



# Blake's "Bone" Goes No. 1

Blake Shelton gets candid during his celebration speech for his chart-topping hit "Hillbilly Bone."

## Blake Shelton celebrates a hit with writers Craig Wiseman and Luke Laird.

While the lyrics to Blake Shelton's latest No. 1 song, "Hillbilly Bone," invoke country icons like Conway Twitty and fried chicken, the song has an interesting rap music background.

Co-written by Luke Laird and Craig Wiseman, the songwriting process brought out a wilder side in the normally low-key Luke. You see, Luke, who co-penned the inspirational songs "So Small" and "Temporary Home" for Carrie Underwood, has a blue-eyed rapper alter-ego affectionately known as "Snowflake." During the writing of "Hillbilly Bone," Snowflake made his appearance. "We just started messin' around with the lyrics, and the verses were very rappable," Craig explains. "When we went to record the demo, Luke showed up in this hoodie, pulls the hood up and gets there on the microphone—all you could see was just the hoodie and the microphone."

The song, and the resulting demo, was all in fun, Craig explains. "If I write a song and it's boring me, then the audience is going to be bored, too. We thoroughly enjoyed every minute of writing this song and making the demo."

Once two of country music's most masculine singers—Trace Adkins and Blake Shelton—got a hold of it, the song took on a life of its own, making its way to the top of the country charts.

At Starstuck Entertainment, a crowd of industry folk—including Blake's manager, Narvel Blackstock (husband and manager to Reba McEntire), Warner Music Nashville president John Esposito, ASCAP's Tim DuBois and BMI's Jody Williams—gathered to congratulate Blake, Craig, Luke and producer Scott Hendricks on their hit. (Trace was on the road that day and unable to attend.)

Blake not only brought his fiancée, Miranda Lambert, to the party but his oft-used sense of humor as well. "To be

honest with y'all, it's tough enough to go do interviews with people like [late-night television host] Chelsea [Handler] and talk about a song called 'Hillbilly Bone,'" Blake said. "I been defendin' that for a while, you know—'My hillbilly bone got really big' and all that stuff that you have to hear—but then to actually stand off to the side and hear Craig Wiseman do an interview, which I'd never heard before, about writing the song and about how he and Luke were 'messing around' and came up with a song called 'Hillbilly Bone'..." Blake's voice trailed off, his sexual innuendo firmly entrenched. The comment brought a roar of laughter from Craig, Luke and the rest of the crowd.

"Between y'all," Blake joked dryly, "that's awesome, man."

Blake, Luke and Craig collected several plaques, including awards from the performance-rights organizations ASCAP and BMI. The Country Music Association took it a step further, donating \$10,000 worth of dog treats to the Nashville Humane Society in honor of "Hillbilly Bone."

—JESSICA PHILLIPS