

# An American Idol plays Kah-Nee-Ta

By Duran Bobb  
Spilyay Tymoo

"It's good to live your dream and have your daughter see that," American Idol 2 finalist Josh Gracin, 28, says. "When she grows up, if she has any doubts about what she wants to do, I can tell her, 'Hey, I lived my dream!'"

Gracin, who performed at Kah-Nee-Ta on November 6, has a father who is of Croatian descent. His mother, Brenda, is Native American and a former newspaper editor.

Born and raised in Westland, Michigan, Gracin learned at an early age to appreciate some of his parents' favorite recording artists like Elvis and the Beatles.

Country music entered his life when he was 11 years old, as the local radio station switched its format to country music.

Suddenly, Gracin's world opened to the sounds of Garth Brooks, Randy Travis, George Strait, and Joe Diffie.

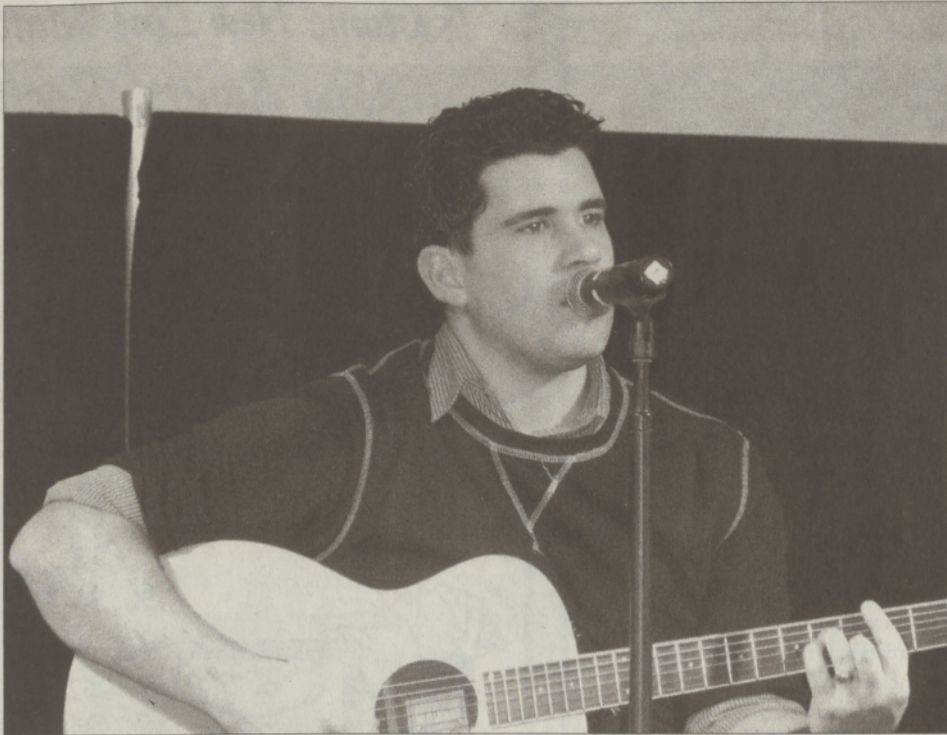
When he was in the eighth grade, Gracin entered a talent competition, singing Garth Brooks' hit *Standing Outside the Fire*. The rest is just history.

"After the reaction I got from the crowd," he says, "I knew right then and there I wanted to sing country music."

As a junior in high school, Gracin began tutoring a classmate, Ann Marie.

"She was failing miserably in history," he says with a grin. "I was one of the good students... so that's where it all started."

The two began dating in 1997. One year after high school, Gracin enlisted in the U.S. Marines, and shortly after that he first saw Fox's new real-



Duran Bobb/Spilyay

American Idol 2 finalist Josh Gracin performed at Kah-Nee-Ta earlier this month.

ity show, *American Idol*. He married Ann Marie, and the two were blessed with Brianna, his daughter.

Two years after enlisting, when he received the approval from headquarters (and at the insistence of Ann Marie), Josh Gracin auditioned for *Idol* in 2002.

Seventy-thousand people tried out. Twenty million people watched from home. Gracin was known on the show for his charming lack of dance-moves, his incredible pipes, and his ability to match Simon Cowell, word-for-word.

Although Gracin was eventually voted off the show in the fourth-place slot, the music dream machine had been set in motion.

On the evening that he was voted off, Gracin pulled his daughter on-stage with him in an unscripted move.

"I wanted to show her that it was possible to go from where I had been to where I was then, and that someday she would be able to do the same if she'd try hard. I'm no longer just some kid with a dream. I'm a father and a husband and this has turned into an accomplishment."

The bass player of Rascal Flatt, Jay DeMarcus, had seen Gracin's performance on *Idol*, and was impressed. He put Josh in touch with the folks at Lyric Street Records, the record label that eventually signed him.

Gracin's hits include *Brass Bed*, *I Want To Live*, *Favorite State*

*of Mind*, and *Nothin' to Lose*, which occupied the number one slot on country music charts nationwide.

"I don't see myself as a celebrity at all," Gracin says. "I'm very shy and not all that self-confident, and I feel like an ordinary person, a normal guy who's very approachable. And if I get a little carried away, I've got my wife to keep me humble and bring me back down to earth."

Gracin's performance at Kah-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort & Casino was playful to a packed house.

For more information on future events at the tribal resort, and to purchase tickets, go to [www.kahneeta.com](http://www.kahneeta.com).

## Cash prizes in Credit logo contest

The Warm Springs Tribal Credit Enterprise is inviting all community members to enter their ideas for the Tribal Credit Logo Contest.

Submissions will be accepted through November 30 at the

Credit Office, located at 1236 Scouts Drive.

First place prize is \$500. Second place is \$300. Third place, \$200.

The theme for the logo contest is "Money."

## Darkness to Light training

Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services will present its next three-hour Darkness to Light child abuse prevention training for tribal employees on Thursday, Nov. 19 at the Family Resource Center.

The training begins at 8:30 a.m. There will be a breakfast served at 8 a.m. for those who arrive early, and a lunch at noon.

Victims of Crime Services (VOCS) is inviting tribal managers and various department heads, BIA management and

other community partners to this training.

VOCS will have regular Darkness to Light training throughout the remainder of 2009 and during 2010.

For more information about the Darkness to Light child sexual abuse prevention workshop, contact Juanita Villa or Aurel Stinson at VOCS, 553-2293, or visit the Darkness to Light Web site at [darkness2light.org](http://darkness2light.org).

## Museum on winter schedule

The Museum At Warm Springs has started its winter schedule. The museum will be closed to the public Sundays and Mondays until

April 1, 2010. For further information, contact the Museum at 541-553-3331 or see the museum's Web site at [www.museumatwarm Springs.org](http://www.museumatwarm Springs.org).

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## Moody doing better after serious car accident

Keith Moody is recovering from a serious car accident that happened in September.

Moody works at the fish hatchery in Maupin.

In September he was driving from Maupin to Pendleton in order to be with family of a good friend, Thane Colwash, who died in a boating accident on the Columbia River. Pete

Good Lance also passed away in the boating accident.

Driving on I-84 to Pendleton, Moody was rear-ended by a vehicle driven by a woman from Canada. Moody's vehicle was forced off the road and rolled over. The other vehicle also went off the road.

Moody was taken to the hospital in Hermiston, and then

taken by LifeFlight to the hospital in The Dalles.

He suffered a serious neck injury, and chest and head injuries. The days after the accident were the most trying of times, as the accident happened as families were already mourning the loss of the two fishermen, and making funeral arrangements.

Keith is in physical therapy now, and is doing better, said his mother Charlotte Herkshan.

## Opal Day Spa



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## Opal Day Spa Coloring Contest



Hey, kids, want to win a free haircut and facial for you mom for Christmas? Color in the drawing and bring it to the Spilyay at the media center, or send it to PO Box 870, Warm Springs, 97761. The contest is open to kids up to age 12.