

Neal Hagberg and Leandra Peak ended up on the road to music mostly by accident...

Hagberg was on his way to medical school and Peak to a career in international business when the road veered. Since then they have found themselves singing to sold out thousand seat venues in some towns and four people and a sick dog (true story) in others.

Leandra - private by nature - was dragged kicking and screaming into the spotlight. Even though she had acted in a professional theater group as a teenager, she had no desire to make a career out of it, and refused even to take solos in the high school choir. As a little girl, all she ever wanted was to be on Johnny Carson. Not for her voice, not for her writing or stage presence, but because she thought Johnny would simply find her funny.

Neal thought a career in professional sports sounded good. Being a small college wishbone quarterback did not exactly prepare him for the NFL. It didn't prepare him for the folk world either, but he figured at least in music he wouldn't get landed on by 300 lb. noseguards. So, he wrote some songs, some people liked them, and he quit his med school plans to go on the road. He somehow convinced Leandra to go along.

That is the story in a nutshell. Leandra grew up in Louisville, KY, Neal in Montevideo, MN. Leandra was raised on Perry Como and barbershop, Neal on The Mamas and the Papas and Swedish hymns. They met at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota in 1981. Off-again, on-again dating, excursions into graduate school (Leandra in Spanish, Neal receiving a Masters of Divinity) only resulted in a postponement of careers as singer/songwriters.

Hagberg and Peak married in 1989 and began touring as a duo full time. Signed by Columbia Artists Management and recording on one of the country's preeminent singer-songwriter labels (Red House Records), Neal & Leandra have since performed in nearly every state in the country.

The Washington Post says "as songwriters, Neal & Leandra have clearly mastered the art of saying more with less." The Minneapolis StarTribune says "listening to Leandra Peak's distinctively husky and lustrous voice might be as heavenly as listening to angels" and "Neal Hagberg writes inspired originals." And the Victory Review of Seattle writes that Neal & Leandra have "one of the most sensuous mix of voices I've heard."

Sometimes people have to work to find them or their eight cds: Old Love, Hearts & Hammers, Accidental Dreams, Stranger to my Kin, Listen to the Angels, Bridge Rail, A Dreamer's Holiday: A Tribute to Perry Como, and Angels And Fools: A Christmas Collection Volume 2. But, tens of thousands of fans have found them nonetheless, and their audience is fiercely loyal. The simplicity and directness of their songs is both disarming and elegant. The songs are layered with textures of everyday life and love. This - combined with their remarkable blend and funny stories - connects with people's own experiences in a way that keeps them coming back for more and bringing friends the next time around.

When they are not touring or recording, Neal & Leandra reside in Minneapolis, MN with their daughter, Madeline, where Neal plays a lot of basketball and Leandra reads many books.