

Percy Sledge, who sang 'When A Man Loves a Woman,' dies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUSCLE SHOALS, Alabama — Percy Sledge, who soared from part-time singer and hospital orderly to lasting fame with his aching, forlorn performance on the classic "When a Man Loves a Woman," died Tuesday, April 14, in Louisiana. He was 74.

His family said in a statement released through his manager, Mark Lyman, that he died "peacefully" at his home in Baton Rouge after a yearlong struggle with cancer. The cause of death was liver failure, Lyman said.

A No. 1 hit in 1966, "When a Man Loves a Woman" was Sledge's debut single, an almost unbearably heartfelt ballad with a resonance he never approached again. Sledge said the song was inspired by a girlfriend who left him for a modeling career after he was laid off from a construction job in 1965. But in a decision that likely cost him a fortune, he gave the songwriting credits to two Esquires bandmates, bassist Calvin Lewis and organist Andrew Wright, who helped him with it.



Sledge

The song was a personal triumph for Sledge, who seemed on the verge of sobbing throughout the production, and a breakthrough for Southern soul. It was the first No. 1 hit from the burgeoning Muscle Shoals music

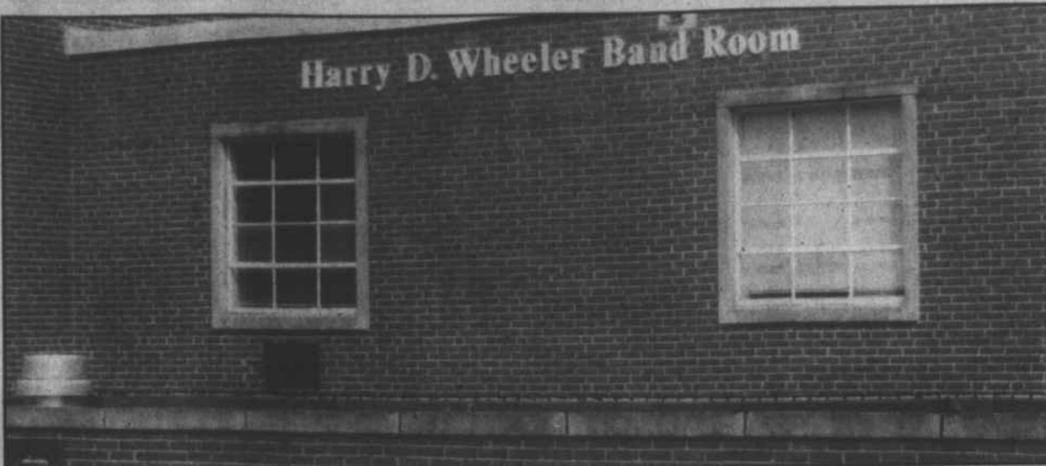


scene in northern Alabama, where Aretha Franklin and the Rolling Stones among others would record, and the first gold record for Atlantic Records.

Recognizable by his wide, gap-toothed smile, Sledge had a handful of other hits between 1966 and 1968, including "Warm and Tender Love," "It Tears Me Up," "Out of Left Field" and "Take Time to Know Her." He returned to the charts in 1974 with "I'll Be Your Everything."

While identified with Muscle Shoals, Sledge lived for most of his career in Baton Rouge. He was inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in 1993, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland in 2005 and the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame in 2007.

He is survived by his wife and 12 children, Lyman said.



The band room name of Harry D. Wheeler is on the outside of Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy.

Program to name three high school band rooms set for Saturday

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The dedication program to name three high school band rooms in honor of their former directors will be Saturday, April 25, in the auditorium of Carver High School, 3545 Carver School Road, from 2 to 4:30 p.m.

The rooms will be named for Rudolph V. Boone, Sr. (Carver High School), Bernard T. Foy, Sr. (Paisley IB Magnet School) and Harry D. Wheeler (Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy).

The public is invited to attend.

The program will celebrate the long and dedicated service of these music educators. It will be like a joint reunion of families, former students, co-workers, friends and admirers.

Tickets are a \$25 contribution per person, with proceeds (after all expenses are paid) to benefit scholarships and other community projects of The Big 4 Alumni Association of Forsyth County Inc., the group sponsoring the event.

Tickets may be purchased from Big 4 active members/officers, honorees' families or at the door Saturday.

The program will include music by: The Big 4 Choir, directed by Eddie Bines; The New South Brass, directed by Gary Hastings; The Healing Force; and Keith Byrd and Friends Jazz Ensemble.

Elected officials, former students and co-workers of the three band directors, and others will be on the program. Nell Davis Britton and Gary Hastings will do special solo presentations. Renee Vaughn, co-host of the Tom Joyner Morning Show, 97.1 QMG will be the mistress of ceremony.

Beverly F. Williams, a graduate of Anderson High School (336-776-1893) is coordinator of the event.

Eric Martin is president of the Big 4 AA of FC.

Juan Eckard, band director at Carver, some of his students and boosters will assist where needed.

Travis Taylor is the principal of Carver High School.



The band room name of Rudolph V. Boone Sr. is on the outside of Carver High School.



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