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How times have changed. This summer, the amphitheater has booked country mega-stars like Kenny Chesney, Darius Rucker, Thomas Rhett and Maren Morris, the Midtown/Domino Room complex recently hosted Charley Crockett and has a steady stream of roots-rock bands on the books, Margo Price played Oregon Spirit Distillers, Silver Moon Brewing brought in Joshua Ray Walker, Elle King headlined Sunriver's amphitheater and Volcanic Theatre Pub has welcomed Ian Noe, Town Mountain and Jesse Daniel.

In other words, it's a glorious time for local lovers of twang, and this week is particularly generous. Here are four artists playing four shows at four different venues, each one bringing a little different flavor of country to the table.

The string band

The Brothers Comatose are no strangers to the region, having played locally several times over the past decade. A five-piece bluegrass-ish band from the Bay Area, the Brothers are, in fact, led by real brothers, Ben and Alex Morrison, whose nifty pickin' and sibling harmonies set the tone for the group's melancholy sound.

They're "bluegrass-ish" because of their Americana vibes and their rock 'n' roll spirit, but it doesn't really matter how you classify them, the Brothers Comatose are just really good. They'll play the free Munch & Music concert series in Drake Park (777 NW Riverside Drive, Bend) on Thursday, with local band Beyond the Lamplight kicking things off at 5:30 p.m. *More info: munchandmusic.com.*

The outlaw

The big names among the current country underground — Tyler Childers, Charley Crockett, Sierra Ferrell, Orville Peck and so on — all bring a certain amount of swagger to their sound. But Paul Cauthen might out-swagger them all. The tall Texan with the deep voice he calls "Big Velvet" harks back to the '70s heyday of outlaw country, with songs about cocaine, champagne, high heels and being "country as f**k" set to



Ashley Allred/Submitted photo

String band The Brothers Comatose pick their way through Bend Thursday at Munch & Music.

hard-edged guitars and, occasionally, hip-hop-ish beats. He's like Johnny Cash for the 21st century streaming generation. It might sound like it shouldn't work, but it does.

Cauthen's also a dapper dresser and a dazzling entertainer with a sizable young fan base, so his show Thursday night at Midtown Ballroom (51 NW Greenwood Ave., Bend) should be quite the scene. Show time is 9 p.m., with doors opening at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$25. *More info: midtownballroom.com.*

The voice

LeAnn Rimes was 13 years old when she released her stunning cover of Bill Mack's song "Blue," which earned her two Grammy awards — she was the youngest Grammy winner ever when she won, and the first country artist to win Best New Artist — and countless comparisons to country legend Patsy Cline. Since then, she has enjoyed a long and diverse career, crossing over into pop and Christian music, selling more than 20 million albums in the United States alone and dabbling in acting.

In September, she'll release a new album called "god's work" that features guests like Mickey Guyton, Ziggy Marley, Ben Harper and Aloe Blacc, and last year, she celebrated the 25th anniversary of "Blue," which still sounds as timeless as it did in 1996. (That's how timelessness works.) Rimes will play the Athletic Club of Bend (61615 Athletic Club Drive, Bend) on Friday, with Cloverdayle opening. Show time is 7 p.m., doors open at 5:30 p.m. and tickets cost \$56. *More info: clearsummernights.com.*



Jody Domingue/Submitted photo

Paul Cauthen is a dapper dresser and a dazzling entertainer with a sizable young fan base.**The mainstream star**

Jon Pardi looks and sounds like a country star from a Pixar movie. He's tall, he has a good, strong jaw, and he knows how to wear a cowboy hat. His last name sounds like the word "party," which paves the way for puns. (His fans are the #PardiAnimals and he has a digital variety show on CMT called "Pardi Time.") Combine all of this with the fact that Pardi writes and sings good songs that nod to country's traditional sound, and you can see why he's a rising star with a handful of #1 hits to his name, including "Heartache Med-

ication" and "Dirt on My Boots."

Pardi will release his fourth album, "Mr. Saturday Night," in September, but first he'll play a show at Hayden Homes Amphitheater (344 SW Shevlin Hixon Drive, Bend) on Saturday, with Lainey Wilson and Hailley Whitters opening. Show time is 6 p.m., doors open at 5 p.m. and tickets cost \$49.50. *More info: bendconcerts.com.*

■ Ben Salmon is a Bend-based music journalist and host of *Left Of The Dial*, which airs 8-10 p.m. Thursdays on KPOV, 88.9 FM and streams at kpv.org. You can find him on Bandcamp and Twitter at @bcsalmon.



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