

Shifty Morgan gets CCMA nomination

By Chris Ashfield

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The title of their first CD says it all – "Anything But Easy." But for local band Shifty Morgan, all that hard work has finally paid off as the group has been nominated for a national country music award.

The Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) has announced that Shifty Morgan has been nominated for the Independent Group of the Year award. The award, which is voted on by CCMA members, was presented in Edmonton on September 13 during the CCMA Awards ceremony.

The award that Shifty Morgan was up for is based on the amount of radio time bands get across the country. The groups single, "now that Day is Gone," has been burning up airways and likely attributed to their nomination.

Along with the CCMA award, Anthony Kelly will also be appearing in Edmonton at the CCMA Songwriters' Cafe with Chris Cummings and Steve Fox where he will have the opportunity to play three of his songs for fans and industry insiders.

Shifty Morgan is made up of Anthony Kelly, Blake Kelly, Guy Wall, Vern Nixon, and Neil Coghill. Anthony Kelly, who hails from Rocanville, is lead vocal and plays guitar and mandolin. Blake Kelly, also a Rocanville native, is on acoustic guitar and also provides vocals. Lead guitar and additional vocals are provided by Guy Wall of Moosomin while Vern Nixon of Wapella plays bass. Whitewood's Neil Coghill is the drummer for the band.

Throughout their career, Shifty Morgan has played across the prairie provinces and have appeared with artists such as the Poverty Plainsmen, Duane Steele, Brad Johner, Jason McCoy and Lisa Brokop. They will be appearing this year at the Agribition in Regina as well as next summer in Whitewood for the Homecoming celebrations.

In 2003, Shifty Morgan won the Saskatchewan Country Music Association (SCMA) "Rising Star" award. The SCMA had also nominated them for Group of the Year, Entertainer of the Year, and Album of the Year.

The CCMA awards show from Edmonton aired live in Canada on CBC at 8:00 p.m. September 13, and was simulcast on CMT in the United States with encore presentations scheduled on CMT in Canada.