

# A Song In His Heart

## Local businessman, Mel Madaris records gospel music

By **Karen Nazor Hill**  
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Though it came as no surprise to the Madaris family that their young son, Mel, had a phenomenal voice (mom, dad and brother sing, too), it did come as a surprise that he got No. 1 in his first talent contest at the tender age of . Dad's singing group came in second.

"This was back during the days of the 'Mulls Singing Convention,' a local television program," he tells. "It was a live shoe, and because I was so small, I had to stand on a box.

He traveled with his family throughout the region singing at churches and civic events.

"We even sang as the Grand Ole Opry," he says.

Though Mel went through a period during his teen years when he would have gladly traded his musical talent for the opportunity to play sports, he stuck with singing.

"I remember everybody playing outside and I'd be in side practicing," he says. "But the practice did help me to blossom,"

And blossom he did.

He recorded several gospel record albums with his family and an additional single record with a country music group. But Mel has recently released his first solo, full-length cassette tape.

"I'm pretty excited about it," says the 40-year-old part owner of a family business.

"I got away from singing for awhile during my college days. I majored in business. I was just burned out from singing so much."

But his talent didn't go away,

"Now I'm proud of my voice," he says. "My family has been after me to do this for about 10 years, but I never felt it was the right thing to

do – until now.

"The tape, *Memories*, contains a lot of old gospel songs and a few songs that I wrote. One song I wrote, called 'Memories,' is a crossover of country and gospel. The theme is how Jesus can heal a broken heart.

When Mel is not at work, he's either with his two children, 8-year old Cara (a budding pianist), and 11-year old Jeremy) who, he says, has a beautiful voice), or he's practicing with the choir at First Presbyterian Church where he is one of their leading soloists..

"I'm finally at a place in my life when I'm glad I can sing. I truly enjoy it," he says.

**SONGBIRD: Mel Madaris is being touted by many as having one of the best voices around. His recently released cassette tape contains old favorite gospel songs, as well as a few of his own original pieces.**