

From GACtv.com

March 6, 2008 - An illness forced Kellie Pickler to cancel an Orlando appearance two weeks ago as the opening act for Rascal Flatts, but her setback has provided an opportunity for **songwriters Neil Thrasher and Wendell Mobley**.

The two composers — who created the Flatts hits "Fast Cars And Freedom," "I Melt" and "Take Me There" — were in Orlando playing golf with the band and received an impromptu invitation to take Kellie's place on the bill. The show went well enough that they were asked to open again the next night, and it's become a routine. Now, Neil told registrants during an event at the Country Radio Seminar, they've been asked to make it a more permanent arrangement, and the duo is considering it. But they're not entirely convinced the wear and tear of playing a different town every night is a better deal than their current songwriting situation.

"I don't know if I wanna do the road thing again," said Neil, who was half of the duo Thrasher Shiver in the late '90s. "I get to go home every night."

Neil, who sounds very much like Flatts lead vocalist Gary LeVox, was part of KCRS Live, a stellar songwriter-in-the-round presentation that featured five songwriters — including singers LeAnn Rimes and Phil Vassar — performing their songs with only a guitar or piano as accompaniment. The bill also featured "Stupid Boy" author **Dave Berg** and "How Forever Feels" writer **Tony Mullins** in a humorous celebration of the power of a song.

Sponsored by performing-rights organization ASCAP, the acoustic mini-concert showcased plenty of hits, such as Kenny Chesney's "There Goes My Life," Tim McGraw's "My Next Thirty Years," Rodney Atkins' "These Are My People," LeAnn's "Nothin' Better To Do" and Craig Morgan's "A Little Bit Of Life."

Role reversal was in great evidence, too. Even as Neil announced that he and songwriting partner Wendell Mobley might be moving from a behind-the-scenes position to a more public touring arrangement, LeAnn — the biggest star of the bunch — moved to more of a background position by providing off-the-cuff harmonies on Phil's rendition of "Bye-Bye," Dave's version of "If You're Going Through Hell (Before The Devil Even Knows)" and Tony's take on "Me And My Gang."

Dave Berg was certainly impressed to have LeAnn as a backing vocalist.

"This," he said, "is so going on my MySpace page."

http://www.gactv.com/gac/nw_headlines/arti...821552_00.html