

Logan Mize

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

From a small town to the big stage. That's a journey which many entertainers have attempted, and it is a tough road. Today we'll meet a singer-songwriter who is making such a journey. He is not forgetting his small town roots. In fact, he is celebrating and honoring them. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Logan Mize is a rising star in country music. He is a Kansas native, having grown up at Clearwater, population 2,173 people. That's rural – but there's more. Logan's father grew up at the rural community of Turon, population 432. Now, that's rural.

In Clearwater, Logan's grandfather Nolan Mize owns the grocery store named Mize Thriftway. Logan started working there at age 12.

Logan took piano lessons as a kid and then got into sports. He went to some country music concerts and they made a deep impression. In the back of his mind, a seed was planted.

But his immediate concerns were sports and school. He played football so well that he had the opportunity to play at Hutchinson Community College and studied agriculture. He was then recruited to play at Southern Illinois University. Meanwhile, he had taken up the guitar and begun writing and performing songs.

Southern Illinois University is located only a three-hour drive from Nashville. Logan Mize started going to Nashville and learning about the country music scene. He decided to give it a try.

What followed sounds like the lyrics of a country music song, or maybe the plot of a movie: Small town Kansas boy goes to Nashville, goes through hard times, meets a good woman, and hits it big. Logan arrived in Nashville with just \$60 and a tank of gas. He got a job as a dump truck driver. That and other odd jobs allowed him to stay in Nashville until he signed his first songwriting deal.

Logan's first album, "Logan Mize," was released in 2009. It was followed in 2012 with "Nobody in Nashville," which charted to number 49 on Billboard Country Albums Chart and number 15 on Billboard Heatseekers Albums Chart.

Logan has been the opening act for Lady Antebellum, Eric Church, Dierks Bentley, The Band Perry, Charlie Daniels Band, Blake Shelton, and more. In fall 2013, he accompanied Leann Rimes on a tour of the United Kingdom in Glasgow, London, Birmingham and Manchester. Wow.

He has also appeared on national television. He was in a widely viewed "Fabric Of Our Life" cotton commercial with a star of the ABC-TV show Nashville. Mize and his band are shown performing on stage at Music City's legendary Station Inn. Mize also played himself and sang with his band in an episode of The CW's hit drama Hart of Dixie.

Logan Mize has even been named the state's Official Kansas Tourism Ambassador by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism. His song Sunflowers is part of a new Youtube video featuring attractions around Kansas. Here is an excerpt:

For more information, go to www.loganmize.com.

From a small town to the big stage. As he performed in front of thousands of screaming fans on the big stage at Country Stampede, it must have been exciting for him to think of his small town roots. We commend Logan Mize for making a difference as an ambassador for Kansas.

And there's more. Remember the movie plot where he met a good woman? The good woman whom he met in real life is a Nashville performer and a Kansan as well. We'll learn about that next week.

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.