



Chris Flynn / The Forum

Logan Ledger, on the right, opened for Nashville-based country singer-songwriter Margo Price at the Sanctuary Events Center on Wednesday, Oct. 29, in downtown Fargo and then played guitar and vocals for her show.

Fiery Fargo debut

Country star Margo Price plays her first stop in North Dakota

BY JOHN LAMB
The Forum

FARGO

When Bob Dylan opened his set at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival with “Maggie’s Farm,” it nearly caused a riot as the singer played with electric instruments and was legendarily booed off the stage two songs later.

Sixty years later, country singer Margo Price closed her Wednesday night set at Fargo’s Sanctuary Event Center with her spin on “Maggie’s Farm,” to riotous applause.

The show was Price’s first in North Dakota and it was worth the wait. She delivered a vibrant 90-minute show that ranged from rave-ups to break-ups and a couple of classic country gems.

Price made her national debut in 2015 with “Midwest Farmer’s Daughter” and created a big buzz with her feisty Loretta Lynn-like brand of country. She strayed from that sound a little since 2020 but returned to vintage form with this year’s “Hard Headed Woman.”

The singer is so excited about the album, which came out in late August, that she played 10 songs from the disc Wednesday night. Oddly, one of the two from the album she didn’t play was its second single, “Losing Streak.”

There was little to quibble about with the

song selection. While the songs varied, it all worked together as a tight, cohesive concert.

When she takes the stage in a gingham top and matching skirt, cynics may have dismissed her take on country as “Hee Haw” schtick, but her Americana roots are genuine. She comes from northwest Illinois where the family lost the farm when she was a child, as she detailed in her semi-autobiographical opener, “Hands of Time.”

Her approach on the introspective numbers is more Springsteen than Strait as she showed later in her wistful look at her hometown, “Nowhere is Where.”

She can tug at your heart on those Midwestern odes or kick your butt with the honky tonkin’ “Don’t Let the Bastards Get You Down.” The song is directed at record executives more interested in the bottom line than artistry. The line in particular she’s referring to is cocaine and when she sings, “All the cocaine in existence / couldn’t keep your nose out of my business,” a roadie brought out a plate of white powder and instead of snorting, she blew it into the crowd to hoots and hollers.

Of course, as a real country singer, she knows her way around a love song as well. Or rather, a strained love song. While she’s been with her husband and musical collaborator

Jeremy Ivey for 21 years, she has a feel for tortured romance and showed it in the upbeat “Red Eye Flight” and the duet “Love Me Like You Used To.”

The latter she recorded with Tyler Childers, but guitarist Logan Ledger filled the part wonderfully Wednesday night. The singer served as the night’s opener with the rest of the band backing him, but his fluid tenor voice proved to be a great complement to Price.

She also paid homage to Lynn’s own collection of duets with Conway Twitty, belting out their 1973 classic, “Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man.”

On the opposite side of the stage from Ledger, lead guitarist Sean Thompson proved to be her other leading man as he whipped out some fantastically countrified picking on his Telecaster, particularly in the swampy stomp of “Tennessee Song.”

Price fanned his fiery fretwork as she would move his way and spur him on with her own energetic playing. Funny, then, that she was the one who broke a guitar string on the bouncy “Don’t Wake Me Up.”

The 323 fans in attendance didn’t seem to care and Price didn’t seem to mind one bit that she was playing to a relatively small crowd, considering she played to 37,000 at Farm Aid at Minneapolis’ Huntington Bank Sta-

dium last month.

She gave Fargo the full show, including a wardrobe change, returning to the stage in a sequined dress for an encore starting with her signature hit, “Hurtin’ (On the Bottle).” The tune may be about talking belts at the bar, but she showcased her powerhouse voice, belting out sustained notes for a thrilling finish to the song.

She, Ledger and Thompson then moved to a vintage microphone for an a capella intro to “Maggie’s Farm.” After showing off some fine harmonizing, they returned to their places on the stage and really tore into the song, rolling like a runaway train fueled by Thompson’s blistering solos. As he and the band played on, Price walked across the stage throwing roses into the crowd as a colorful forget-me-not to an unforgettable show.

It will always be Bob Dylan’s song, but Margo Price is the latest to give that tune a new lease on life 60 years after an inauspicious introduction. She’s a good enough songwriter to stand on her own music, but she honors the artists that paved the way for her to play in front of 37,000 people or 323 people with the same energy and love for music.

Readers can reach Forum reporter John Lamb at jlamb@forumcomm.com.



Chris Flynn / The Forum

Margo Price plays with special guest Logan Ledger at the Sanctuary Events Center on Wednesday, Oct. 29, in downtown Fargo.



Mary Murphy / Forum News Service

Minnesota Sen. Lindsey Port, DFL-Burnsville, discusses the impacts of the federal government shutdown on Thursday, Oct. 30, at the Capitol in St. Paul.

Federal workers plead for lawmakers to ‘hammer it out’ as shutdown reaches a month

BY MARY MURPHY
Forum News Service

ST. PAUL — Union leaders told senators on Thursday, Oct. 30, that Minnesota’s federal workers are now missing rent and are taking home boxes of food at the end of their shifts.

The sobering testimony on Thursday comes as the federal government shutdown nears a month. It was the latest meeting of the Senate’s Subcommittee on Federal Impacts.

Mark Johnson, of Duluth, representing TSA agents with the American Federation of Government Employees, said roughly 1,000 of Minnesota’s 18,000 federal employees are TSA agents.

“I’ve got officers that have come to me that say my rent is due on Nov. 1. I don’t have the funds for that. My landlord is unwilling to work with me. And, ‘Oh, by the way, they told me there was going to be a \$50 per day late fee.’ How do people sustain that when you are ... paycheck to paycheck?” Johnson said.

Neal Gosman, with the American Federation of Government Employees, and currently a TSA agent at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, said his employees took home food boxes after their shifts on Wednesday.

Johnson has been with the AFGE union for 18 years and said this isn’t his first rodeo. At day 30, with the longest shutdown on record at 35 days, he said he would “like to hope” another record isn’t set, but that he’s “just not sure.”

“It’s time for our leaders to start focusing on how to solve problems for the American people, rather than on who is going to get the blame for the shutdown,” he said. “There’s no partisanship in this. We need our elected officials to please, please get together and hammer this out.”

Members of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture who have partnerships with the USDA also testified. Dr. Nicole Neeser, director of the Dairy and Meat Inspection

Division, said their services in testing meat are considered essential since processing plants can’t sell products without inspectors.

Dr. Brian Hoefs, director of the Board of Animal Health, who oversees animal disease, said Minnesota is already the state most affected by avian flu, with 208 confirmed cases. He said if a new disease emerges, he’s not sure how his staff would respond.

Hoefs said his communication with the USDA, which provides 20% of his staff’s budget, is “not where it used to be.”

“The USDA contingency plan for the federal shutdown has also been removed from the website ... we don’t know why, but that’s kind of the ... status of where we’re at with communications,” he said. “We don’t get a lot of direct communication like we used to. There’s ... decisions being made that we aren’t always privy to, and we find out about them after the fact.”

Alex Fitzsimmons, with the Children’s Defense Fund, testified about her concerns with the federal nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Minnesota receives roughly \$9 million a month for WIC, and funds are expected to last through the third week of November, according to reports from Minnesota Management and Budget on Wednesday, Oct. 29.

“Oftentimes, we’re concerned about being hyperbolic as advocates; in this situation, this isn’t hyperbole,” she said. “Losing access to WIC would result broadly in increased hunger, poorer health outcomes, and greater financial strain for thousands of pregnant women, infants and young children in Minnesota.”

Attorney General Keith Ellison testified before the subcommittee regarding his lawsuit against the USDA that argues the halt in SNAP benefits during the shutdown is illegal and that a \$6 billion contingency fund should be tapped. Ellison

SHUTDOWN on A8

The Forum

OF FARGO-MOORHEAD

A division of Forum Communications Company
ISSN 0895-1292 (print) and 1461-967X (digital)
USPS 206-660 | Vol. 164 No. 273
Copyright 2025

www.inforum.com
701-235-7311 | 800-747-7311

The Forum is published twice weekly on Wednesdays and Saturdays by The Forum, 101 5th St. N., Fargo ND 58102. Periodicals postage paid at Fargo, N.D., and additional mailing offices.

CONTACT US

Administration

William C. Marcil
Chairman

Bill Marcil Jr., Publisher and CEO
publisher@forumcomm.com

Advertising

Classified advertising	701-241-5504
Farmers’ Forum ads	701-241-5504
Employment	701-241-5500
All other advertising	701-241-5431

State law requires certain public notices to be published in a legal newspaper. The Forum meets the requirements publishing legal notices in North Dakota and designation as a legal newspaper in Minnesota.

Newsroom Staff

Matthew Von Pinnon, Editor
mvonpinnon@forumcomm.com

Kaity Young, News Editor
kyoung@forumcomm.com

Thomas Evanelle, News Editor
tevanella@forumcomm.com

Angie Wieck, Business, Features Editor
awieck@forumcomm.com

Rob Beer, Sports Editor
rbeer@forumcomm.com

Anna Paige, Photo Editor
apaige@forumcomm.com

NEWS TIPS

news@forumcomm.com,
701-451-5734 or
701-241-5579.

TO SUBSCRIBE

Call 833-248-7802.

OFFICE HOURS

The Forum front office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to The Forum, 101 5th Street N. Fargo, ND 58102.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Wednesday & Saturday Mail Delivery
+ Digital All Access:
\$377.89 per year / \$34.99 per month

Digital All Access:

\$160 per year / \$14.99 per month

EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE STATED HEREIN OR REQUIRED BY APPLICABLE LAW, YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FEE IS NONREFUNDABLE. If you cancel your subscription, you are not entitled to receive any refund or credits for the time remaining in your Billing Periods, and you will continue to have access to your subscription until the end of your current Billing Period (unless we provide you with a refund or credit).