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Tom Cochrane to headline 2017 Hoedown



By Brock Weir

Canadian music icon Tom Cochrane is 2017's Hoedown headliner.

Magna announced Monday that Cochrane and Red Rider will take the stage on Saturday, September 16, the second evening of their two-night annual country music extravaganza.

York Region's biggest party, which is set to raise money for 20 York Region community groups serving an estimated 82,000 residents, opens September 15 with the Hoedown Showdown finals, the Ontario-wide talent search looking for the country's next country music superstar, and that evening's headliner Chad Brownlee.

?Tom Cochrane with Red Rider is a legendary Canadian country music icon,? says Hoedown's Erin Cerenzia. ?He is a Juno winner, he has been nominated for Grammys, and it doesn't get much more Canadian than that, especially when we're into the Canada 150 Celebration.

?Obviously we know he is going to bring an incredible show. The James Barker band is a really up and coming country group as well. They have just been nominated for a bunch of CCMAs (Canadian Country Music Awards), Dani Strong, a local performer who began right here in Aurora, and the lineup itself is just going to give us an amazing range of country talent. Our goal is to sell out the event. Every ticket we sell comes back and puts money into the pockets of charities and 82,000 residents of York Region will benefit from the programs these charities serve. You're in for a great show, but it is also for an even better cause.?

This wasn't news to area resident Anna Wood, who was dubbed ?one of the most die-hard Hoedown fans? out there. An enthusiastic competitor in Magna's annual ?Find Frank? competition, where social media clues leading music fans to a cardboard cut-out of the Magna founder hidden somewhere in York Region with free Hoedown tickets, Magna saved her the trouble this year ? awarding her a bevy of free event tickets at Monday's announcement.

?I love Hoedown because country is really in my soul,? Ms. Wood explained. ?I lost my dad a few years back and he played country music, so when I hear country music it just brings a smile to my heart. I love the Hoedown because, inside the tent, the music and the food is just so amazing ? and I love the fact [proceeds] go to 20 York Region charities. It is a win-win situation for everyone.?

The Hoedown super fan also gave the thumbs-up to Tom Cochrane, having been first wowed by him at the age of 19 at a particularly rousing concert at Exhibition Place.

With early beginnings as a folk-based singer/songwriter playing in Toronto coffeehouses in the early 1970s, Cochrane became the driving force with the adventurous rockers, Red Rider, prior to achieving massive international success (over three million units worldwide and a rare diamond-sales status at home) with the breakthrough 1991 album Mad Mad World and its anthemic hit, ?Life is a Highway,? which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

With his other recordings combined he has sold over six million worldwide. Over the course of this long and illustrious career, Cochrane has cemented his place in the hearts of Canadians through passionate, crowd-pleasing performances from coast to coast, and his unwavering work on behalf of humanitarian causes and organizations.

An Officer of the Order of Canada recipient and Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee, Cochrane has won eight Juno awards and numerous other industry honors, including the 2013 Allan Waters Humanitarian Award and a Grammy nomination.?

For tickets and further information on the annual Wild, Wild West Hoedown, the 2017 Hoedown Showdown competition, participating community organizations and more, visit www.hoedown.ca.