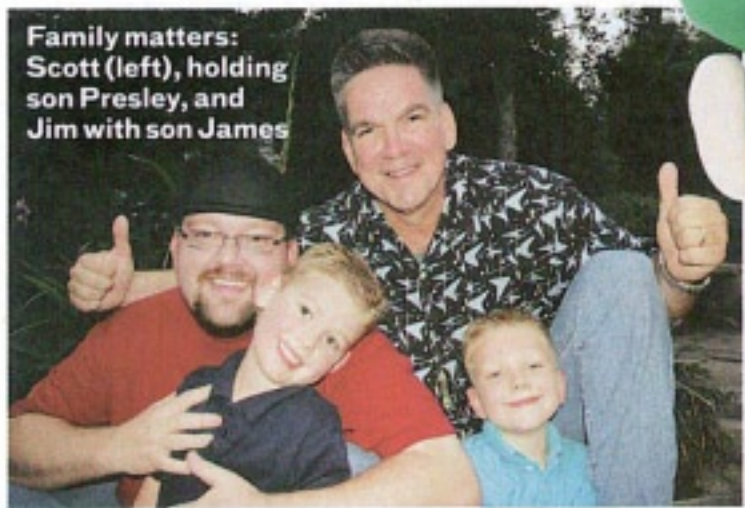


YOU MAY NOT KNOW HOLLYWOOD HAL AND Rhinestone Al—but your kids probably do. Hal and Al are a couple of loveable, overdrawn characters who use music and their infectious personalities to teach kids about safety, good manners and sundry other wholesome values. Currently, they star in their own TV series, *Hollywood Hal & Rhinestone Al With the Wannabees*, in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and other Louisiana markets. Hal and Al's good buddy, Neal McCoy, performs the show's theme song.

The larger-than-life team was conceived in 2006 by Scott Innes, a Baton Rouge radio DJ and the voice of cartoon character Scooby-Doo since 1997, and Jim Hogg, a singer and songwriter who runs his own ad agency in Baton Rouge. "I'm Hollywood Hal, who's like this little fat movie director," says Scott, "and Jim plays Rhinestone Al, because he's kind of a Nashville guy who writes music."

Jim laughs, "They're always on this big quest for stardom. They think they're huge stars but they're not even close."



Family matters: Scott (left), holding son Presley, and Jim with son James

Well, don't tell that to the preschool set. Hal and Al and their fictional backup band, The Wannabees, have become such a smash with kids that they've already produced a greatest-hits CD and a Christmas TV special featuring former Lonestar lead singer Richie McDonald.

The formula for the phenomenon is simple. "It's wholesome, motivational, educational," says Jim.

"We sing about manners, not doing drugs, following your dreams—things that children can relate to," adds Scott. "The kids love the characters, but parents also like what we do because some of the humor is aimed at adults. We're like a modern-day Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble." You can sample some of Hal and Al's material for yourself on their website, halandal.com.

There's also a new DVD, *Welcome to Wannabeville USA*, due this spring. "Neal McCoy is on it and he gives a tour of his bus, and it's as funny as it can be," says Scott. "We've got a live concert on there, too. The whole Hal and Al thing has just been amazing—it's been a blessed project." **CW**

Your Pals Hal & Al

Two zany larger-than-life characters, Hollywood Hal and Rhinestone Al, are reaching kids with positive messages.

BY BOB PAXMAN

