



## Local Artist Shows Guitar Skills On New CD

### Dean Shoultz's "All the Pretty Horses"

This week, Covington native Dean Shoultz gets his chance under the spotlight with the review of his 2009 release "All the Pretty Horses," off of Prime Time Music. Prime Time Music is owned and operated by Tom Cossie, an industry veteran who has produced numerous gold and platinum albums for artists such as Chic, David Bowie, Janet Jackson and many others.

The album was produced by local musician Pershing Wells at Digital-Sac-a-Lait Productions. All songs were written by Shoultz and Wells, with the exception of the title track. Shoultz provides guitar for every track, while Wells handled arrangements in addition to keyboards and drums.

"All the Pretty Horses" contains mostly guitar instrumentals, though two songs on the album include vocals. All of the songs are melodic and easy to listen to.

Shoultz, who started playing guitar at the age of 10, just two years before moving to Houma, said it was produced as a concept album where each song flows directly into the next.

The first five tracks are instrumentals, but each has a small story behind it.

Track 1, "The Carpenters Tree," came together at 3 a.m. while Shoultz was working on the album.

"I guess it was an inspiration from above," he said.

While the guitar-inspired tracks are easy to listen to, that doesn't mean you should expect easy-listening music. It is apparent by the middle of this track that Shoultz is an accomplished guitarist, on rhythm and especially lead guitar. This song rocks. The blazing solo in this track is a foreshadowing to come later in the disc.

Although mostly instrumental, several of the songs include famous sound clips, such as the one

introducing Track 2, "War," which features Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy" speech. Regarding this track, Shoultz said it best, "this song starts slowly and continues to build until it turns into full-fledged reckless abandon, then comes back again."

He said he's always been interested in World War II, and what ancestors had to deal with during those times. The sound clips from FDR seemed to fit.

Track 3, "No Slumber," started from a warm-up exercise Shoultz has done for years.

"It turned into a song during another long-night session," he said. "The next day Pershing Wells asked if I had gotten any sleep, which is where the name came from."

Sound clips of a cheering crowd appear throughout this song as if it were recorded live — it wasn't, but if it would have been; there would have been no need for a sound clip. Driving rhythm guitar with metal solos — I would have gladly provided the cheers.

"Freedom," Track 4, is the result of Shoultz playing around with finger picking and some effects on his equipment. He said the lick just kind of came together.

"The tone I got on my Melancon guitar just seemed right," Shoultz said.

"Freedom" is smooth, very moving in a non-assuming way, much like the freedom we enjoy every day as residents.

Track 5, "The Awakening," almost didn't happen. Shoultz said he was watching TV one day when this one came to him.

"If I wouldn't have hurried up, grabbed the guitar, and started to play what I was hearing in my head, I

would have lost it," Shoultz said. "That's happened a million times!"

Well, I for one am glad it did — happen that is. This Houma resident has some talent on the guitar. I don't think I can stress that enough. You're going to have to check it out for yourself. His style is a unique blend of the likes of Van Halen, Metallica and Guns-N-Roses and 100 others that defy my short-term memory.

Remember, it's all Shoultz. He's playing all the guitar parts on the disc.

Track 6, "Hero," is all about Shoultz's daughter, Taylor, and about how she changed his life for the better.

"A line from the song reads 'God bless this little girl' and it describes exactly how I feel about her," Shoultz said. "Fortunately, she gets her looks from her gorgeous mother, instead of me."

What an absolute blessing of a song! Coming from a man expecting his first born in three months, the song brought me to tears. Upbeat, catchy, sweet and real — I could have just as easily heard this song on the radio.

Shoultz jokes about thanking audiences and family for putting up with his voice on the two tracks with vocals, but I'd say he was being a little modest. I really get a Roger Waters feel from him.

The title track, Track 7, "All The Pretty Horses," was written by Traditional Irish, and Shoultz said he would rock Taylor to sleep every night with this tune.

"I rocked her so often it just stuck in my brain, so I just had to transform it into a guitar song," Shoultz said.

Track 8, "I Have A Dream" is Shoultz's tribute to one of the great leaders of the civil-rights movement.

"I've always thought that Martin Luther King Jr. was a visionary and well ahead of his time," he said.

Shoultz said this one is all about him. He even does King Jr. the honor of including parts of his "I Have a Dream" speech. Track 8 has a drum beat that is progressively funk-alternative and is laced with the best of what Shoultz has to offer.

This song is powerful from the first downbeat and haunting until the down-right Depeche Mode ending. My personal favorite thus far. This kind of love is the love of a warm day, all windows down, stereo cranked as loud as it goes with a long stretch of highway in front of you. You know those open-road favorites that have you dancing in the driver's seat, even after the car next to you has slowed to laugh.

Track 9, "Sing to Me," is a song that hits very close to my own heart. The story is both heartbreaking and full of hope.

"I was on the phone with my Dad when I heard the phone drop, and he passed away that night from an unexpected heart attack," Shoultz said. "I sat there with the phone in my ear dumbfounded for a long time."

Shoultz said this is his attempt at asking him to watch over him and his family. You know, Shoultz sings twice on this album, once for his little girl and once for his father.

The final track, Track 10, "Sequel to the Server," was oddly enough inspired by a Microsoft computer server.

"They have a rather complex product called SQL Server, and it seemed to fit the chord progression in this song," he said. "I know — strange!"

Strange maybe, however, it is another first for this music fan. Not quite as high-tech as I thought it might be, but then I remembered who I was listening to: Dean Shoultz, a man all about the guitar and his "All The Pretty Horses."

Shoultz has headlined concerts and opened for major artists such as Live, Kansas, Driving and Crying, Cheap Trick and others.

The CD is another hit from another south Louisiana native.

The CD can be found online at [www.cdbaby.com/cd/deanshoultz2](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/deanshoultz2). It is also on Amazon, LaLa, iTunes and many others at any moment.