



BLAKE SHELTON



by Jim Gigliotti

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Consultant: Starshine Roshell
Music and Entertainment Journalist
Santa Barbara, California

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A Great Start

In May 2001, Blake Shelton stepped onstage at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee. At the time, Blake was an unknown. He sang a heartfelt **ballad** called “Austin.” Claps and cheers rang out in the concert hall. The crowd loved it! Blake was on his way to becoming a huge country star.

The Grand Ole Opry opened in 1925. It's a place where country musicians perform.



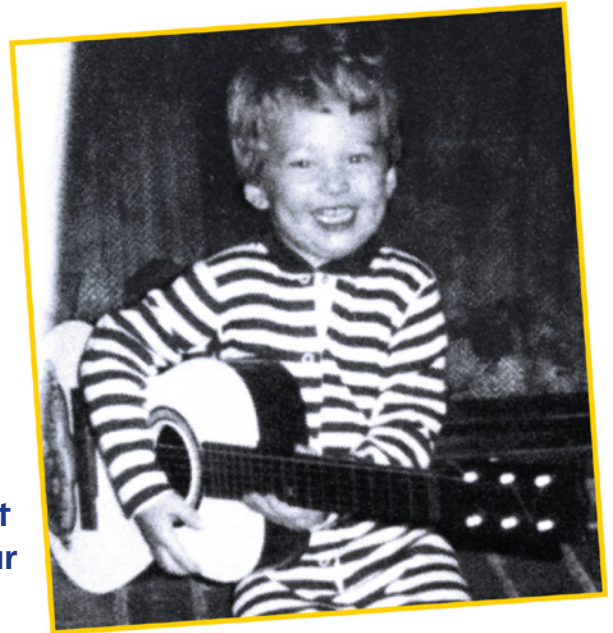


Blake Shelton
with his guitar
in 2001

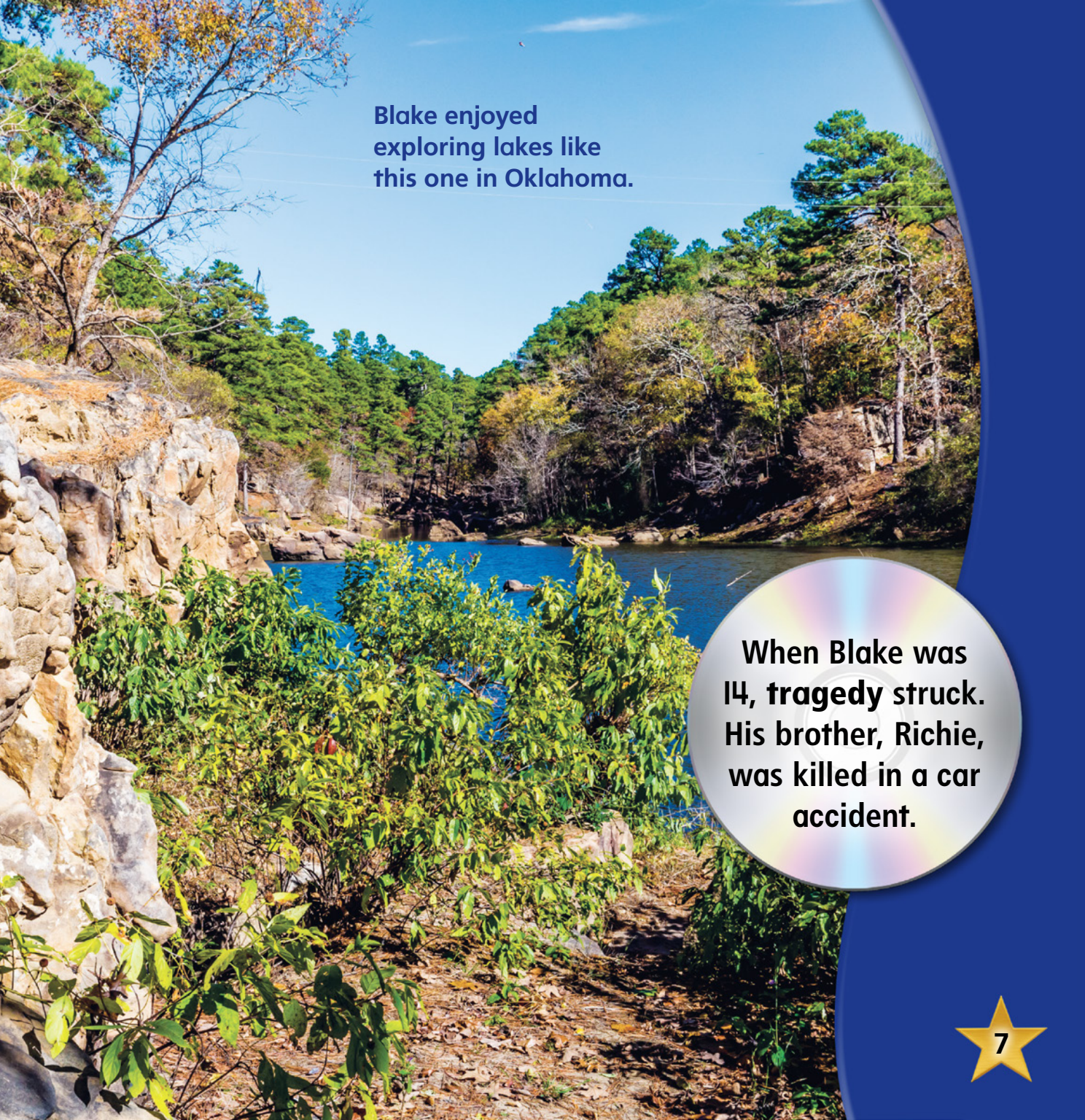
"Austin" was
Blake's first single.
For five weeks, it
was the number one
song on *Billboard*
magazine's country
music chart.

Outdoor Living

Blake Tollison Shelton was born in Ada, Oklahoma, on June 18, 1976. Blake's dad sold used cars for a living. His mom ran a beauty salon. Blake and his brother and sister spent a lot of time outdoors. "I didn't grow up playing video games," he says. Instead, he caught **minnows** in the creek. Blake loved life in the country.



Blake at
age four

A scenic view of a lake in Oklahoma, surrounded by trees and a rocky shoreline. The lake is a deep blue, and the surrounding forest is a mix of green and yellow, suggesting autumn. A rocky cliff is visible on the left side of the frame.

Blake enjoyed
exploring lakes like
this one in Oklahoma.

When Blake was
14, **tragedy** struck.
His brother, Richie,
was killed in a car
accident.

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Tieck, Sarah. *Blake Shelton: Country Music Star (Big Buddy Bios).* Minneapolis, MN: ABDO (2013).

Tometich, Annabelle. *Today's Hottest Music Superstars (Today's Superstars).* Minneapolis, MN: Lucent Books (2016).

Learn More Online

To learn more about Blake Shelton, visit
www.bearportpublishing.com/AmazingAmericans

About the Author

Jim Gigliotti is a former editor at the National Football League. He now writes books on a variety of topics for young readers.

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BLAKE SHELTON

Blake Shelton is a country music superstar. So how did this incredible talent rise to the top? Look inside to learn how an Oklahoma boy became a country music icon.

Luke Bryan	Blake Shelton
Miranda Lambert	Carrie Underwood

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