

# Chicago's Award Winning Entertainer

## Ron Hawking

### Press Bio

Chicago's Award Winning Entertainer, Ron Hawking, knows how to deliver a performance that truly comes from his heart. And, it's that special quality that allows him to touch the heart of his audience every time he walks onto the stage.

Ron Hawking sang before he could talk. He's appeared on television shows before entering grammar school and won talent competitions before he could tell time. As one critic said, "his photo should be placed next to the word "entertainer" in the dictionary!"

And for Ron Hawking, singing and entertaining is what he was truly born to do.

Ron learned to play piano in grammar school and guitar in high school, using his musical talents to play in bands throughout high school and college—Experiences which would nurture his passion for performing, recording and making records.

After recording 2 albums with the touring group, The New Era, Ron returned to Chicago and began directing his talent toward the recording studio. While sending out demo's, in search of a hit record, several of Chicago's commercial music producers began to take notice of Ron's talent.

Soon, Ron went from singing and playing with his band in night clubs, to singing in the recording studio on countless broadcast commercials for TV and Radio. In addition to becoming one of the "top-call" studio singers in Chicago, Ron started receiving calls from the Detroit, New York, Nashville, and L.A. music producers as well, and a long running career began to unfold.

With a successful studio career firmly in grasp, Ron wanted to sharpen his performance skills even more and began studying improvisation at Chicago's Second City. Shortly thereafter, he

left Chicago to study acting at *The Neighborhood Playhouse* in New York City while maintaining a busy studio career there and in Chicago.

In 1985 Ron returned to Chicago and began working on a new act as a singer & impressionist. His singing talent, combined with a knack for effortlessly creating character voices for commercials, led to a demand for Ron as an entertainer at corporate events throughout the country.

In July 1995 Ron was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Despite an initial "Show must go on" determination to perform, chemotherapy was required, so Ron shifted his focus temporarily to treatment. It wasn't easy, but thanks to God and his awesome doctors at the Weiss University of Chicago Hospital, Ron went from being a patient to being a cancer survivor, a distinction that gives him great pride to this day.

In December, 1995, the entertainment world lost Dean Martin. Only two months later, the inimitable Gene Kelly passed away. It was then, while driving and listening to the radio broadcast about Kelly's passing, Ron started thinking of the remarkable legacy of another lasting legend, Frank Sinatra. The grim thought of what the world would be like without Sinatra started to sink in and the idea to create a new show to tribute him was born (Sinatra passed away in May, 1998).

In July of 1998 Ron created and self-produced the hit musical "His Way—A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra", which opened to rave reviews and sold out crowds at Chicago's *Mercury Theater*. In 1999 Ron received additional critical acclaim for his West Coast production of His Way that played at San Francisco's *Theater On The Square*. Ron Hawking went on to tour The His Way Show in Las Vegas, as well as other major cities, before bringing the show back home to Chicago.

As *His Way's* popularity continued to grow, another opportunity presented itself and Ron found himself opening his own venue, *The His Way Theater* inside studio "A" at Chicago's NBC Tower.

Ron Hawking has made over 1000 appearances starring in the hit show His Way, and with nearly a million tickets sold, the show has become one of Chicago's longest running and most beloved musical tributes.

In 2007 Ron went back to the drawing board and created another hit musical production, *“Ron Hawking celebrates–The Men & Their Music”*. The show honored the legendary singers, songwriters, and performers that have inspired Ron and touched the lives of millions. The critics gave the show rave reviews and once again, Ron had another long running hit musical in his hometown of Chicago.

His critically acclaimed Christmas Show, *Ron Hawking Home for the Holidays*, has played to sold out audiences at many Theaters and continues to be a seasonal favorite.

Ron Hawking has performed at New York’s Carnegie Hall with The Philly Pops Orchestra honoring singer Patti Page and her 50th anniversary in show-business. He continues to perform his shows at many prestigious theaters and performing arts centers around the country.

In 2008 Ron auditioned and was cast to play the role of the Syracuse University’s play-by-play sports announcer in the Universal Pictures movie *“The Express,”* starring actor Dennis Quaid. His additional movie credits include the movie, *“Look Who’s Talking”*.

At the 2014 Chicago Music Awards, Ron Hawking was presented with CMA’s 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award.

His latest 2014 album release, *“The Song Is You”*, was nominated to the category of *Best Traditional Pop Vocalist Album* for this year’s 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Grammy Awards.

