

Country music stars play for Wellspring House benefit

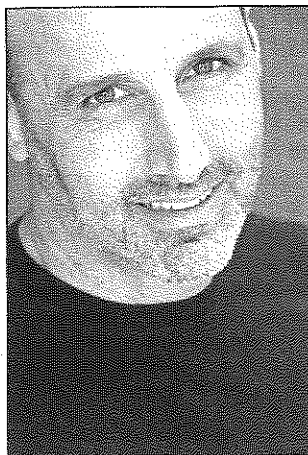
BY TIMES STAFF

ESSEX — Number One hit singer-songwriters once again return to Cape Ann to perform in a Wellspring House benefit concert with its “#Celesong” fall event on Friday, Nov. 17, at Woodman’s in Essex.

Performing will be Mark D. Sanders and Jason Matthews, both of Nashville, Tennessee, and both well-known in the country music world.

Sanders, a California native, started out as a literature major, basketball player and surfer who, at the age of 23, traveled to Nashville to pursue songwriting. After a decade in this endeavor, his career skyrocketed in the early 1990s when he wrote several award-winning songs and No. 1 hits for many artists, including “I Hope You Dance” sung by Lee Ann Womack.

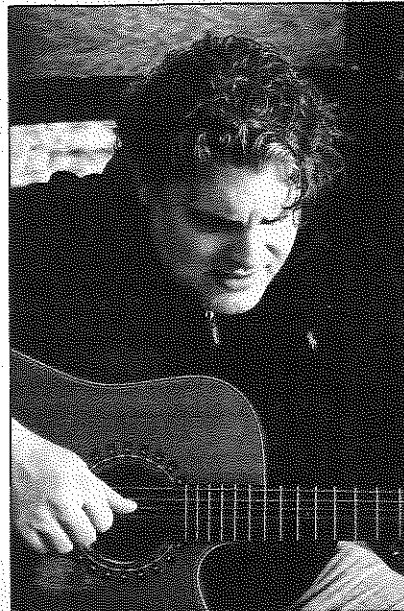
Matthews, who was born in Harrell’s Store, North Carolina, had a similar vision. At 15, he saw Eric Clapton on television and became obsessed with writing songs.



He later settled in Nashville where he worked to fulfill his dream of becoming a hit songwriter. In 2006, that wish came true when he landed his first No. 1 hit with Billy Currington’s version of his song, “Must Be Doin’ Something Right.”

The Wellspring House benefit will include cocktails, a family-style barbecue dinner, an auction, and a Fund-a-Need paddle raise.

Proceeds go to support Wellspring’s homelessness prevention initiatives, including its holiday store, which



Nashville songwriters Jason Matthews (right) and Mark D. Sanders (left) will perform at a Wellspring House benefit on Nov. 17 at Woodman’s in Essex. Matthews’ first No. 1 hit was “Must Be Doin’ Something Right,” sung by Billy Currington. Sanders penned several award-winning songs, including “I Hope You Dance” sung by Lee Ann Womack.

Courtesy photos

for the past 21 years has provided an opportunity for eligible low-income parents to shop for toys and gifts for their children for \$2 per child.

This program also helps parents from getting behind on bills or rent in January because of holiday spending. Last year, the holiday store served 804 children from 344

families on Cape Ann and the surrounding communities — with more than 1,500 toys in total going to local children.

IF YOU GO

What: #Celesong — a singer-songwriter benefit concert for Wellspring House

When: Friday, Nov. 17, at 6:30 p.m.

Where: The Essex Room at

Woodman’s, 125 Main St., Essex. Tickets and sponsorships are available at wellspringhouse.org. Individual tickets with open seating are \$150, or there are reserved tables for 10 for \$1,500. If

anyone is unable to attend but wants to consider hosting a toy drive or making a contribution, contact Lisa Robinson at lrobinson@wellspringhouse.org or 978-283 3558 ext. 302.