

Johnny Paycheck

Donnie Eugene Lytle was born on May 31, 1938, in Greenfield. By the age of 6 he was playing the guitar and singing. At the age of 15 he left home, and lying about his age, joined the Navy. There he got in a fight with an officer, was court-martialed and spent almost three years in the brig.

Upon release, he headed for Nashville, performing wherever he could to make a living. In Nashville he eventually performed with the likes of George Jones, Faron Young, Porter Wagoner and Ray Price among others. During this time he had problems with alcohol and drug abuse. During this time he performed under the name Donny Young. In 1964 he legally changed his name to Johnny Paycheck.

Not only did Johnny perform but he also wrote songs including "Apartment #9" which became Tammy Wynette's first hit in 1966.

In the 1970s, as his career started to lose steam, his music changed directions. His recording of "She's All I Got" went to number 2 on the Billboard Country chart in 1971. This led to a string of hits through the seventies including "Take This Job and Shove It" in 1978. The album sold 2 million copies. This song was one of the two Grammy nominations that Johnny received during his career. The other song was "Don't Take Her, She's All I Got."

Throughout his career Paycheck had continuing problems with drugs and alcohol, getting clean then falling again. He worked hard and got his GED, but had problems with writing bad checks, the IRS and bankruptcy.

One of the lowest points was when he got in a bar fight in Hillsboro in 1985. He shot and injured a man and spent 22 months in prison.

Johnny died of emphysema on February 19, 2003, in Nashville, Tennessee. During his career he had six gold albums, one platinum album, one double platinum album and 33 hits in a row (three per year for eleven years).

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