

**A Conversation with Sandy Cherryholmes
by Frank Goodman (2/2006, Puremusic.com)**

Cherryholmes was the big surprise for us this issue. We'd been hearing about them, but that still doesn't prepare one for the urgency of their sound, or the cogency of their approach.

They're a family bluegrass band. They lived in a pretty tough part of L.A.; the parents were strong Christians. After the eldest daughter died in '99, they all went to a local bluegrass festival, to lift the family's spirits. During the course of the weekend, Jere and Sandy Cherryholmes had an epiphany, and decided that this was what they needed to do, start a family band. It would pull everyone together, and give them something they could learn and do as a unit.

Although not pros, the parents were experienced musicians, and guided the four kids (there is one more, on his own) down various paths of fiddle, guitar, and then banjo. (Cia was a flatpicker with a new guitar, and she reluctantly agreed to become the family banjo player, since you can't have a bluegrass band without one. Five short years later, she was to be named SPGMA Banjo Player of the Year.) Home schooling was already the family way, so music lessons were simply tacked on to the curriculum.

They began playing gigs, and the kids kept getting better, and so did the jobs. Jere and Sandy Lee hold the reins pretty snug--no TV, no Internet, and no headphones. They even *listen* to music as a family. And the music of the family was Bluegrass; they were living it, especially the classics: Jimmy Martin, the Louvin, Stanley, and the Osborne Brothers, Bill Monroe, Jim and Jesse, et cetera.

When the time came, they decided as a family to make the leap to playing music full time, and go on the road with their bus. Their fast and steep ascent in the world of Bluegrass has created a huge buzz nationally on the family called Cherryholmes, and they shocked the industry at the SPGMA Convention this year, when instead of winning Best Emerging Artist, they were selected as Entertainers of the Year.

Their story is so amazing to me that I decided to write to Oprah Winfrey and tell her staff about this family. If their story and their music turns you on the way that it did us, we invite you to write to Oprah at Oprah.com--there's a place to make suggestions for a future show, and you can make your Cherryholmes pitch. But now we invite you in to a conversation with the silver throated mandolinist and mom, Sandy Lee Cherryholmes.

Puremusic: As a relative newcomer to the fast-building legacy of the Cherryholmes family--

[laughter]

PM: --you can appreciate how astonishing it is to absorb all of the accomplishments and the accolades that are piling up so high, so fast, so young.

Sandy Cherryholmes: I know. It's mind-boggling.

PM: It's just unbelievable. I first heard about the family and the group when my friend Craig Havighurst did a piece on the IBMA on NPR.

SC: In fact, they're broadcasting that now. And I haven't heard it. I caught the last forty-five seconds of it when someone called and said it was on. But an agent that's with us said he's heard it today and said it was great, it was really well done.

PM: Oh, yeah. Craig is a very thorough and academic person, and he did a wonderful job. And then I saw him at a bonfire, at somebody's big party outside very soon after the piece had first aired. We talked about the family and the group. And he was really fired up about your whole story, and the reality of who you are and what you've done. I mean, you've really got a champion in him.

SC: [laughs] That's great.

PM: But I guess he's probably one of a long line, because you know how people love to champion someone who's really not just talented, but somebody who's good.

SC: Well, like I said, we've been amazed, because we just did what we did as a family for the sake of the family. And to have it have been so successful is--it's very awesome, and an awesome responsibility.

PM: Yes, an awesome happening, and an awesome responsibility. I can appreciate that. And along with being the entertainers of the year in the world of bluegrass, the family has become, really, one of the most interesting families in the nation.

SC: [laughs] That is so funny, because I guess that must be true, but we just don't see ourselves that way. We're people, and that's the way we see ourselves. It's far from being all that interesting.

PM: [laughs] And of course, people who see themselves as very interesting, they're not as interesting anymore, are they?

[laughter]

SC: Oh, I know. Like today--well, we're just outside of Oklahoma City right now, camped in a RV park right up against the freeway, and it's far from glamorous. We're plugging away at our school classes--the three of them are home-schooled--and it looks like an explosion in a classroom inside the bus. Jere is trying to sleep because he drove all night. There's nothing glamorous about this.

PM: But along the lines of me calling you--and I think rightfully so, being one of the interesting families in the nation at the moment--has anybody done a magazine piece on Cherryholmes from that kind of an angle?

SC: Not really, not mentioning it that way.

PM: Not per se. I've got to circulate that idea around to some of my writer friends, because somebody has got to be writing an article like that, and you guys should be in there.

In this world, and in this day and age, how are you and Jere able to guide all your children, at least the four that are with you here, all so unerringly down this very unlikely path of virtuosity and young stardom?

SC: It's a funny thing, we haven't ever looked at it as anything extraordinary in our own selves. But from the very beginning, Jere and I just decided in the direction that the family needed to go. And our kids are--I guess maybe they're a lot like we are. I imagine that's a genetic thing. They seem to have always been able to have us tell them, "We're going to do this."

From the very beginning with the music, Jere and I decided we were going to teach these kids how to play some instruments. That would be a good idea: we're going to start a family band just so we have something special to do at home. And when we told them, a couple of them were real happy. And one of them could probably take it or leave it. And the other one really didn't want to play what he was playing. But everybody had the attitude, "Okay, if this is what we're going to do, then I guess it's what we're doing."

And then they enjoyed it. And we did it together. And it's been like that as it's progressed, as far as the band goes. As they got better and realized that people were responding to their ability, they grew, even in the first year when they had just started. They got off to great start. In just a relatively short time, they had the traits of kids who look like they might actually have some future talent.

We'd take them out to play at festivals just to jam. And people would comment. And that would make them want to try harder. In turn, it made us get different goals and learn more songs. Then we won a couple of contests, and that got everyone excited, and we thought, oh, gee, we could do some other good stuff. And every step, everybody seems like they've been willing to get on board and want to do it.

And then we've always talked about it--we'd say, "Well, how far do you want to go, now that we're going to get more work. Are you kids going to practice? Because you're going to have to practice if we're going to work." They'd say, "Yeah, we want to do it." And that went right up to the jump-off point when we finally sat down and said, "You know, we're considering selling everything and going full-time, what do you kids think? It's going to be a big sacrifice, and it's going to be hard. We're going to be on a road in a trailer, and we don't know what's going to happen or where we're going to be. But we can try it." And everybody said, "Okay. If that's what we can do, let's do it."

And it's been like that ever since. They just work with us. We get a vision for something, and lead them, and they follow, and they work hard. And it's kind of like a big team.

PM: It's unbelievable. Can you take me back further, just a little bit, to the days before the kids, and closer to where the story begins. Where did you and Jere each grow up, and how did you meet?

SC: I spent some of my youth in Ohio. My family was from the east. Then we moved out into California about 1967. I was born in Lynwood, California, actually. My folks couldn't make up their mind where they wanted to live. Jere was born in Huntington Park, California. We met going to his father's church. His father is a preacher. And we were in the music team at the church. I'm the piano player, actually. And he's the guitar player. Doing music together, that's something that we always enjoyed.

PM: Wow. After the tragic death of your daughter, Shelley, in '99, the story goes that a bluegrass festival that the family attended changed everything. Can you put us back at that festival? Where was it, and who were you seeing there that really started a whole new world of life-changing ideas? Who kind of spawned the idea of, "Well, maybe we should try a band, a family band"?

SC: The festival was in Norco, California. I think it was called the Golden West Bluegrass Festival. It was, I think, the last one they had there, that year. It was April of '99. There were a few acts there, but the one that really captivated us, and we just really lit up, was Jim and Jesse and the Virginia Boys.

PM: An electrifying act, to be sure.

SC: Yeah. And it also had to do a lot with the personal side--they were just so--oh, I don't know, their whole performance was--you just felt joyous sitting and watching them.

PM: Ah.

SC: And that's what we needed at that time. Our daughter had died March 12th. And going to that festival--it was basically just a decision to get out of the house and get away from everything, and just take a day and do something totally unrelated to the daily routine that we had.

We ended up getting there late, because we were there on Sunday. All the campsites and the parking spots were taken. So they parked us backstage. And it just so happened that Jim and Jesse had flown in from Tennessee and rented cars, and so they had to park backstage as well, which gave us a chance to talk. Jesse's grandson was with them at the time. I think he was about 18. And Cia, being only 15, was just amazed that there were actually young people like that in the world--because we lived in L.A., and you just don't see that polite, well-groomed, young man around where we were, I should say.

PM: Right.

SC: And the kids were just captivated by the band, by Luke and Jim and Jesse. And all the people in the band, they were very friendly. Even though they didn't know who we were, they came down and talked to us. And then watching them, they joked with each other, and they insulted each other, and they just had a ball. And their music was so much fun. Later on, when I learned more about Jim and Jesse and their faith, and the trials Jesse was going through with even his own son, which is MS--you know, his son also ended up passing away from that... I believe that they had a gift that they came and gave us, born out of a similar hardship.

And it was amazing--when we got done spending the day there, watching them--and I'd have to say even though there were other bands, they made the biggest impact on us--Jere said, "That's what we need. We need to do it. We need to get the kids playing, and we'll play together, and it'll be something really good for us right now." And I thought, well, I've always wanted them to take some lessons or play an instrument anyway, because I had. And I thought it was a great discipline. Whether they pursued it or not seriously, it was a great thing to have it as just a discipline.

Since I was home-schooling them, I would give them the lessons during the day. They were just informal lessons, no music reading. I would just show them what to do. And we would get together and play. And then when their dad came home, they would want to show him what they did. And we'd practice at night for a couple hours just for fun.

PM: Now, that's interesting, because they only had you or Jere to show them stuff on the instruments at night. They didn't go out for more formal or--you could even say "professional" teaching.

SC: No. I guess the miracle of it all is that I played several instruments, but none of them professionally, I was just someone who loved music and studied music growing up. I played a lot of concert instruments and acoustic instruments well enough to teach the basics to somebody else--and the same with Jere, he played guitar and bass, but not professionally. And Los Angeles is not exactly the Mecca of bluegrass. It was really difficult to find out what bluegrass was and really understand it. We just used--Jere liked to call it "think method." We used to love the musical *The Music Man* because Professor Harold Hill used the "think method" to get these kids to play this thing. "If you think it, you can do it."

And we tried to search everywhere we could to find old bluegrass. We had Ralph Stanley. And we did Del McCoury, and we did a lot of the traditional J. D. Crowe, and Bill Monroe. And then we kind of purged the house of any other kind of music at that time, because we wanted the kids to grasp a new culture. We didn't really understand a whole lot, exactly what it meant, but we felt we didn't want to be part of the pop culture, or part of the western--even the western bluegrass. We wanted to create a whole different culture.

PM: Okay, so some of us are guitar players, and we can share that, or some bass, or this or that. But when it comes to something like banjo--I know you're a clawhammer banjo player--

SC: Uh-huh.

PM: --but when it comes to something like bluegrass banjo, I mean, that's something kind of hard to pick up on your own. Did you know that bluegrass style of picking, too? Did you teach Cia that?

SC: Absolutely not. What was strange is that Cia started as a guitar player. And when we'd been together about a year, Jere and I got to talking and saying, "There are promoters hiring us, and we're a bluegrass band, and we don't have a banjo."

PM: [laughs] That'll never do.

SC: Yeah. We had two mandolin players, two guitar players, bass, and we had no banjo. And we thought, "Our career is not going to be very long without a banjo."

PM: [laughs]

SC: And so then we looked at the kids and we wondered who would do it? Well, I might have been able to study it and pick it up, but I had so many other things I was trying to do. And so we looked at the kids and tried to evaluate who would be someone who would work hard and get it down, and we decided Cia. She had the ability to really apply herself. She was disappointed when her dad told her, "I need you to switch to banjo," because she had bought her new guitar, and she'd practiced the guitar.

PM: She was a hot flat picker.

SC: She was a good flat picker. She was really good. She had taught herself how to do that. And we went to festivals in that November--I think it was November of about 2000--with two banjos. We picked up a bluegrass banjo, and we picked up a clawhammer banjo, and decided that between the two of us, we could both learn enough banjo to make it look like we had a bluegrass band.

So I learned to play clawhammer, and she learned to play three-finger style. She just listened to recordings and tried to get ideas on how to set her fingers, and went to jams, and asked people to show her. And then I did the same, got together with a clawhammer friend of mine and said, "Show me how to play this thing." And we very quickly tried to work things out and add them to the show so that we could continue on with some sort of sense of--it would look like we had some banjos going, anyway.

PM: Wow. Yeah, because you've got to have somebody to show you some of that stuff, seems to me. I'm a pretty good finger picker on the guitar, but when it came to starting to disentangle the bluegrass picking, I thought, "I need somebody to show me some of these rolls. I don't think I'm doing this right." [laughs] And so now I've had a couple of lessons, and now I'm starting to understand how to roll around on that instrument just a little bit. But it's kind of a bizarre thing to pick up at the beginning, I think.

SC: It is. And so much of it Cia got just from listening. She would listen to recordings. She'd slow them down and try to hear the individual notes.

PM: Ah.

SC: And so at first she didn't have some of the fingering right, but she'd have the notes right, because she could hear the notes in the record. And she would play them, but then she'd realize, "Well, the fingering on this is really awkward." I know once we were opening for Del McCoury. And we kept telling her, "Go up to Robbie and ask him about that lick." And she was really nervous. And then she asked him, "How do I--am I doing this right?" And she played it for him and he said, "You got the notes right, but your fingers are in the wrong position." Then he showed her. We didn't really have a concept of those chords that you could do everything from.

PM: Right.

SC: If you know the one main chord, you can do everything from there. And he showed her a couple little things to correct it, and then she went home and worked on it some more, and she just built it up. She started playing the first of December, and she was on stage doing her first concert with us middle of January.

PM: Unbelievable. Well, that's the fearlessness of kids, too.

SC: Yes.

PM: They just say, "What? I can tear this apart. There's nothing to it."

[laughter]

SC: Right, right.

PM: It's a beautiful thing. It's like the way they learn languages, too. They just start talking.

SC: And they're uninhibited. I knew that at that age, even if they messed up, everyone was just going to be so wild about it and think they were great. You know, when you're older and you mess up, people think, "Ah, this stupid person can't do that anyway."

PM: [laughs] Yeah, that's right.

SC: But when you're young they think everything you do is wonderful.

PM: Even though the kids are already what you could call bluegrass virtuosos, I mean, kids are still kids. Are any of them listening to other styles of music? Is anybody listening to hip-hop with headphones on in bus?

SC: Oh, never, no. One thing, we've had a lot of rules that we felt have helped our kids to not pull away into other things. We share all our music. Hip-hop isn't one of those things. And we never allowed the kids to sit with headsets on. We always wanted to know what they were listening to.

PM: Wow, that's an interesting rule. "No headphones."

SC: No. No headphones, no internet, no TV.

PM: But Sandy, that's so amazing! No internet, no TV, no headphones?

SC: Uh-huh.

PM: Because that's how you'd have to do it. It's like putting them in a rocket ship and saying, "We're going to a different planet. We're all on the same ship."

[laughter]

SC: Yeah, but it's such a good planet. You know, the thing is that they enjoy it now. They listen to other music. But you'd be surprised the music they listen to is Stephane Grapelli jazz. They just, for the first time--we did an in-store at a little music store up in Louisville. And the man in there let us go through and take albums home. And they got a hold of a live Phil Collins. And they're just captivated by Phil Collins live.

PM: Wow.

SC: We didn't play that at home when we were learning bluegrass and all that, because we didn't want them distracted. But now we're introducing those things to them. And since they're already geared towards the bluegrass, all they're doing is getting ideas. How to translate the energy of some of these other things, and the pizzazz, into what they're doing.

PM: Now, will you guys allow them to listen to bluegrass bands that exhibit other influences, like Nickel Creek, or the old Newgrass guys, or any of that stuff?

SC: We do. We don't have much Nickel Creek or Newgrass, but we do have Alison Krauss.

PM: Right.

SC: We listen to Sirius, which will play everything from Bela Fleck, Hot Rize.

PM: Ah.

SC: So instead of getting just a lot of albums to play all the time, we listen to Sirius, which will constantly give them a variety of everything.

PM: Right.

SC: And when something good comes out, we'll have the albums. We have tons of friends now in the bluegrass world, and any time any of them have an album out, we get it and listen to it and see what they're doing. So they do have a lot of other influences. But their favorites that they seem to always be going back to are standards. The guitar player's favorite influence is Jimmy Martin. And he loves Bryan Sutton, too.

PM: Right.

SC: But Jimmy Martin, he's got that drive. And the same thing goes for the fiddlers. The fiddlers love Aubrey Haynie. They've listened to things from Mark O'Connor, and some jazzier players.

PM: Right.

SC: And then they just interpret it on their instruments. And Cia, she likes J. D. Crowe, Keith Whitley. She just loves Keith Whitley.

PM: Oh, he's amazing, yeah.

SC: And then they like Irish, like John Doyle, Cherish the Ladies, and just some different influences like that. But nothing pop. Nothing from Eminem, or nothing from any of the pop artists.

PM: Right. And so they're incredibly untainted.

SC: Yes.

PM: That's incredible how you guys are pulling that off and have pulled that off.

[laughter]

PM: Has the family like been on *Oprah* yet, or something like that?

SC: No, we haven't.

PM: Because you're going there. I mean, somebody needs to land you guys on *Oprah*.

SC: Well, the Skaggs label has done incredible things. And we've done so much in such a short time, it's hard to even say what's around the corner.

PM: Right.

SC: We're ready for just--we're on our way. In the next couple weeks we've got the Grammy nomination, and that is awesome.

PM: Because you and I know that if Oprah Winfrey ever got wind of who you guys are, and what you've done, she'd have you on that show in a heartbeat!

SC: [laughs]

PM: You're right up her alley.

SC: Wow. And yet it's funny, I've never seen an *Oprah Winfrey Show*. I know who she is, but we don't watch television, so I don't even know what she does.

PM: Oh, my God! Oh, that's amazing. But you understand the magnitude of her influence.

SC: Yes, I do. I do that.

PM: I mean, if you write a book and she puts it in the Oprah Book of the Month Club, you're done. You're double done.

SC: She's amazing in that respect.

PM: So I hope that somebody is hooking that up for you, because you guys deserve that. And I'm sure somebody at Skaggs is on the stick about that. Me, I'm going to talk to some friends that book TV shows. And say, "You're onto Cherryholmes, right?"

SC: [laughs] We just got an interesting call from a promoter we're going to work for in California, just a little concert we're doing around San Diego, who said Jamie Lee Curtis had called him and said that she really wanted to go to our show and see if she could meet the band. I thought, "Oh, my God!" I said, "How did Jamie Lee Curtis hear about us?" He said, "I don't know."

[laughter]

PM: Totally cool.

So after releasing your first three CDs, how does that compare to suddenly being part of an outfit like Skaggs Family Records?

SC: Oh, it's a whole different life. We worked hard when we did our self-released ones, but there's only so much you can do on your own. If you're at that point, to get you to the next level you really need someone with some backing and some confidence in you. We found that, even though we had a top producer, Darrin Vincent--Rhonda Vincent's brother--do our last one, and we did it in Nashville. We were going to do it on our own. And we didn't choose a label. We were holding off. We did all the promotion ourselves, and I don't think that we got enough airplay to really do much of anything with it, even with all the good people involved and all of that. And after that, we realized, "Now is the time for a label, because I think we've hit the wall. We've gone real far, but I don't think we're going any farther than this without help."

And the Skaggs people called us and asked to meet with us. We had already spoken to a few different labels and really felt hesitant. We wanted to know exactly why we would sign before we did. We didn't want to do it just because it might make us feel good. We wanted to know what we were signing and why, and what was going to happen when we signed. And so we were really holding off for the right one. We had about five meetings with the Skaggs folks before we signed--it was like a courtship and the marriage. I mean, there was no question. As soon as we got together we all realized we were headed the same direction, and that we were all on the same page.

PM: Wow. Yeah, because obviously, the profit per record goes down significantly, so there's got to be other perks, like publicity and promotion to tip the scales.

SC: Right. And this has been amazing. I think you probably got information about us and arranged this interview through Kissy Black's office.

PM: The lovely and talented, indeed. Kissy is a friend of mine.

SC: She has just been incredible. I'm just amazed at the things she's come up with, and the places they've been able to stick us. Not to mention just Ricky Scaggs going around telling people what he thinks. And that endorsement is worth gold, anyway.

PM: Absolutely.

SC: It's just been great. And they let us do our own material. They let us be who we want to be. That was another very important thing in choosing a label, was that we wanted our image. We didn't want to be forced to pull out a lead singer and be a backup band for our daughter, or we didn't--we have a family act. And everyone has worked hard to be a

family act, and our popularity on the stage is due to the fact there are six people who are totally involved.

PM: Right.

SC: There's no one who's just sitting around, and we wanted to make sure that we weren't changed, that we weren't turned into the next Dixie Chicks, or any of that. We wanted to be us. And Skaggs said, "Hey, if that's what's winning, why change it?"

PM: And he's so right, and you're so right, because as soon as they pull a lead singer out of the band, then everyone else is subjugated to instrumental roles, and that's where it all goes wrong.

SC: Right. And then pretty soon, the lead singer is pulled out of the band altogether to go with a better band. So we've been looking at this as a tight family team, and trying to make sure that everybody, every year, everyone who gets a little bit better in skill--which they do, they're young, so every year they can sing or play something they couldn't do the year before--and then we start incorporating that.

Another big feature is that we all do Irish step dancing. Five of us do. Dad wasn't around to learn it. That's become a real big feature with the group, because we'll play music, and in the middle of the playing, we can all stop, do a five-man dance routine, and jump right back in the music again.

PM: That's unreal.

SC: It's a lot of fun. It's a ball.

PM: I can't wait to see the act. I've not had the pleasure yet. But certainly, I'm looking forward to it. It must be immensely hard to continue to home school the kids when they're living the life of bluegrass stars and always on the move, right?

SC: We've done it so long--home schooling is not new, we've been doing it about 15 years--so when we went on this adventure, it was just a matter of let's keep up and reschedule.

PM: Right.

SC: Home schooling itself was not a difficult thing to do as we made our changes. Even today--we drove all night, and now all day today, tomorrow, and probably a good part of the next day will be catching up on assignments. And they're all in there where they're supposed to be. We've got one graduating this year, another one will graduate in two years, and then Molly, who will start high school at the end of this year.

PM: When do they get time to practice, Sandy?

SC: Since music is such a big part of their lives, practice is a lot of times something that they do because that's their love.

PM: Yeah.

SC: During downtime. I imagine later on today, when they're done with school, they'll probably get instruments out, and later we'll look at new songs we're working on. We'll practice in the bus as we're going down the road.

PM: Wow. But the bus is kind of an open thing. If the fiddler wants to practice something in the key of A, and the banjo wants to learn something in F, I mean, do they just kind of find a way and point toward the window and practice something they're working on, or go in the bathroom, and just catch as catch can?

SC: They'll go in the bathroom. I was just going to say, the bathroom is the rehearsal room. You'll have someone who's in the bathroom, someone who has shut the doors to the hallway. It's a 45 foot Prevost, so it's got--

PM: Ah.

SC: We just got a bigger bus. So I can go in the bedroom, if I want to play. I can close the door. You'll have someone in the bathroom, someone in the hallway, and a couple people up front. And then we'll practice as a group. The bus is plenty big for all of us to sit in there while Dad is driving. And then he'll make his comments and that, and then he'll at least be familiar with the songs. Then when we land and get to practicing, he'll add the bass. But we'll work out a lot of the arrangement parts apart from that, and then just put it together.

PM: Wow. Have you been approached about doing a movie on the Cherryholmes story, yet?

SC: No. And I hope I'm not for a while.

[laughter]

PM: That's coming. That's coming. That's too good.

SC: I've had a few different people wanting to do documentaries. I know people get enthralled. And it's just hard to have--well, I suppose if there's something that comes up that works sometime--there is an element of it that we would like to be like a normal family, too, and not just be followed around all the time.

PM: As normal as you can be, anyway. [laughs] I mean, living the life you live.

SC: Yeah.

PM: With so much attention coming their way, how do you manage to keep the kids' egos and values in line, and their eye on the ball? I mean, they're just human.

SC: And that is the whole other issue apart from the success, is that everyone is still human. And with facial hair comes moods.

PM: [laughs]

SC: And when kids go through certain ages, they still have certain things, they still--as they grow they have certain issues they deal with. And I guess adults do, too, as we get older, we have our issues as well. And those are things that we just always are working on. We have lots of family talks. We spend lots of time together talking, in general, just about values and life, reputation, egos, working for the team.

Their dad really works with them about their vision for the team, not the self. Because you can have five great people, but if you don't pull it all into a team, that's where the big explosion of energy is. There are a lot of great individual musicians out there, but there are not a lot of really great, great bands. And so he works real hard on them, you know, about being selfless, putting other people before yourself. That's something we try to set by example, by making a lot of sacrifices ourselves, and we're constantly trying to teach them.

PM: And that's really the crux of the whole thing, I mean, the enlightened spirit-driven leadership, that's what's making this thing work.

SC: Well, I think so, and I believe that. Of course, we're Christians who believe that we're following a plan that's been set before us. And if we handle it the right way, and have the right attitudes and do it to the best of our ability, then whatever blessing it brings--we're willing to go home and not do any of it if it wasn't for us, or we're willing to step out and live with no home, and be on the road, and do whatever it is we're led to do. We're really not doing it for gain, we're doing it because we feel we're supposed to do it for whatever reason, and we love it. A lot of people seem to be happy with what we're doing. And I guess it's, to me, like giving the gift to other people that was given to us from Jim and Jesse years ago.

PM: Well, you've been very kind with your time today, Sandy. I appreciate that very much. And I really look forward to having Cherryholmes on the cover of our--well, you won't see it because it's a magazine on the internet.

[laughter]

SC: Nope. I won't get to see it.

PM: But it's a very classy magazine online, with a million hits a month. A lot of people will read our interview today. And I thank you for your generosity of spirit.

SC: Well, thank you for even considering us. We're honored to have the interest. Thank you for taking the time to do that for us.

PM: Oh, it's a fascinating story. I'm tickled to have been some small part in the spreading of the word. And your friends who do look at the internet, you can say, "Hey, we did an interview for Puremusic.com. Tell me how it looked."

SC: Okay. I'll put that down. We usually have a news page where we tell people where we can get different things, and put links and that. So we'll try to do that, too. That's great. Puremusic.com.

PM: Yeah. And love to the family, Sandy. And thank you very much for your time today.

SC: Oh, hey, thank you. And you have a good day.