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## Common Wealth duo ventures to new venues

ANDREW CRITCHELOW The News-Enterprise

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The local acoustic duo Common Wealth performed in March at Bourbon Barrel Tavern in Elizabethtown and returns to that stage Friday.

Submitted

Although vocalists Matt McDougal of Elizabethtown and Bekah Wilson generally have used their vocal talents in area churches, they've recently decided to branch out as a duo.

Performing under the name Common Wealth, McDougal and Wilson plan to bring their signature harmonies to stages throughout the region.

"Our voices and styles have always matched really well, so I knew it would be an easy thing to sing with Bekah," McDougal said.

McDougal, who lives in Elizabethtown, is originally from Bowling Green, said he began singing while in high school. He earned a bachelor's degree in music from Western Kentucky University and has performed in a variety of theater and church settings. He currently performs with the Kentucky Opera in Louisville and has served as a worship leader for nearly two decades.

Wilson, a native of Hardin County and resident of Vine Grove, said she began singing in church when she was 4 years old. She has sang in various school and church choirs throughout the years.

Also a graduate of WKU, Wilson met McDougal at the college. She said her husband, also named Matt, played bass in some worship bands with McDougal and they later began leading worship together at area churches.

McDougal and Wilson both moved to Hardin County in 2015 and continued leading worship together upon moving. They volunteer on the worship team at Grace Heartland Church in Elizabethtown.

Common Wealth formed early this year and made its debut at Bourbon Barrel Tavern in Elizabethtown in March. In the duo, McDougal and Wilson both sing lead and harmony while McDougal plays acoustic guitar and piano.

The duo's repertoire includes covers of artists such as James Taylor, Coldplay, Taylor Swift, The Lone Bellow and Maggie Rogers.

"We both really love helping people just have a night away from everything where they can hear a lot of songs they know and maybe learn to love some new ones too," McDougal said.

The duo also has started writing original music.

"We brainstorm topics that connect with us personally and some that would connect with everyone," Wilson said of the process.

Shortly after their debut performance, the duo was forced to stop planning shows and rehearsals amid the COVID-19 pandemic. They began booking shows anew as state restrictions on bars and gatherings began to be lifted.

Upcoming performances by Common Wealth include an appearance Friday at Bourbon Barrel Tavern and an Oct. 2 performance at Traveler's Cellar Winery in Bowling Green.

Looking toward the future of this new endeavor, McDougal said he would like the duo to perform at more venues throughout the state and to record an EP within the next year.

"We just love it when people choose to spend their night out listening to us sing," he said. "It is really an honor."

For information on Common Wealth, go to [commonwealthband.com](http://commonwealthband.com) or follow the Instagram account [@common\\_wealth\\_music](https://www.instagram.com/common_wealth_music).

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