

# THE JOURNAL RECORD

General News

## KOMA radio director collecting local crooners for compilation

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OKLAHOMA CITY – Kent Jones often is amazed by the singing talent he hears in church – so much so he wants to make a CD of the top crooners from around the area. Jones, who has been KOMA Radio's program director of 19 years, had the idea that selling local singers makes good business sense, and he plans to do so with a Feb. 1 release, just in time for Valentine's Day.

Jones is in the process of taking entries. The deadline is Nov. 30, and by then, Jones hopes to have seen or heard dozens of singers. He knows they're out there.

"I have over the years played a lot of karaoke parties and I've also seen a lot of churches that have fantastic singers," he said. "They want to sing because it's in their heart. It will be cool to have them heard and give them some exposure."

Singers can submit a recording of any song they chose, and Jones requires a letter from the church verifying the entrant is a soloist. A photo and personal note regarding are required. The metro is full of churches that have talented singers, he said.

While the singers will come from churches, the music on the CD doesn't necessarily have to be gospel, he said.

"It can be bluegrass, country, pop, oldies or even original songs," Jones said. "These are love songs to go along with Valentine's Day." And it will be about more than just sound. "We want to know why a song has meaning and we also want to also include background on the singers," he said. "We want the story behind the singer."

The CD will be marketed online and through churches. He said churches can use them as a fundraiser.

The singers, if chosen, will have a recording contract and will be paid a royalty on the sale. There's no cost to the singers.

"It's privately funded; we just need to hear from them," Jones said.

All that's required is a good voice.

"Most people are thinking they'd need a pianist or a karaoke set-up," he said. "They don't. A recording (submitted to Jones) doesn't have to be professional quality."

Jones said he hopes to line up 12 to 16 songs for the CD. He said he'll need to obtain rights to duplicate a song. "We'll try not to run into problems with publishers."

Jones said he'll occasionally go out to the churches to hear the singers.

"We want to get them into the studio in December or January," he said. "The recording studio is my private studio. I have recorded many things there over the years. We will bring in musicians if needed. It's not a set-up like Nashville, but it's still professional."

He hopes the metro's best Sunday singers can help themselves.

"This is a for-profit deal," he said. "We will pay royalties to singers. If Oklahoma is a success, we'll see if others states can be, too." If the singers' CD makes money, an instrumental CD could be next, he said.

"We need it to be profitable because there are a lot of expenses, including the studio time and all the mastering to distribution," Jones said. "We hope to sell up to tens of thousands."

He said recordings and verification letters can be submitted to Kent Jones Productions, P.O. Box 851957, Yukon, Okla., 73085-1957.

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