

FRIDAY || 8:30-10:00 PM

MT
MAIN TENT

WADE HAYES

Country music's power has always been in its ability to reflect real life, and few artists have a stronger gift for capturing both heartache and hope than Wade Hayes. In the past few years, the singer/songwriter has navigated a complicated journey that has produced some of the most potent songs of his already impressive career. Surviving stage IV colon cancer, not just once but twice, has given Hayes a unique perspective of the fragility of life and the strength of the human spirit.

A second generation country singer from Bethel Acres, Oklahoma, Hayes grew up watching his dad perform. In 2009, he released the critically acclaimed independent album, *A Place to Turn Around*, and continued to tour extensively until his world came to a screeching halt when he was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer in the fall of 2011. It was a surprise to everyone, even the doctors. Because Hayes was so young, doctors initially thought the symptoms were the result of him working out too strenuously and lifting too much weight. After extensive surgery and debilitating chemotherapy, Hayes battled his way back to health only to have the cancer return in the fall of 2012.

He's now cancer free again, and the title track of his new album was inspired by a conversation with his oncologist. "When I'd gotten through cancer the second time and we were looking at my blood work, my oncologist said, 'Wade, you were stage IV and now you're cancer free. We can take your port out. This is a big deal and I want to tell you something. I want you to go live your life.'" "It hit me like a ton of bricks," Hayes continues, "because I knew that he meant two different things: one being, it's kind of a miracle that you're still here. You need to go enjoy your life. And two being, you had cancer really bad, and when it spread as far as it did, there's a good chance that it can come back. He was telling me to go live my life, because we don't know how long this good is going to be. I told Bobby Pinson that story and we wrote the song, "Go Live Your Life" - an upbeat anthem about making the most of every day and reveling in the things that bring you happiness."

