

 **LOUISVILLE MUSIC NEWS****"Returning With a Vengeance"****Good News (Rounder Records)****The Charlie Sizemore Band**

By Bob Mitchell

From the moment I saw the cover art work until I heard the last note of the last track, I found this release to be one of the most energetic and enjoyable CDs of 2007. After a five-year recording hiatus, Sizemore returns with a vengeance.

Make no mistake, this University of Kentucky graduate is the same man who at age 17 began singing lead with Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys. Having replaced the legendary Keith Whitley, Sizemore held the role for nine-and-a-half years, establishing himself as one of the industry's most respected vocalists and song writers.

Stanley said, "Charlie was one of the top singers I've had through the years ... he knows music and he makes it right." Indeed he does. This project belongs in your collection and if you read on I will tell you why.

Let's begin with the light-hearted cover photograph of Sizemore reading the National Inquirer. The typically outlandish front page headline boldly declares, "HANK WILLIAMS SR. IS ALIVE." That is good news! The other good news is that Sizemore has assembled a top notch band for his first release on Rounder Records.

A short list of highlights includes three songs co-penned by Sizemore: a lighthearted "I Want To Be In Alison's Band," "The Silver Bugle" - a haunting Civil War tale based on actual events at Puncheon Creek, near Sizemore's childhood home in Magoffin county - and "I Won't Be That Far From Here," the tale of lost love inspired by one of Carter Stanley's neck ties; a song co-penned by bassist John Pennell, "Devil on a Plow;" DeSpain's original gospel track, "Good News When I Die;" and two songs from the mighty pen of Paul Craft, a bluesy slightly funky "Mama Turn Aloosa My Soul," and a straight-ahead, no-nonsense "I've Fallen Down and I Can't Get Up."

The Charlie Sizemore Band has been invited to at the 2007 I.B.M.A. World of Bluegrass this fall. Members are Sizemore (lead vocals and guitar), Danny Barnes (mandolin and vocals), Matt DeSpain (Dobro), John Pennell (bass) and Wayne Fields (banjo).

On a five-point scale of excellence this release merits a five. This one is a winner.

For more information go to [www.charliesizemoreband.com](http://www.charliesizemoreband.com)