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MIKE CURB
50 Years
Music, Motorsports, Public Service & Philanthropy

Text by Jay Sheridan and Don Cusic
Photography by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Robin Hood and Randall K. Powers
Mike Curb, California’s former Lieutenant Governor and a prominent figure in the entertainment world, is the founder of the Mike Curb Music Business, Entertainment and Music Commission. Curb has also served as Chairman of the Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital Board of Trustees and is a board member of the Tennessee State University Board of Regents. He is also a board member of the University of Tennessee, Texas A&M University, and Vanderbilt University. Curb has also endowed the Curb Chair for Public Health Policy at Vanderbilt and the Curb Creative Campus at the University of Tennessee, Austin (the Austin-Seton Medical Center). In addition, Curb has been honored by the ACM with the Academy of Country Music’s prestigious Overall Producer of the Year Award.

Mike Curb’s recording career began in the 1950s, when he joined the Mike Curb Congregation, a vocal group that included his brother, John Curb, and several other singers. The group released several albums and singles, including “Hey Jude” and “I’ll Be There.”

In 1961, Curb formed his first record company, Mike Curb Enterprises, which released a single called “Hey Jude.” The song became a hit and established Curb as an important figure in the music industry. Curb has since founded or co-founded several record companies, including Curb Records, which he launched in 1962.

In addition to his work as a record producer and music executive, Curb has also been involved in various philanthropic endeavors. In 1978, he co-founded the Mike Curb Foundation, which has supported a variety of initiatives, including music education programs, scholarships for students, and disaster relief efforts.

Curb has also been involved in politics, serving as a Democrat in the California State Senate and as a member of the Tennessee State Senate. He served as the Secretary of the Florida State University Board of Trustees and as the President of the University of Tennessee. Curb has also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Football League and as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Basketball Association.

Curb has also been involved in the music industry, serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the Recording Academy and as a member of the Board of Governors of the National Association of Music Merchants. Curb has been honored with various awards, including the Academy of Country Music’s Lifetime Achievement Award and the Recording Academy’s Special Merit Award.

Curb has also been involved in the entertainment industry, serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Curb has also served as the President of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and as the President of the National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Curb has been involved in various political and social causes, serving as a Democratic candidate for the California State Senate and as a member of the Tennessee State Senate. Curb has also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Football League and as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Basketball Association.

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Music, Motorsports, Public Service & Philanthropy

M. Curb and M. Curb were both involved in music and motorsports. M. Curb was the co-founder of the Curb Records label, which released numerous top-selling singles from the mid-1970s to the late 1970s. The company had its first No. 1 record on the Billboard Chart in 1976, and more than 500 records were recorded by artists under the Curb Records label. The company has had success with contemporary Christian artists such as Grant received multiple Grammy nominations and for Collins, Rodney Atkins, Jesse (Kinch), Jerrod Niemann, Righteous Brothers which gave Curb Records the Multi-Platinum Award, and the Boone Girls and Debby Boone, whose recording of "Never Can Say Goodbye" was the first No. 1 dance record on the Billboard Dance Chart. In 1977, the incredible Doo Wop sound was introduced to American audiences with "Yeah Yeah Yeah" which was recorded by rap artist Fat Joe and The Terror Squad.

In 1975, the Incredible Bongo Band had its first single "Bongo Rock", which was the first record used to create the break to break hip hop sound. Then, in 1978, the Incredible Bongo Band reached #1, and the biggest record of the 1970s based on Billboard chart activity. Since that time, the company has had success with contemporary Christian music. In 1979 to 1983 term, Curb served as acting governor for the 10-domestic NASCAR Championship with Johnny Sauter, Bobby Santos, and the Agajanian Racing Team has won 12 U.SAC National Championships including being the only entrant to win all 10 domestically, Bobby Santos, and the 2013 World of Outlaws Championship with Darin Bayston and Logan Seavey in 2017 and 2018 and the 2018 World of Outlaws Championship with Yokota Brothers, which was Curb's World of Outlaw Championship. In 2015, Curb received the induction into the World of Outlaw Stock Car Hall of Fame and inducted in 2016 to the Texas Motor Speedway Hall of Fame in 2017. He has been the recipient of the Legends of Racing Award.

Curb's father Charles was an FBI agent. Curb is married to the former Linda Dunphy, daughter of famed heavyweight boxer Muhammad Ali and his wife, who has six adult children, Megan, Karl, and Ali. Curb has been inducted into the World of Outlaw Stock Car Hall of Fame and inducted in 2016 to the Texas Motor Speedway Hall of Fame in 2017. He has been the recipient of the Legends of Racing Award.
GRAMMY University® was created by The Recording Academy® to engage college and trade school students from diverse backgrounds who all share a common passion for music. Whether performance-based, behind a board in the studio, or working on the business side, GRAMMY University® engages its members through unique educational experiences and by providing direct one-on-one access to artists and entertainment industry executives.

GRAMMY University delivers each student broad-based programming and opportunities, delivering a real-world perspective and professional guidance. By encouraging each student to educate, create, and inspire, GRAMMY University is helping foster our next generation of cultural gatekeepers and music tastemakers.

The Recording Academy and MusiCares® thank Mike Curb for his support of our important endeavors on behalf of the music community. To find out more about GRAMMY University or to join, please go to www.GRAMMY365.com/GRAMMY-U.

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The Renaissance period in Western Europe was engendered by rare men, often coming from small towns and common, simple beginnings. Following a dream and with creative passion, they ascended, in the estimation of their countrymen, to a level of celebrated excellence through a life’s work in multiple disciplines.

In contemporary times, Mike Curb has been a major catalyst in a Renaissance of popular music and culture. Curb experienced adolescence in the ethnically mixed neighborhood of Compton, in south central Los Angeles. Gifted from childhood as a musician, he ascended at an early age to become an accomplished songwriter, music producer, and founder of his own music label. His talent, vision, and enthusiasm enabled him to transcend music and serve his country as lieutenant governor and acting governor of California. He became a trusted team member and the national presidential co-chairman for the transcend music and serve his country as lieutenant governor and acting governor of California. He became a trusted team member and the national presidential co-chairman for the world’s most powerful and admired leader of a generation — Ronald Reagan.

Along the way, Mike has followed his lifetime passion for motorsports, guiding his phenomenally successful motorsports team to a forty-year legacy of winning in most classes of American racing, from NASCAR to dirt track Sprint cars, and racing in numerous Indianapolis 500s including the victory in the Centennial Indy 500 in 2011. Curb was also involved in the famous No. 2 car in which Dale Earnhardt won his first national championship, as well as owning the world-famous No. 43 car driven by Richard Petty to his record-setting 200th career victory at Daytona. Curb cars have won over 300 races and 10 national championships while participating in 25 different categories of American motorsports.

In the realm of music, Curb has written more than three hundred recorded songs — from composing Liza Minnelli’s signature song from the Emmy award-winning film Withnail & I, writing Hank Williams Jr.’s first number one song, “All For The Love Of Sunshine,” to authoring songs for The Crickets, The Ventures, Roy Orbison, The Osmonds and other music legends. Curb’s records are now indelible in the American music consciousness, from Lou Rawls’ GRAMMY song “Natural Man” and Solomon Burke’s “I Have A Dream” to Debbie Boone’s Academy Award-winning song, “You Light Up My Life.”

Curb has also scored numerous movie soundtracks, composing the theme songs for movies starring Frank Sinatra, Jennifer Lopez, Cwyszeth Palterre, James Franco, Bette Davis, Ernest Borgnine, including Curb-written hit theme songs for Peter Fonda’s Wild Angels and Clint Eastwood’s Kelly’s Heroes. He also produced the hit theme song from Disney’s It’s a Small Field and composed Dick Clark’s American Bandstand theme and wrote the popular advertising jingles for companies like Chevrolet and Honda.

Curb has created gold records in almost every genre of music, including pop, rock n’ roll, gospel, jazz, blues, rap and country. Upon the fiftieth anniversary of Curb Records, the list of artists is a “who’s who” of popular culture — from The Osmonds to Tom McCaw to Lou Rawls to Jimmy Osmond to Debby Boone to Debby Boone to Lee Briscoe to Wynonna to The Judds to LeAnn Rimes, from The Four Seasons to The Righteous Brothers, and from producing Sammy Davis Jr. to Hank Williams Jr. Billboard magazine credits Mike Curb and Curb Records with more than 300 #1 records and, in 2001, Curb Records was named Billboard’s “Country Label of the Year.” In 2007, Curb was honored with a star on the Historic Hollywood Walk Of Fame for his career in music and the recording industry.

Mike’s achievements are the result of visionary genius as much as gifted talent. His innate ability to make the right choices have served him well — from selecting a song for a particular artist, to choosing the most promising race car drivers, to foreseeing the talent in an unknown, yet-to-be-discovered singer. Perhaps the choice most integral to Mike’s success was his selection of a partner for his life’s journey — the charming Linda Dampf of Los Angeles. Forty years later they have two daughters and six grandchildren.

Mike Curb’s accolades and awards will forever brighten his stature in the eyes of his peers and the American public. However, it is as a compassion for his fellow man, his contributions to higher education, humanitarian and the philanthropy for public well being for which he will be most remembered. Mike Curb’s passion has guided him to leverage his success to benefit the common good, and this, in itself, will ensure that the altruistic zenith of his comet will burn brightly through the twenty-first century and beyond.
THE MIKE CURB GALLERY AT THE GRAMMY MUSEUM IN LOS ANGELES
AND THE GRAMMY MUSEUM GALLERY AT THE MUSICIANS HALL OF FAME IN NASHVILLE

“We could not be more pleased and proud to have Mike Curb’s legacy deservedly honored here at The Grammy Museum.”

—NEIL PORTNOW, PRESIDENT OF NARAS (GRAMMYS)

“Mike Curb is a brilliant executive, developer and developer who has made a significant impact on the music industry. He has been a leader in our community for many years, and this gallery is a testament to his dedication and commitment to music.”

—BOB SANTELLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GRAMMY MUSEUM

“I am honored to have my legacy celebrated in such a distinguished institution as The Grammy Museum. This gallery is a fitting tribute to the music industry and the incredible artists who have made it their life’s work.”

—MIKE CURB, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND CEO OF MTS ENTERTAINMENT

“We are thrilled to have Mike Curb’s contributions acknowledged and celebrated in this gallery. He has been a valuable partner and friend to the Grammy Museum, and we are grateful for his commitment to the music community.”

—JOE CHAMBERS, CEO OF THE GRAMMY MUSEUM

“Mike Curb has been a shining example of what it means to be a music industry pioneer. His legacy is etched in the annals of music history, and this gallery is a fitting tribute to his achievements.”

—JERRY NUISSANCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MTS ENTERTAINMENT

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—JILL SEXTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MTS ENTERTAINMENT

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—CAROLE CURB NEVINS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF MTS ENTERTAINMENT