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EDITOR'S NOTE:
Entertainer photos can be e-mailed upon request.

Country Comes Full Circle at A Taste of Colorado

DENVER – Pioneers of country rock, Poco, and country pop trio, Love and Theft, are scheduled to perform on the Main Stage at the 26th annual A Taste of Colorado. Poco will take the stage at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 6, and is presented by KOOL 105. Love and Theft will headline at 1 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 7; the concert is presented by 98.5 KYGO. The four-day, free admission, food, music, and entertainment Festival will take place Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 through Sept. 7, in Downtown Denver's Civic Center Park.

Poco, the band that defined country rock in the '60s and '70s, was formed in 1968 by vocalist/guitarist Richie Furray and bassist Jim Messina following the dissolution of their previous group, Buffalo Springfield. The group's debut album, 1969's "Pickin' Up the Pieces," received a rare perfect rating from *Rolling Stone* magazine. "From the Inside" was released in 1971 with Southern soul guitarist Steve Cropper as producer and featured "Bad Weather," which became a signature song for the band. Poco's 1973 studio album, "Crazy Eyes," featured a heavily produced sound and yielded the hit title track written about fellow country-rock pioneer, the late Gram Parsons.

The group released "Head Over Heels" in 1975, generating the hit single, "Keep On Tryin'." A renewed Poco lineup saw the multi-platinum album, 1978's "Legend," with cover art by comedian/actor Phil Hartman. "Crazy Love" hit No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary charts, and the track, "Heart of the Night," was performed on the live album, "No Nukes," which also featured Bruce Springsteen and Jackson Browne.

In 1989, the original Poco quintet reformed and released the comeback single, "Call It Love," followed by the gold-selling album, "Legacy." The group continued to tour throughout the '90s and into the new millennium, with "Running Horse" released in 2002, the band's first appearance in the studio in 13 years. Poco continues to write and record original music while releasing live albums recorded at performances at festivals and venues across the world.

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Love and Theft, a young trio of Nashville singer/songwriters influenced by Contemporary Christian music, the Eagles, Johnny Cash, and the Beatles, have made their mark on the country music scene with the hit single, “Runaway.” The band’s debut CD, “World Wide Open,” is scheduled to be released on Aug. 25, 2009, with Eric Gunderson, Stephen Barker Liles, and Brian Bandas each taking turns singing lead. With multi-platinum producers Jeff Coplan and Robert Ellis Orrall at the helm, the album, to be released by Disney-owned Carolwood Records, features material written in part or entirely by the band. The group made its Grand Ole Opry debut on March 28 of this year, after gaining popularity in part to being the opening act for country sensation Taylor Swift in 2008.

In addition to the Main Stage, four other entertainment stages located throughout the Festival will serve up a continuous menu of music, featuring rock, country, jazz, classic rock, blues, and ethnic music and dance groups.

More than 50 of Colorado’s favorite food establishments will be selling a wide variety of small portions to full meals, ensuring that there will be something for every palate. The Fine Dining area, sponsored by Sub-Zero and Wolf, will host some of Denver’s finest restaurants. The Culinary Showcase features local and nationally-renowned chef demonstrations creating simple, yet elegant meals.

Festivalgoers can shop in more than 250 Marketplace booths for original arts and crafts, home and gift items, furniture, jewelry, imports, and more. Shoppers can also explore the Home & Lifestyles area, which features a variety of exhibitors displaying products and services such as window installation, kitchen remodeling, cookware, basement refinishing, and salons and spas.

There will be plenty of music, magic, clowns, and puppets on the KidzStage, and the KidZone features play equipment and hands-on craft activities. Kids and adults can also enjoy carnival rides and games Saturday through Monday.

In the Festival of Mountain and Plain area, families can learn about the state’s pioneer past, nature, and the environment. Featured artisans will demonstrate Navajo weaving and culture, spinning, rug braiding, lace crocheting, papermaking, and quilting, along with the popular blacksmith demonstration. At the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program exhibit, children can learn about birds and their environment, along with their interactions with humans. Free gold panning and educational materials about dinosaurs, volcanoes, rocks and minerals, and energy production and conservation are available at the Colorado Mining Exhibit.

Sponsors of this year's Festival are: 9NEWS, Aggreko, All Copy Products, American Medical Response, American Satellite – An Authorized DIRECTV Dealer, Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, Blue Moon, Cascadian Farm, Cold Front Distribution, Coors Light, *The Denver Post*, Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc., Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream, Eldorado Natural Spring Water, Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que, Grand Lodge On Peak 7, Killian's, LÄRABAR, LBA Realty, Levinson Eye Clinic, Microtech-Tel, Mike's Hard Lemonade, Molson, Muir Glen, The Other White Meat Tour, PEPSI, Residence Inn Denver City Center, SOYJOY, Sturgeon Electric, Sub-Zero & Wolf, and Travelers Insurance.

Festival hours are Friday, Sept. 4, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 5, and Sunday, Sept. 6, 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Monday, Sept. 7, 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Festival of Mountain and Plain ... A Taste of Colorado is a community celebration that is produced by and benefits Downtown Denver Events, Inc., the Downtown Denver Partnership family's community events non-profit organization. The Festival is an opportunity for people throughout the region to come together to experience and appreciate our diverse cultural traditions, and to learn more about our state's Western heritage. The Festival highlights visual and performing arts in addition to featuring educational programs and culinary demonstrations.

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