



AFTER DARK



Prairie Oyster - that's lead singer **Russell deCarle** at upper left - are among the headline acts at the **Salmon Valley country music festival**. The group's latest CD, **Everybody Knows**, is looked at in story below by reporter **Arnold Olson**.

Michelle, Oyster both have new CDs

by **ARNOLD OLSON**

When the **Salmon Valley Music Festival** opens, July 30, two of the best things to happen in **Prince George** this year will occur: **Prairie Oyster** and **Michelle Wright** will perform.

Both have dandy CDs on the market.

Everybody Knows, by **Prairie Oyster**, is the jumpiest thing you'd want to hear. The first three pieces - **Will I Do It**, **One Precious Love** and **Can't Say Goodbye** - are as close to rock as country music can get without crossing the border into the city.

Russell deCarle, **Prairie Oyster's** lead singer, has a varying style of singing as he matches the songs presented. Last year in an interview during the festival he admitted he'd paid close attention to most of the top country singers as he grew up. He was not surprised that his style often reflected **Eddy Arnold's** style because that great country star of the 50s and 60s is one of his favorites, but **deCarle** said he wasn't consciously duplicating one of his country music heroes'.

Michelle Wright's CD, **Now and Then** is no less worthwhile. Her husky and sultry voice is the kind a person can listen to at any time - indefinitely - because it's not an affected style and sound. Even though she does evince a slight U.S. western drawl and soft R, that can be forgiven because that's the animal an entertainer has to ride to find a wider audience than what **Canada** affords.

Like **Prairie Oyster**, **Michelle Wright** is more than just country. Her style is more like city-side, because her music calls to a wider audience than those who like shin-kicking music.

The good news doesn't stop with just those two acts.

Gary Fjellgaard, **Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**, **Murray McLaughlan**, **Lisa Brokopp**, **Anita Perras**, **Collette Wise** (Tribute to **Patsy Cline**), **Kidd Country** and a whole passel of country entertainers are on the roster for the three-day festival.


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