By VICTORIA CALDERON

• Leader & Times

Hit country singer from the 1990s Sammy Kershaw is back in the music game.

After taking a hiatus from producing albums for four years, Kershaw came back with the album “Better Than I Used To Be.” And now that he’s back, Kershaw is making a trip to Liberal for the Five State Fair.

The Sammy Kershaw concert will be from 8 to 10 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 1, at the fairgrounds grandstands. To attend the concert, tickets can be purchased for $15 (general admission) or $30 (VIP). Beer will be served at the show, but only in the VIP section.

Tickets are being sold right now at KSCB, the Leader & Times, the Activity Center and United Wireless, all in Liberal. For those who live outside of Liberal, tickets can be reserved by calling 482-6100, which can be claimed at the Will Call/Ticket Booth the night of the concert.

Before making his big comeback, Kershaw was unsure as to whether his music would ever be listened to again. According to the biography on his website, www.sammykershaw.com, he said, “I don’t know if the fire ever left, but I had some doubts for a while if people still wanted to hear my music, or if radio would still play my music anymore.

“One Saturday morning, I’m sitting on my bus listening to the radio, and this old Johnny Paycheck song comes on called ‘Old Violin.’ That’s how I felt – like an old violin, fixin’ to be put away and never played again,” he continued.

However, the same song became the inspiration that resparked his desire to play music.

“Then, the last line in the song came on, and it said ‘We’ll give our all to music, and we’ll give our life.’ That took me back to when I was 12 years old, and in a bar room singing my first country song, which was ‘Is Anybody Goin’ To San Antone.’ It took me back to that time in my life, and that line changed my mind set in an instant,” Kershaw said. “I thought to myself, radio might not ever play me again, and people might not want to hear me, but I need to do some new music – for me.”

The new album “features a roller-coaster of emotions,” or so the biography promises. His new songs on “Better Than I Used To Be”are about authentic feelings and experiences Kershaw has been through firsthand, and nothing less.

“There’s not very many songs that I can’t sing,” Kershaw said. “I won’t record a song if I haven’t lived it – no matter how much of a hit I think it might be, if I haven’t lived it, I won’t cut it. I’ll pass it on to somebody else. That’s the way I’ve done all of my albums and all of my music. I’ve stuck to that formula.”

The album features the following songs: “Like I Wasn’t Even There,” “Everybody Wants My

Girl," "Takin' The Long Way Home," "That Train," a cover of Dr. Hook's "On The Cover Of The Rolling Stone," and more.

"I love to play, and do live shows," Kershaw said. He also believes that touching lives is the most important part of his music.

His passion for music and performing live will be sure to make for a great show on Aug. 1 – so be sure to make it out to the fair that night to see Sammy Kershaw, a "pure country" star.