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## Kevin Costner's film fame the big draw for his concert here Sunday

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel  
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Kevin Costner is coming to Fort Wayne this Sunday to perform music at the Allen County Fairgrounds.

Yes, you heard right — Kevin Costner.

The Oscar-winning actor, director and writer and his group Modern West will hit the stage at 8 p.m. at the Allen County Fairgrounds to perform a concert filled with their own special brand of country music.

Most people who hear the name Kevin Costner immediately think of films. “Dances with Wolves,” “The Untouchables,” “JFK,” “Bull Durham” and “Field of Dreams” — just a few in a long list of movies that catapulted Costner to mega-stardom and A-list status in Hollywood.

What people may not know is that Costner also has a life-long love affair with music that started in his childhood.

At the beginning of his career, Costner flirted with performing music, but filmmaking and acting eventually won out and music was pushed to the background while he pursued his film career.

Costner's current wife, Christine, whom he married in 2004, encouraged him to reawaken his love of music and do it beyond just a hobby. Beginning in 2007, Modern West was born and hit the road with live shows.

Modern West has released a few music CDs: “Untold Truths,” “Turn it On” and “From Where I Stand.” The group also performed on the soundtrack album (“Famous for Killing Each Other”) from Costner's television miniseries entitled “Hatfields & McCoy's,” which was recently shown on the History Channel and drew big ratings.

The group continues to write music, record and tour in-between Costner's film work.

According to Tony Rafiei, manager of The Neon Armadillo, who arranged Costner's appearance here in Fort Wayne, people all across the country have been eager to catch a glimpse of Costner up close and in person on Sunday, especially women.

“We have people coming in from almost all over the country to see him,” Rafiei said. “Based on almost 800 tickets or so, if not more, that we have sold online, I can strongly say that 70 percent of those buyers are woman, 20 percent are businesses around the area and then maybe 10 percent are men.”

Costner and Modern West were originally supposed to play inside the Neon Armadillo. But as more and more tickets sold and interest stayed high, Rafiei contacted the Allen County Fairgrounds and moved the show there.

“I really didn't know how the response is going to be from the people,” Rafiei said. “The response was beyond my imagination. It was sold out basically the first day because our capacity is 400. We sold almost the same amount of tickets on the first day in probably an hour or so. That's why we moved it outside.

“We were going to do it in front of the Neon, but in another week or so we sold another 300 tickets. We were looking around for a place to move him and we found the Allen County Fairgrounds to be open on that Sunday, so we moved it to the Allen County Fairgrounds.”

Rafiei said that since the Neon has built up a name in country music circles by hosting such acts as The Band Perry and Eric Church, he was able to contact Costner's management and set up the show.

Most of the big name acts that play at the Neon Armadillo are arranged because they are traveling through the area.

“Usually these people that are going through are either going south or going north, no matter who they are,” Rafiei said. “Usually we get a call from them to see if we are interested.

“The Kevin Costner deal was ... he's supposed to be in Nashville on that Tuesday (July 17th), so Sunday, July 15th, that fits in with their routing — that's why we were able to get them.”

Rafiei said that while most people who have bought tickets are anxious to see Costner, many of them either don't know or care that much about his music.

“I asked a lady who was buying a ticket if she had heard his (Kevin Costner's) music and her exact words were, ‘I don't care about his music. I just want to see him live on the stage,’” Rafiei said. “It's a comment that almost every woman makes who buys a ticket.



### More Information

#### Stage of dreams

**What:** Kevin Costner and Modern West live in concert.  
**When:** 8 p.m. Sunday. Audience members must go through a security checkpoint, and that process could begin as early as 5:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Central Soya Pavilion at the Allen County Fairgrounds, 2726 Carroll Road  
**Cost:** \$24  
**Information:** Call Neon Armadillo at 490-5060 or buy tickets online at [www.neonarmadillo.com](http://www.neonarmadillo.com) or in person at The Neon Armadillo, 6040 Lima Road.  
**Note:** Some seating will be provided, but it is not assigned seating. You also are welcome to bring your own folding chair. No coolers allowed; food and beverages will be available.

"Then there was a guy who came in who bought like eight tickets," Rafiei added. "I asked him if he heard the music, and he said that he didn't care for it, but his wife wants to go so he has no choice."