



Perky Natalie is all smiles over her baby boy Slade. She and husband Adrian Pasdar (inset) celebrated Slade's first birthday this past March.

Dixie Chick Natalie Maines exclaims that she's head over heels in love – with being a mom. And the object of her affection is her adorable son, Slade.

"Parenthood is wonderful!" raves Natalie. "Slade is just as cute as can be." Natalie and her husband, actor Adrian Pasdar, celebrated Slade's first birthday on March 15. The new mom reports that the bouncing boy has his dad's amber/brown eyes, but both she and Adrian agree that Slade more closely resembles Natalie, especially in the chin and upper mouth.

And like all infants, Slade has his unique personality quirks. "He used to hate the car," says Natalie. "Not even music would make him stop screaming." With a laugh, she adds, "When the Dixie Chicks' music would come on, he'd scream even louder!"

Now that's *really* "like mother, like son." Natalie has often joked about her early vocal prowess – starting at birth in Lubbock, Texas, on Oct. 14, 1974. "The doctor said, 'It's a girl!' and I was screaming so loud that he

BABY CHICK

Dixie Chick Natalie Maines celebrates her son's first birthday

asked my parents, 'Do you want me to put her back?' " Natalie's parents claim to have the audio tape of that raucous first day as proof of her wailing talent.

So could Slade be following in his mom's performing footsteps? He's already had a taste of the traveling celebrity life – in February, Adrian bundled up little Slade for a trip to the Houston Rodeo to see the Dixie Chicks in concert.

Slade has also met some of his TV heroes. "When I taped an appearance for *Sesame Street*," says Natalie, "Slade got to meet Elmo and Big Bird. And I had his picture taken in Oscar's garbage can." (Fans can see Natalie mingling with the *Sesame Street* characters on the May 6 and 9 episodes of the popular PBS series.)

As much as she loves motherhood, Natalie's ready to kick her Dixie Chicks career back in action. Along with fellow Chicks Emily Robison and Martie Maguire, Natalie spent most of 2001 recovering from an exhausting tour schedule and wrestling with legal action against the trio's record company.

Despite the legal hassles, the Chicks are reportedly working full-steam-ahead on a new album, to be released later this year. No tour plans have been announced, however, and Natalie has hinted that she will never go through another back-breaking travel schedule again.

"My life has changed," she commented recently. "My life now is about Adrian, me and the baby. *We* come first."

— Bob Paxman