

Lonestar

Lonestar is an American country music group consisting of Cody Collins (lead vocals), Michael Britt (lead guitar, background vocals), Keech Rainwater (drums) and Dean Sams (keyboards, melodica, background vocals). Collins, who had formerly been in another country group called McAlyster, replaced former lead vocalist Richie McDonald, who left in November 2007 for a solo career. John Rich was also the group's bass guitarist and second lead vocalist until 1998, when he was fired from the group. He left for a solo career, before joining Big Kenny in the duo Big & Rich in 2003. Since Rich's departure, Lonestar has not had an official bass guitarist.

Lonestar made its debut on the *Billboard* country music charts in 1995 with the Top 10 single "Tequila Talkin'". Since then, they have amassed a total of twenty-seven singles on the country charts, with nine of those singles reaching Number One. Their biggest hit was 1999's "Amazed", a crossover hit that reached Number One on both the country charts and the *Billboard* Hot 100, becoming the first single to do so since Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton's "Islands in the Stream" in 1983. The group has also recorded eight studio albums and a Greatest Hits compilation. Three of their albums have been certified gold, while three more have been certified platinum or higher.

Lonestar began in 1992 as a band named Texasee. This name was derived from the fact that all five members were natives of Texas, and met in Nashville, Tennessee's Opryland USA theme park.^{[1][2]} The original lineup consisted of lead singer Richie McDonald (Lubbock), guitarist Michael Britt (Fort Worth), drummer Keech Rainwater (Piano), keyboardist Dean Sams (Garland), and bass guitarist/co-lead vocalist John Rich (Amarillo). Before Lonestar's foundation, Rainwater played drums in another country band called Canyon, which charted nine singles between 1988 and 1990. By 1992, Texasee changed its name to Lonestar. They first played at a concert in Nashville in 1993 and began touring after a booking agent then added the group to his roster, and in 1995, Lonestar was signed to BNA Records.

Their first single for BNA Records, "Tequila Talkin'", reached a peak of #8 on the *Billboard* Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. It was followed by the release of their eponymous debut album.^[1] Certified for gold sales by the RIAA, the album also produced the band's first Number One single in "No News", as well as the #8 "Runnin' Away with My Heart", #18 "Heartbroke Every Day", and the #45 "When Cowboys Didn't Dance".^[2] In 1996, Richie McDonald also sang background vocals on Mindy McCready's Top 20 single "Maybe He'll Notice Her Now", for which he received chart credit. This song and "Heartbroke Every Day" (the only single on which John Rich sang lead) overlapped on the charts.