

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Sarah Nesbit
972-744-4612 or 214-793-9596
sarah.nesbit@cor.gov

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND — EISEMANN CENTER PRESENTS
“A RIDE WITH BOB” THE BOB WILLS MUSICAL WITH RAY BENSON
AND ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL FOR FIVE SHOWS DEC. 28-31*, 2011

RICHARDSON, TX – For more than 40 years, **Asleep at the Wheel** front man **Ray Benson** has been showcasing his brand of Western Swing, has racked up nine Grammy®-awards, was named both Texan of the Year and the recipient of the Texas Medal of the Arts in 2011 but even he knows – in Texas, Bob Wills is still king!

To cap off this stellar year, **Ray Benson** and **Asleep at the Wheel** are performing ***A Ride with Bob: The Bob Wills Musical***. This first-ever musical drama about the pioneering Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys rolls into the Eisemann Center, December 28- 31*, 2011 for five shows only.

In 1973 after the release of the band’s first album (which paid tribute to the music of Bob Wills), Benson was invited by his idol to Dallas for a meeting. Upon his arrival, he learned Wills was not feeling well and the meeting was postponed for the next morning. That same night Wills had a stroke and went into a life-ending coma. In ***A Ride with Bob***, Benson finally gets to have his conversation with the Spirit of Bob, who visits him on the **Asleep at the Wheel** bus late one night. The fascinating and sometimes outrageous stories of Wills’ career, his contribution to American music, and his raucous personal life unfold. The drama includes performances of Wills’ most famous songs, including “*San Antonio Rose*,” “*Faded Love*,” “*Cherokee Maiden*,” “*Take Me Back to Tulsa*,” and many more.

This two-act play features **Ray Benson** (as himself), **Asleep at the Wheel** members including fiddler **Jason Roberts** (as Young Bob Wills) and actor **Marco Perella** (as Spirit of Bob Wills). The play was co-written by Benson and Hollywood screenwriter **Anne Rapp** (*Cookie’s Fortune* and *Dr. T & the Women*). Production credits also include Robert Tolaro (Production Stage Manager), Christopher McCollum (Set Designer) and Bill Peeler (Lighting Designer).

A Ride with Bob debuted with six sold-out shows at the State Theater in Austin, Texas as a commemoration of Bob Will’s 100th birthday in 2005. It was an instant hit with audiences and critics, garnering several nominations from Austin Circle of Theaters Awards and fueled a four-city tour of Texas and Oklahoma that fall. In 2006, the show rode high into San Antonio, Ft. Worth, San Francisco, CA and Washington, DC where President and Mrs. Bush were in attendance at the renowned Kennedy Center. Since then, the play has continued to introduce many to the legend of Bob Wills as well as remind others of a bygone era. Response to the play has been glowing. Liz Smith calls ***A Ride with Bob***, “The most entertaining night in Texas.” And John Wooley of the *Tulsa World* wrote that the play is “...as raucous, spirited and joyous as the music that inspired it.”

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Performances are Wed. Dec. 28, Thu., Dec. 29, Fri., Dec. 30 and Sat., Dec. 31*, 2011 at 8:00 pm and one matinee on Thu., Dec. 29 at 2:00 pm. Tickets range from \$38-\$58 and are on sale now online www.eisemanncenter.com, by phone at 972-744-4650 or in person at Eisemann Center Ticket Office. Ticket Office hours are 10:00 am until 6:00 pm Monday through Saturday and one hour before performances. Group discounts are available for 10 or more by calling 972-744-4657.

*Join **Ray Benson, Asleep at the Wheel** and the entire cast including **The Quebe Sisters Band** for a New Year's Eve Party following the closing performance on Sat. Dec. 31, 2011 at 10:30 pm at the Renaissance Dallas-Richardson Hotel located adjacent to the Eisemann Center. Party tickets will only be available to ticketholders for any performance of the show. Celebrate the New Year Texas-style with great entertainment, refreshments and cash bar.

A special discounted hotel package is being offered for the run of the show by the Renaissance Dallas-Richardson Hotel for ticketholders to ***A Ride with Bob***. Please contact the hotel to make reservations at 972.367.2000 or online at www.marriott.com, using promo code **LRR**. See the show, enjoy the party and relax in the safety and hospitality of the Renaissance Dallas-Richardson Hotel.

The Charles W. Eisemann Center is located at 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson, Texas. **The Eisemann Center** is accessible from Highway 75 North taking the Galatyn Parkway/Renner Road exit going north and the Galatyn Parkway/Campbell Road exit going south, or from the DART light rail station at Galatyn Park. Eisemann Center Presents 2011-2012 sponsors include *The Dallas Morning News*, *WFAA-TV*, UT Dallas, ViewPoint Bank, Altrusa Intl. of Richardson, Inc., the Richardson Woman's Club, Texas Commission on the Arts and Five for Five Sponsor Opportunity Bank.

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