

MAY/JUNE 1995

\$3.00

# COUNTRYMUSIC

**MARK CHESNUTT**  
Speaks the Truth

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**TRACY LAWRENCE**  
Comes Out All Right

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**GLEN CAMPBELL**  
Answers 20 Questions



**GEORGE STRAIT**  
Pull-Out Poster

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**MARY  
CHAPIN**  
Gets Personal

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*Q: What are you listening to now?*

Rhett: Hank Williams, Jr. *Habits Old and New*  
Bill Monroe *The Music of Bill Monroe 1936 to 1944*  
Counting Crows *August & Everything After*

*Q: What was the last book you read?*

Rhett: *Robert E. Lee* by Douglas S. Freeman

*Q: Your favorite movie?*

Rhett: *Giant*

*Q: Your heroes?*

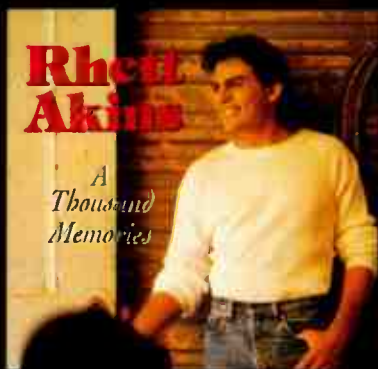
Rhett: George LaHood and Thomas Akins (Grandfathers)  
Nathan Bedford Forrest

*Q: Your favorite poet?*

Rhett: Edgar Allan Poe

*For more information on*

**RHETT AKINS...**



Check out ***A Thousand Memories***, his debut album featuring the smash single and video "That Ain't My Truck"

**On tour with Reba**  
**In Stores Now**

**DECCA**

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# COUNTRY MUSIC

## FEATURES

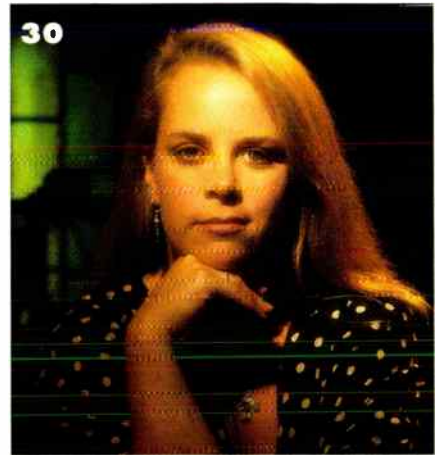
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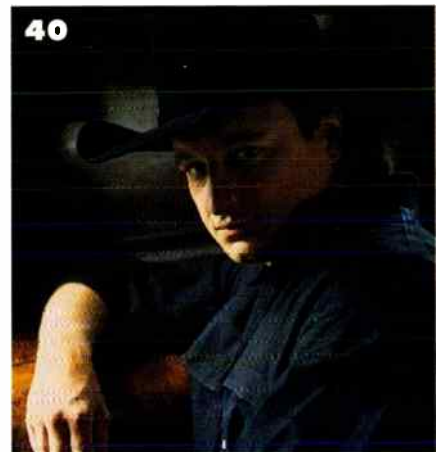
- 30 Mary Chapin Carpenter Gets Personal** *by Bob Allen*  
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STEVE JENNINGS (C)

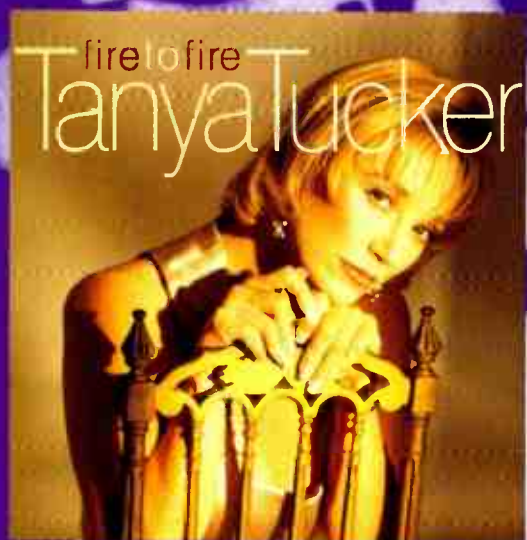


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a masterpiece  
of country  
& elegance

*Tanya Tucker*

fire to fire



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World Radio History

# People

## YES, YES, YES

Of course, Fan Fair is sold out. Sold out in about a second and a half. Every country music fan in the world wants to be in Nashville June 5th through 10th at the Tennessee State Fair grounds. Stars have not been announced as yet, but you can trust me on this one. Everybody who is anybody will be here along with 25,000 screaming fans.

## DEAD RECKONING RECORDS

I've not heard any of the music yet, but I want to, and so will you once you hear who all is involved. **Kieran Kane, Kevin Welch, Harry Stinson and Tammy Rogers** have pooled their resources and talents to form their own record label, Dead Reckoning Records. The label's first two releases are Kane's *Dead Reckoning* and Rogers' and Don Heffington's *In the Red*. Upcoming releases also include a studio album from **Kevin Welch** and a live recording from Nashville's **The Bluebloods**. Won't it be just too cool if these wonderfully talented people can score on this, their own record label. If you are interested and want some of their music, you can call 1-800-442-DEAD. It would please me muchly if this were a major success.

## PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

According to the people, three females were nominated in the music category as Female Vocalist of the Year: **Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey and Reba McEntire**. The winner, a country act, was Reba McEntire, which was really cool. Just as cool, or cooler, were the three male nominees, who are all country: **Vince Gill, Alan Jackson and Garth Brooks**. Garth received the award. Thanks to TNN, CMT, Sound Scan and rap, country music's finally getting its due. I love it.

## AT IT AGAIN

Hillbilly's fabo four, **Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson and Willie Nelson**, have new music on Liberty. Yep, **The Highwaymen's** new album is aptly titled *The Road Goes On Forever*. Shoot,

## MEMORIES OF TOOTSIE'S



The taping of the upcoming syndicated television special on Nashville's famous Tootsie's Orchid Lounge brought out a host of legendary country songwriters, including Kris Kristofferson, Bobby Bare, Willie Nelson and Jimmy Dean, who share their memories of Tootsie Bess and her bar. Show airs in June, check local listings.

they should have added, "And we will be on that road." I can tell you that the entire album is sooo hip. If you are a smart person, and you are or you wouldn't be reading this, you will go out and get this music...for the good times. Song choice made me smile, nostalgia brought tears, and Lord knows, there was tongue-in-cheek humor as always when these four wonderful friends perform or make records. All I can say is thank God, they're at it again. These four made Music City a better place. I hope we can say the same about the crop of 1995.

## ANOTHER LABEL IN TOWN

**Tim DuBois**, who's had major success with Arista Records and Arista/Texas, has announced the formation of Career Records, a sister label of Arista. My friend **Lee Roy Parnell** exits Arista and will

become the flagship artist for Career. The second act, **Brett James**, is a native of Oklahoma. **Denise Nichols**, former field promotion person for Arista, will serve as Director of Promotion, overseeing a staff of five for the new label. Course Mr. DuBois will oversee everything, while **Mike Dungan** will serve as VP/Sales and Marketing and **Jack Weston** will remain VP of Promotion. Joining this team of Top Guns is **Fletcher Foster**, yep, my longtime pal, exiting L.A. for Music City in the capacity of VP/Artist Development & Multi Media. Welcome home, Fletcher. Too long you've been gone.

## A LADY NAMED FRANCES

TV personality **Dan Miller** hosted the event. **Chet Atkins, Randy Owen, Mac Davis** and **Gary Morris** performed. Honoring BMI President & CEO **Frances Preston**, who be-

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman



mandolin, is god on both, no less. **Al Perkins'** dobro wrapped around "If I Could Only Win Your Love" like arms of high school lovers. Emmy dedicated "One of These Days" to her mother. **Jon Randall Stewart** with his hot guitar and harmony vocals, **Larry Atamanuik's** chili pepper drumming and **Mark Winchester's** scorching upright bass work drew applause after applause during the course of the evening. After a break, Emmy started her second set with **Steve Earle's** "Guitar Town" followed by "Half as Much," "Save the Last Dance for Me," "Sweet Dreams" and the incredible "Walls of Time," which was a real show stopper and might' nigh an altar call for me. Chills all over the body and screams all over the Ryman.

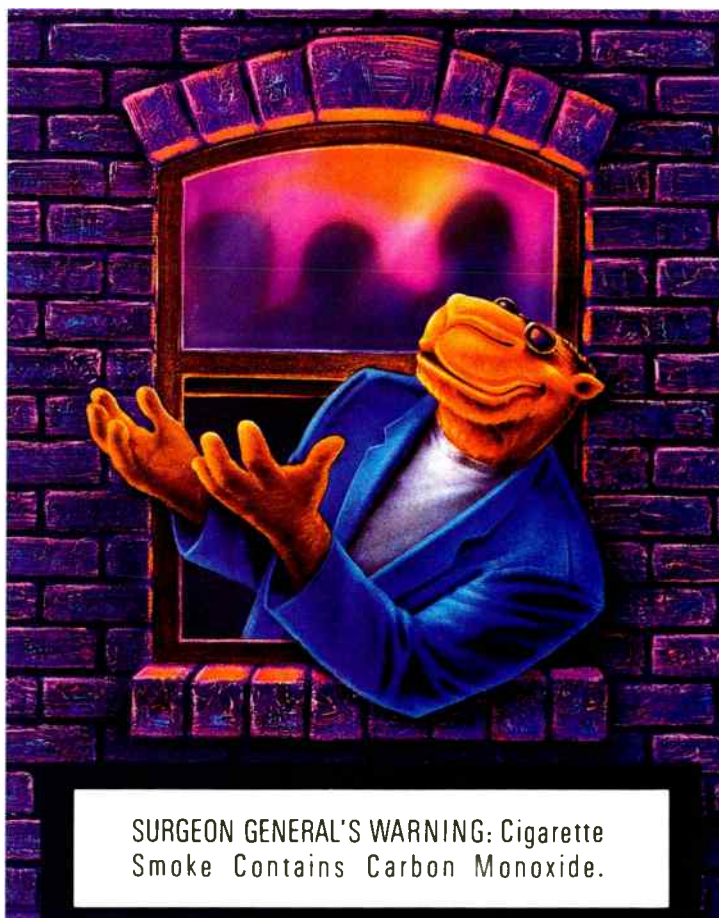
Changing guitars often throughout the evening, Emmylou strummed a blond Gibson, a real beauty. "This guitar is young," she said. "Guitars have to season out. And to do so they have to be played." Smiling, the lady of the hour said this classic line, "Everybody knows guitars and women get better with age." Cameos by **Bill Monroe** and **Kieran Kane** were welcomed, but clearly the night belonged to Miss Emmylou Harris and The Nash Ramblers...the way God meant it to be.

came the first female to receive the Nashville Entertainment Association's Master Award. Frances established Nashville's BMI office in 1958 and in 1985 took over the reins worldwide, forcing a move to New York. She's never forgot her roots, nor her Nashville songwriters, and every time a south wind blows, she's on a plane to Music City. The lady called Frances is the best friend a songwriter has. We salute her. Proceeds from the event go toward Vanderbilt's Frances Preston Laboratory/Cancer Center.

### THEY PARKED THE RAMBLER

Emmylou Harris has more music savvy than any ten I know. Example: musicians who have played in her band in the past include **Ricky Skaggs, Rodney Crowell, Sneaky Pete, Emory Gordy, Tony (wow) Brown, James Burton, Albert Lee, etc.**

Let's talk about parking **The Nash Rambler(s)**. They ran four years, and what a run they had. The first show was when Emmy and the guys recorded the live album at the Ryman. Naturally when they called it quits, the end had to be at the Ryman as well. Naturally, I was there. Favoring a Cover Girl model, Emmy hit the stage singing "Roses in the Snow," with her silver hair pulled back and her red-lipsticked smile shining. **Sam Bush** singing harmony and doubling on fiddle/





# People

## TIJUANA TIM

When Quick Draw **Tim McGraw** was in Tijuana, Mexico (you know that), filming a video for "Refried Dreams," fans 'cross the border in San Diego were invited by the local radio station to join in the street dance. Lo and behold, 1,500 showed up—on Fat Tuesday at that. Being Louisiana born and bred, McGraw saw Mardi Gras as time for a holiday. Partied till they puked, so I was told. As for the 27-year-old star, McGraw just smiles over the four and a half million albums he's sold in less than a year: *Not a Moment Too Soon*, lest you let the record title slip your mind.

## HAVE FAITH

**Faith Hill**, Nashville beauty, and **Julia Roberts**, Hollywood's beauty, teamed up on a children's project, entitled *The Road to Nashville*. Faith sings the ten songs on the project while Julia does the narration.

## GO SAN DI-E-GO

"Go San Diego," they said, and I did. To the NARM Convention, with the the Big Dudes. National Association of Recording Merchandisers, to translate—it's the folks who sell all recorded product. Recording companies bring their wares, tho top of the line, and make a presentation. Music City bigtimers like RCA's **Randy Goodman**, MCA's **Walt Wilson**, Mercury's **Luke Lewis**, **Bob (cutie) Frank**, **Sandy Neese** and **John Grady**, Polydor's **Steve Miller**, Sony's **Mike Kraski** and **Scott Siman** as well as K-tel's **Mickey Elfenbein**, with yours truly and every salesperson and A&R person. Highlights of interest included the CFMA (Capitol, Liberty, etc.) boat cruise, which was unbelievable. Superstar **Garth Brooks**, **Tanya Tucker** and a performing **John Berry** represented Music City with smiles and autographs, along with **Isaac Hayes**, **Paula Abdul** and others from different areas of music. An array of food fit for the queen that I am was on all three decks. Loved that moonlight cruise. Go San Diego.

Sony presented their finest singer, Mr. **Joe Diffie**, who pretty much set the convention on their ears. You must realize that before and after Joe was screaming, we were seeing and hearing videos—rap and other genres of music—that bored and blasted me out of my skin. Course seeing **Michael Jackson** and his new music was definitely Number One with a couple of bullets. I must say, as country as I am, Michael gave me that flutter you get in the presence of charisma.

Uni Distributers (MCA, etc.) not only had *Playboy* centerfold models signing autographs in their booth, they also had a topless with "just hand covering" foto of **Patti Davis**, daughter of former Prez **Ronald** and **Nancy Reagan**. Smiling away, former first daughter autographed her name. I kept looking for our illustrious leader **Russell Barnard** coming through the autograph line.

**The Mavericks** scored big, head and shoulders above all other MCA acts. Virtually brought the house down. Powers that be left the convention wanting to sell their wares, and it's no wonder.

BMG's "Greatest Musical Show on Earth" was a mini fair with games and prizes and food and decorations. Real cool. The sound, however, was far from "greatest," as were the first two acts. **Weird Al Yankovich** also failed miserably as host. **Radney Foster** fared well and so did **Lari White**, although one-tenth of the crowd was gone by the time she got on stage. Still Music City saved the show.

**Jeff Foxworthy** brought the Warner Brothers show home. He was funny and fun. The entire audience, New Yorkers, Hollywoodites and me, were all laughing our heads off. Foxworthy's album, *You*

*Might Be a Redneck If*, has surpassed platinum plus, so the comedian quipped, "Cost 'bout \$6,000 to make the record, sold over a million copies. Talking with the Warner execs backstage, 'n' they allow I might get some royalty money down the road soon."

The Polygram folks "PGD Hall" rocked every night to a packed house. You fans would have been extremely proud of newcomers **Chely Wright** on the Polydor label and **Kim Richey** on the Mercury label. Last, but certainly not least was the Country Music Association's (CMA) "guitar pull" on Saturday morning. **John Berry**, **Kim Richey**, **Joe Ely** and **Raul Malo** of **The Mavericks** showed those conventioners a thing or two. People from Los Angeles and New York don't get to see stars sing with "just a guitar," so our four stars showed them how it's done. Several folks from NYC and L.A. told me they'd never seen anything like it. Nothing, but nothing, equals the human voice when the singer can sing.

Representing the CMA was **Ed Benson** (exec director) and his harem of beauties, **Teresa George**, **Bobette Dudney**, **Jamie Dowling** and **Tammy Genovese**. A proud fivesome, they were.

**It's Getting Around.**

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.

## People



Two music legends, Woylon Jennings and Carl Perkins, joined Rodney Foster backstage at the taping of *Red Hot + Country*. The three-hour concert was filmed at the Ryman.

### RED HOT + COUNTRY

The wonderful Mercury album project *Red Hot + Country* became a TV special that I hope you eye-balled, for it was a killer show. Artists who participated in the project were **The Mavericks, Kathy Mattea, Suzy Bogguss, Billy Ray Cyrus, Sammy Kershaw, Nanci Griffith, Earl Scruggs, Randy Scruggs, Doc Watson, Rodney Foster and Jimmy Dale Gilmore**. Artists who came on for the special were **John Hiatt, Woylon Jennings, Shelby Lynne, Levon Helm and Ricky Skaggs**. All profits from this project go for AIDS awareness and research.

### EYE SAW

Eye saw the Phelps brothers, aka **Brother Phelps**, on my flight home...from San Diego through Dallas to Nashville.

### SYMPATHY

Sending love and sympathy to **Fran, Bill Jr. and Sheri Boyd** on the untimely passing of **Bill Boyd**, Executive Director of the Academy of Country Music. The 64-year-old Jackson, Tennessee, native died at home after suffering a massive heart attack. During the private ceremony the family was joined by only about 20 close friends including family friend superstar **Garth Brooks**, who sang "The Dance." Superstar **Dwight Yoakam** performed Bill's favorite song at the celebration of life ceremony, "I Sang Dixie." Bill and Fran Boyd were country music mainstays in California.

They helped found the ACM. Bill was also actively involved with most all country music television from California. Their son, Bill Jr., works for Dick Clark Productions, where Bill had his office. A giant has fallen. Bill Boyd will be missed.

### SPEAKING OF FOOD

**Alan Jackson**, that handsome, singing thing, now has a cookbook using his mama's recipes. See, Alan wants to teach America to cook. Georgia country boys want gravy with their biscuits, and they want their salmon fried...none of this sushi for Alan. So he figured if he did a cookbook with mama's recipes, just maybe restaurants might take a clue and start cooking like mama. Mmm...wonder if Alan needs a cook to go on the road? Now that would be a gig worth having. Boy, can I cook!

### THE HILLBILLY AND THE SENATOR

Republican Senator **Fred Thompson**, who has been seen in high places escorting **Lorrie Morgan** (hillbilly girl singer), did in fact accompany Miss Morgan to the Grand Ole Opry last Saturday night. The following Tuesday when former Tennessee Governor **Lamar Alexander** announced his candidacy for President of the United States, followed by a \$1,000 a plate fund raiser at the Opryland Hotel, the lovely Lorrie again was on Senator Fred's arm. The Hillbilly and the Senator are an item in these parts and others. Don't you just love show biz? Me too.

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**Russell D. Barnard**

Vice President/Managing Editor  
**Rochelle Friedman**

Editors-at-Large  
**Michael Bane, Patrick Carr,  
Bab Allen**

Art Director  
**Katheryn Gray**

Senior Editor  
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Contributing Editors  
**Peter Guralnick, Leonard Kamsler,  
Rich Kienzle, Bob Millard,  
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Associate Publisher/Advertising Director  
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Vice President/Creative Services  
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Merchandising Manager  
**Moira Allaby**

Administrative Assistant  
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### Editorial, Executive and Advertising Offices

329 Riverside Avenue  
Westport, Connecticut 06880  
Telephone (203) 221-4950  
FAX (203) 221-4948

Subscription Service  
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### Advertising Office, West Coast

Leonard Mendelson  
P.O. Box 5489  
Santa Monica, California 90409  
Telephone (310) 207-4948 (Advertising Sales)

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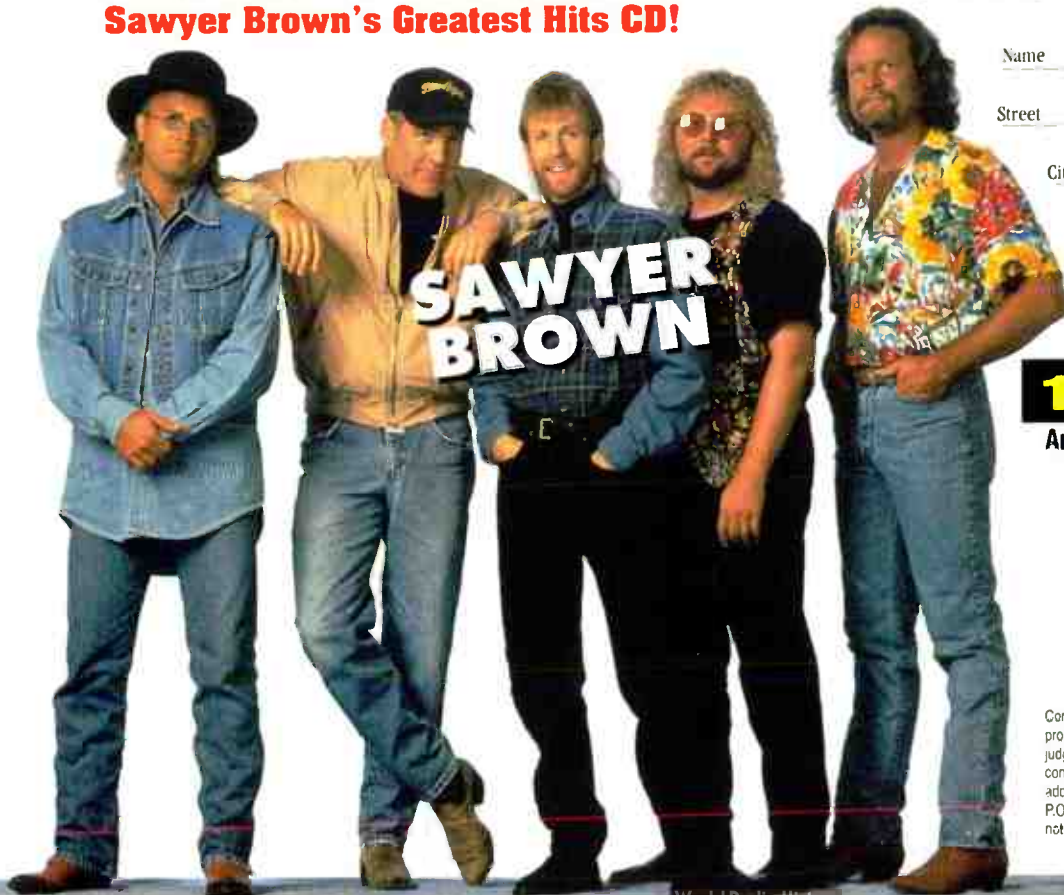
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# People



**Jim Ed Norman, prez Warner/Nashville, Ms. Reba, Faith Hill, producer Scott Hendricks and Martha Sharp of Warner Brothers, all celebrating Faith's debut platinum album.**

## BUGS BUNNY'S HOMEFOLKS MAKING A MOUNTAIN OUT OF A HILL

Warner Brothers Records is home to **Bugs Bunny**, **Travis Tritt**, **Jim Ed Norman** (Prez/Nashville) **Martha Sharp** (who signs stars), **Randy Travis** and the exciting **David Ball**. What Warner is also focusing on this day and time is making a mountain out of a hill...**Faith Hill**, that is. With her debut record certified platinum, all they knew to do was throw a party at the brand new trendy Boundry. When Faith asked the fans to "Take Me As I Am," they did...a blue million strong. During her short career, the Mississippi beauty continually talked about the fact that **Reba McEntire** was her mentor. And still today, Faith listens to Reba's music religiously. With that die cast, Ms. Reba felt it an honor to surprise her friend Faith. She dressed up, showed up and presented Faith with her first platinum record. Ain't show biz grand in Music City...course, I doubt this even would occur in rock 'n' roll.

Not too long after the party, Faith had laser surgery on her vocal chords, which laid her up without speaking for a spell. So I just sent Faith the wonderful *Oklahoma Girl* package that I put together for Mercury Records, which contains all of Reba's earlier recordings. On a personal note I am very proud of the package, and humbly proud of all the wonderful reviews I have received. I would like to thank **Rich Kienzle** with this mag, **Jay**

**Orr** with *The Nashville Banner*, **Jack Hurst**, **Peter Cronin** with *Billboard* and all the other wonderful people who wrote positive words about this, my first liner notes and package. Thank you.

## THE SCAR

I give it to you **Strait**, he's the sweetest, kindest, prettiest, cutest, sings the best and is plumb crazy over me. Well, it hap-

pened like this. MCA threw a do at the snazzy Nashville Country Club celebrating George Strait's re-signing with the label. Since 1981, when he made his first record, George has remained at the same "watering trough" so to speak, and 30 million records later, he's still the same predictable George. The label presented George with a special plaque commemorating his 14 years with MCA and presented him a second plaque for quadruple platinum (4,000,000) sales for his movie soundtrack, *Pure Country*. George's current album, *Lead On*, contains "You Can't Make a Heart Love Somebody," his 29th Number One single. George was visibly overwhelmed when labelmasters **Bruce Hinton** and **Tony (wow) Brown** surprised the star with a three-and-a-half year old palomino quarter horse, registered, of course, and named **Deacon**. The real highlight, however, was when I introduced ASCAP's **Shelby Kennedy** to George. Pointing to his beautiful chin, said I, "George, tell Shelby where you got the scar." "Hazel bit me," allowed the cowboy. Much laughter.

"We had a good time that weekend, didn't we," said the man of the hour. Now you have the real story, and I have a witness in **Shelby K.** So there.

## DOLLYWOOD, USA

For you fans coming this way or going that way, the lineup for 1995 at Dollywood is hot. **Aaron Tippin**, **Marty Stuart**, **Pam Tillis**, **Tracy Byrd** and **John Anderson**. Also appearing is **The Charlie Daniels Band**.



**Tony (wow) Brown, Bruce Hinton, Deacon, and George and Norma Strait were all smiles when George re-signed with MCA Records. He's been with the label for years.**

# Snowbird

by

Award-winning artist

Laura Cobabe



- Head, arms and legs crafted of fine, hand-painted bisque porcelain
- Hand-numbered and accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity
- Complete with a delightful little "snowbird"

Doll shown smaller than actual seated height of 11" (17 1/2" from head to toe)

As the sun's golden rays awaken the earth from its winter slumber, little "Snowbird" wanders outside to celebrate the beginning of spring. Warming her bare feet in the morning sunlight, she stretches her arms up to the clear blue sky. Suddenly, in a touching gesture of trust, a tiny snowbird alights on her fingertips — perhaps sensing they are kindred spirits.

Now, this heartwarming moment has been captured by gifted doll artist Laura Cobabe - winner of numerous doll artistry awards including the coveted "Rolf Ericson Award for Outstanding Doll Sculpture," and two back-to-back "Doll of the Year" awards. You can see her exceptional talents in the tilt of "Snowbird's" head ... the look of innocent wonder in her beautiful brown eyes ... the meticulous sculpting of her outstretched hand.

"Snowbird" wears a white fringed dress accented by beads of blue, yellow, and red — symbolizing her people's long-standing ties to the snow, sky, sun and Mother Earth. Her lustrous black hair is styled in two long braids and adorned with a beaded headband, lavished with feathers. Crafted of fine, hand-painted bisque porcelain, "Snowbird" is hand-numbered and accompanied by a matching Certificate of Authenticity. She is available exclusively from The Hamilton Collection for only \$135. As always, our 30 Day 100% Buy-Back Guarantee assures your complete satisfaction.

Welcome "Snowbird" and her delightful little visitor into your home. Submit your reservation today!

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## Respond by: June 30, 1995

Please accept my reservation for \_\_\_\_\_(qty.) "Snowbird" doll(s). The issue price is payable in five convenient monthly installments of \$27\* each. I need send no money now. On acceptance, I will be billed for the first installment when my doll is ready for shipment.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\*Plus \$ 90 shipping and handling per doll payment. Deliveries to FL will be billed 6% state sales tax. All reservations must be signed and are subject to acceptance.

## The Hamilton Collection

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# People



The annual Country Radio Seminar at the Opryland Hotel brings the stars out in force. Randy Travis makes the rounds with publicist Evelyn Shriver; Garth Brooks records a radio promo spot; and newcomers Daron Norwood and Daryl Singletary hold forth in the Giant Records suite.



## LANA AND JOHNNY WERE SWEET-HEARTS YEARS AGO

Years ago, before he shot his bus and before she had her daughters and maybe her sons, Lana Nelson and Johnny Rodriguez were sweethearts. What got the couple "in the same state" again, I don't know. But I do know they were married at the church in Luck, Texas, that was used in the movie *Red-Headed Stranger* starring, who else, Lana's dad Willie Nelson. As Lana waked down the aisle on the arm of her father, Johnny sang The Beatles' classic, "In My Life." Lana works as daddy's assistant, and Johnny is one of our better singing stars. We wish the newlyweds the best.



## LET'S ROAST PORTER

It was quite the gathering at the Opryland Hotel to roast Grand Ole Opry star Porter Wagoner. Superstar Dolly Parton was there to help out. When Dolly Parton was young, Porter Wagoner was a huge star. It was Porter who made Dolly a household word through concert appearances and his syndicated weekly television show. He was instrumental in helping her land a record deal with RCA as well as an Opry membership. After a seven-year relationship, a bitter breakup occurred. The couple did a makeup of sorts in the early 80's when Porter appeared on Dolly's network TV show.

Sammy Kershaw, Kenny Chesney, Alison Krause and Blackhawk. Plus Lari White, Neil McCoy, Toby Keith, Patty Loveless, Rick Trevino, David Ball and Doug Stone. Finally, John Berry, Collin Raye, Shenandoah, Louise Mandrell, Tammy Wynette, Jerry Clower, Merle Haggard and those great Oak Ridge Boys are all skedded. I will see you there.

## COUNTRY RADIO SEMINAR/NEW FACES

New artists on the New Faces show for the Country Radio Seminar were John & Audrey Wiggins, David Ball, Archer Park, George Ducas, Steve Kolander, Bryan White, Rick Trevino, Lisa Brokop, Ken Mellons and Western Flyer.

## RUN OVER BY HIS OWN CAR

Clinton Gregory's home is north of my home, Caswell County, North Carolina, up above Danville, in Martinsville, Virginia, where the famous Speedway is located. Clinton made an appearance at the local high school and after the show drove by the old house where he used to live. Since tree limbs were in the driveway, Clinton got out of his car, removed them and left his car engine running. Somehow,

the car jumped out of park and ran over Clinton. He was treated at the local hospital for a sprained wrist, head and neck injuries and facial cuts. By the time Clinton's mom had driven him to Mt. Juliet, some 450 miles away, rumor had it back in Martinsville that the Polydor recording artist was in fact dead. When a cousin called his house, it took Clinton a while to convince them he was very much alive. And we are glad he is.

## THOSE ASCAP PARTY-DOERS

Party after party: it's Number One time, and you know us. Connie Bradley and her staff threw a biggie for Vince Gill's chart topper, "When Love Finds You," penned by Vince and Michael Omartian. Next it was Collin Raye-time. We celebrated Collin's Number One, "My Kind of Girl," with writers Debi Cochran, John Jarrard and Monty Powell. The last do was for the Pam Tillis single, "Mi Vida Loca (My Crazy Life)," that Pam wrote with Jess Leary. All the parties were held at the glass-enclosed ASCAP building at the head of Music Row. Pam has her own company that is administered by Sony Tree Publishing. Pam's company name, Ben's Future Music. Ben is Pam's son. Cool, huh?

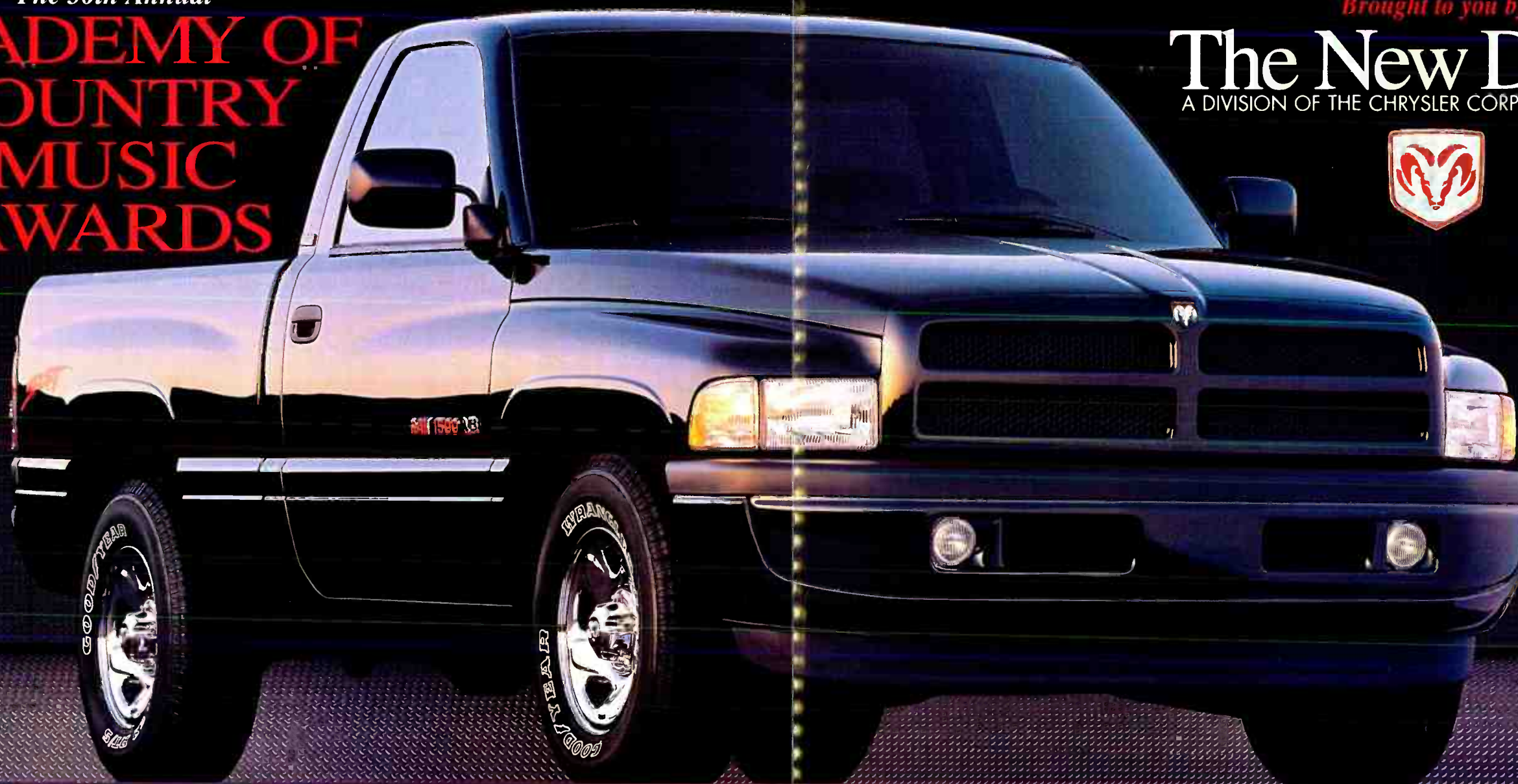
## VIC WILLIS: 1922-1995

John Victor "Vic" Willis, leader of the Opry's Vic Willis Trio and last surviving member of The Willis Brothers, died January 16 in a one-car accident near Hohenwald, Tennessee, while returning from a funeral. Originally known as The Oklahoma Wranglers, the three Willis brothers, Guy, Skeeter and Vic, made their reputation working with Eddy Arnold. They later renamed themselves The Willis Brothers, doing two stints with the show. In the 60's their trademarks became trucker records like the 1960 Top Ten record, "Give Me 40 Acres (to Turn This Rig Around)." The group continued after Skeeter's death in 1976, but after Guy died in 1981, Vic changed the name and brought in other musicians. Vic, a World War II veteran who was wounded in the 1944 Normandy invasion, was Secretary-Treasurer of Nashville's Musicians' Union.

—RICH KIENZLE

The 30th Annual  
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COUNTRY  
MUSIC  
AWARDS**

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PAM TILLIS

& Many Others!

**THE 1995 NOMINEES**

**ALBUM OF THE YEAR**

- In Pieces—Garth Brooks
- Not A Moment Too Soon—Tim McGraw
- Stones In The Road—Mary Chapin Carpenter
- When Love Finds You—Vince Gill
- Who I Am—Alan Jackson

**SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR**

- Don't Take The Girl—Tim McGraw
- I Swear—John Michael Montgomery
- Livin' On Love—Alan Jackson
- Third Rock From The Sun—Joe Diffie
- Tryin' To Get Over You—Vince Gill

**SONG OF THE YEAR**

- Don't Take The Girl—Tim McGraw
- How Can I Help You Say Goodbye—Patty Loveless
- I Swear—John Michael Montgomery
- Livin' On Love—Alan Jackson
- When Love Finds You—Vince Gill

**TOP MALE VOCALIST**

- Garth Brooks
- Joe Diffie
- Vince Gill
- Alan Jackson
- George Strait

**TOP FEMALE VOCALIST**

- Mary Chapin Carpenter
- Faith Hill
- Patty Loveless
- Reba McEntire
- Pam Tillis

**NEW MALE VOCALIST**

- David Ball
- John Berry
- Tim McGraw

**TOP VOCAL GROUP**

- Alabama
- Diamond Rio
- Little Texas
- Sawyer Brown
- The Mavericks

**TOP VOCAL DUET**

- John Anderson/Tracy Lawrence
- Brooks & Dunn
- George Jones/Alan Jackson
- Conway Twitty/Sam Moore
- Trisha Yearwood/Aaron Neville

**NEW FEMALE VOCALIST**

- Lisa Brokop
- Victoria Shaw
- Chely Wright

**ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR**

- Alabama
- Garth Brooks
- Brooks & Dunn
- Alan Jackson
- Reba McEntire

**NEW VOCAL DUET OR GROUP**

- The Mavericks
- The Tractors
- John & Audrey Wiggins





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# People

## A HILLBILLY WEDDING



When Ken Mellons married longtime girlfriend, Stephanie Poole, it was truly a hillbilly affair at the Lebanon Road Church of Christ. To prove the point, Ken sang "Where Forever Begins" for his bride during the ceremony. Joining Stephanie and Ken in the celebration are: second row, managers Eric Marcuse and Allen Whitcomb; third row Dale Dodson with Sony Music Publishing, Jerry Cupit who produces Ken and is a co-writer, Jack Lameier, VP Epic Promotion, and Doug Johnson, VP A&R/Epic. Just a hillbilly wedding for the "Jukebox Junkie," who is one of my favorite newcomers.

The roast was the scene of complete reconciliation. It went like this. Dolly said, "When we broke up Porter, you said a lot of hurtful things. Here in front of everybody, all these people. I want to say that I forgive you for anything and everything you did and said. And I know I said a lot of hurtful things as well. I want you to forgive me." Dolly and Porter embraced, and the show went on. Roasting her former partner, Dolly teasingly said, "For seven years I was a Porter Wagoner look-alike. I stood and sang in his shadow and under his arm." Oprymate Jeannie Seely took her turn, remarking that she'd always wanted to be a duo with Porter, but along came Dolly with two big "hips" and she got that job. Chet Atkins allowed as how once a tornado hit Porter's hometown of West Plains, Missouri, doing \$100,000 worth of damage; however, it was an improvement. Finally Ralph Emery told about Porter (who loves to hunt) going hunting and shooting a sofa. With all his fancy rhinestone suits, etc., Ralph claimed that Porter took the sofa home and made a suit out of it. Opry/Opryland/Gaylord CEO E.W. "Bud" Wendell, Carol Lee Cooper, The Oak Ridge Boys, Nora Lee Allen and more famed and near-famed attended the event, a benefit for the Dan Rudy Cancer Center.

## NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations go out to our favorite cowboy, Ranger Doug of *Ridgers in the Sky*, and his wife, Dianne. They are the proud parents of Grace Elizabeth Green, born at Nashville's Baptist Hospital. Says the proud father, "We are absolutely ecstatic over the arrival of Baby Grace." To all of them we say, "Happy trails."

## COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME CELEBRATION

What a classy do with great rations and fabo entertainment. Held at the Opryland Hotel, it was awesome. When you looked around a room, you felt like you were looking at a photo album of "Who's Who in Country Music." Present were Hall of Famers Kitty Wells with hubby Johnny Wright, Bill Monroe, who kissed me on the mouth, Earl Scruggs with his lovely wife Louise Scruggs, Roy Horton, 96-year-old Jimmie Davis with wife Anna, Pee Wee King, the beautiful and classy Frances Preston, Grandpa Jones with his wife Ramona, daughters Eloise and Alisha, Hank Thompson, Mariposa and Ronnie Robbins (wife and son of late Hall of Famer Marty Robbins)

and the fabo Chet Atkins.

Also in the crowd were RCA-ers Joe Galante with wife Phran Schwartz, and Randy Goodman with wife Jennifer. Opryland's "Bud" and Janice Wendell, Arista's Tim and Pam DuBois, Tandy Rice with ex-wife Judge Muriel Robinson, Mary del Frank and hubby Stan Scobey, Dick Frank, Connie and Jerry Bradley, Shelby and Sheri Kennedy, Bev and Jack Weston, MCA's handsome Bruce Hinton and Tony (wow) Brown, Catherine Darnell, Roger and Shirly Sovine, Joyce Rice, whose date was some pop singer that you might know named Neil Diamond, Bob Gaudino, who was one of the Four Freshmen and is currently Diamond's producer, and Tom Roland and Connie Smith. As for the entertainment, Marty Stuart, Pam Tillis, Hal Ketchum, Martina McBride and the great Willie Nelson performed. You will see the show televised on TNN. Look for it.

## A STREET IN SEDALIA

Sedalia, Missouri, hometown of Leroy Van Dyke, named a street Leroy Van Dyke Avenue. Cool, huh? Born on a farm near Sedalia, Leroy joined the *Ozark Jamboree* in Springfield with Red Foley in 1956. His first hit, "Auctioneer," soon followed. In 1961 his monster single, "Walk on By," chart topped—stayed at the Number One position for an unbelievable 19 weeks. It ain't every day a body gets a street named for them. But there is a street in Sedalia called Leroy Van Dyke Avenue.



If you're ever in Sedalia, Missouri, check out the street named Leroy Van Dyke Avenue in honor of a hometown hero.

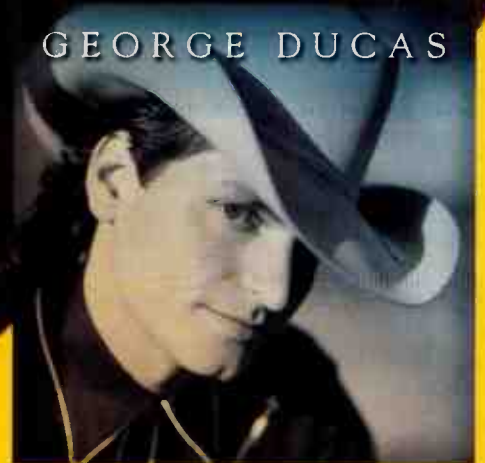
A COOL SHADE OF COUNTRY...

# GEORGE DUCAS

GEORGE DUCAS

FEATURING THE HIT SINGLE

LIPSTICK PROMISES



# Record Reviews

## Various Artists

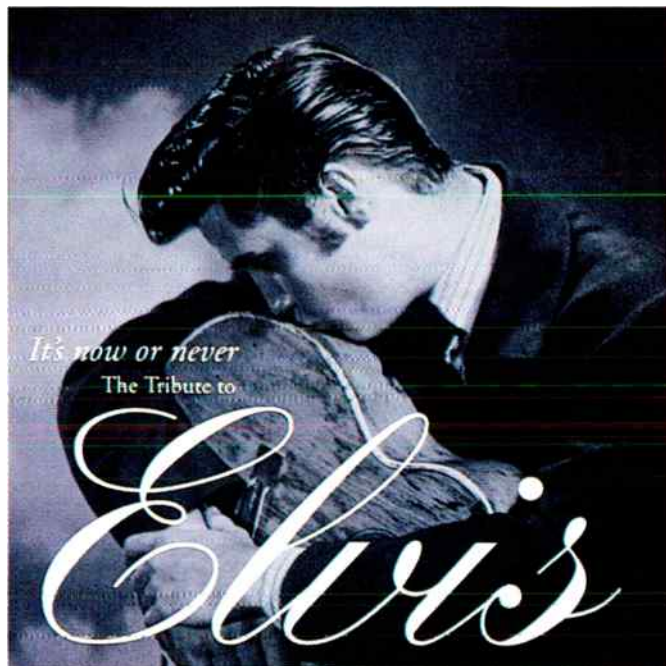
*It's Now or Never: The Tribute to Elvis*  
Mercury 314-524 072

One of the first singers to do any sort of Elvis tribute album was Merle Haggard, who followed up his 1977 hit single, "From Graceland to the Promised Land," with an LP of the same name.

If anyone could make a contemporary all-star Elvis tribute succeed, focusing on his early material in a (mostly) concert setting, it's producer Don Was. Was, after all, gave Willie *Across the Borderline* and Waylon *Waymore's Blues, Part II*. As it is, the record sounds great on first hearing. But on subsequent listens, it's clear that even Was could only make it succeed part of the time.

Certainly, the high points are abundant.

Travis Tritt's roaring "Lawdy Miss Clawdy" (a Lloyd Price R&B hit that Elvis covered) outdoes some of Tritt's own material. Tanya Tucker's longstanding Elvis obsession yields a performance of "Teddy Bear" reeking with excitement and authority. Dwight Yoakam's "Mystery Train" is one of his better recent moments, and has a bonus in Pete Anderson's brilliantly gnarly guitar solo. The Mavericks, whose Raul Malo is among this decade's greatest ballad vocalists, are masterful on "Love Me." Rock singer Melissa Etheridge turns in a white-hot "Burning Love." The Michael Hutchence-NRBQ version of "Baby, Let's Play House" preserves the bopping spirit of Elvis' original Sun recording. Equally masterful is Aaron Neville's spin on "Young and Beautiful," from the film *Jailhouse Rock*. He manages to preserve the original



recording's plaintive feel.

The lesser moments are ones that even Was' talents can't resolve. In all but one case, the blame rests with artists, not with the material. Marty Stuart could tackle many early Elvis tunes. Unfortunately, his "Don't Be Cruel" with The Jordanares is simply bland. Pop superstar Michael Bolton, known for lousy remakes of pop and rock standards, is outclassed on "Jailhouse Rock" by the guitars of Carl Perkins and Scotty Moore. Rocker Chris Isaak's prissy "Blue Moon" and Wet Wet Wet's "It's Now or Never" are flat imitations, while Faith Hill's "Tryin' to Get to You" and Canadian rocker Bryan Adams' listless "Hound Dog" are terminally boring. Still, any of these surpass Billy Ray Cyrus' pathetic, off-key version of "One Night (With You)." He may have The King's onstage moves down pat, but musically, he couldn't shine the sequins on Presley's jumpsuits.

Only once does the material fail the singer. Tony Bennett, a master of standards of the pre-rock era, has a certain versatility. After all, his second big hit was a 1951 pop version of "Cold, Cold Heart." Now a star to the MTV generation (many of us forty-somethings always knew he was great), his version of "Love Me Tender," which he says Elvis wrote (Elvis didn't write it but got composer credit), exudes the class that only Bennett can project. Unfortunately, this isn't his type of song. In fairness, Elvis couldn't handle the songs of Gershwin, at which Bennett excelled. Bennett only worsens his self-conscious, forced performance by making it a lame, lounge-style audience sing-along.

I don't know if given the variety of performers, genres (and egos) involved in such a project, anyone could have made this work any better. Was faced a number of challenges here, and did his best. —RICH KIENZLE

## Kieran Kane

*Dead Reckoning*  
DR 001

Nearly ten years ago, Kieran Kane and Jamie O'Hara formed the acoustic vocal duo, The O'Kanes, one of the great acts of the New Traditional era. One could have mistaken their sound for demo sessions, given the sparse accompaniment and loose, easy feel. Yet their moody, atmospheric sound, top-notch songs and eerie harmonies set them apart from nearly anyone around today. Sadly, they couldn't continue the momentum and eventually split. Kane did one 1994 Atlantic album that didn't sell, so he's joined with Kevin Welch and producer Harry Stinson to form the Dead Reckoning label. *Dead Reckoning* is also the name of Kane's debut release.

Without the pressure of producers demanding "product" to suit the cookie cutter mentality of radio programmers, Kane calls his own shots. The loose O'Kanes feel, mixing acoustic instruments with the occasional electric guitar, is up front. That he attains such a full sound with so few instruments remains amazing, and a lesson to any producer who thinks he (or she) needs 20 musicians and six weeks of overdubs to get this result.

"This Dirty Little Town" takes a cynical shot at a small-minded, ugly hamlet. Even stronger is the dark, moody "He Never Knew What Hit Him," a tale of an abused woman who doesn't run from her abuser; rather, there are fatal results to him. "Eight More Miles," "Find Somebody New" and "Cool Me Down" aren't profound, yet it's a pleasure to hear the rhythmic, raunchy O'Kanes sound re-

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World Radio History

# Record Reviews

vived with such flair. Even Kane's cover versions succeed. It's understandable that he pulls off Hank Williams' original recording of the fatalistic "Ramblin' Man," not an easy song to cover. The original recording could have been a model for Kane's acoustic sound. The closer, a delightful version of Buck Owens' "Love's Gonna Live Here," also fits.

I seriously doubt that Kane's top priority is a mass audience. The growing market for alternative country, which might wash away some of the day's worst music, may be the place for him. In any case, in a time when too many vocalists sound cloned from each other, it's doubtful anyone hearing a Kieran Kane record would mistake it for the latest dance favorite. —RICH KIENZLE



## Highwaymen

*The Road Goes On Forever*

Liberty 28091

So much has changed in country music in the decade since the post-Outlaw quartet, The Highwaymen (consisting of Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash), released its first album (*The Highwaymen*, 1985), that it kind of makes your head spin.

Maybe that's why the sepia liner sleeve photo of Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and Kristofferson posed together for their third collaboration, *The Road Goes On Forever*, makes me feel nostalgic—like I'm witnessing a reunion of Civil War veterans or something. Their creased faces, like their ragged, leathery harmonies, are faded but familiar landmarks on country music's drastically altered landscape.

Sure, there's a soothing familiarity to these four roughhewn voices raised in clumsy unison. Willie, of course, can harmonize with everybody—and has; Waylon

can harmonize under duress; and Cash and Kristofferson do manage to hit the right notes most of the time: The end result often sounds like a drunkards' choir. Yet *The Road Goes On Forever* is also a radical album. It is shaped by the provocative philosophy, religion, social commentary and delightfully off-the-wall humor that informs these 11 intriguing, out-of-left-field songs.

Each of the four Highwaymen has contributed one original to *The Road Goes On Forever*. There are also thought-provoking songs by great writers like Kevin Welch ("Everyone Gets Crazy"), Steve Earle ("The Devil's Right Hand," which Jennings previously recorded), Robert Earl Keen Jr. (the title tune), Billy Joe and Eddy Shaver ("Live Forever") and Dallas Frazier.

Producer Don Was' gutsy, free-wheeling arrangements also give these tracks special distinction. Using relatively sparse, but occasionally exotic instrumentation, Was deftly inspires this aging foursome to gospel fervor, as on both "Live Forever" and "Death and Hell," the latter a gothic tale of temptation and salvation written by Cash and his wife June, and to bluesy bravado, as in the rowdy vocal interplay and searing instrumentation of "It Is What It Is."

There's even a little bit of full-tilt rock 'n' roll on here, which is not surprising since

Was also produced The Rolling Stones' last album. For instance, check out NRBQ guitarist Stephen Bruton's scorching electric lead playing on his own composition, "Waiting For a Long Time."

Not all the song choices are startling. Leave it to Nelson, the King of the Song Recyclers, to trot out an oldie like his own oft-recorded 1962 original, "The End of Understanding." Surprisingly, Nelson, backed by a loping shuffle beat and some snazzy steel guitar and Hammond C-3 passages, manages to make the song sound fresh. Kristofferson re-introduces his previously recorded "Here Comes That Rainbow Again." The song's heartwarming message, about how one small act of human kindness often inspires another, seems more timely and poignant than ever.

With typical irreverence, the album closes with the title track, a modern-day Outlaw anthem written and previously recorded by Robert Earl Keen Jr., and also covered by Joe Ely a few years ago. The Highwaymen's lumbering, top-heavy version of this harrowing tale of small-time thieves and drug dealers with no honor among them doesn't come close to beating Keen's original version. But it's intriguing all the same—the sort of ballsy, graphic four-and-a-half-minute saga song that hardly anyone else would

touch in this ultra-conservative age.

*The Road Goes On Forever* is simply too disheveled and haphazard-sounding to rank as a great album (like the previous two Highwaymen albums, it sounds like it was done on the fly), and the singing seldom rises above the ordinary. Yet the songs are so vivid, the performances so roughhewn and authentic, that it's hard to resist its bumbling, grizzled charm. —BOB ALLEN

## Linda Ronstadt

*Feels Like Home*

Elektra 61703

Not long ago, an elderly neighbor asked me why all young country female singers scream so much in their recordings. When I answered, "Linda Ronstadt," this sweet, tough 85-year-old scrunched up her face to wordlessly say, "Who?" So I added, "Because they all grew up listening to rock singers." She nodded her agreement while grimacing to show her lack of approval. Miss Mildred would probably scrunched up her face again if she heard Ronstadt screaming her way through Tom Petty's "The Waiting," which opens the Mexican-American's new album, her most mainstream musical effort in more than a decade.

Titled after a Randy Newman song, *Feels Like*

## Record Reviews

*Home* should feel like familiar territory to Ronstadt. It's a return to the kind of eclectic albums that were her specialty in the 1970's, when she combined renditions of a couple of well-known rock and R&B hits with the occasional country classic and several well-chosen sensitive songs culled from the best singer-songwriters of the day. As in the past, her highpoints are stunningly strong while the lowpoints suggest she still sometimes wields her blowtorch of a voice with an extravagance that scorches past whatever emotions the lyrics hold.

On her new album, the worst example of over-singing is on Matraca Berg's "Walk On," about a gutsy woman who tells her man that the next time he walks out during an argument, he need not walk back. Ronstadt's version picks up the tempo, and she opens up and roars, but she doesn't come close to conveying the bitterness and contempt behind the song's message of strength. That's too bad, for she's excelled at such emotional context in the past—remember "You're No Good" and "Poor Poor Pitiful Me"?

"Walk On" follows "The Waiting," and maybe Ronstadt wails with such glib superficiality through both because she's hurrying to get to the ballads that make up the rest of *Feels Like Home*. From then on out, Ronstadt's gifts shine. She can still sometimes sound almost too pretty, as on her cover of Neil Young's psychedelic environmental protest song, "After the Goldrush." But, for the most part, she digs into substantial songs with subtle beauty and ideal emotional weight. Highlights include remarkable versions of Dave Olney's "Woman 'Cross the River," Harley Allen's "High Sierra," Newman's title cut and Uncle Dave Macon's "Morning Blues" (based on an arrangement originally recorded by The Seldom Scene). She also does a good job with Tom Kimmel and Jennifer

Kimball's "The Blue Train" and The Carter Family's "Lover's Return."

Starting 25 years ago, and predating both The Eagles (who once were her back up band) and Emmylou Harris, Ronstadt has shown her willingness to mix solid versions of country standards by Hank Williams, Ray Price and Willie Nelson into her repertoire, and in so doing, has done as much to keep country music alive among young rock fans as anyone of her generation. And it's impossible to listen to Trisha Yearwood, Martina McBride, Lari White and parts of Patty Loveless and not recognize Ronstadt as one of the primary influences on the latest generation of female country vocalists. *Feels Like Home* is a welcome reminder of her classic period, warts and all. I won't play it for Miss Mildred, but anyone under 50 will find something to identify with in these lyrics—and plenty to admire in the singer's talent.

—MICHAEL MCCALL

**Guy Clark**  
*Dublin Blues*  
Asylum 61725

**G**uy Clark is a slow worker. *Dublin Blues* is his first album in three years and only his seventh since his debut, *Old No. 1*, appeared in '75. The silver-haired Texan has

praised the patient, meticulous process of the artisan's hands-on craftsmanship in songs like "The Carpenter," "Boats to Build" and "Jack of All Trades" and obviously applies the same approach to his own songwriting. The time is well spent, for his latest batch of songs resembles fine furniture; the words and music fit together so precisely that there's nary a seam or a wobble.

*Dublin Blues* contains yet another Clark song about craftsmanship, "Stuff That Works," which he co-wrote with Rodney Crowell. Compared to the version on Crowell's last album, Clark's take on the song is softer and more casual—much like the faded shirt, scratched guitar and creased boots he praises in the first verse. Clark starts singing about the importance of keeping an old car tuned up and ends up talking about paying attention to your friendships and marriage. The connection is so natural—so well crafted, that is—that it never has to be explained or even stated.

That sort of polish comes from honing your skills over many years. Clark's skills as a wordsmith have never been more obvious than on "Hank Williams Said It Best," where he invents dozens of variations on the old cliché, "One man's heaven is another man's hell." "One man's famine is another

man's feast; one man's pet is another man's beast," he sings. "One man's bat is another man's ball; one man's art is another man's scrawl." He also has a knack for taking a commonplace object like a cheap set of "Black Diamond Strings" and making it stand in for a whole way of life—in this case, the good times which can be enjoyed even on a poverty budget.

"The Cape" is the tale of an eight-year-old kid jumping off the roof with a Superman cape in the form of a flour sack tied around his neck. It's a sharply sketched story, and it leads, as so many Clark songs do, to a memorable aphorism: "He's one of those who knows that life is just a leap of faith—spread your arms and hold your breath and always trust your cape." At other times, Clark pushes his narratives in the direction of comic absurdity, as in "Baby Took a Limo to Memphis," one woman's adventure with a credit card. Sometimes, he weaves his mottos and jokes together, as in "Shut Up and Talk to Me," in which he begs his lover to stop chattering and please say something.

Clark's limitations are the same as ever. The cramped dimensions of his vocal tone and range make Johnny Cash sound like Luciano Pavarotti, and his easy-going, clip-clop midtempo rhythms are too unvarying for their own good.



Guy Clark/Dublin Blues



# Record Reviews

Admiring friends such as Nanci Griffith, Emmylou Harris, Kathy Mattea and Sam Bush make the harmonies surrounding Clark especially rich on "Dublin Blues," and Ramblin' Jack Elliott (the subject of an earlier Clark song) sings a duet vocal on "Hangin' Your Life on the Wall," a defiant anthem of old folks who refuse to slow down. The heart of any Guy Clark album, though, is the writing, and the writing on *Dublin Blues* is the work of a dogged perfectionist.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

## Rick Trevino

*Looking For the Light*  
Columbia 66771

**D**amn, I just don't think I'd want to be a new country artist right now. There are just too many singers vying for too few spots in the charts, and the competition has become hostile, cutthroat.

Then, too, it used to be that once you got a couple of hit records under your belt, you were set for life (if you could get by playing 500-seat high school gymnasiums, as many of the Opry's elder stars still do today). But the new "Young Country" fans are far more fickle and impulsive than their counterparts from 20 or 30 years ago. They're quick to flick the radio preset if your latest single leaves them cold, or doesn't readily inspire a new dance step.

Thus there are some stiff odds to beat, and, quite frankly, many of today's newcomers won't beat them. Yet, of all of today's babyfaced country crooners (no wonder they call them "baby acts" within the industry—most of 'em look like they're about 16!), Austin-born Rick Trevino clearly has an edge, if anyone does.

Though Trevino is no Jones or Travis or Strait, he is a fine journeyman singer all the same. More important, as the 11 solid tracks on *Looking For the Light*, his second album,

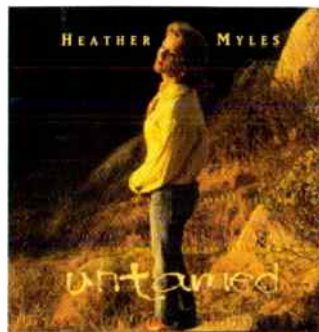


demonstrate, he's on fire with the honky tonk spirit: confidently entrenched in an exuberant, hard country groove with a palpable sense of tradition.

Trevino wrote only one song on *Looking For the Light* (it's a beauty); but he and producers Steve Buckingham and Blake Chancey have done a superb job of rounding up ten top-drawer tunes by some of Nashville's most dependable writers. Trevino, much to his credit, even dusts off a quirky, half-forgotten old Merle Haggard-Tommy Collins gem called "Poor, Broke, Mixed Up Mess of a Heart," which Haggard recorded years ago in his own best imitation of Buck Owens.

Even when Trevino delves into three-handkerchief sentimentality, as on the title tune (a tender ode to Mama written by Liz Mengher and Tim Mensy), his earnestness and sure-footed sense of style serve him well. His ease as a balladeer is even more apparent on a provocative song like "The Pain" (Rusty Golden-Danny Mayo), in which a heartbroken man prays to God, not to get his woman back, but merely to find a way out of his grief. Trevino has a great big outrageous streak of spunk and playfulness in him as well. He uses it to shovel an extra layer of fun and bravado on party songs like "Save This One for Me," "I Want a Girl in a Pick-Up Truck" and "Bobbie Ann Mason."

"Family Reunion" (by John Scott Sherrill and Pebe Sebert), with its droll barroom wit and weeping steel guitars, is another tongue-in-cheek six-



pack tour de force. On "Full Deck of Cards" (by Kostas and Melanie Dyer) he deals yet another winning hand and struts his frisky honky tonk savvy.

"San Antonio Rose" is the sole Trevino original here, and it fittingly closes the album. Most of the time when these rollerblade generation honky tonkers try to evoke a sense of tradition by recycling Bob Wills and Western swing clichés, they merely come off sounding callow and disingenuous. But Trevino delivers this heartfelt ode to his late grandfather with flair and emotion.

All told, *Looking For the Light* is a delightful, inspired and amazingly consistent effort. These 11 songs are just about enough to convince me that R.T.'s got a real strong chance of hanging in for the long haul.

—BOB ALLEN

## Heather Myles

*Untamed*  
HighTone HCD 8059

**H**eather Myles is an oddity in the current market, considering the way Nashville's signed every Trisha and Mary Chapin clone they can find in the city's folkie clubs and at songwriters' nights. A lot of the paths followed by these singers were fresh 20 years ago when Linda Ronstadt and others blazed then, but today they're moldy oldies that the new generation hasn't improved upon. Californians, however, always have strayed from the norm in the country field, and Myles has an individuality seen too little these

days. Her roots owe more to Dwight Yoakam and other Western beat pioneers of a decade ago than they do to mainstream country artists.

*Untamed*, a worthy successor to her HighTone debut, *Just Like Old Times*, demonstrates she can retain her non-nonsense edginess while creating music commercial enough for a mainstream audience. Her full-throated voice and her well-focused writing aren't all that make up Myles.

Her Southwestern consciousness dominates the album. One of the high points comes early with her intense, Patsy-esque "When You Walked Out on Me." Just as compelling is the ballad, "Until I Couldn't Have You," and the moody, Tex-Mex "Indigo Moon." The snap and snarl continues with "It Ain't Over" as she roars, at one point, "You can go to he-e-ll!" That same directness dominates the low-keyed ballads, "Until I Couldn't Have You" and "Coming Back to Me." The rocking, acerbic "Gone Too Long," penned by Myles and Dickey Lee (composer of "She Thinks I Still Care"), also approaches perfection. Her environmentalist title song succeeds largely because it avoids the preachiness that usually sinks most social commentary.

Two covers also stand out, one being her smoldering version of Eddy Raven's "Just Leave Me Alone" (co-written by Raven and Whitey Shafer). And her performance of Marty Robbins' 1964 hit ballad, "Begging to You," would bring a smile to Marty himself. Even the musicians are excellent, particularly guitarists Bob Gothar and Greg Leisz, and original Dwight Yoakam fiddler Brantley Kearns.

Myles has proven herself with two outstanding albums that appeal to the mainstream, the alternative audience and even older fans. She has that rare potential to reach them all, and she more than deserves a chance.

—RICH KIENZLE

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# Record Reviews

## Wade Hayes *Old Enough to Know Better*

Columbia CK 66412

Welcome to the information age, folks. If you haven't noticed, due to the advent of global communications—faxes, the Internet, 24-hour cable TV, and the still vital and expanding print media—we're having more new information hurled at us faster than we can possibly absorb it.

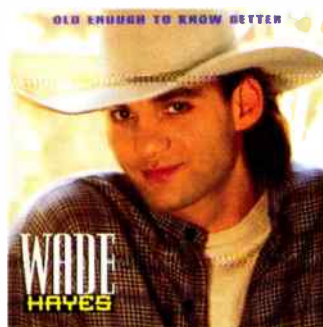
In a strange way the same thing seems to be happening in country music. With almost manic determination the major labels are signing new singers and tossing them out on the marketplace faster than the average fan can even sort them out. It's cold, it's calculating, and the end result, I believe, is going to be a thinner slice of the pie for everybody. That is, there will be much shorter careers for most artists, and a lot of very talented people will be lost in the shuffle. (I could be completely wrong about this....I hope I am.)

Yet undeniably, another end result of all this, at least in the case of Oklahoma-born newcomer Wade Hayes, is some fine new music. Hayes' recent single, "Old Enough to Know Better," which is also the title tune of his debut album, recently, and deservedly, topped the country charts.

Could Wade Hayes be the next George Strait? Or (more realistically), the next Mark Chesnutt? (Stylistically I hear a strong similarity there.) Or will he even be around two years from now?

Good God, don't ask me! With so many gifted contenders jockeying for position in an already over-crowded field, I no longer feel safe making those kinds of predictions.

Yet I do know that there's a whole lot to like about *Old Enough to Know Better*. It's solid, no-frills neo-honky tonk served up with gusto and confidence, as well as tenderness and pathos. Nothing more, nothing less. There is no great



innovation going on here; no stylistic ground-breaking. There is, however, some very sure-footed songwriting and singing from a young artist who seems to have a clear-headed sense of what he stands for, musically, and where he's going.

*Old Enough to Know Better* was produced by Don Cook, who's hit pay dirt in recent years with The Mavericks and Brooks & Dunn. He boosts these ten tracks (three of which Hayes co-wrote with Chick Rains and four of which Cook himself had a hand in writing) with the same sort of punchy, space age-honky tonk production style he's brought to the hits of the aforementioned groups.

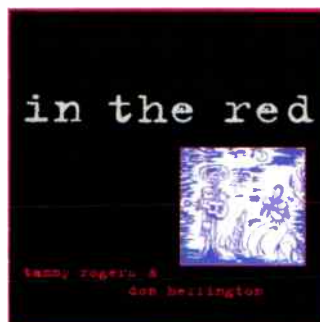
Hayes expertly handles the rowdy uptempo stuff, like "Don't Make Me Come to Tulsa" (written by Don Cook), and the good-timey title tune. Yet his true depth is most apparent on the slower, more sensual songs. Hayes' dusky voice evokes a special tenderness, and hints of George Strait (of the "You Look So Good in Love" era), on "I'm Still Dancin' With You."

Hayes also serves up a mountain of pathos on "Family Reunion," one of two tunes on here co-written by the great Harlan Howard. This is an especially mournful, knowing song about a man who comes to terms with his painful past by reuniting his mother and his long missing father—unfortunately, he is only able to accomplish the reunion after they've both passed away. ("This time, Mama, he's gonna stay forever by your side...." he sings.) Man, oh, man! Sad-

ness without measure! If this ain't country, I don't know what is. (The only thing weepier would be if someone ran over your favorite hound dog.) Hayes, to his credit, simply sings the hell out of the song.

Hayes serves up a similarly moving rendition of "Kentucky Bluebird," a love song co-written by Cook and previously recorded by the late Keith Whitley. As much as I've always loved Whitley's posthumously released version of "Kentucky Bluebird," I have to admit that Hayes (who cites Whitley as a big influence) certainly does Whitley's memory proud. Like I said, I'm through with predictions. There are just too many horses in the race at this point. But if Wade Hayes can sustain the nearly impeccable artistry heard on *Old Enough to Know Better*, he may stick around for a while.

—BOB ALLEN



## Tammy Rogers and Don Heffington

*In the Red*  
Dead Reckoning 0002

Anyone who has regularly attended country music concerts in the last few years has probably seen Tammy Rogers perform. She's a dark-haired dervish with an engaging stage presence who performs on fiddle, and occasionally mandolin or other instruments, and she has backed Patty Loveless, Randy Travis, Vince Gill and Kieran Kane, among others. As a testament to her talent and versatility, she's also often recruited by

those outside the mainstream country pool. She's been touring with Victoria Williams recently and has worked with Neil Young, Maria McKee and The Jayhawks—all of whom are linked by quality and individuality.

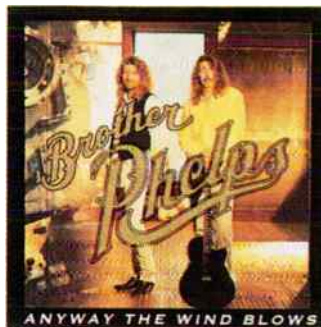
Rogers met Heffington, the original drummer of the memorable country-rock outfit Lone Justice, when both performed as part of Loveless' concert band. They also recently worked alongside Williams together, and sometime along the way began collaborating on a series of folk- and country-based instrumentals. Heffington steps away from his big drum kit to explore a variety of primitive rhythms on various exotic instruments, while Rogers shows off the beauty and virtuosity of her playing on folk themes from the mountains of Appalachia, the hills of Ireland, Bulgaria and beyond. Both Rogers and Heffington take a turn at vocals, too. Rogers offers the eerie mountain song, "In the Arms of Angels," while Heffington takes on the somber spiritualism of "Psalms."

The album's emphasis is always on the grace and splendor of a lovely melody and on the timeless quality of unpretentious, soulful playing. Both musicians display their mastery and their wide-ranging adventurousness without becoming too experimental. Rogers communicates the radiance of her playing, and Heffington shows imagination in his choice of rhythmic support. Both seem to be thoroughly enjoying their journey.

Rogers and Heffington composed all of the songs except "Psalms" and a breathtaking version of "Amazing Grace." Both reveal Rogers' touch for honoring classic tunes while finding a fresh way to convey their meditative, ageless radiance. From the animated Latino rhythms of "Flaco's Farewell" to the haunting tones of "John's Tune" to the exhilaration of the exotic duet jam, "Whiplash," *In the Red* glows with intimate treasures.

—MICHAEL MCCALL

## Record Reviews



### Brother Phelps *Anyway the Wind Blows* Asylum 61724

**T**he Kentucky HeadHunters were exciting precisely because the give-and-take between the country and the rock sides of their music was so vigorous. That tug-of-war became so strenuous, however, that the rope snapped, and two-fifths of the band tumbled right out of the group. Ricky Lee Phelps and his kid brother Doug had wanted to work in more ballads and storytelling songs to strengthen the country side of The HeadHunters' equation, but Richard Young and his brother Fred and their first cousin Greg Martin wanted to lean more toward the boogie and blues-rock. So the Phelps left.

Rather than call themselves The Brothers Phelps, Ricky Lee and Doug named their new duo act after their father, Brother Phelps, an Assembly of God minister in Missouri. The duo's first album, *Let Go*, moved a bit too far into the Nashville mainstream and despite a Top-10 single, sounded too much like hundreds of similar pop-country projects. The new Brother Phelps album, *Anyway the Wind Blows*, strikes a better balance between Ricky Lee's classic honky tonk voice and the aggressive arrangements which had made The HeadHunters so popular in the first place.

Rather than boogeying on old bluegrass, novelty and hillbilly songs as The HeadHunters did, Brother Phelps draws its out-

side material from the likes of J.J. Cale and Steve Earle. And on their originals, the brothers bring a contemporary, progressive edge to their country-rock as if taking their cue from Cale and Earle. The new album borrows its title from a Cale tune, and just as the song benefits from Ricky Lee's smoky, vibrant vocal, so does Ricky Lee benefit from the slinky, funky shuffle which injects some vital tension into his performance.

The album includes two Earle compositions, "I Ain't Ever Satisfied" and "The Other Kind," and Ricky Lee provides the vocal firepower to push these non-conformist anthems over the top. Both songs should have been hits for Earle, but they get a second chance with Brother Phelps' new versions, which should be faithful enough for Earle's fans and accessible enough for Travis Tritt's and John Michael Montgomery's. Ricky Lee and Doug lead a similar hard-hitting attack on the blues stomp, "Down Into Muddy Water," and their own rocking celebration of a convertible, "Ragtop."

Brother Phelps' new co-producer is Kyle Lehning, who has worked so long with Randy Travis, and Lehning helps Ricky Lee through the sort of romantic ballads there was no room for in The Kentucky Headhunters. Unfortunately, the three ballads on *Anyway the Wind Blows* are indifferently written, though Ricky Lee does turn in a nicely understated vocal on "Some Walls."

If he's not able to transcend mediocre material, he is able to rise to the occasion when a good song comes along. Such an opportunity comes on Dennis Linde's "Lookout Mountain," a narrative about the Civil War battle told from the perspective of a scared Confederate picket. In a strong vocal over a moody arrangement, Ricky Lee captures both the fear of battle and the sense of reluctant duty in this fateful tale of honor, defeat and death.

—GEOFFREY HIMES



## BROTHER PHELPS

### Anyway The Wind Blows



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# Record Reviews

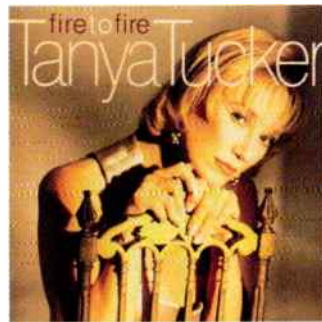
## Tanya Tucker

*Fire to Fire*  
Liberty 28943

**T**anya Tucker has been around about as long as any woman currently in the country charts. She had her first big hits back in the early 1970's, and she's still having them. Along the way, she's made some great records, as well as a few awful ones. *Fire to Fire*, her latest, and 28th album to date, falls somewhere between these extremes. In terms of overall song and performance quality, it's about as uneven as Tucker's own erratic pilgrim's progress from 70's country teen sensation, to failed early 80's rocker, to born-again (career-wise, at least) 90's superstar.

Tucker's singing is just about unmistakable; and ultimately it's that distinctly raunchy, cat-scratchy voice of hers on which she rises or falls. On *Fire to Fire*, it wears well on some songs, and merely wears thin on others. Too often on *Fire to Fire* Tucker and long-time producer Jerry Crutchfield seem to have little sense of direction, and end up relying on songs which are not much more than generic country-pop chart fodder.

A case in point is "Come In Out of the World" (co-written by Don Schlitz and Billy Livsey). "I'll Take the Memories" (by Charlie Craig and Keith Stegall) is a similarly over-produced "radio lite" ballad that is at odds with the sort of gutsiness that Tucker handles best. "Nobody Dies of a Broken Heart" (Randy Sharp and Sonny LeMaire) is a faintly interesting song that's undercut by an annoying vocal arrangement in the bridge. (It kind of sounds like something The Bee Gees forgot to record back in their white-suited disco phase.) Jerry Crutchfield's "Lost in the 80's" production style is, here and elsewhere, more of a hindrance than help.



The real bottom of the barrel, though, is the title track, a duet with Willie Nelson. Nelson's and Tucker's talents are largely squandered on a schlocky ditty of a song with a tacky click-track-style rhythm arrangement. (Send this one to The Bee Gees too.) Things might have been a little better if there were more actual interplay between Tanya and Willie; but their duet (which sure sounds overdubbed to me) is surprisingly lifeless.

But here and there on *Fire to Fire*, Tucker does occasionally manage to get, if not incendiary, then at least lukewarm. "Between the Two of Them" (by Mickey Cates) is a loving graveyard tribute—anyone who's lost their parents can relate to this one. "The Love You Gave to Me" (Gary Nicholson & Delbert McClinton) is a credible slice of country-gospel. "Find Out What's Happenin'" (written by Crutchfield) manages to capture some of that vintage Tough Broad persona of Tucker's, which we've come to adore.

But, really, only once on *Fire to Fire* does Tucker truly get the sparks flying. It's on a dark, duplicitous, romantically incorrect song called "I Bet She Knows" (Paul Thorn & Billy Maddox). It's about a woman who is so eaten up by jealousy, bitterness and envy that she finds her only comfort in hoping that torrid memories of her love-making will drive a wedge between her ex-boyfriend and his new squeeze. It's definitely music for punching pins in voodoo dolls; and Tanya's singing here is charged with an alluring,



bitchy, alley cat raunchiness.

There's only one drawback to a cut as emotionally arresting as "I Bet She Knows": It makes Tanya sound like she's barely even got her pilot light lit for much of the rest of *Fire to Fire*.

—BOB ALLEN

## John Berry

*Standing on the Edge*  
Patriot 7243-8-28495

**L**ast May was a very busy time for John Berry. In the same month, Berry's wife gave birth to a son; Berry's single "Your Love Amazes Me" hit Number One, and Berry himself underwent emergency brain surgery. This year Berry is looking forward to repeating two of those three events. His wife Robin is pregnant again, and Berry has another catchy power-ballad, "Standing on the Edge of Goodbye," climbing the charts. He'd just as soon skip the surgery this time.

"Standing on the Edge" is the title track from Berry's second major-label album (after the six he released himself back in Athens, Georgia). The song—with its Don Henley-like vocal, Jackson Browne-like piano and Fleetwood Mac-like rhythm section—is typical of Berry's approach to country music. Such California pop has little to teach Nashville about lyrics—but it does have something to offer harmonically. This break-up ballad, co-written by Berry and Stewart Harris, boasts a juicy melodic/rhythmic hook which Berry's strong, handsome tenor warbles convincingly.

It makes no sense to gnash

one's teeth over the presence of such soft-rock singers on the country charts, for they are here to stay. It's not up to critics to define what is and what isn't country music; that's the audience's job. It's up to the critics to differentiate between the best of this new branch of country (Trisha Yearwood and The Mavericks, for example) and the worst (John Michael Montgomery and Little Texas). Berry, who admits in interviews that he listened to The Chi-Lites and John Denver before turning to country, falls somewhere in between.

Berry's biggest assets at this point are his big, warm voice and his ability to sound like a country storyteller even as he rides a punchy beat. His weaknesses include an inability to write or find very strong material and a tendency to settle for melodrama when he should be striving for drama. As a result, his new album, like his 1993 breakthrough, *John Berry*, contains enough catchy hooks and good singing to please on a first listen but lacks the emotional depth to sustain repeated listenings.

Chuck Jones, who co-wrote four songs on *John Berry*—including the singles "Your Love Amazes Me" and "A Mind of Her Own"—is back with four more on the new album (including last winter's single, "You and Only You," recycled without change). Whether it's the cheerleading pop-rock chorus of "Desperate Measures" or the overwrought ballad chorus of "I Never Lost You," Jones encourages Berry's bad habit of belaboring the obvious. *Standing on the Edge*, produced by Garth Brooks' mentor Jimmy Bowen and Chuck Howard, is plagued by several more similar songs.

Berry is on much firmer ground with a pair of Don Schlitz compositions. The midtempo "I Think About It All the Time" finds the singer trying his best to stop thinking about a new lover, even though he can't, and that dramatic conflict reins in Berry's



**Tracy Byrd—No Ordinary Man.** *Keeper Of The Stars; Watermelon Crawl; The First Step; and others.* (MCA) **484•758**



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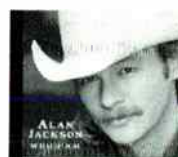
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**Elton John—Grt. Hits 1976-86** (MCA) **450•353**

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**ZZ Top—Grt. Hits** (Warner Bros.) **438•010**

**Journey's Greatest Hits** (Columbia) **375•279**

**Phil Collins—Both Sides** (Atlantic) **481•952**

**The Best Of Sade** (Epic) **110•379**

**Bruce Springsteen—Born In The U.S.A.** (Columbia) **326•629**

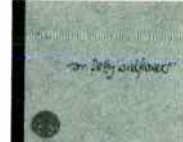
**The Steve Miller Band—Grt. Hits 1974-78** (Capitol) **290•171**

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**Mary Chapin Carpenter**—Come On, Come On (Columbia) 440-560

**Billy Dean**—Men'll Be Boys (Liberty) 486-365

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# Record Reviews

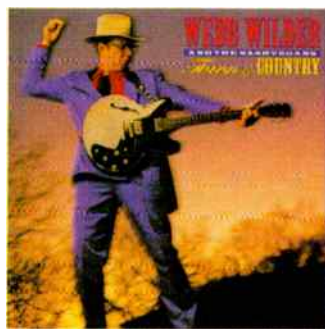
temptation to oversing. "Prove Me Wrong," which Schlitz co-wrote with Vince Gill, contains a similar conflict—the singer doesn't believe in love but he's waiting for someone to prove him wrong—and Berry's nicely understated vocal makes a lovely ballad melody even lovelier. Best of all is a remake of Hank Snow's 1963 hit, "Ninety Miles an Hour"; Berry modeled his hurtling-toward-doom vocal on an '87 version by Bob Dylan, of all people.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

## Webb Wilder and The Nashvegans Town & Country Watermelon CD 1032

**C**onfession time: despite my traditionalist bent in most of my columns and in our sister publication, *The Journal*, my earliest roots were in 60's rock: the British Invasion, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, and various American three-chord "garage bands." When I started pursuing country 25 years ago, my peers questioned my sanity for buying old LP's by guys with short hair and cowboy suits. I don't mind if somebody plays country, rock, blues, jazz or whatever and wears cowboy outfits as long as he or she don't call the music what it ain't. Webb Wilder avoids that very trap with *Town & Country*. He doesn't call it "hot." He doesn't call it "new," "young" or even "pure country." Describing this crazed mix of obscure 60's British and American rock along with blues, cowboy 'n country from various eras, he says, it's "kinda like if we made a car tape to listen to across America except we sang and played all the songs."

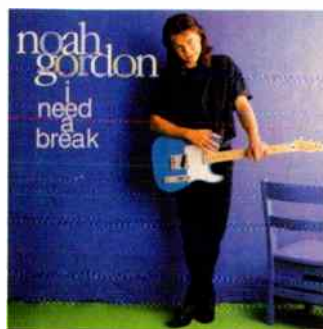
There's no pretense of performing these songs country-style. There isn't a fiddle or steel, just guitars, keyboards and rhythm. And Wilder really pulls the blues from the musical backwaters, like Louisiana bluesman Lazy



Lester's "I'm a Lover Not a Fighter" and Jerry McCain's "Stay Out of Automobiles." "Rockin' Little Angel" was a Sun rockabilly single by Ray Smith. The 60's Brit rockers include The Small Faces' "My Mind's Eye," which Wilder points out in his crazed notes is "psychedelic and MOD." Indeed. One can almost see striped bell-bottoms and tie-dye T-shirts. The instrumental "Goldfinger" (from the 60's James Bond movie) came from the John Barry Orchestra. Wilder found "Short on Love" on a live album by the Liverpool rock band, King Size Taylor and The Dominos, contemporaries of The Beatles. "Original Mixed Up Kid" came from the 70's Brit band, Mott the Hoople.

American rock bands of the 60's created "Talk Talk" (The Music Machine) and "Slow Death" (San Francisco's Flamin' Groovies), both brought to life by Wilder. His country choices are equally weird. The best-known is "Too Many Rivers," which he attributes to Patsy Cline and Johnny Rodriguez (actually, Brenda Lee had the hit), done swing style. Waylon's "Nashville Bum" goes back to his early days. The Austin band Teddy and The Tall Tops first recorded the rocking "Honky Tonk Hell." "Ain't Livin' Long Like This," one of the few well-known ones, comes from Rodney Crowell. "Streets of Laredo" is the old cowboy lament.

I said it before and I'll say it again: what really burns me about a lot of "Hot Country" is that it's rooted in non-country music with absolutely no ties to the past. I'd rather the artists



playing it just admitted they were playing pop music and wearing cowboy duds for the hell of it. That's what Wilder does with this ingenious and audacious record. It's a hell of a mixture and a hell of an album.

—RICH KIENZLE

## Noah Gordon I Need a Break Patriot 07777-81221

**N**oah Gordon, at age 23, fits right into Patriot Records' youth brigade, which includes Lisa Brokop and Bryan Austin. Like his labelmates, Gordon flashes enough talent to reveal why someone would see potential in him. And, like the others, his talent is introduced in songs that sail breezily to cheerful, overly sweet themes that make the pages of *Teen Beat Magazine* seem gravely serious.

With so many younger fans now paying attention to country music, it makes sense that record companies would begin recruiting babyfaced talents to stimulate notice and create performers with whom the youthful buying public might more closely identify. But as the rather bizarre *Brady Bunch* revival recently unfolded, I couldn't help but draw parallels with what's happening in country music. Just as the movie transported the smiley, cardboard-cutout children of the Brady TV family into a 90's context, country music seems to be pushing blemish-free young adults upon us during an age when most young people aren't so uncomplicated and lighthearted.

The now youth movement

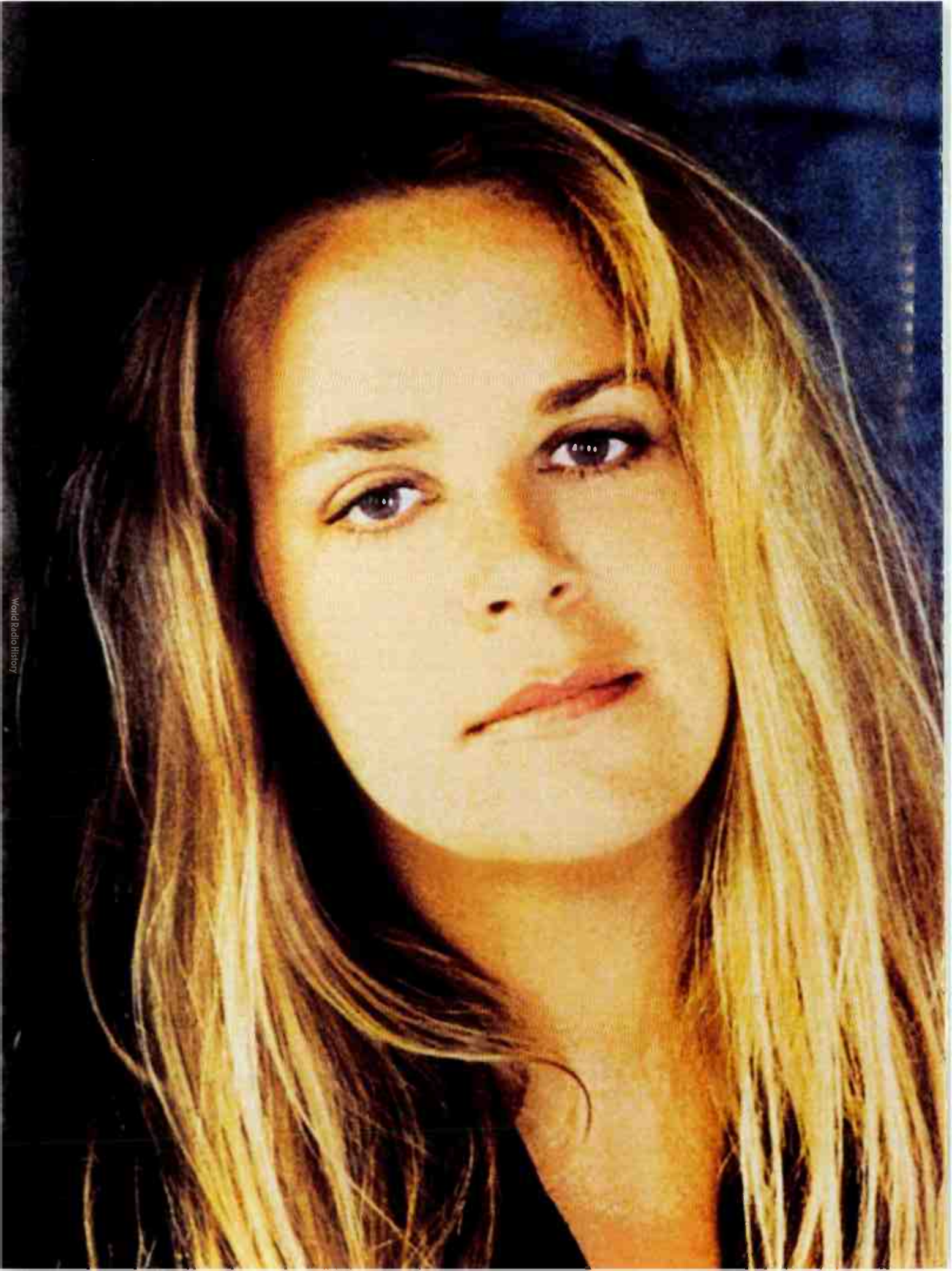
seems trained in theme-park theatrics, where the emphasis is to always be positive and always upbeat. Its performers seem ludicrously out of touch with the concerns of most young people, which is why Pearl Jam, The Cranberries and Offspring sell millions of records awash in angst, while many new country singers are stumbling with weak sales. Songs like Brokop's "Something with a Ring to It" and Austin's "Radio Active" don't exactly explore relevant issues of self-esteem and modern sexuality. They're the kinds of songs the Bradys' might sing, however.

Gordon co-wrote all of his new songs with Music Row pros, and he seems to be trying to show how well he can mimic the formula rather than find something to say within himself. How else to explain a 23-year-old writing a song about putting quarters in a jukebox to get over a heartache? Just how many young adults hang around jukeboxes these days, and how long has it been since it only took a quarter to send a CD spinning in a high-tech box? Most of the rest of the songs are about silly puns ("After Ours") or superficial wordplay ("I need a break, not a broken heart.") And titles like "Even Roses Have Thorns" and "Listenin' to the Radio" tip off the staleness of their lyrical ideas before they're heard.

In a short biographical sketch that the record company has distributed on his behalf, Gordon states that he hates to be called "an act," that he believes that cheapens what he does. He also cites Keith Whitley, George Jones, Merle Haggard and Steve Earle as his primary influences.

If he wants to be seen as an artist, he needs to go back and study why his idols stood out from the pack. Most of those guys were pretty young when they started, too. But they weren't afraid to stand up and act their age.

—MICHAEL McCALL





*With her current album, *Stones in the Road*, Mary Chapin Carpenter examines the changes in her life over the past few years. In this interview, she talks about those changes and how they fuel her creative fires.*



# Mary Chapin Carpenter *Gets Personal*

by Bob Allen

**F**rankly I am starting to get a bad attitude. For weeks, phone lines have been buzzing back and forth. Negotiations for a Mary Chapin Carpenter interview have been under way for God knows how long, and we're getting nowhere. I'm beginning to feel like some third-rate Henry Kissinger; we've done about everything but argue over the size of the conference table. Finally, my somewhat less thin-skinned editor does somehow wangle an actual sit-down interview with Chapin (as she prefers to be called). And as the time approaches, I'm politely but tersely warned by one of the singer's management representatives that my interview will fall in the midst of a "media day" (a term that today's "media managing" Music Row types use the way they used to use the term "bad hair day"). A half an hour means a half an hour; I'm reminded, and that's all I'm going to get. In other words: Have your questions and your tape recorder ready, and don't get mad when we hustle you in and hustle you out to make way for the next question-and-answer session.

So, by the time I finally show up at Carpenter's management office, an unimposing operation nestled on a quiet side street in a quaint Washington, D.C., suburb, I'm past being indignant. I'm merely resigned to the fact that the corporate mentality has completely permeated the field of country music media relations. I figure I'll just be a good boy, wait in line for my half-hour "one-on-one," get whatever I can and somehow try and cobble it into a credible-sounding "in depth" feature.

So I'm sitting there, marveling at Chapin's

platinum record awards which adorn the walls and thumbing through a *Billboard Magazine*, when all at once, after all the weeks of frustrating behind-the-scenes delay and maneuvering, Chapin herself appears. She comes bounding casually out of a back office, grinning and shaking hands and introducing me to her office staff like we're all old college buddies. Her hair is pulled back, no make-up, and she's wearing tinted glasses. She's dressed ultra-casually in baggy slacks and an even baggier black flannel jacket. "People see me like this when I'm in the supermarket buying milk or something, and sometimes they'll sort of sidle up real slyly and say, 'Traveling incognito, hmm?'" She yells with comic exasperation: "I just tell 'em, 'No, this is me. I always dress this way!'"

Much to my surprise, the afternoon spent with Chapin ends up feeling less like an "interview" than a reunion with a long lost friend. When the meter runs out on my allotted 30 minutes and one of Chapin's trusted assistants steps in to shoo me away, Chapin shoos her away. "No, it's okay, really," she tells me. "Stay as long as you want."

In the course of our visit, Carpenter is, by turns, hilarious, ruminative and occasionally even starkly confessional as she threads her way painstakingly through her thoughts, at times weaving on and off the record. You soon realize that with Carpenter there are none of the pat, easy rhetorical answers you get from so many media-savvy artists. At times, it's almost as if the conversation itself becomes another outlet for her to explore heretofore unexplored side streets and alleyways in the creative and personal evolu-

tion so vividly expressed on her new album, *Stones in the Road*.

Along these lines, Chapin also proves a good listener. She seems genuinely interested in how other artists I've spoken with deal with such persistent occupational hazards as stage fright and the loss of privacy. Though she's reserved by nature, you soon realize that Chapin often wears her heart on her sleeve, and, figuratively speaking, sometimes bleeds for her art. Like when she falls to talking about *Stones in the Road*, her newest, most quietly introspective and, in my estimation, best album yet.

"I wanta say this without it sounding self-serving or like I'm patting myself on the back," she says of *Stones*, which debuted at the top of *Billboard's* country album charts after its release last fall. "But I'm more proud of the songs on it, and this whole body of work, than of anything I've ever done. I think, in large part, that has to do with seeing how far my reach extends, seeing how far I could stretch or push myself in what it is I do. And also I just had this burning desire to address some things that honestly reflected the changes, personally and professionally, that I've been through in the last few years. Relationships, peace of mind, depression...all sorts of things. It was just real important for me to express those things—as opposed to expose them—because we all know the difference.

"When we finally finished *Stones in the Road*, I felt the way I've felt with every record," she adds. "You kind of hold your breath and cross your fingers and hope everybody likes it, even though you know not everybody will. And I still feel so strongly about it, even in the face of a few not so kind reviews. It's certainly helped me reach another place as a writer, and that's what means everything to me."

First of all, before delving into some of the emotional and creative storms that Chapin has weathered these past few years, and which found their way into the songs on *Stones in the Road*, it's necessary to put things in proper perspective.



Chapin with her two latest Grammys.

ting a '90s spin on age-old themes of love, loss and finding one's own way in the world—with a significant other or without one. While Chapin, who earned a degree in American Civilization from Brown University some years ago, often writes and sings about the past, about childhood, her songs are, more often than not, devoid of the relentless sentimentality that's the stock and trade of more mainstream country artists. She is also one of a handful of contemporary woman country singer/songwriters who speak of a new, evolving set of social codes. The big difference is that the characters in Chapin's songs (which have been covered by everyone from Wynonna to Joan Baez), as often as not, stand alone and define themselves—albeit sometimes tentatively—in contexts other than merely being in or out of a relationship with a man. As *Newsweek* astutely pointed out in a recent profile of Chapin, the women she writes and sings about, "know how to be alone, and they know how to take care of themselves."

Carpenter has delved even more deeply into such territory on *Stones in the Road*. Compared to *Come On, Come On*, it's a much quieter, inward-looking, and personal album—which is saying a lot for the always introspective Carpenter. It's also a creative tour de force, in so far as she wrote and co-produced all 13 cuts herself. And other than the first single, "Shut Up and Kiss Me," which hit Number One in *Billboard* last November, there are precious few rowdy, upbeat radio hits like "Down at the Twist and Shout" and "I Feel Lucky"—something a few critics have beaten up on her for. Instead, most of *Stones in the Road's* wool-gathering themes revolve around unusually complex issues—not just loss of love, but even trickier and murkier dilemmas regarding personal ethics and personal insecurity.

As Carpenter explains, these are all issues she's had to grapple with during the past few giddy, tempestuous years, a watershed period which she sometimes refers to as her "baptism by fire."



Whether at folk festivals or as here in Miami, Chapin's audience goes beyond mainstream country.

"I'm reluctant to make it sound like, 'Poor me,' like I'm complaining, because I've got a dream job, ya know," she says with a hesitant shrug. "But I certainly felt a couple of years ago, when I decided to get off the road for a while and start writing the songs for *Stones in the Road*, that I was a real fry baby. My personal life was crummy—I really didn't have a life. It was mostly that I hadn't learned to take the time for myself that I really needed to take; I hadn't discovered that it was within my power to do that."

Oddly enough, in the face of all the adoring reviews and even more adoring fans she's been collecting across the nation these past few years, a few new and unexpected demons popped up. Aside from the stress of losing a long-term romantic relationship to the pressures of her career a couple of years ago, she also found herself dealing with intense, at times almost crippling, stage fright.

"I can pinpoint where that started," she says, as if vividly recalling a nightmare. "I was in Australia, about three years ago. It was at the end of the tour, I was exhausted, and I had to get up really early to do *Good Morning Australia*, which is a just like our *Good Morning America*. I was playing 'This Shirt'—a song off her first album, which she's played countless times—"and I blanked. I just forgot the words, and that had never happened to me before. It was as if out of nowhere you suddenly get a terrible cold, and all your defenses are down. I just didn't know what to do. I remember feeling this slow panic building inside me that the words weren't coming. I was just on automatic pilot, playing the chords, but no words. I had sung the first verse, but could not begin the second because I couldn't remember it. What I ended up doing was just repeating the first verse, because I remembered that. The whole song lasted maybe a minute, and they were expecting like three minutes. I remember seeing out of my peripheral vision, the floor manager throw up his hands, and go 'What the f\_\_\_!?' They very quickly threw the cameras back to the show's hosts, who ended up just flying by the seat of their pants, just holding up my CD and ad-libbing. I remember I stood there for what seemed like a year. Nobody came to get me. My tour manager was upstairs in the control room, and it took him a while to get there. I just remember bursting into tears...just shaking. As if in that one moment I'd lost all the confidence I'd built up for years. It was terrible—as if I woke up one day and something I'd known how to do my whole life I didn't know how to do anymore. And once it's happened to you, you're always afraid it's gonna happen again."

After telling me this story, she gets a troubled look. "Maybe I should have kept that off the record," she frets. "I'm skittish about it, like maybe the best thing is to not make it a bigger issue than it has to be...But at times I really found myself feeling like nothing is worth having to go through this."

But she goes on to explain how even a harrowing and immensely embarrassing experience like the debacle down under offers valuable lessons to be learned.

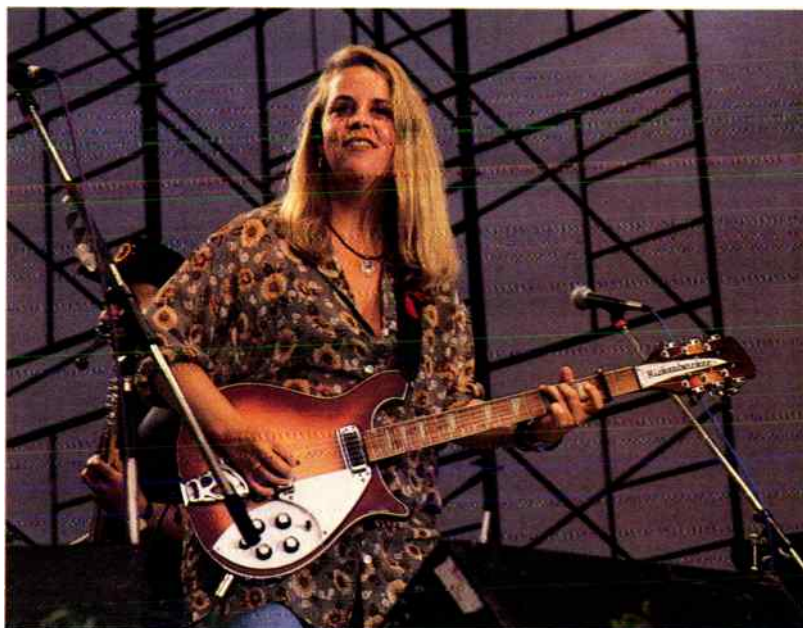
"Plus, all that coincided with a very stressful time, both personally and physically. I subsequently went to this therapist who works specifically with musicians—mostly classical musicians—who suffer from performance anxiety. He's taught me breathing exercises. It was very much like going to a regular therapy session. We also talked a lot about my personal life, and the difficulties that were going on at the time, and he was advancing the idea that it's almost like I was struggling to keep a lot of stuff down during a very tough time. But sometimes it's almost like our emotions just fight to be recognized within us. And sometimes they come out during the worst possible times."

Chapin acknowledges that after therapy and her long hiatus from the road, during which she wrote the songs for *Stones in the Road*, her performance anxiety has at least diminished. She recalls that once she'd finished *Stones*, "I sort of got ants in my pants to get out there again."

Yet she also laughingly confesses that some nights, even now, amidst five or ten thousand adoring fans who hang on her every lyric line, she'll find herself obsessing about the one or two people she sees in the front row sitting on their hands with their heads down, looking bored and half asleep. And she'll find the old self-doubt flooding back, find herself wondering, "Why are they here?...why am I here?"

Another stumbling block, she maintains, is that her livelihood at times almost requires her to be two people: the extroverted performer and the solitary introspective writer. And sometimes changing hats and shifting from one mode to the other can be emotionally grueling. She recalls that when she did clear the decks and fold the tents long enough to settle into her songwriting mode, it took a painfully long time to dig back down and rediscover her muse.

"Basically, I was out of touch with myself. It really took me about three months of writing to really buckle down to where I was feeling like I was getting down to the things I wanted to write about and coming up with songs I was happy with. The first couple of months, man...." She sighs, then continues. "It was like, 'I haven't written a song for a long time'—I mean, I just can't write on the



SHERY PAPPEN BARNETT

Road loneliness—here she's in California—will soon be assuaged by a new friend.

road. It's almost as if songwriting's like a muscle, and, man, mine was way out of shape, out of touch. I felt really...almost spastic for a long time. It's a really crummy feeling—like, 'God, I can't do this anymore! I've forgotten how to write songs!' It really makes you question who you are and what you're doing.

"Then, the moment I felt like I was finally, there, that I finally felt like I had begun to write, was when I finished 'John Doe, No. 24.'" (This haunting song on the new album was inspired by a *New York Times* obituary about a retarled man who was found wandering the streets in 1945 and lived out the remaining half-century of his life without anyone ever finding out who he really was.) "After that," Chapin goes on, "it was like that zone that you hear writers and athletes talk about. It was an extraordinary period of productivity for me.

"You see," she concludes, "I go through periods where I really feel like I have this identity, I feel like I know who I am: I'm a songwriter, I'm this...I'm something. And then, when I'm not writing songs, it's like I've lost my identity and I've gotta get it back again. So it was just an extraordinary feeling to be back in that zone."

But, she adds with another wistful shrug, "Sure enough, gearing up to go back out on the road again has kind of brought it back to a halt. That's another reason we restructured the tour this year so I'll have more time off. So it's not several years before I get to feel that satisfaction of writing songs again."

Chapin goes on to explain that the long months off the road not

only recharged her songwriting batteries, they also gave her the breathing space to get other aspects of her life back in perspective—to get a life again. She moved from her long-time apartment near Washington into a town house, and also bought a second house in Nashville. “I was spending so much time down there, and the hotel room scene was getting kind of old,” she explains. “And I felt like I had found a home in Nashville, spiritually, with that community of songwriters. But I still sort of accomplish all my work, most all my recording, up here”—in northern Virginia and Washington, D.C.—“because I just feel so comfortable about it.”

Yet Chapin also concedes that even eight years down the road from the release of *Hometown Girl*, she’s still not used to the being treated like a “star.” She insists she’s still adjusting to this celebrity business, and still has a tendency to cringe when somebody recognizes her in public.

“I’ve tried to adjust gracefully to that, and I hope I have,” she says with a hesitant, faraway look. Then she adds with a soft laugh: “There have been some comical times—when you sort of wish people had a better sense of timing. I was in Nordstrom’s once, trying a dress on. I’m in my underwear, and this lady slips this piece of paper under the dressing room door. ‘Can you sign this!’”

Chapin readily acknowledges that some loss of privacy comes

breakthrough or whatever. Sometimes interviewers say to me, ‘Man, you just kind of exploded.’ But I don’t see it that way. I just see it from day to day to day to day. I still think a lot of what we called our ‘Bronco tours,’ where we’d just climb in our cars and drive around the country to shows and radio interviews, before we could afford to rent a bus. It seems like yesterday, it feels like yesterday. It’s like time is kind of warped for us in this business.”

But surely, I ask, there must be occasional moments when you breathe a sigh of relief? Success must take some of the edge off the kinds of persistent worries we all have at times about the future?

“Whoa, not with the tour I’m mounting this year,” she laughs and rolls her eyes.

Chapin goes on to explain that, for starters, her new, more relaxed schedule will translate into fewer personal appearances. She’s arranged it this year so she’ll have at least two consecutive days off every week, and a week off for every two weeks of touring. “It may not be as lucrative as it could be,” she shrugs. “But your sanity is so much more important than just trying to turn a buck.”

The catch is that with fewer shows, her overhead this year is going to be considerably higher. “It’ll be the first time that I’ve taken a real set out, lights and everything,” she explains with visible excitement. “So it’s kind of like stepping up to a new level. I’ve also added a new bandmember, Duke Levine, a second lead guitar player.” (Levine joins John Jennings, her long-time guitarist and co-producer.) “What I love about the recorded versions of a lot of the songs on *Stones in the Road* are the lead guitar textures of John and Stuart Smith playing together. I really wanted to recreate that live, as much as possible,” she explains, referring to Jennings and one of Nashville’s ace session guitarists, Stuart Smith, who worked on her album.

“And I’ve never been part of a—quote, unquote—‘package tour’ before, aside from doing a few dates with Vince Gill a few years ago,” she adds. “But we’re going to be touring all year with The Mavericks. I just love them. I feel real fortunate that they said yes, because I think they could have probably gone out on their own.”

But one of the most drastic changes in her road life this year, Chapin explains, is purely for the sake of love. She’ll have her current Significant Other along with her for companionship and moral support. “His name’s Cal, and I have to show you a picture!” Chapin grins like a little school girl with a mad crush. She reaches into her Day Timer and comes out with a color snapshot of herself and Cal posing with Santa Claus.

“Is that the nuttiest, campiest thing you have ever seen!?” she giggles as she hands me the photo. “Cal’s my golden retriever. He’s just the greatest. The school for dogs I take Cal to has this thing that they do every year at Christmas, where, for 25 bucks, you and your dog can have your picture taken with Santa. All the money goes to charity.

“I swear to God, this is not my dog. This is my child!” she laughs at herself as she carefully puts the cherished photo away. “I am completely, hopelessly over the top about Cal. I just love him, I don’t know where I’d be without him. I can’t help it, he enriches my life, and now I want another one! I want two! But I promised myself that this year he was going on the road with me.

“Ya see,” she goes on, filling me in on her personal pet history, “I used to have a wonderful golden retriever named Hallie who I got with my old boyfriend. When we split up, she stayed with him, because I was away so much. But ever since then, it was just like there was this hole in my heart. Then last year at the Grammys—this was hilarious: We were in this hotel in New York, and this little Russell terrier came racing down the hall and into our rooms. Scared us all half to death! And I said, ‘This has got to be Wynonna’s dog!’ He was just rockin’ down the hall! Turns out Wynonna had two of her dogs with her: I said to myself, ‘Man, if she can do it, then I can do it.’ So we’ll see how it works out. My band might rebel,” she giggles again, “but Cal is going to have an all-access pass!”

JOHN LEE MONTGOMERY/NOUVEAU PHOTOGRAPHY



Pal Lee Roy Parnell added guitar licks to the video for “Shut Up and Kiss Me.”

with the rarefied territory she now inhabits. But the sort of blatant intrusions and violations she’s often had to contend with, and which she goes on to calmly describe—off the record—would unnerve anybody. As she continues to talk about some of the more harrowing episodes, all my previous difficulties in setting up this interview slowly come into perspective. Hell, if I’d been through what she’s been through on this count, I’d have a little stage fright, too, and I’m not sure I’d give interviews at all. Chapin herself concedes that she sometimes finds herself wondering what controversial political figures and Hollywood superstars must go through. “Compared to the level they’re at,” she says, “I’m just a punk.”

Mind you, there’s not a trace of self-pity in all this; Chapin never loses sight of the fact that she does indeed have a “dream job.” When she speaks—albeit hesitantly—about such things, she’s not whining. Rather, she seems to still be thinking them through. Still struggling to resolve the often conflicting pressures of maintaining her own personal comfort zone in the midst of relentless public scrutiny.

Indeed, at times she’s so painfully earnest about it all that I almost feel the need to play big brother: to remind Chapin of the magnitude of her recent success, of the artistic recognition and (one would assume) financial security she’s attained at the relatively young age of 37.

“I’m pleased and flattered that you would say that,” she says quietly, “but I don’t know if I have that perspective. For me this has all been a very long, gradual episode of life, as opposed to a

# Newsletter

## REVIEWS & FEATURES

### Gavin's Americana Chart

As Hazel Smith reported in the lead item of the People section in the March/April issue of *Country Music*, radio trade magazine *Gavin* has introduced a new country chart. And it's the one this magazine's writers and many of you CMSA members have been asking for. Finally—a chart that gives a home to legends like Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings; folk-ish country artists like Nanci Griffith, Robert Earl Keen and Iris DeMent, and just all around great music from the likes of Billy Joe Shaver, Shawn Colvin, Jim Lauderdale, Asleep at the Wheel, Rodney Crowell, Lyle Lovett, even The Mavericks and Mary Chapin Carpenter.

Rob Bleetstein, who edits the Americana chart for *Gavin*, says they are giving an outlet to singer/songwriters like these, because, "for too many years too much great music has fallen through an enormous crack." They also see it as an opportunity to help developing artists.

Right now, about 50 stations are reporting their playlists for the chart. Those stations, says Bleetstein, are a mix of adventurous mainstream country radio stations, small market country stations (which generally tend to take more chances than their large market cousins), Album Adult Alternative stations (another up-and-coming format known for its penchant for singer/songwriters) and public radio stations (as Patrick Carr talked about in his Final Note in March/April).

That's not a lot of stations—yet. And most of the record label support has, so far, come from independent labels, with the majors taking a "wait and see" attitude. But this is just the beginning. You have to start somewhere. We say cheers and good luck to Rob Bleetstein and *Gavin* for picking up on an idea that's been a long time coming. There may be hope for country radio yet! Keep listening for an Americana-format station near you.

four stations over there. Cassettes, CD's and "Old Man Jukebox" T-shirts are available from Eddie at P.O. Box 32455, San Jose, California, 95152.

### Eddie and June Hook Up

Here are two names that will be familiar to CMSA members: Eddie "G" Greiner and June M. Cappi. June has contributed lyrics to *Readers Create*, and we heard from Eddie "G" in the November/December 1993 issue, when the then 63-year-old singer achieved his dream of releasing an album. He updated us on his progress in July/August 1994, and since then, there's been an interesting twist. June fills us in. Enclosed is *Old Man Jukebox*, the latest release from Eddie "G." I am the co-writer of all three songs on the album, and Eddie and I met through your CMSA section. He was featured the same month one of my Christmas lyrics was printed. We collaborated on this album cross-country for the past year and had lots of fun putting it together. He lives in San Jose, California, and I live in Michigan.

Though we have never met, we feel like we have always known each other. That is one of the joys of *Country Music Magazine*, which brings people outside of Music Row a forum. Thanks for a great magazine! You deserve your own Gold record for the best magazine in country music.

As for the album, the third song, "Here's Why You Haven't Heard from Me," is an answer song to Reba's "Why Haven't I Heard From You." It hit Number 25 in Denmark, and is being played on



Songwriter June Cappi, and Eddie G's latest release.

four stations over there.

Cassettes, CD's and "Old Man Jukebox" T-shirts are available from Eddie at P.O. Box 32455, San Jose, California, 95152.

June M. Cappi  
Lambertville, Michigan

### In This Issue

- Record and Concert Reviews
- A Look at the Mailbag
- George D. Hay in Legends
- Collections and Readers Create

Editor: George Fletcher

Executive Editor: Helen Barnard

Art Director: Kathryn Gray

### Member Record Review

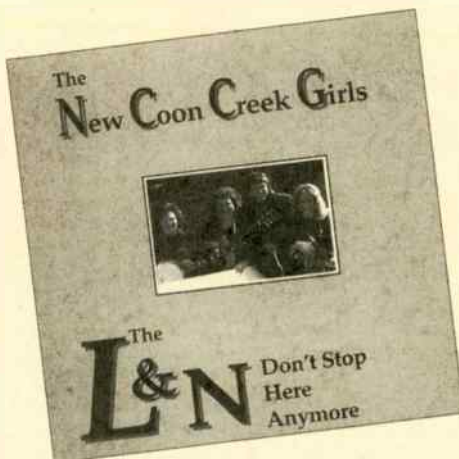
Another of our regular contributors, Julie Yocum of Mapleton Depot, Pennsylvania, fills us in on the latest album from *The New Coon Creek Girls*. The original Coon Creek Girls began in 1937 when sisters Lily May and Rosie Ledford, plus Evelyn Lange and Esther Koehler, debuted over WLW. The New Girls have been together about 15 years.

### The New Coon Creek Girls

*The L&N Don't Stop Here Anymore*  
Pinycastle Records (PRC 1027)

On the New Coon Creek Girls sixth album, *The L&N Don't Stop Here Anymore*, the quartet displays their best work yet. Though the group has been through many personnel changes in their 15-year history, the one thing that has remained constant is the expert playing. That tradition continues on this new album. Original member Vicki Simmons has put together a group that blends well with her bass playing and baritone vocals. Dale Ann Bradley's angelic voice grabs your attention from the first note she sings, and her rhythm guitar playing adds to the sound. On banjo is Ramona Church Taylor, who was the 1993 Kentucky State Banjo Champion. She also contributes vocals. Rejoining the group is Pam Perry, who left to join Wild Rose.

This album showcases their hot picking and some outstanding harmonies. The two a cappella songs, "Hammer and Nails" and "Brand New Home," are prime examples of how well these four voices blend. Throughout the album, the group manages to capture the listener with songs that range from straight-ahead bluegrass to gospel, folk and even a rock 'n' roll classic. The title track, written by Jean Ritchie, is a highlight of the



project. The song, which has been recorded by both Johnny Cash and Michelle Shocked, vividly tells the story of a family coping with the loss of the coal mining industry in their town.

The band got its start in 1979 at Kentucky's famous Renfro Valley Barn Dance, the same place their namesake, The Coon Creek Girls, played in the 40's. The group still plays there on a semi-regular basis, as well as playing bluegrass festivals around the country. If you like good, heartfelt lyrics and hot picking, then the New Coon Creek Girls are for you.

Julie Yocum

Mapleton Depot, Pennsylvania

### Country in the North Country

CMSA member Ted Fiskevold of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, fills us in on some country entertainment in his home state. The We Fest is one summer country music festival that country and camping fans shouldn't miss. It takes place in early August every year (this year will be the 12th annual event) for three days at the Soo Pass Ranch, which is five miles south of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. Surrounded by sky blue lakes in the heart of Minnesota ("The Land of 10,000 Lakes"), the ranch offers plenty of space for camping (both tent and RV), great food, friendly people and some of the greatest acts in the industry. Last year's line-up included Brooks & Dunn, Tanya Tucker, Ray Charles, Patty Loveless, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Trisha Yearwood, Merle Haggard, Carlene Carter, Aaron Tippin, Steve Wariner, Tammy Wynette and local bands from Canada and the midwest. In addition to plenty of seating for all, there's a huge screen so nobody misses the action, and the shopping around the festival is fantastic.

Thirty miles north of Detroit Lakes, the Shooting Star Casino offers some mighty good country entertainment year round. I've seen: Waylon Jennings, Roy Clark, Mickey Gilley, Ray Price, Hank Thompson and Merle Haggard. The casino is located in Mahanomen, Minnesota, on the White Earth Indian Reservation. The performances are held in the Cabaret Ballroom, where every seat is a good one. The artists are very accessible after the shows, and I had an opportunity to meet every one of the artists I mentioned (and get their autographs on my guitar and some other memorabilia).

So, "if you're travelin' to the north country fair," check out some of this action. You won't regret it. All good entertainment is not necessarily south of the Mason-Dixon line in places like Austin, Nashville and Branson.

Ted Fiskevold

Detroit Lakes, Minnesota

### Concert Comments

Frequent contributor Robin Sue Lehmann of Aurora, Colorado, has once again made a pilgrimage to one of George Strait's Denver, Colorado, concerts. This one took place at McNichols Arena on October 22, 1994. She shares her experience here.

Two songs into his set, George Strait looked out at the audience and said, in his best imitation of Mr. Ed, "We-e-l-l-l-l."

With good reason. So loud were the crowd's cheers, they drowned out George's introduction, and were louder



### Collecting Chris

Member Alice Gore hails from Denton, Texas, and is a big fan of Chris LeDoux. Just wanted to share the enclosed photo with you. I call this "Full House" as I have a copy of all the cassettes and CD's Chris has released. I joined Chris' Western Underground Fan Club kind of late and have had to play catch up real fast, but I have arrived! My part of Texas is "Chris LeDoux Country."

Alice J. Gore  
Denton, Texas

still when he appeared. A sold-out McNichols Arena made an impressive sight, the stage in the center totally surrounded with standing, screaming fans. While the Ace in the Hole Band stayed in one place, George worked his way counter-clockwise to microphones set on each side, which definitely allowed for a better view than the traditional stage-at-one-end set up. And the crowd had plenty to be enthusiastic about. Most special was hearing songs from George's new album, *Lead On*, including the first single, "The Big One"; the gentle title song; and my favorite, the sweet, sad ballad that opens the album, "You Can't Make a Heart Love Somebody." People were on their feet again for "Heartland" and "Where the Sidewalk Ends" from *Pure Country*; "Amarillo by Morning"; and the encore numbers, "Big Balls in Cowtown" and "The Cowboy Rides Away." Amazing sight, amazing night.

**Robin Sue Lehmann**  
Aurora, Colorado

### Classic Photos from Sunset Park

Member Rina Davenport of Parker Ford, Pennsylvania, dug these classic candid snapshots out of her collection after seeing the Legends piece on The Wilburn Brothers in the July/August 1994 issue.

When I was in my late teens, my friends and I went to Sunset Park every Sunday. There we would see all of the hillbilly stars—Johnny Cash, Lester Flatt, Jean Shepard, and so on. What fun we would have!

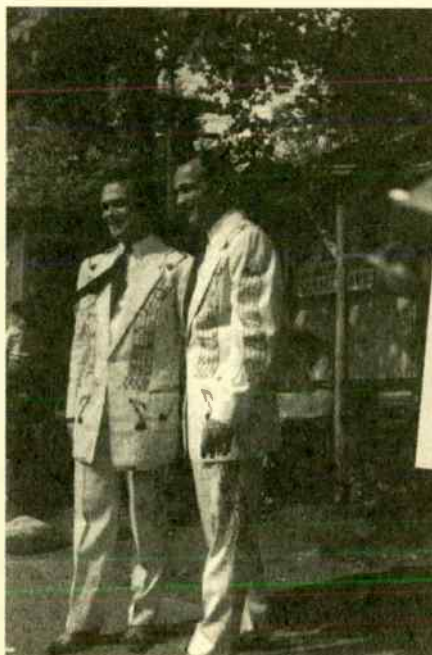
I'm sending two precious pictures, one of Jeanie Shepard, and one of Ted and Doyle, if you care to use them. I would appreciate any information on Ted. What is he doing?

A country fan from way back,

**Rina Davenport**  
Parker Ford, Pennsylvania

### Faron Young Correction

Due to an editing error in the article on Faron Young in Legends of Country Music in the March/April 1995 issue, two incidents involving Faron were mistakenly lumped together. The sentence which ended: "...and a 1970's backstage incident in Oklahoma (he spanked someone else's child) that almost led to charges" should have read: "...and a 1970's backstage dressing room incident that resulted in morals charges and hassles over extradition before the charges were dropped." The child-spanking was a separate incident which occurred in West Virginia in 1972, according to Randall Riese's book, *Nashville Babylon*.



*Teddy Wilburn still does the occasional Opry performance and runs Sure-Fire Music. Readers may also be interested in the Recollections piece on Sunset Park which appeared in the August 1992 issue of The Journal.—Ed.*

### Notes from The Mailbag

Responses to recent Newsletter topics.

#### THE JAN/FEB EDITORIAL

Thank you very, very much for your editorial, "A Look at the Charts" in the January/February issue. I hope you will continue to focus on this subject of how country radio is keeping active veteran artists off the air, and in doing so, is keeping them from having any kind of chart success. I think this practice is terrible!

My favorite singer is Johnny Cash, and they have ignored him for the last ten years. My 20-year-old son loves him, and so do many of my friends. The impression that country radio leaves its listeners is that these veterans are no longer recording and that couldn't be further from the truth! If there's an organized effort in the country music industry to combat this, I'll be the first to join!

This "new country" and "young country" is rampant up and down the West Coast. They are dictating to me what I want to hear, or what they think I want to hear. The truth is I want to hear all new country music, including veteran artists. The people will decide the fate of the music, but they have to hear it first.

**Ron Grimm**  
Astoria, Oregon



**The Wilburn Brothers (left) and Jean Shepard played at Sunset Park.**

### PEN PALS WORLDWIDE

I missed the issue that carried the letter about the pen pal column becoming a dating service, but I read the responses you published in November/December. I'd like to add my comments, if it's not too late to be included.

I can see why some people are a little disappointed that there are so many people using the column as a lonely hearts club, as it's obvious the "date and mate" people don't have any idea what pen paling is all about. But don't discontinue the section. There's a lot of pen pals out there that only have a correspondence friendship in mind. There are personals columns in plenty of other publications for the date and mate people. They don't need to take up the limited space you provide for those looking for pen pals with a common interest in country music. So I say just delete the dating requests and lose the lonely hearts. The rest of us genuine pen pals will thank you for it and have more space to place proper pen pal adverts.

Please allow me a quick hello to my CMSA pen pals: Anita M., Bonnie H., Kay J., Karen M., Katie C. and Tim S. It's me, Down-Under Del! G-day to you all! Remember, keep stitching. We can sew the world together peace by piece.

**Ms. Del Soden**  
New South Wales, Australia

### March 1995 Poll Results

Due to the large number of responses to the March Poll, plus an early deadline for this issue, the results couldn't be tabulated by presstime. Check this space next issue for all the details.

## Collecting the Magazine

Members help each other complete their magazine collections.

\*For sale: *Modern Screen's Country Music*, *Country Weekly*, *Country America*, *New Country* magazine. Wanted: concert photos of Tanya Tucker and Marty Stuart. Send stamp for list. **Becky Baker, P.O. Box 218, Greentop, MO 63546.**

\*Magazines for sale: *Country America*, *Country Music* and others. Artists include Garth, Mark, Reba, Travis, Lorie, Hal, Tanya, Hank, Randy, Marty. Reasonable prices. Send SASE for price list and/or offers. **Tonya M. Miller, 7433 N. Depot Rd., Ashtabula, OH 44004.**

\*100's of country magazines for sale (five-page listing). Two stamps/SASE. *Country Music*, *Country Weekly*, *MCN*, etc., 1972 to present. Country albums for sale, 6000+. All artists. Graded collectibles. Send four stamps for catalog. Also, lists available, two stamps each: Reba McEntire, Dolly Parton, CD collectible singles/full-length, Vince Gill/Judds, Radio shows. Specify interests. **Rick J. Cunningham (RJC), 134 Berwick St., Berwick, ME 03901**

## Information, Please

Please write each other directly about information or items listed. When corresponding, include SASE. We reserve the right to edit for space and style.

\*For sale or trade: Reba McEntire items, brand new. Cassette *Out of a Dream* (Mercury 1979), VHS video *For My Broken Heart* (MCA 1992), CD *Greatest Hits* (MCA 1987). Want to buy or trade: Reba's fan club newsletters prior to 1992, Reba tour books. To make offer or trade, send SASE for responses. I'm a big Reba fan interested in anything on her. Also have trading cards. **Caroline Lips, 766 S. Orange, Turlock, CA 95380.**

\*Wanted: anything on John Michael Montgomery—especially photos (concert, candid, backstage, etc.). Will pay reasonable price. I have photos and items to trade. Want to hear from JMM fans, too. Write me. Amy from Paducah, with photos: I need your address. **Terri Jennings, 20-C Airport Rd., Freedom, CA 95019-2616.**

\*For sale or possible trade: ACM Country Classic Card Sets, posters, albums (incl. Garth on Kiss tribute album—red vinyl collector's limited edition), 45's (incl. Garth red vinyl "Callin' Baton Rouge"), other various items, articles, cassettes, video collections of award shows and specials. Also have some autographed items. Looking for items on Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Vince Gill, Kathy Mattea, Kenny Chesney, the pop group Abba and Wizard of Oz movie items. Please send large (at least 5x7) SASE (three stamps) for lists to **Cynthia Lockie, 307 Waterside Dr., Little Ferry, NJ 07643.**

\*Serious collector looking for The Judds 8x10 publicity photo for *Why Not Me* (b&w or color) and their first promo photo. Will pay reasonable price. Want autographed items of Judds and others. For sale or trade: newsletters, pin-up photos, posters, CDs, cassettes, magazines, etc. on anyone and everyone in country. Let me know what you have on Judds/Wy. **Kevin Abercrombie, 30345 Chualar Cyn Rd., Chualar, CA 93925.**

\*Judd TV and radio appearances, tour merchandise, early promo items, any memorabilia or special items or just anyone who has stories of meeting them. Serious fan. **Darla Chasteen, RR 1, Box 2250, Cameron, OK 74932-9787.**

\*Fan Fair and concert photos for sale. Also have variety of magazine articles, posters, trading cards, cassettes, books, newsletters priced to go. For list send long SASE. **Mary Florane, 1400 2nd Ave. SE #312, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403.**

\*Wanted: anything on Hal Ketchum, especially copies of his appearance on the Canadian *Tommy Hunter Show* a couple of years ago and the article on country's hunks from *Playgirl* a while back. **Diane Barnhardt, 869 Garrison Rd., Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada L2A 1N6.**

\*Wanted: VHS tapes of the 1992 CMA awards, 1992 and 1989 ACM awards. Please help! Will pay reasonable price. **Patti Held, 2420 Grant Ave., Apt. #4, Redondo Beach, CA 90278.**

\*Wanted: Elvis Presley 10-1/2 inch plate from the Elvis Remembered collection by Susie Marton, No. 7 called *Moody Blue* by Ray Ernst. Would appreciate any help. I need that one to complete the set. **Mrs. Bernice Guild, 164 Forest Ave., Brockton, MA 02401-5910.**

\*Can somebody name the artist who recently recorded a song with the lyric, "...the shadow of your ring on your left hand." **V.L. Siegrist, 5610 Chippewa 1W, St. Louis, MO 63109-1542.**

\*Looking for others like myself who videotape and/or audio tape live country performances from TV shows. Have large collection, but there are gaps. Most wanted: Emmylou Harris' "Restless" from *Austin City Limits*. Looking for traders. **Dan Hirsch, 11070 Rose Ave. #2, Los Angeles, CA 90034.**

\*Wanted: 10/4/94 issue of *Country Weekly* with Reba on cover. Also still need original copies of Reba fan club newsletters from start of fan club (1984) to March/April 1987. Will pay reasonable price. **Lance Yaeger, 43 Mapes Ave., Springfield, NJ 07081-3217.**

\*For sale: 45-rpm country records from 1960's-1970's. None later: 100 assorted for \$19.00 postpaid in US. Foreign, write first. Take a chance—good songs. **Karl Davidson, 5347 St. Charles Dr. NE, Olympia, WA 98516-9102.**

\*For sale: six-hour tape S/H \$25. Awards: CMA, AMC, TNN, Songwriters, No Hats Tour, Alan, Dolly, Garth, Reba, Randy, Loretta, *Nashville Now*, *Music City Tonight*, Grand Ole Opry. SASE to **June Miner, 517 Edward Rd., West Melbourne, FL 32904.**

\*I design, inlay and stitch boot tops for custom cowboy bootmakers. I recently designed and stitched a pair for Lee Roy Parnell. The boots were navy with a white crescent moon and stars on the tops and a white toe. I would like to have a picture of Mr. Parnell wearing these boots. Please write if you can help me. **Lisa Sorrell, Custom Boot Work, 1224 W. Logan, Guthrie, OK 73044.**

\*Cassettes for sale: *It's All About to Change*, Travis Tritt; *Big Time*, Little Texas; *Voices in the Wind*, Suzy Bogguss; *Rhythm, Country & Blues*, various artists. All are brand-new (never played). \$6.00 each, or will trade one for one for the first two releases (cassettes in good

condition) by The Desert Rose Band, *The Desert Rose Band and Running*. **Teri Nelson, 5279 Lars Hansen Rd. SE, Port Orchard, WA 98366.**

\*British collectors seek country music photos, poster, autographs, concert programs and magazines. Seeking all modern artists and Jim Reeves, Hank Williams Sr., Hank Snow, Roy Rogers, Patsy Cline, etc. Send detailed list. **Star Shots, 47 St. Austins Grove, Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8DF, England. Tel/Fax: (011 44) 1263 824146.**

\*Looking for the following CD's: The O'Kanes—*The O'Kanes*; Dean Dillon—*Slick Nickel*; Foster and Lloyd—*Foster and Lloyd*; Lacy J. Dalton—*Blue-Eyed Blues*. Also 45's: Porter Wagoner—"Ole Slew Foot," Keith Stegall—"Pretty Lady," Billy Montana and the Long Shots—"Oh Jenny," The McCarters—"Up and Gone," Gus Hardin—"My Mind Is on You," Roy Clark—"Thank God and Greyhound" and "Heart to Heart," Dave & Sugar—"Golden Tears," Nancy Griffith—"Anyone Can Be Somebody's Fool," The Kendalls—"Heaven's Just a Sin Away" and "Pittsburgh Steelers," Eddy Raven—"She's Gonna Win Your Heart," Steve Wariner—"Beside Me" and "Don't Your Memory Ever Sleep at Night," Freddy Weller—"The Roadmaster" and "The Promised Land," and Dottie West—"Country Sunshine." Send asking price. **Craig Hixon, 2207 Viewland Cir., Christiansburg, VA 24073.**

\*Wanted: Looking for *Star Trek* memorabilia (VCR tapes of the original series, toys, posters, clothing, pins, patches, etc.). Will pay reasonable price. Would like to hear from other *Star Trek* fans. **Carol Steele, 305-C Jaycee Manor, Martins Ferry, OH 43935.**

\*Wanted: anything and everything on the group Little Texas and their ex-keyboardist, Brady Seals. TV appearances/performances, pictures, newsletters, VHS tapes, interviews, Fan Fair info/pictures and parties, concert photos, articles, memorabilia. Also want a VHS copy of *Entertainment Tonight* with Little Texas promoting the video for "My Love" or on *Live with Regis and Kathy Lee*. Reasonable prices and postage paid and blank VHS tapes sent for copies. Send price lists and information. If you are a Little Texas or Brady fan, write me. **Teresa Stang, 6748 Memory Ln., Cincinnati, OH 45239.**

\*Strait fans: large collection of memorabilia for sale. I have collected items since 1984 and am parting with extras. Have a stand-up, posters, magazines, ads, photos, record albums, etc. Two stamps for list. Also, large collection of magazines, news articles and albums of many country stars. Also stand-ups and posters. Have been a collector for many years. Name favorites and send two stamps for updated list to: **Cheryl Simkins, 4707 E. Oak St. #5, Phoenix, AZ 85008.**

\*For sale: close-up photos of many country artists—Reba, Lorie, Patty, Pam, Tanya, Cash, Jones, Yoakam, Billy Dean, Waylon and many more. Send SASE for list. **Richard D. Moore, 20 Maple St., Hopedale, MA 01747.**

\*For sale: Concert and offstage photos of all your favorite country performers, 1974-1995. Also have large collection of LP's, posters, trading cards and maga-

zines. Name favorites, send SASE for lists. **Galen Duncan, 3517 Grier Nursery Rd., Street, MD 21154.**

\*For sale: video—Jackson, Stone, Exile, Chesnutt, Boy Howdy, Diffie, Restless Heart, Daron Norwood Scrapbook (first \$15 gets it); key chains, buttons, magnets of Sawyer, Stone, Daron, Exile and Boy Howdy. Photos—various. Cassette singles—Stone, Chesnutt, Supernaw, Restless Heart, Tritt, Montgomery, Parnell, Foster, Diffie, BRC and more. Wanted: items on Tritt, Walker, McGraw, Gill, Dean and Stuart. **Amy Carraway, Rt. 2 Box 210, Murray, KY 42071.**

\*For sale: on/offstage photos of country artists—Alan, Doug, Tim, Aaron and more. SASE for list. Mention favorites. Will trade anything for Doug Stone. **Karen Burnette, 4700 NE 5th Ave., Boca Raton, FL 33431.**

\*I am a collector of country music trading cards. Interested in buying, selling and trading any type of card. I also collect *Country Weekly* magazine, and I'm looking for some back issues. I need April 12, April 19 and May 3. **Gerald Gooch, 260 Gooch Rd., Kins Mountain, KY 40441.**

\*Wanted: anything on Dolly—magazines, posters, pictures, *CMM* February '73 issue with Dolly on cover. Will pay reasonable price. Include SASE please. **Suzannah Stoll, 1152 Deerwood Dr., New Johnsonville, TN 37134.**

\*Wanted: an audio tape or record of the song, "Clinging to a Saving Hand," by Connie Smith. Name your price. Also want VHS videotapes of Martina McBride and Joy Lynn White TV appearances and their videos. Want videos to Marty Stuart's "Let Me Be a Witness" and "That's What Love's About." Will send blank tapes and pay postage. Also, will pay reasonable price for July '94 issue of *New Country* magazine with Travis Tritt on cover and January '95 issue of *New Country* with Alan Jackson on cover. **Melissa Phipps, Rt. 2 Box 332, Clintwood, VA 24228.**

\*Wanted: LP or cassette of Bob Moore called *Mexico*. Anne Hollowink, **Box 834, Port Hill, ID 83853-0834.**

\*Wanted: copy of *Emmylou Harris Songbook* published by Cherry Lane Music of New York or any other Emmylou sheet music. Also albums: *White Mansions* and *Legend of Jesse James*. Will pay reasonable price. **Rachel Lee, 205 Edgewood Dr., Lufkin, TX 75904.**

\*Wanted: items related to Judds—*Country Song Hits* magazine, Winter 1986, "Why Not Me" ceramic mug, United Way ads, "Love Can Build a Bridge" promo ad, Ralph Emery shows, Dolly special 10/87, *New Stars Show* 1986, *Hee Haw* 1984, "Simple Gift" recording, Terry Wogan (UK) show 1987, tour jackets, Family Album 1986/87 Tourbook, sun visor, headband, large format cable guide 11/30-12/06 1991 with Judds on cover, "Why Not Me?" and "Heartland" hats, "River of Time" and "Rockin' with Rhythm" T-shirts and radio shows. For sale: press kits of country artists—RVS, Tanya, Stone, Lawrence, Montgomery, Loveless, Trisha, Mattea, Diffie, BRC, many more. Collections on Randy, Dolly, Shelby Lynne, Clint. Autographed 8x10's on various artists. SASE with three stamps to **Dana Stein, 345 East 80th St. #10B, New York, NY 10021.**



# CMSA COLLECTIONS

## Pen Pals

*Make new friends by mail. Pen Pals is a means of introducing CMSA members who wish to correspond. It is not a "personals" column. Physical descriptions and requests for romance will not be printed. We also reserve the right to edit for space and style. Parent's written permission required for those 16 and under.*

- \*53-year-old single gal wants pen pals who like older stars: Statlers, Gatlin and so forth. Prefer gentlemen 50-55, but will answer all. Pen pals only. Not a Garth or Reba fan. Carol Jorgensen, 20643 150th St., Maquokita, IA 52060-8729.
- \*I'm 25 years old, single, never married and no kids. I love country music. I enjoy reading, writing letters, outdoors, movies, taking pictures, bowling and shooting pool. Favorites include: Reba, Alan, Garth, Brooks & Dunn, etc. Looking for some new pen pals, especially guys 24-35. No inmates, please. Kathy Combest, 1148 Sunlight Cir., Concord, CA 94518.
- \*I'm a 37-year-old looking for some new pen pals. Favorites are: Tanya, Hank Jr., Alan, Tritt, Toby Keith, Tracy Byrd. Hobbies: photography, traveling, camping, fishing. Will answer all. No inmates, please. Terry Luper, P.O. Box 513, North Plains, OR 97133.
- \*I'm 25 years old and love everything country. My favorites are Aaron Tippin and Garth. I love animals and children. Will answer all. No inmates, please. Letisha Maxfeldt, 14219 Cool Valley Rd., Valley Center, CA 92082.
- \*I'm 31 years old and single. Love country music. Hobbies are golf, horseback riding, etc. I'd like to hear from ladies between 25 and 35. No inmates, please. Will answer all. Richard Cain, 53 Cheswich Ct., Bedminster, NJ 07921.
- \*City boy with a country state of mind, 28 years old, presently incarcerated in TX. Seeking friendship and correspondence with country music fans, especially Haggard, Waylon and Dwight Yoakam fans. Will answer all. Photo gets photo. Johnny C. Smith #645042, Wynne Unit, Huntsville, TX 77349.
- \*24-year-old single cowboy who's a country music lover. Very dedicated Oak Ridge Boys fan. Hobbies are going to Oaks concerts, collecting their materials, country dancing and writing letters. Looking for pen pals, especially single women. I'll answer all. Marc Taylor, 217 Starling Wy., Hercules, CA 94547.
- \*Hi, I'm 44 and a long-time country fan. I love Patsy Cline and would like to hear from other Patsy fans. I also like Dwight, Wynonna, Reba, Alan, Pam and many more. Hobbies include collections, reading, letter-writing, traveling and dancing. Will answer all. Franklin Plath, 3846 Clarke St., Oakland, CA 94609.
- \*I'm a single, 32-year-old country girl who loves country music. Favorites are Vince, George Strait, Tritt, Little Texas and a few others. Enjoy camping, good music and down-to-earth people. Would love to hear from someone with similar interests, ages 25 to 40. Send photo, I'll do same. Will answer all. Sheila Murphy, 74 Third St., Piedmont, WV 26750.
- \*I'm a single man with Southern country values. Born 9-13-63. Currently in prison. Would like to hear from women. John Lee Shallenberger, 100 Hillcrest Rd. N77770, East Moline, IL 61244.
- \*I'm 35 and a single guy. I love country and pop music. Favorite singers are Lorrie, Alan, Reba, Martina McBride, Ronna Reeves and many others. Love to hear from single ladies 33-35 from IA and Northern MO. I am also a big Elvis fan. No inmates, please. Bill Hoyt, Box 325, Shannon City, IA 50861.
- \*I am a 29-year-old woman that plays fiddle in a country band. We stay busy playing all over New England. Would enjoy hearing from anyone. No inmates, please. Tina Turner, 41 Pleasant St. #1, Attleboro, MA 02703.
- \*I am a 21-year-old young cowgirl from West TX. Dancing, rodeoing, attending concerts and listening to country music are some of my pastimes. I'd love to hear from some real cowboys interested in a spirited pen pal. Photo gets mine. No inmates, please. Shaylene Farris, P.O. Box 60342, Midland, TX 79711.
- \*I am 30 and I live for country music. I enjoy concerts, reading, photography, animals, vacationing in TN, Elvis, cross-stitch and writing letters. I like most country artists, but I love Alan Jackson. Interested in hearing from other Alan fans and all who love country. I've never been to Fan Fair, considering going in 1995. Would like to hear from fans who've been there. Rose Camarillo, 2316 W. 145th St., Posen, IL 60469.
- \*I am a 20-year-old single female. I love all kinds of music, but country especially. Some favorites are Tracy Byrd, John Michael Montgomery and Tim McGraw. Looking forward to hearing from pen pals from across the US, ages 21-35. Sirena Lara, 14859 Brookhill Rd., Madera, CA 93639-7909.
- \*Slightly crazy country girl, 24, wants a good, long distance friend. Lots of interests: rodeo, music (too many names to mention), playing cards, reading, cross-stitch, long walks, photography and animals. Would like to hear from anyone, especially in the West. No inmates, please. Christy Anderson, 2841 Freedom Valley Rd., Alma, AR 72921.
- \*I'm a 44-year-old single male who loves country music. Have too many favorites to put on paper. I'm presently doing time, but will be out in August '95. Would like to correspond with females who aren't judgmental. Will answer all. Letch Spicer, P.O. Box 128 KSP, 5-3C-11, Eddyville, KY 42038-0128.
- \*I'm 52 years old and divorced. I've got a lot of country music and B&W photos of country stars. I like all country music stars and hymns. I like to travel, meet and make new friends, walk, baseball, car racing, church and will answer females only. Photo gets mine. Paul E. Revell, P.O. Box 1007, Florence, SC 29503-1007.
- \*Would you like to write a real Texan? I like animals. My favorite singers are George Strait, Clint, Alan, Doug Stone and Mark Chesnutt. I'm 13. Would like to hear from someone my age, male or female. Michael Brown, 305 Oliver St., Gladewater, TX 75647.
- \*I'm 25 and single. I love country music. Some favorites are George Strait, Garth, Clay, Alan, Tracy Lawrence, Tracy Byrd, JMM, Ricky Lynn Gregg, NFL (Cowboys). Would like to hear from guys 18 and up, especially single. Will answer all. Carol Silas, 1826 Van Buran 202, Arlington, TX 76011.
- \*I am 23 years old and divorced. I enjoy reading romance novels and *Country Music Magazine* while listening to country music. Faves are Sammy Kershaw, Little Texas, Alan Jackson, Ricky Lynn Gregg and Vince and Reba. I am interested in hearing from anyone 21 and up. Cowboys welcome. Love to write letters. No inmates, please. Carol Sue Huffer, 433 N. High St., Chillicothe, OH 45601.
- \*I'm a 21-year-old single mother who likes Little Texas, Marty Stuart, Shawn Camp, Pearl River and others. Will write everyone, including inmates. Male or female. Kelly Denstitt, 12315 Graham #8, Moreno Valley, CA 92557.
- \*Lonely, incarcerated, U.S. Army Vietnam veteran, 46 years old. Would like to write to females 18-40 and discuss country music, past and present. Some hobbies include: weightlifting, motorcycles, pickup trucks, hot rods and more. Also a good card player. Bryan Barfoot, #37322, Box 2500, NSP 5-A-20, Lincoln, NE 68542.
- \*I'm in my early 30's, single. I'm currently doing time. Looking for new pen pals of all ages, and some I lost due to complications. I love country music. Some favorites are Dolly, Tracy Lawrence, Alan, Reba, Lorrie and many more. I also like anything outdoors. Will answer all. Photo gets mine. Bill Schultz #87876, Arizona State Prison, 10,000 S.W. Wilmot Rd., Tucson, AZ 85777.
- \*I'm a 19-year-old country girl from Northern CA. My favorite country singers are Chris LeDoux, Hank Jr., Alabama, Keith Whitley and more. One of my major hobbies is going to rodeos. Interested in writing to all, so please fill my mailbox. Enclose photo, I'll do the same. No inmates, please. Sheila McKnight, P.O. Box 1185, Redway, CA 95560.
- \*I'm a huge country music fan. Number one favorite is Emmylou Harris. Also like Alan, Marty, Ricky Skaggs, Rodney Crowell, Suzy Bogguss and more. I would like to hear from other true fans of country music. Martha Callahan, HC 68 Box 118, West Liberty, KY 41472.
- \*I'm 22 and enjoy writing letters, country music, watching *One Life to Live*, *Guiding Light* and movies, reading and working out. My favorites are Lorrie and Toby. Write soon and let's start a great friendship. Will answer all. No inmates. Christy J. Poser, 355 Stumpstown Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
- \*Looking for pen pals who share similar interests in music and life. Some favorites are Reba, Tritt, Faith Hill, Waylon, Vince and more. Some interests are nature, children, sports, art, log cabins, healthy living and government functions. Will write and exchange photos, females 18 and up. R. Hickey #861953, Indiana State Prison, P.O. Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46361.
- \*Hi! I'm 20 years old and love country music. I like Reba, Garth, Clay, John Michael and more. Would love to hear from anyone, especially sports fans. Will answer all. No inmates, please. Prefer those ages 18-30. Jennifer Hester, 507 Third St., Stanley, NC 28164.
- \*Hi! I'm a 26-year-old single male. Favorites are Faith, Wynonna, Lorrie, Sawyer Brown, Confederate RR, Mark Collie, Tracy Lawrence, Travis and Doug Stone. Interests are car models and car maga-

zines. Would love to hear from people with similar interests. No inmates, please. Will try to answer all. Waylon Leonard Ferguson, Route 2, Box 131-A, Pittsburg, TX 75686.

\*Hello there, country music ladies. I am a big country music fan, but I am in prison. Please have pity on me. I erred and have seen the light. I will correspond with any lady, age unimportant. I will answer everyone. Scott Little #229-287, Madison Correctional Institute, P.O. Box 740, London, OH 43140.

\*Hello, I'm single and 38. Nashville was home for 35 years. Now living in FL. Seeking country music fans to share letters with. If you enjoy country music and would like to meet a proud country boy, then write! Favorites are Jones, Conway, Haggard, Doug Stone and more. Will answer all. Steve R. Bunch, Union Correctional Institution, P.O. Box 221-K-2-709856, Raiford, FL 32083.

\*Howdy! I'm a single 24-year-old Wisconsinite. I enjoy listening to all country music ('75-'94) and some rock ('50-'75). I also like fishing, hunting, bowling, billiards, rodeos, camping, photography, singing/dancing, working and being outdoors. Looking forward to corresponding with females 17-26 years. Send a picture, and I'll do same. Douglas E. Propp, 519 East Haseltine St., Richland Ctr., WI 53581.

\*Hi! I am 31 years old and single. My favorites are Waylon, Mac Davis, Hank Jr. and Sammy Kershaw, to name a few. I also like to attend country music concerts. I spend a lot of time outdoors. If you love your country, I sure would love to hear from you! Please write soon. Joseph Jay Butala, 525 Pewabic St., Lawium, MI 49913.

\*Hi! I'm 18. I love country music. Some favorites are John Michael, Pam Tillis, Alan Jackson and Sammy Kershaw. Some hobbies are reading and writing letters, playing basketball and shopping. Would like to hear from females only, for friendship. Please, no inmates. Rebecca Miller, 423 E. Dartmouth St., Muncie, IN 47303.

\*I am a single female, 35, and love country music (Garth, Clint, RVS and many others), horses and animal watching. I want to correspond with Americans and Canadians my age, male and female, to make friends and improve my English. Angelica Hagenmaier, Echardingerstr 7, 81673 Munchen Germany.

\*Hey there! I'm a 25-year-old country boy, love the outdoors and country music (Faith Hill, Vince, Alan...heck, I like them all). Would like correspondence and friendship. I made a mistake and am unfortunately incarcerated, but not for long. Please give me a chance. I'm not a bad person. Tim Scott 895652, B.T.C., Box 500, Tell City, IN 47586.

*Send requests to Country Music Magazine, 329 Riverside Ave., Westport, CT 06880. Mark envelope, Attention: Collections. Entries sent without membership number will be discarded. Collections is printed as a service to readers, and Country Music Magazine assumes no liability for any losses or damages resulting from any Collections page correspondence. Parents, be aware of children's correspondence.*

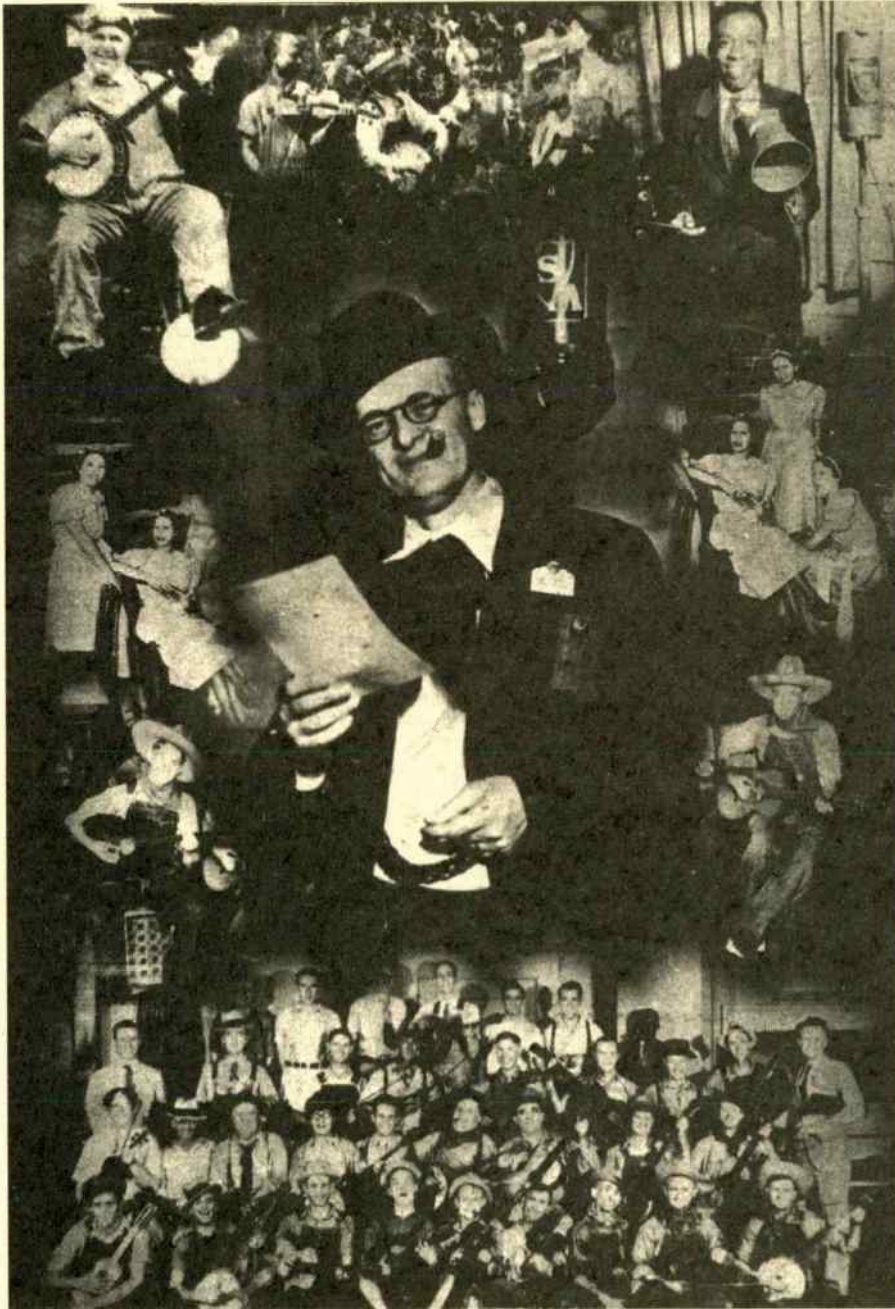
By Rich Kienzle

George D. Hay had never seen anything like it. A reporter for the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, he was in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas, covering the 1919 funeral of a World War I soldier. After getting the story of the funeral, he ran into a poor rural farmer who invited him to an old-fashioned hoedown that evening. "About 20 people came," Hay wrote. "There was a coal oil lamp in one corner of the cabin and another one in the 'kitty corner.' No one in the world has ever had more fun than those Ozark Mountaineers did that night." The experience left an indelible impression on the young reporter. Just a few years later, it inspired a vision in him that led to the founding of America's longest running radio show, one that consolidated country music's nationwide audience: The Grand Ole Opry.

George Dewey Hay was born in Attica, Indiana, on November 9, 1895. As a boy, "Judge," a mispronunciation of his name, became his nickname. Introduced to Southern life while in Georgia for World War I military training, he decided to return south after his discharge, landing his job on the *Commercial Appeal*. After a stint as a police reporter, he became a columnist, his column titled "Howdy, Judge." Hay was excited by the changes radio brought to America as receivers got cheaper and stations popped up all over. In 1923, the *Commercial Appeal* started Memphis station WMC. Hay became "radio editor," doing a nightly broadcast on his daily reporting experiences and, tongue in cheek, named himself the "Solemn Old Judge." On the air, he blew an ancient wooden steamboat whistle called "Hushpuckena" after a tiny hamlet in the Mississippi Delta, south of Memphis.

By 1924 WLS Chicago, the Sears-Roebuck-owned radio station, hired him away from Memphis. He pioneered the first "teletthon," doing a marathon broadcast to raise Red Cross relief money for storm victims. That year he was voted the most popular announcer in the U.S. by station owners polled by *Radio Digest Magazine*. He also became staff announcer on the station's new live country music program, the *WLS Barn Dance*.

Hay was at WLS less than a year when Nashville's National Life and Accident Insurance Company started their own station. The call sign was WSM, an acronym for "We Shield Millions." The station opened October 5, 1925. Even before Hay became involved with programming, WSM began featuring "old time" music



# George D. Hay

*Newspaperman and radio pioneer, the Solemn Old Judge shaped the Grand Ole Opry into the institution it became. He always championed what he saw as the rural and the "down to earth" in both music and performers.*

on Saturday nights. Dr. Humphrey Bate, a rural Tennessee physician who played pop and old-time music with a group of musicians over Nashville's WDAD, did an hour-long old-time program over WSM.

On November 28, 1925, Hay, by then a WSM staff announcer, was stuck filling air time when a preacher failed to show up for a Saturday broadcast. A pianist mentioned that her uncle was with her and that he could fiddle. Hay put the man, 77-year-old Uncle Jimmy Thompson, on the air, and the letters and telegrams that showed up on Monday made it clear the station was on to something. Hay suggested WSM formalize the old-time music into a regular Saturday night show. By late December, it was a regular segment, the WSM *Barn Dance*. Through 1926, other acts drifted into the station including Nashville mechanic Paul Warmack, who led a group called The Gully Jumpers, and Herman and Lewis Crook (not related) in a group called The Crook Brothers. Black harmonica virtuoso DeFord Bailey, brought to the show by Dr. Bate, joined the cast, as did ebullient singer-banjoist Uncle Dave Macon.

The show's popularity and list of performers grew, and Hay, by then WSM Program Director, gave it a distinct identity. The fact that much of Nashville's upper crust found the show offensive to their genteel tastes mattered not to Hay. At no time was that more apparent than one night in December 1927: WSM, affiliated with NBC, was broadcasting the network's *Music Appreciation Hour*, hosted by conductor and composer Dr. Walter Damrosch. Damrosch, after stating there was no room in classical music for realism, concluded the program with an exception to the rule—playing an Iowa man's orchestral composition depicting an onrushing freight train.

When the show ended, Hay stepped to the microphone and commented on Damrosch's statement. *"From here on for the next three hours, we will present nothing but realism. It will be down to earth for the earthy. In respectful contrast to Dr. Damrosch's presentation of the number which depicts the onrush of the locomotive, we call on one of our performers, DeFord Bailey, with his harmonica, to give us the country version of his 'Pan American Blues.'" Bailey played the number, and Hay returned. "For the past hour we have been listening to music taken largely from Grand Opera, from now on we will present...the Grand Ole Opry."*

Hay would develop the show's identity over the next decade and a half, but WSM's owners were insurance business people who expected profit and planning. By 1930 Harry Stone replaced Hay as pro-

gram director. Hay's creative abilities aside, his dreamy personality and occasional emotional instability made him ill-suited to the big business slant of commercial radio. He also lacked hard-nosed business skills.

Hay remained the Opry's manager and chief announcer. His ideas of what kind of music did and didn't belong on the show remained dominant for years. While the *WLS National Barn Dance* flirted with pop music, Hay preferred fiddlers, harmonica players, banjoists and guitarists. Such colorful monikers as "The Dixie Dewdrop" for Uncle Dave Macon and group names like "The Fruit Jar Drinkers" came from Hay, who made the performers seem more rural than they were in real life. Hay barred "uptown" music and instruments like drums and horns from the show. Though the station added vocal groups to broaden the show's appeal, WSM generally stood behind Hay's policies.

Not always accommodating to new talent, Hay blew off a Knoxville singer-fiddler named Roy Acuff several times before Joe L. Frank, Opry artist Pee Wee King's father-in-law and manager, got Acuff an audition late in 1937. By 1938 Acuff was a full-fledged Opry cast member, though forced to change his band's name from "Crazy Tennesseans" to "The Smoky Mountain Boys." He was more accommodating with Bill Monroe, an established figure through recording and performing with his brother Charlie as The Monroe Brothers. Having split with Charlie, he'd chosen to pursue his own musical vision: a new spin on the old-timey stringband. After Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys played "Mule Skinner Blues" over the air in 1938, Hay told Monroe: "If you ever leave the Opry, it'll be because you fired yourself."

Hay remained unbending on keeping the show "down to earth." He once told Sam McGee not to bring back a little amplified Hawaiian steel guitar he'd played on the Opry because it was "too modern." Yet Hay didn't totally turn a blind eye to show business. He, Acuff, Uncle Dave Macon and other members appeared in the 1940 Republic Pictures film, *Grand Ole Opry*.

By the beginning of World War II, the Opry, with its 50,000 watt signal, was already a national institution. Hay, his black hat and coat in keeping with his "Solemn Old Judge" image, remained a powerful influence. Unfortunately, that jovial image concealed Hay's ongoing emotional problems. At times he left Nashville for extended visits back to Indiana. Through the 1940's the problem continued intermittently. Hay couldn't

keep the show totally rooted in the past. In 1942 Texan Ernest Tubb joined, and since electric guitars were part of his honky tonk sound, that taboo evaporated. Electric steels like the one Sam McGee played also became acceptable. Still, Hay was angered when Bob Wills defied the show's ban on drums late in 1944. Slowly, but surely, though, the Opry evolved.

By 1947, Hay was still active, though young Grant Turner and other announcers shared his duties. Late that year Hay suffered a major nervous breakdown that incapacitated him for months, ending his control of a show that had outgrown him. WSM Artists' Service Bureau head Jim Denny, who'd run the show's booking agency, became Opry manager. Performers like Acuff, Tubb, Red Foley, Minnie Pearl and others became most identified with the show.

Hay nonetheless remained a beloved figure and a link to the Opry's roots through the late 40's and early 50's. He'd appear on the show with Hushpuckena, his steamboat whistle, and talk a bit. In the mid-50's, he appeared in the Al Gannaway color film performances of Opry stars, providing a bit of quaint color. His dominant days on the show were over. It was as if, for the last time, he'd given his famous, whimsical (but poetic) announcement that closed every Opry broadcast:

*That's all for now friends. . .  
Because the tall pines pine  
And the pawpaws pause  
And the bumble bees bumble all  
around,*

*The grasshoppers hop  
And the eavesdroppers drop  
While, gently, the Old Cow slips away.  
George D. Hay, saying so long for now...*

Hay eventually moved to the Norfolk/Virginia Beach, Virginia, area to be near his daughter Margaret. He died on May 8, 1966, at age 70. The Opry paid tribute to him on Saturday May 11, 1966, and that year he was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Perhaps the best tribute came on March 16, 1974, when the new Grand Ole Opry House at Opryland opened. A segment from the 1940 *Grand Ole Opry* film was to be shown on a screen, featuring Roy Acuff playing "Wabash Cannonball." The song would begin on film, then Acuff and the 1974 Smoky Mountain Boys would continue it, live, in the present. But the first face the audience saw on the screen was not Acuff, but the man introducing him: George Dewey Hay.

**Albums Available**  
See For CMSA Members Only page.

# Readers Create

## Always on My Mind

*Mona Knadle of Watertown, South Dakota, says she loves CMM. "I especially enjoy the Readers Create section. I have always imagined what it might feel like to have something of your own published in a fine magazine like yours." Imagine no more, Mona.*

## Unspoken Feelings

It's hard to live from day to day  
not knowing how you feel;  
It's hard to know if in your thoughts  
the things we shared were real.

I never know what I should think  
when I don't hear from you—  
Should I assume you want me to  
forget what we've been through?

I miss you more than you will  
probably ever even know—  
You're on my mind no matter  
who I'm with or where I go.  
I hear a song that makes me feel  
so lonesome I could cry;  
I think of how I really hate  
those awful words "good bye."  
So many things around here

are just memories of you;  
I guess I should just move away  
and try to start anew.  
But something seems to hold me here  
that I just can't explain;  
Something makes me think  
I'll get to be with you again.

You're wrong if you think what I need  
is promises or vows;  
I know you haven't answers  
for my many "whys and hows."  
I don't want you to tell me things  
that don't come from your heart—  
Guess I just wish that I was missed  
whenever we're apart.

It's hard though, I repeat to you  
not knowing how you feel.  
I need to if in your thoughts  
what we have shared was real.

—Mona Knadle

## Puzzles Return to Readers Create: Conway Twitty Word Search

*It's been along time since we ran a puzzle in Readers Create, as the maker of this puzzle, Francine Parrish, points out in her letter. In fact, we*

*haven't done one since we converted to our desktop publishing system. In the old days, everything was sent out to a typesetter, and it was their problem to*

*turn our typed or handwritten pages into typeset material suitable for publication. But that's ancient history. We've done everything in-house for over two years now, and since we now know what we're doing (more or less), it seemed a good time to tackle a puzzle. CMSA members have been asking for them, so here you are! Francine, by the way, is a Charter Member hailing from Jacksonville, Florida. The late Conway is her all-time favorite.*

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## Word List:

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| ARKANSAS       | JENKINS      |
| ARMY           | JUNE         |
| AWARDS         | LEGEND       |
| BASEBALL       | LORETTA      |
| BLUES          | MISSISSIPPI  |
| CONWAY TWITTY  | MUSIC        |
| COUNTRY        | PHILLIES     |
| FAN FAIR       | POP          |
| FANS           | RIVER        |
| FRIARS POINT   | ROCKABILLY   |
| GOSPEL         | SEPTEMBER    |
| HAROLD         | SONGS        |
| HELLO DARLIN'  | SOUL         |
| HENDERSONVILLE | TEXAS        |
| HONKY TONK     | T BIRD       |
| IT'S ONLY MAKE | TWITTY BIRDS |
| BELIEVE        |              |



**GEORGE STRAIT**  
COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE MAY/JUNE 1995

PULL-OUT  
CENTERFOLD  
OF-THE-MONTH

# GEORGE STRAIT

## Update '95

.....

### Personal Data

*Given Name:* George Strait  
*Birthdate:* May 18, 1952  
*Birthplace:* Pearsall, Texas  
*Family:* Wife, Norma; son, George Jr. (nickname Bubba)

.....

### Vital Statistics

*Height:* 5'10"  
*Weight:* 160  
*Color eyes:* Green  
*Color hair:* Brown

.....

### Record Label

MCA Records, 60 Music Square East,  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203.  
Current Album: *Lead On*

### George's Pet Products

George is involved with South Texas Pet Products, in a new signature line of dog food and treats, horse feed and treats and animal care products. South Texas Pet Products is headquartered in George's hometown of San Antonio, Texas.

The three products, Strait Nutrition (including liver treats for dogs), Country Legend (mane, body and tail apple-scented shampoo and conditioner for horses) and Strait Country (a fresh, natural-scented shampoo and conditioner for horses) will be available this year.

Though Country Legend and Strait Country are made for horses, the manufacturer states that these products have been shown to be beneficial for human use as well.

The Strait dog products will carry George's photograph as well as his dog

Buster's. Buster has appeared with Strait in album and publicity photos since he was a puppy. The horse products feature Strait and one of his horses.

.....

### Current Events

The Annual George Strait Team Roping Classic will be held June 9th and 10th in Kingsville, Texas. The PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association)-sanctioned event will feature over 400 teams competing for prizes totalling over \$150,000. As in previous years, George will be competing.

The Third Annual George Strait Country Music Festival will be held in San Antonio at the Alamadome on September 3rd. Scheduled guests include Vince Gill and Clay Walker.



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# DAVID LEE MURPHY

## Out with a BANG

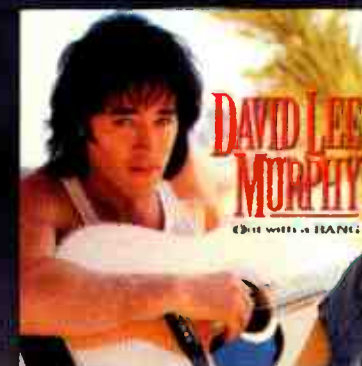
featuring the hits,

"Just Once,"

"Fish Ain't Bitin',"

and the smash single

# "PARTY CROWD"

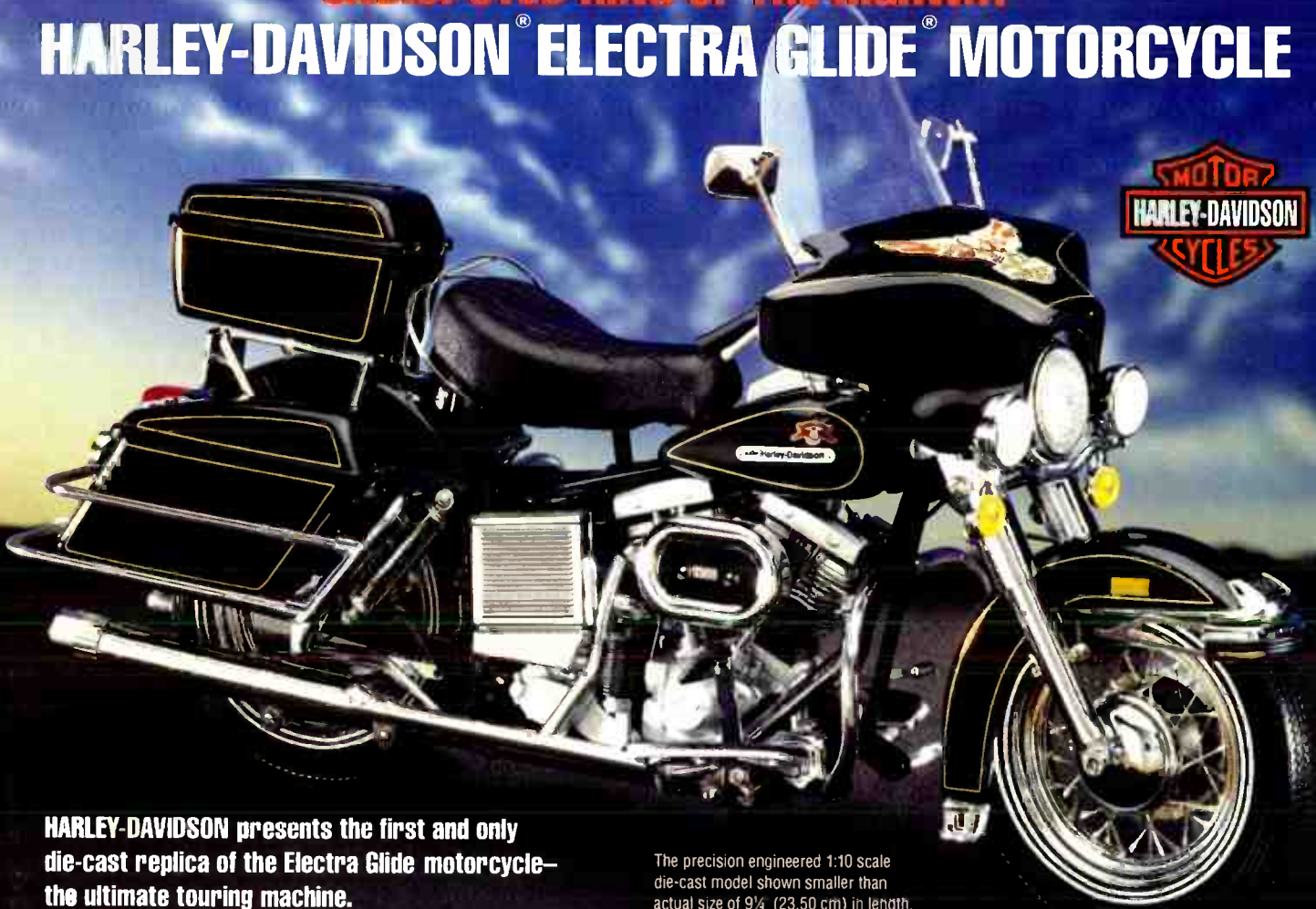


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**The Harley-Davidson Electra Glide. Exclusively From Franklin Mint Precision Models.®**







**P**erhaps the easiest, and truest, thing you can say about Mark Chesnutt is that what you see is what you get—maybe that he is what he is, or you have to take him as you find him.

The way we find him today pretty much says it. He's laid back on one of the beds in his road manager's Opryland Hotel room, sneakers kicked off, wearing jeans and a T-shirt and a camo Buckmasters Classic gimme cap over unwashed hair, watching the Saturday morning fishing shows on TNN. Sure, he says, we can do the interview now, but the TV's going to be staying on, or at least the picture is. "I ain't missing my fishing shows," he explains. A *real* thick southeast Texas twang there.

This exchange isn't the first thing that's happened between us. We've been chatting for about ten minutes already about stuff like the ideal woods revolver and the relative shootability of the .280 and the .30-06, that kind of thing, while TV bass after TV bass is hauled in to the TV boat and held up to the TV videocam. But you-all don't need us to tell you

always ask me, what's your favorite this and what's your favorite that, and I really don't have one favorite anything." He pauses, as if he's done, but then he seems to shift gears. "Hell, I just like Waylon, y'know. If I like someone, I like 'em. It's not just one or two songs, it's the whole body of their work."

That's better.

"Why did you pick 'Rainy Day Women'—sorry, 'Rainy Day Woman,' singular—to sing as your duet with Waylon on your *What a Way to Live* album?"

He laughs, kind of a long, ironic chortle. "I *hoped* you was gonna catch that. That was the song we were listening to when the idea came up for a duet. It could have been a dozen other songs. I always liked the steel guitar on that cut."

"Who played steel on the new cut?"

"Hell, I couldn't tell you. It wasn't Paul Franklin, who usually plays on my records. It was some guy I've never seen before. But Waylon's steel sound was something I always loved about his records."

I tell him about the first time I heard Ralph

*The East Texas honky tonker is outspoken and humble, and he can sing circles around many of newcomers who've followed him—just ask George Jones and Waylon Jennings.*

# MARK CHESNUTT

## *Hard Country, Blunt Truths*

BY PATRICK CARR

about bass or TV, so we'll get down to business.

"What's your favorite Waylon Jennings album, Mark?"

That's the first question because Mr. Chesnutt's publicist, having experienced the agony of watching her client "yes-ing and no-ing" to more than a couple of interviewers' questions—not the stuff of great quotes or sound bites—has prepped me.

She has also explained: "Mark, you see, will talk your ear off if he knows you and likes you, but he's not easy with strangers. The way he grew up, when everyone else was dating and doing the social thing, he was on the bandstand. He doesn't know how to do small talk." Therefore, she says, I should ask about stuff he enjoys discussing: fishing, of course, plus his new show, his work with George Jones, his new baby (his first), and the world of classic country records he knows and loves so well. So I figure that since he's called his new son Waylon, my opening question is a pretty safe bet.

It doesn't work right away. "I don't have one special Waylon album" is all he says. He looks a little sick, like there's a bad smell somewhere.

"Your favorite track?"

"Tons of 'em. I love a bunch of 'em. People

Mooney's steel making beautiful music with Waylon's Telecaster—I'll never, ever forget it—and then say, "Hmmm. Where's Mooney now? Did I hear he'd retired and he was preaching somewhere, got himself a ministry someplace?"

"I didn't hear about that. I didn't hear he was preaching. Waylon told me he's just old. I asked when we were doing the session. I said, 'Shoot, we shoulda had ole Mooney over here.' Waylon said, 'Ah, he's too old.'"

He starts chortling again. "Y'know, the first time I saw Waylon live, Mooney had lost his steel. I asked Waylon about that. I knew he wouldn't remember. I said, 'I saw you in Port Arthur, Texas. You came down there, and I sat through half your show before I realized Mooney wasn't playing. You were doing all the steel licks on the guitar. Then you introduced the band and called ole Mooney out and said he'd lost his steel, he'd left it somewhere.' Waylon just said, 'Ah, he was probably f\_\_\_d up.'"

I should ask Mark to date that Port Arthur gig—was it before or after he himself became a full-time honky tonk hero back in 1979, dropping out of high school to play the joints, dives and skull orchards for a living at the

*“We’re not swingin’ from ropes...and I’m not no sex god and don’t want to be. I’m just a singer, and with me it’s all music, it’s music and fun.”*

age of 16?—but oh, well.

“So you called your boy Waylon, huh?”

“Yup. It was Waylon’s idea. He was just kidding. He told my wife that when the baby was born, we were going to have to name him after him, sort of like a trade-off for him being on my album. I thought it was a good idea.”

“What’s your boy’s whole name?”

“Waylon Nelson Chesnutt.”

“Nelson?”

“That’s his grandmother’s name. But I have a dog named Willie, so...”

I don’t know about you, but I’m enjoying myself. It’s good to have less diplomatic generality, more real life, in an interview. Often in country music these days, you’re dealing with people who are trying to keep their real selves secret—it’s media manipulation, image control; managers and record companies actually have their “artists” coached in how to do it. It’s a tonic to run into someone who doesn’t care.

“So you have a new show, Mark?”

“Yeah,” he replies, laughing. “It’s the same old songs”—laughing harder—“but they’re in a different order.

“I dunno. This whole concert bit is sort of weird to me. They put so much into it, they’re doing rock concerts these days in this business. That’s kinda hard for me to keep up with. I’ve got

the stage, and all the computerized moving lights and all this crap. I had to just recently replace one of the most expensive pieces of equipment that you can get, because they lock in this program on this damn computer, and you have to do the same goddam thing every night. You have to walk over here, you got to walk over there. It’s a mess, like being choreographed, you know?

“That didn’t work with me. After about a month my concert manager come over and said, ‘You know, this piece of equipment we got over here, there ain’t but about eight of them in the world, and it’s very expensive, and the LD spends a lot of time programming this thing. But you know, you’re just not a programmable guy. This ain’t gonna work with you.’ I said, ‘No, it ain’t.’”

“Who’d you sell it to?”

“Well, it ain’t mine. No way in hell I’d buy something like that. It’s just part of the stuff that we’ve contracted from the production company. But they had to get another lighting board and work manually, ‘cause I just ain’t...I mean, the whole deal is, you got two choices. You can either be Kiss, or you can be Mark Chesnutt.

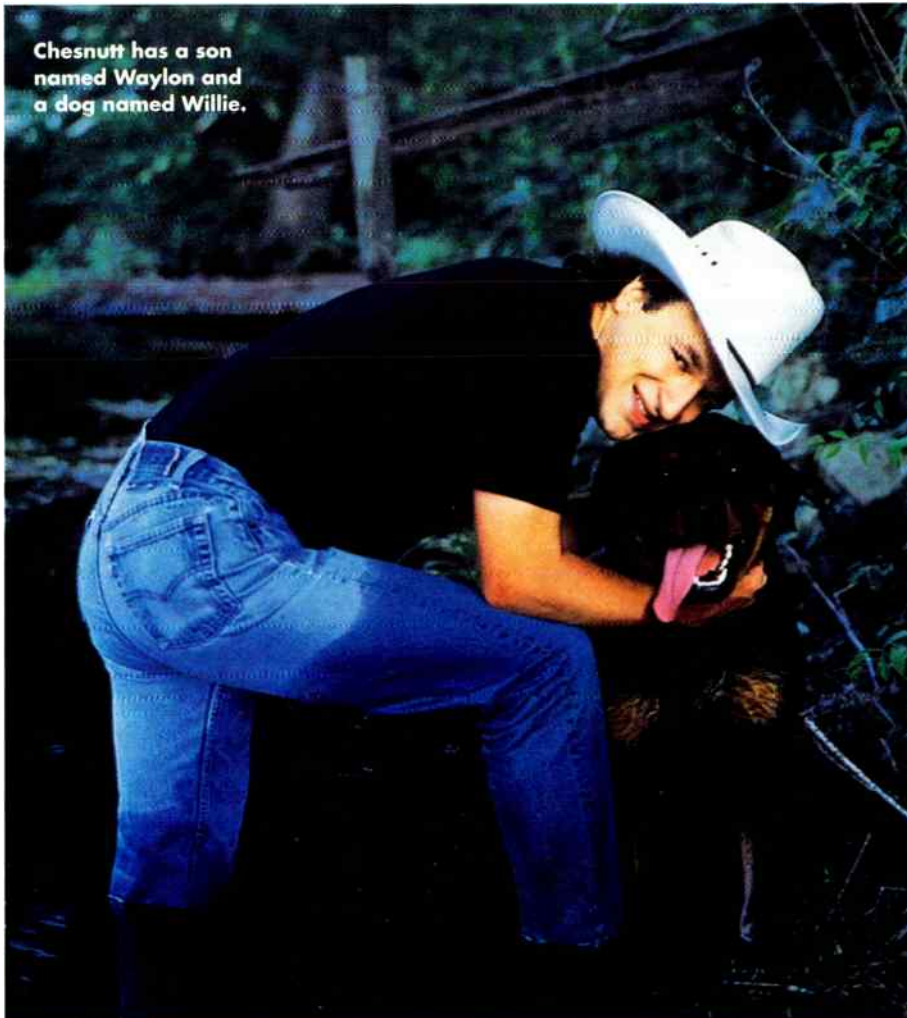
“Don’t get me wrong, now. We’ve got a great show, but I can’t say ‘Our show is bigger and better than it was last year!’ ‘cause sometimes it is, and sometimes it ain’t. If you do the same old

crap every single night the same way, see, then the next year comes around and it’s, ‘Oh, it’s time to change shows!’ Hell, *our* show’s different every night. We’re not swingin’ from ropes and jumpin’ off shit, and I’m not no sex god and don’t want to be. I’m just a singer, and with me it’s all music, it’s music and fun.”

It should be noted at this point that the Mark Chesnutt show *is* renowned. He and his band get rave concert reviews from even the most experienced, hard-bitten critics, not to mention the paying public. And they seem to have fun, too. To that end, Mark says, it helps that all his musicians are “local”—from his southeast Texas, southwest Louisiana home range (he was born in Beaumont, and lives only 70 miles from there today).

“These guys ain’t moody,” he explains. “They’re not weird, they’re not on drugs, there’s no problems. Everybody’s just good ole country boys havin’ a great time. I mean, I’ve hired guys out of Nashville or somewhere else, but they were too damned serious, always crying about stuff.”

At this point, the TV shifts from fish to race cars, which I find more relaxing—those bass can get pretty frisky—so for a while we stare at the colorful little cars going round and round. The moment has a homey kind of feel to it, reminding me that with TNN on the job, more or less the whole U.S.A., and significant chunks of the rest of the planet, can feel just like Beaumont on a



Chesnutt has a son named Waylon and a dog named Willie.

Saturday morning. It's just one of the ways in which, as Mark Chesnutt sang on *Almost Goodbye*, his third platinum album, "Texas is bigger than it used to be."

Back to business, though. I decide to ask about money. I wouldn't even bother with most modern country singers, but this guy might just tell me. Specifically, I'm wondering where three platinum albums and an "ever-widening fan base" get you these days. Is Mark's earning power growing steadily?

That ironic chortle again. "Well, it was 'til I started headlining. Then I couldn't sell no tickets. So no, I ain't doin' all that damn good!"

"When you go out to headline these days, it's really tough. I'm sure it's always been tough, but it's ridiculous now. There's too many people out there tryin' to headline, competing for the same dollar. You book a venue, well, hell, two weeks later there's six other artists coming into the same venue! People just don't have that kind of money. They ain't gonna spend twenty-five dollars for a ticket four times a month, more than that really. It's just too big. It's a mess out there right now."

"So what do you do about that?"

"Well, I'm thinking about just pullin' out of that whole damn thing and gettin' with one of these big stars that keep gettin' on top of me, 'cause every time I go to a venue I find out that Alan Jackson or somebody like that is comin' in two weeks later, and pulling all the ticket sales. So maybe I'll get on the road with somebody like him and let *him* pay the bills and pay me to open for him. Otherwise it's just too expensive."

He goes into a long, at times hilarious digression about young singers wanting the world from him before they'll open his show—another new aspect of the business, where opening acts used to have less bargaining power than a well-hooked bass or a one-eyed NASCAR driver. After a while we quit laughing and get back to the main subject.

"I mean, I wish I could get on TV like Garth Brooks and say I've got all the money in the world—which I very seriously doubt, by the way. I'd like to be able to brag about that, but hell, I ain't gonna lie, put nobody on. This is a very expensive business to be in. We're not that rich."

"Do you see a crash coming?" I ask. "You know, because the market's become oversaturated?"

"I don't know what in the hell's gonna happen. All I know is what I'm gonna have to do. It just don't seem like it's the music that matters anymore. It seems like it's everything *but* the music that matters. A lot of people go out and buy tickets just because somebody looks good in a pair of Wranglers—they'll buy tickets just to see how he dances or see how he shakes his hips. Boy, that's hard to compete with."

"Maybe in the short term," I say. "Not in the long run."

"Well, yeah, those guys are gonna get older and the crowd's gonna get older. *Somebody's* got to grow up eventually. And hell, I'll ride it out. I'll be here. Eventually, a lot of these guys are gonna have to start competing with me on my terms. When all the glitter's gone, they're gonna have to start singing. And I'll be right there singing with 'em."

If that ever happens, of course, the other guys are in trouble, because everyone knows that Mark Chesnutt surely can sing. George Jones says so, and he should know. So does Waylon. The critics say so, too, all the time. They've written that his vocals are "honest, okay, rich, complex, robust, yet somehow delicate"; that he is "the best pure country singer in the new country crop"; and even that he's "saving the soul of country music."

I don't know about that last bit. Neither does Mark. When I read it to him, he gives me that horse-manure look again and says, "All I do is, I do the best I can do. I do what I know how to do. I'm not out there to change the world. I just do



On stage Mark's the real deal. Critics and fans agree.

what I do and hope somebody appreciates it."

That sounds a bit like phony humility. I don't think it is, though. I believe that Mark is just telling the truth. I really don't think that behind his front, well hidden when the little red light on the TV camera or tape recorder blinks on, there's a character hopelessly in love with himself and his talent. Which may sound obvious, but believe me, there are some *very* good actors out there.

When I ask him about the progress of his music, he's characteristically frank. "I don't think I've quite caught up with myself yet. I don't think I've done my best work in the studio. I think it's gotten better over the years, but I think it could be a hell of a lot better than it is now."

That's what he says. What *I* say is that he's been over-mainstreamed in the studio; that his recordings haven't reflected his power, or his range. He is after all a very strong, experienced, instinctively intelligent singer who thinks in terms of the turf between George Jones and ZZ Top, not Kenny Rogers and James Taylor. Somebody should turn him loose.

Somebody just might. Right at the end of our interview, Mark delivers the news that his next album will be produced by Tony Brown instead of Mark Wright, who oversaw his first four. "I sure don't know how to get the best out of myself in the studio," he says, "but maybe Tony Brown does." Maybe so. The odds are good.

He puts on his shoes to go do a radio interview, glad it's not TV so he doesn't have to wash his hair. I leave happy. ■



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BERRY

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ON THE  
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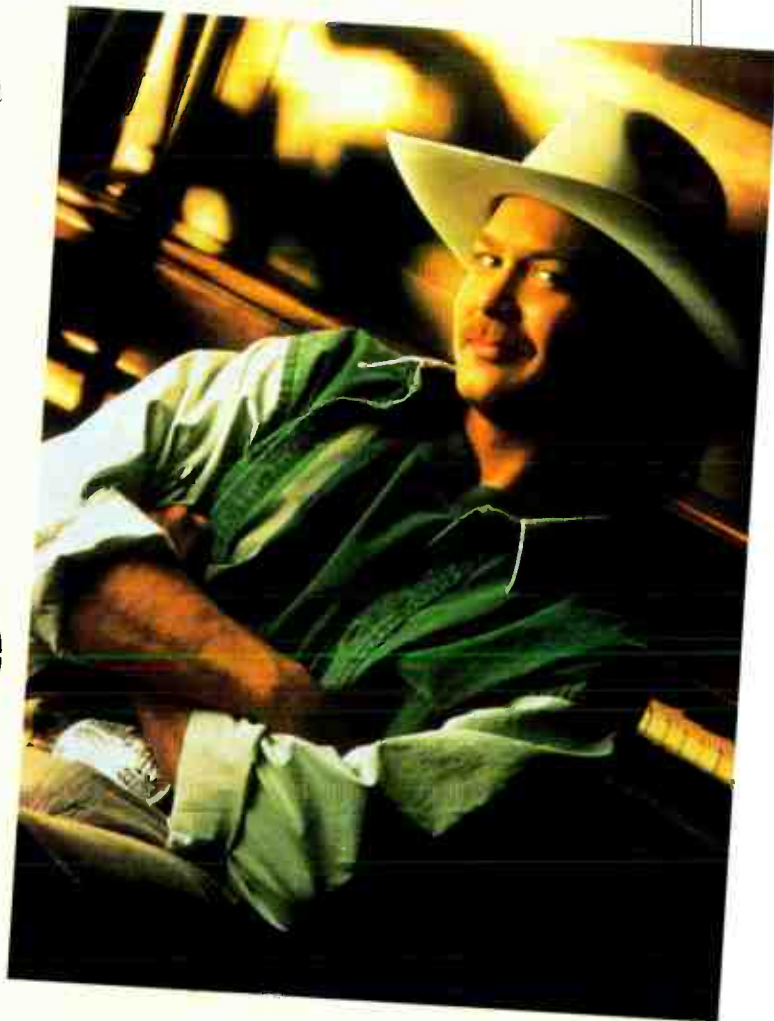
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World Radio History

*At the young age of 27, Tracy Lawrence has lived through things that people twice his age never do. He's put shootings, bankruptcy and management problems behind him now, and he's looking ahead.*

# Tracy Lawrence

## *Comes Out All Right*



**L**ooking back over the last couple of years, it sometimes seems to Tracy Lawrence that making it as a country star was the easy part. If fame wasn't exactly handed to him, he didn't exactly have to bust rocks for it, either. Seven months after the then-23-year-old Texas-born, Arkansas-raised singer first set foot in Nashville, he was in the studio recording *Sticks and Stones*, his 1991 debut album which would result in four Number One singles (including the title track) and eventually sell a million copies. And, at least to the outside world, Lawrence appeared to be riding high as his second album, *Alibis* (1992), quickly soared to platinum and set him up for prestigious awards like *Billboard's* Best New Country Artist citation and the Academy of Country Music's 1992 Top New Male Vocalist trophy. During these heady times, Lawrence never lost sight of the fact that, in his business, perception is everything. He always did his best to hit the stage grinning and convince his fans that he was the same old rowdy, foot-loose Tracy Lawrence, without a care in the world.

"The public outside does not see all the changes that go on in Nashville, in an artist's inner circle," he points out. "They see you through the advertising and the media, and in their eyes nothing has changed with you. And you always have to take that into consideration when you're sitting in the middle of that circle. Those people out there, when you go to a concert, they don't care if you've had a bad day. They don't care about your problems. In their eyes you are the luckiest, happiest, most successful person in the world, because this is what you do for a liv-

ing. And that's the way it's supposed to be. When they pay 20 bucks to come see you, you should give them the very best show you can every night. Don't walk out there complainin' because you're having problems with your management company, or you didn't get no sleep last night because you had two shows the day before. You've gotta get out there and take care of that crowd like it's the last time you're ever gonna get on that stage. I don't always achieve that intense level, but I sure try to. And finally I'm getting back to the point where I'm doing it on a consistent basis."

As Lawrence explains all this, he's moving through life like a young man who's determined to make up for lost time, which in a large sense he is. It's a Friday, near the finale of Nashville's annual Country Radio Seminar, a four-day convention/industry trade fair at the Opryland Hotel during which country artists do their best to sell themselves and their music to all the program directors, consultants and air personalities who run country radio stations across the nation and arbitrarily determine whose records will be played on their shrinking play lists. Lawrence has a special edge at the moment: His latest single, "As Any Fool Can See" (which he co-produced with Flip Anderson, his piano player), has just hit Number One. And he's profuse with gratitude as he plays a sweaty-palmed lunch time showcase for a ballroom full of restless radio folks. "It scares the hell out of me, playin' for all you people in suits and ties and me up here in my ol' cowboy hat," he jokes nervously during his brief set.

In a little while, Lawrence will head down to the hotel lobby to make a guest appear-

BY BOB ALLEN

ance on a Nashville country station that's doing a remote broadcast from the convention. Between times he has an impromptu reunion with his pal, Marty Stuart. The two run into each other in the hallway as Stuart similarly makes the rounds of this radio dog and pony show. Finally, during a half hour break, Lawrence manages to kick back long enough to sip a beer and recount the somewhat dramatic twists and turns his career has taken in the last couple years.

Accompanied by his wife, Frances, whom he married in 1993, he sits in the spacious hotel suite his record label has rented for the radio convention and stares through the window that overlooks the busy lobby a couple of floors below. He's affable, almost irrepressible, in a youthful sort of way. His feet jiggle restlessly, and his eyes widen as he anticipates a visitor's questions. At age 27, he is ruggedly handsome and almost impossibly lank, like he was custom-built for the tight jeans, fancy boots and exquisitely embroidered Western jacket he's wearing. His mane of silky dark blond hair billows out from beneath his black cowboy hat, almost concealing the little earring in his right ear. Yet, as Lawrence reflects on his career, the word "insecurity" frequently pops up in his narrative. More than once he emphasizes his philosophy of "trying to find something positive in even the most negative situations."

"There were so many things goin' on in

my personal life there for a while that I'd lost a lot of the confidence I'd had early on in my career," he explains, choosing his words carefully. "There was a point where I was very close to bankruptcy. Where my taxes hadn't been paid, and people were just totally mismanaging my finances. Believe me, I know a lot of terrible things, and I've been through a lot of ups and downs in the past couple years. My wife and I both have. There was a time when I almost completely withdrew and shut down. I really think I had some kind of nervous breakdown, even though I always maintained that appearance level on the outside world.

"And probably the one thing that keeps Frances and me going on is our faith, our belief that everything happens for a reason. I believe that it makes us all stronger. And that even in the most negative situations you can find something that will make you grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally and be a better person."

Lawrence recalls that he was only 23 when he hit Nashville in September, 1990, and it was music, not the business of music, that he was obsessed with. "I was completely focused on what I wanted. I think I was also very humble. I didn't come here with any kind of attitude. I was very scared when I came to town. I just went out and sang. I hit every club I could find in town that would let me get on stage." Despite his focus and ambition, luck, he admits, was the biggest factor. "The reality of it is, what I was able to accomplish, the chances of it happening are slim to none. They're nine hundred and ninety-nine to a thousand. Seven months after I got to town, I was cutting *Sticks and Stones*.... It's amazing. I never knocked on any doors, I never went to Music Row tryin' to get in and see people or tryin' to pitch my songs. I just played all the

◆

*"There was a time when I almost completely withdrew and shut down. I really think I had some kind of nervous breakdown, even though I always maintained that appearance level on the outside world."*

◆

live shows I could."

One of the shows Lawrence played was "Live at Libby's," in Daysville, Kentucky, where a rep from Atlantic Records, his present label, first spotted him. "I wasn't even the one they'd come up to see," he grins as he considers the strange way destiny sometimes works. "They'd come up to see a young lady who was performing on the show, and I just happened to be there at the right time." But this amazing stroke of luck was soon followed by a great-big cosmic sucker punch. Shortly after he completed the sessions for *Sticks and Stones*, he resisted some thugs who attempted to rob him and a friend in the parking lot of a Nashville motel and was shot four times. Ironically, the oft-related tale of the shooting and his slow, painful recovery made a great hook for interviews when *Sticks and Stones* finally was released.

Even though Lawrence has already recounted the harrowing late-night event in hundreds of interviews, I can't help asking him two simple—okay, perhaps even stupid—questions about it: Number one, did it hurt? And number two, do you wish they'd caught the people who did it? "Hell, yes, it hurt, and hell, yes, I wish they'd caught 'em!" he roars. "But at this point, if they did catch 'em and it was up to me to identify 'em, and say, 'Yes, that man is the one who shot me,' I couldn't honestly do it. I couldn't honestly remember what they looked like, I've blocked it out so bad. I couldn't give an honest and true answer that I could live with if I put somebody in jail over that.

"It made me real paranoid for a long time," he adds. "I'm just now gettin' over that part of it. But you just have to grow through things like that the best you can. It's made me a stronger person. I think everything happens for a reason. A lot of people would disagree with that statement, but I believe it with all my heart."

The amazing success of *Sticks and Stones* helped erase the physical and emotional scars of the shooting incident. It also almost single-handedly saved the then-floundering Nashville division of Atlantic Records. "I was told that when my album came out, in the fall of '91, if it didn't hit, Atlantic's doors were closin' on January first," says the singer. "I was like their last shot." Lawrence's heady run in the charts continued with his second album, 1992's *Alibis*, which went platinum and spawned four more Number Ones. Lawrence seemed—at least to the outside world—to be on his way to superstardom. But trouble was brewing. In the midst of *Ali-*



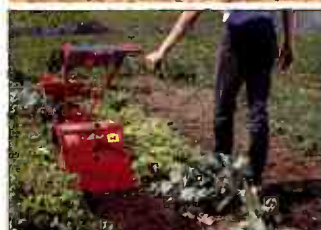
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his' heady success, he began noticing that the business that he was paying people good money to take care of wasn't being taken care of. There he was, selling tons of records and working his tail off on the road, yet at the end of the year he discovered his taxes hadn't been paid and other debts were piling up. Ultimately, he was forced to sue the people who, up to that point, had been managing his career; and teetered for a while on the brink of bankruptcy.

Lawrence admits that it wasn't just duplicity on the part of those whom he trusted, but also his own nonchalant attitude toward the fine-line details of his finances that paved the way for his troubles. "When I first got to town, I was so gung-ho and so young, all I could think about was playing music. I didn't even wanta think about havin' money or anything. All I wanted was for them to put me on the road, and when I would get done the money would be there. Of course, it didn't work out that way. But I'm lucky that I caught it as early as I did, and I'm real fortunate I was able to come through it," he adds, citing the dire examples of Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard, both of whom, after long, illustrious careers, ended up owing millions in taxes. "Believe me, it's made me much more aware of the realities of this business and how easily people can get to you. It will be a lesson in life that I will carry with me for years and years. I'm very aware of what goes on around me these days."

All the pressure and bitterness of his legal and financial hassles, along with some unwanted publicity, seemed to explode in Lawrence's face in April of last year: That's when the singer was involved in another, admittedly more frivolous, shooting incident. After a run-in with a carload of teenagers on Interstate 40, near Lebanon, Tennessee, Lawrence and his brother, Stewart, followed the teenagers and confronted them.

Lawrence (who claimed the kids had made obscene gestures at him and may even have fired a gun at his brother's truck) pulled out an unregistered .357 magnum and fired into the air a couple of times. Wilson County authorities arrested him shortly afterward and charged him with aggravated assault, carrying an unregistered weapon and impersonating a police officer. (An "honorary" police ID, which Lawrence claimed was a token of apprecia-

**Whether at Fan Fair or on the road, Lawrence is cheerful and upbeat with audiences. He believes they're looking to him to forget his problems and help them forget theirs for an evening.**



tion given to him at a concert, was found in his truck, along with a fake badge.)

After months of legal wrangling, all charges against Lawrence were dropped late last year on the condition that he pay all court costs, surrender his pistol and undergo a year's probation.

Happy to have the ordeal behind him and anxious to keep his nose clean, he'd just as soon not talk about the incident now. Yet, at the time, he apologized in a public statement: "I take full responsibility for my actions...Based on past experience [the fact that he was shot four times in the 1991 robbery attempt] the incident was a very stressful situation. At the time I felt my brother, Stewart, and I were in danger, and I fully admit I over-reacted and did not handle myself in a proper manner."

Part of the road back for Lawrence was completely restructuring his business organization. ("It took some time. It was a matter of letting some people go, trying some new people out, and trying out some old people in new positions. I'm controlling just about every aspect of it this time.") He was also determined to play a similar hands-on role in producing his own records. He and Flip Anderson's debut co-production effort was "Renegades, Rebels and Rogues," a song they did for the soundtrack of the Mel Gibson movie, *Maverick*, that became a Top Ten hit last summer. He and Anderson also co-produced three of the cuts on *I See It Now*,

Lawrence's third and latest album, which is selling briskly. When he listens to *I See It Now*, Lawrence insists he can also hear echoes of what he's been through these past couple of years. "I hear a lot of different things: Growth, insecurity....I hear a guy who was really unsure of where he wanted to go, on account of the scattered types of music on this record. It bounces from mid-tempo pop, to blues, to Southern rock 'n' roll. Looking at it in this context, you can take it as either a very well rounded album, or as a case of a young man who was a little bit insecure of which direction he wanted to go. Personally for me, I think I was somewhat scattered when I cut this album. Yet, looking back at it now, I'm very proud of the way it turned out."

Lawrence hesitates for a moment. Then, with a gleam in his eye, the former foot-loose bachelor glances warmly across the room at his wife Frances and explains what a source of strength she's been in his life these past few years. "Frances and I met in Denver, Colorado, about three years ago," he explains, grinning again at his wife, as if seeking her approval in discussing their romance. "It was at a Western apparel market show. I was performing a private show for the Stetson Hat Company. I met her after the show, and just fell in love at first sight. The rest is history."

"Marriage was a drastic change in my life," the singer concedes with a frank but sheepish grin. "Really an about-face. It's really been a blessing in my life that I'm starting to appreciate more and more. You have to work very hard at it, to try to understand each other, and when you have bad days, you have to learn to walk away from each other. But it has given me a whole new focus and a whole new attitude about life," he adds, his smile a little less sheepish now. "It sure is a great feeling that somebody loves you a lot and is waitin' at home for you." ■

*"It made me real paranoid for a long time. I'm just now gettin' over that part of it. But you just have to grow through things like that the best you can. It's made me a stronger person. I think everything happens for a reason."*



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# Letters

## Some Praise for Brooks & Dunn

Thanks for the cover story on Brooks & Dunn. You did a splendid job! I want to comment on one part of the article: "Two nights before we came out here, we played for about 15,000 people in Kentucky at Rupp Arena. When the lights went down and our show cranked up, they'd go nuts." I was one of those 15,000 people, and it was everything they said and more. Truly a piece of art. They are two great entertainers. I want to thank Brooks & Dunn for their compliment to us Kentuckians.

Lucy Langdon  
Hazard, Kentucky

## Weird's the Word

After reading the article by Patrick Carr on BRC in the January/February issue, I felt he needed to know: 1) His mention of BRC not being able to compete with Merle Haggard or Garth Brooks as an artist should be left to the "ear of the listener." 2) BRC does not manipulate the fans. He does what the fans want. It gives us time to get pictures. If the writer had ever attended a fan club party, he'd know his love for his fans is genuine. And his mention of "Vanilla Ice" was not lost to me. 3) Calling BRC very weird is odd because I thought the article was very weird.

Kathy Doucette  
Tampa, Florida

## Wonderful's the Word

I would like to thank Patrick Carr for the wonderful article he wrote in the January/February issue about Billy Ray Cyrus. Billy Ray is a great singer and performer. He's also an honest, down-to-earth man who deserves more recognition than he's received in the past. I'm a loyal fan of Billy Ray and wanted you to know that it's nice to read an article that recognizes his talent.

Connie Woodley  
Bethel, Ohio

## Billy Ray's Wide Appeal

We're sick of you bashing Billy Ray Cyrus. We've been to four of his concerts and never had steam coming from our drawers. You make it sound like all that come to his concerts are screaming women. Well, you're wrong. My husband and I are in our late 50's. We both enjoy his music. All four concerts we were surrounded by kids, veterans and people of



all ages. We talked to two middle-aged couples who know the security people at the fairground and go backstage to meet an average of four to five artists per year. All four agreed Billy Ray was the politest they'd met. As far as country goes, he's not your typical country, but we're sure glad of that.

Bruce and Jami  
Enola, Pennsylvania

## Mixed Results

Thanks for the beautiful cover and photos of my favorite, Billy Ray Cyrus, in your January/February issue. However, Mr. Carr, I only sort of liked your article. We fans would love Billy Ray even if he didn't stay on stage after performing. I think this is his way to interact with us. It gives those who want a chance to see him up close and take pictures, so we appreciate it. Lots of fans give him gifts at this time too. His focus is on the music, but he is adorable too.

Myrene Northey  
Kennewick, Washington

## A Happy Mavs Fan

I just wanted to say thank you for the article about The Mavericks in the March/April issue. I loved it. They're the hottest group in country music as far as I'm concerned. I had almost given up on country music until they came along. Thanks again for the well-done article. You made a Mavericks fan very happy.

Dianna Goffinst  
Orleans, Indiana

## Carr Gets Thumbs Up

Thank you! I've just finished reading the article on The Mavericks. Ever since their "Oh, What a Thrill" video came out, I've loved their music. This is the first major country magazine I've seen with a good article on them. And the pictures! They were great. Thumbs up to Mr. Patrick Carr.

Erin Steele  
Valley Park, Missouri

## Loyal to Lorrie

I've enjoyed every issue of *Country Music Magazine* that I have received, especially the March/April '95 issue with the article about Lorrie Morgan. I've been a big fan of hers since the time she was on *The Ralph Emery Show*. Lorrie Morgan has paid her dues in the music business and deserves the success she has attained. Lorrie has a lot of fans who love her, and I'm on the top of the list somewhere. Thanks for a great magazine.

Maurice Holt  
Lyles, Tennessee

## Walker Fine Young Man

Thanks for the Clay Walker article in the January/February edition. Clay is one mighty fine young man and one heck of an entertainer. I've been fortunate to see Clay twice in concert. Country music lovers, if you have the opportunity to see this young man in concert, do not miss him. You will be entertained. As a country music fan from the "old school," I wish much success and happiness for Clay and his adorable wife, Lori.

Bonnie Dickerson  
Farmington, New Mexico

## Tanya's Friends

Many thanks for the poster on Tanya Tucker (March/April issue). She came to Hanford Kings County Fair and was the opening act in one of her first concerts. She has many friends in this area.

Wally Willems  
Hanford, California

## Not the Best of Tanya

I think a better photo of Tanya Tucker could and should have been used for the poster in the March/April issue. There are better pictures of her. Tanya is not always portrayed to the best advantage. Thank you for the article on Lorrie Morgan.

Virginia Nowell  
Alamogordo, New Mexico

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QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the July/August 1995 issue.

1. Mary Chapin Carpenter's most recent album debuted at the top of the charts. Name it.
2. What classic Waylon Jennings song did Mark Chesnutt record with Waylon himself?
3. Where was Texas-born Tracy Lawrence raised?
4. Name the TV show that propelled Glan Campbell to fame.
5. George Strait's dog appears with him on his new pet products. What's the dog's name?
6. What important safety feature is standard equipment on Chevy's new Full-Size Pickup?

**ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:**

1. Caesar's Palace
2. Raul Malo
3. *Proudheart*
4. Ernest Tubbs
5. 2
6. For your comfort, Chevy's new Full-Size Pickup includes an option for leather seats.

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**For the Love of...**

Enough already! I'm so tired of seeing men in those pull-out posters. Will you please, for the love of equality, put more women on the covers and posters? Thank you.

Stacy Kerberg

Camp Douglas, Wisconsin

*Tanya centerfold last issue, Chapin cover this issue. Satisfied?—Ed.*

**We're on a Roll**

The Garth pull-out poster in your November/December issue was just what I needed that day. Thanks. Then, when I opened up the January/February issue to find Vince Gill, all I could say was, "Wow!" These two are my favorite performers. Thanks for the great pull-outs.

Michelle Harmon

Union City, Tennessee

**Dolly and Dottie**

My love to you, Hazel, for covering Dolly as often as you do in the People section. Your articles on Dolly glow with your love and admiration of her work. And thanks to Rich for an exquisite review of Dolly's *HeartSongs* album in the January/February issue. I saw not one negative word in the entire review. Yes, Dolly is divine. We Dottie West fans, send our love to Michelle Lee for her portrayal of Ms. West. I laughed. I cried (inside, I am a man). It was nice to see Nashville's finest, Dolly, Kenny, Loretta, etc., in the film as well.

Timothy Scott Kisling

McGaheysville, Virginia

*Not one negative word in a Rich Kienzle review? We'll have to talk to the boy.—Ed.*

**Country Notes from Germany**

I want to refer to (Hazel's) article in the September/October issue, "Con-Vince-D." I'm writing for a German country music magazine. We also drove to Hamburg to see the Vince Gill concert. We had a great time, like Bernd Glodek said, he is really a nice guy. There is one thing, there were not some 20,000 fans, but 200-300 people. It took place in a little discothek named "Docks" in the "red light" district of Hamburg. But I agree with everything else in the article. By the way, Garth Brooks had two sold out concerts in Frankfurt, but in Berlin, the place was not sold out. So, if you want to see Garth, come to Berlin. I always like to read your reports. Keep it country.

Renate Gehring

Berlin, Germany

**Loved Dottie West Story**

I really enjoyed the movie *Big Dreams and Broken Hearts*, *The Dottie West Story* on CBS in January. Thanks for alerting us several months earlier of its making. Is there any way to get Dottie West mementos? Dottie, along with others, will always be remembered as the

starter of a new sound in the 60's that is the basis of country music today. The legends will live on in history while the new fads will fade.

Bobby Powers

Holly Springs, Mississippi

**Lay Off Reba Now**

When I read Rich Kienzle's review of Reba McEntire's *Oklahoma Girl* collection in *Essential Collector* in the November/December issue, I just had to write. I'm angry with critics like him, as well as some fans, who insist on downgrading Reba's recent recordings and performances. To say that Reba doesn't sing country anymore is ludicrous. First, country music is not just fiddles and steel guitars. It's pure emotion that comes from the heart and sends a message to the listener. If you doubt that describes Reba's songs, listen again to "If I Had Only Known," or "Is There Life Out There." Regarding Reba's "Vegas stage act," if you look back into her past, you'll find that right from the beginning Reba has said that all she wants to do is entertain her fans. Anyone who has seen one of her shows knows that's exactly what she does.

Michael F. Cudak

Farmington, Connecticut

**From the Conway Estate**

Rich Kienzle's comments in your January/February 1995 issue about *The Conway Twitty Collection* in *Buried Treasures* were well received by Conway's Estate. We would like to let fellow *Country Music* readers know that Conway's Estate is selling many items of Conway Twitty merchandise. The Estate address is: 1045-A Avondale Road, Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075.

Donald W. Garis, Co-Executor

Hendersonville, Tennessee

**More CD's, Less Radio**

Just had to write Patrick Carr and tell you how much I enjoyed your article in the March/April issue of *Country Music* (Final Note). I am happy to know that someone like you, who is so closely associated with country music, voiced my opinions about "new country" music. Of course, you said it much better than I could, but, like you, I listen to my CD's and tapes more often than I do radio. I've had all of Garth, Reba and Wynonna (and a lot of others) that I could ever want. I think Garth Brooks, with his wild antics on stage, has been the biggest influence in the new trend, and I would be happy if I never heard him again. Please do what you can to help get country back to country.

Marjorie Holemon

Pell City, Alabama

**One Solution to Radio Situation**

I wholeheartedly agree with Patrick Carr's article in the March/April issue regarding the lack of twang on

commercial radio. Among some of my projects here in New York has been the attempt to pester our local commercial WYNY to play the twang country that helped to make country music's roots great. This, my efforts and others' as well, has resulted in getting three hours of oldies on Sundays between 9 P.M. and midnight. Often times, like Mr. Carr, I'll depend largely on tape, CD or vinyl.

Howard Weissman  
New York, New York

### Cover Chapin

Hazel was lucky to be able to meet Mary Chapin Carpenter backstage at the Ryman. I enjoyed the People piece in the March/April issue about that experience and look forward to seeing more Mary Chapin in *Country Music Magazine*. She's my fave, and you are right, her albums are fab. I have all five. Now I hope to see her in concert soon myself.

A.J. Hinchee  
Macomb, Illinois

*This one's for you, A.J.—Ed.*

### Find the DJ

My 94-year-old mother remembers listening to a country music disc jockey in the general area of Hot Springs, Arkansas, during the early to mid-1930's who used the phrase, "Come in and have some coffee, it's already sauced and blowed." She has often talked about this DJ and wished she could remember his name. Can you help me fulfill this wish for her?

Charles L. Garrett  
Culver City, California

*Who can help with this one?—Ed.*

### Gavin Great for Fringe Artists

I've been receiving *Country Music* for quite awhile now, and I love it. I was very happy to read in People that the Gavin Americana Chart will be reporting on artists such as Lyle Lovett, Lucinda Williams and others not played on mainstream radio, including my very favorite singer, Jimmie Dale Gilmore. These very talented artists have been ignored for too long. I saw Jimmie Dale in concert four times last year, including one show in Oregon where he opened for Nanci Griffith. What a super evening of entertainment that was. I would like to see features on these artists, especially Jimmie Dale, who, in my opinion, is one of the most talented and sincere artists around today.

Heather Alexander

Langley, British Columbia, Canada  
*Most recent Jimmie Dale feature was November/December 1992.—Ed.*

### Country Tributes?

Wow! I didn't know The Beatles were a country band. Fantastic! Now we can add them to Elvis Presley and The Eagles as being the biggest influences in today's "pure country" music. Who's next, The

Who? How about Springsteen? I'm sure there are some young country singers who would love to do a tribute album to him. Hey, I know, Snoop Doggy Dogg. Perfect.

Kathleen Chaney

Long Beach, California

*Actually, we're waiting for the country tribute albums to Captain & Tennille, Cher and Tiffany. All coming soon, we hear.—Ed.*

### Get Money's Worth with Gill

We went to a Vince Gill concert March 4, 1995. He is truly an entertainer of the year. We appreciated it that he keeps it a family concert. We have gone to many concerts, but he stayed onstage, played and sang longer than anyone we have gone to see. People really got their money's worth. Patty Loveless opened for him, and she was good also. We are Vince Gill fans for life.

William and Marjorie Mott  
Galatia, Illinois

### What About Rhett?

I really enjoy the work of new artist Rhett Akins. His music is great, but he is rarely heard of. Could you please do an article about this very talented rising star? I'd like to hear about him and the songs he chose for his debut album, *A Thousand Memories*. How about a centerfold of this babe? Many of his pictures don't show his face.

Michelle Stone  
Cumbola, Pennsylvania

### James in the House

I am writing in hopes that you will consider doing a feature article on James House. Not often do we get to experience such rare talent. His accomplishments alone speak for themselves. James co-wrote "Ain't that Lonely Yet" with Kostas for Dwight Yoakam and also recently had a big hit with the song "In a Week or Two," which was recorded by Diamond Rio. His current single, "Little by Little," is Number 37 on the Top 40 chart. James is an outstanding writer and performer.

Sherry Lin Bornt  
Gloversville, New York

### Gettin' to the Source

I would like to see an article about the national consultants who are paid to tell country radio what songs/artists to play. We, the fans, have often wondered why our favorite artists' new releases are relegated to that Great Purgatory in the air waves. Why are we not allowed to choose what we want to hear on radio? The last I heard, this was still a democracy. What gives these consultants and the stations the right to treat their listeners like mindless sheep? Last, but not least, how do we overcome their dictatorial control?

Jeanne Hearn  
Douglassville, Pennsylvania

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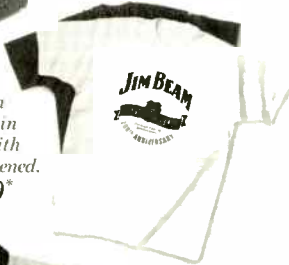
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## Fed up with Country Radio

Today I received my March/April issue of your magazine and am enjoying it. The Final Note column in this month's issue really grabbed my attention. Many of the artists, such as Hal Ketchum, Patty Loveless, Mark Collie and more, are the reason I listen to country radio. Sadly, some of those artists don't get as much airplay as they deserve. I also miss hearing music from Waylon Jennings, Charley Pride and Merle Haggard. These people are turning out great stuff that no one seems willing to listen to. I've heard programmers say they just don't have enough time to air everything. They would if they would limit the total number of songs any one artist has played in a 24-hour period.

I'm fed up with all the look-alike, sound-alike artists that are being put out by Nashville these days. I will survive on CD's and cassettes from the artists whose music I feel is appealing.

Mary Vandergrift  
Mason, Tennessee

## Letters a Waste

I have been buying, reading and collecting country magazines since the early 50's. I enjoyed reading about my favorites and even those artists who were not my favorites. I enjoy all the articles, stories, pictures, reviews, etc. There is one thing in your magazine I feel is a total waste of space: Letters. Five or six would be sufficient. I really don't care what John and Jane Doe think about country music, how many concerts they have attended, or which articles they feel you did a good job on. You read your Letters to the Editor and publish your magazine accordingly.

Bette Ann Jessen  
Bloomfield, Nebraska

Watch out for the mailbag now.—Ed.

## Imitation Not Always Best Form . . .

I write to congratulate Bob Allen for his exemplary record review of Clay Walker's latest effort, *If I Could Make a Living* (March/April). It seems that as Walker is making a living out of attempting to look, sound and ultimately be George Strait, someone should make a note of it. I think it shameful that such attempts be made, for it is an embarrassing comment on where country music is today. There is no originality in the style of "young country" artists, for the most part; and Walker's imitation is a fine example of this. While George Strait is likely flattered (as well he should be), and Walker sells records...the true country music fans are aware that Walker will never sound like George, look like George or be George. Walker may actually have talent. But no one will ever know of it until he stands on his own.

Indera M. Johnson  
Laurelton, New York



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## Come on Back, Hank

Time to give a pay raise to the great Michael Bane for another of his priceless record reviews. His March/April critique of Hank Jr.'s latest release, *Hog Wild*, was a bulls-eye. Were Bocephus to release the songs he released ten years ago, he'd still be on the charts. I hate that he's taken such a major turn from real Hank music over the past six or eight years. Whoever's advice he's been following, I wish he'd stop taking it and really look into his heart. Come back, Hank, we really miss you.

Johnny West  
 Dallas, Georgia

## Especially Good

I just had to write and let you know how much I appreciated the record review about George Strait's *Lead On*, by Geoffrey Himes (January/February 1995). He was right on, or should I say "strait on," with it. Also, Hazel Smith doesn't leave any doubt as to who her favorite country artist is, but I'm wondering where she got 20 albums by George Strait. I thought that I had all of them, but only have 19. I also enjoyed the story about Art Satherley by Rich Kienzle in the CMSA *Newsletter* and the ones about Pam Tillis, Clay Walker and David Ball.

Maxine Patterson  
 Millersburg, Ohio

*Nineteen is correct.*—Ed.

## Bogguss Among the Finest

I've been meaning to compliment you on the article in the September/October issue on Suzy Bogguss, country's finest offering since Emmylou Harris. I'd also like to comment on Rich Kienzle's review of her latest album with Chet Atkins, *Simpatico*, in the January/February issue. It seems to me that he made his judgment of each song based on which of those "categories" it fell into and not on the song itself. One of Suzy's greatest strengths is her versatility, and that is brilliantly displayed on *Simpatico*.

J. Wakely  
 Marina Del Rey, California

## Dolly Gets Her Due

What's this? It can't be! *Country Music* finally gives Ms. Dolly an exceptional review of her latest *Heartsongs* CD (January/February). This, of course, comes as no surprise to thousands of Dolly's loyal fans, like me. She's still got what it takes to put a smile on this country boy's face.

Sheldon Olson  
 Stratton, Ontario, Canada

## Sweeps Winners

The winner of our October/November 1994 \$1000 Renewal Sweepstakes is Ms. Beadie Turner of Stuart, Virginia. Marlin Blake of Dallas, Texas, is the December/January winner. And the winners in the 1994 Treasure Chest Giveaway have been selected.

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2. In the boxes below, write the numbers of any of the albums on the Top 25 list in this issue which you bought in the last month.

3. For any albums you bought in the last month not on the Top 25 list, write performer's name and album titles in the space below. (Attach a separate sheet if you need more room.)

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Albums (list 5 numbers)

#### Are You a Collector?

5. a. Do you purchase collectibles?  Yes  No  
b. If yes, what do you collect? (Check all that apply.)  
 Plates  Dolls  Scale Model Cars  
 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

6. a. Do you collect country music memorabilia?  
 Yes  No  
b. If yes, what do you collect? (Check all that apply.)  
 Recordings  Paper goods  Fan Club Items  
 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Tell Us About Yourself

7. a. Sex:  Male  Female  
b. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Who Can Vote

Only CMSA members are eligible to vote. If you are a member, write your membership number here.

If you are not a CMSA member but would like to join and vote immediately, enclose your check for \$16 for a one-year CMSA membership (you get an extra year of *Country Music Magazine*, too).

Fill out poll and mail to: May Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880.

#### George D. Hay Special

This issue's *CMSA Newsletter* Legends of Country Music feature covers George D. Hay, the man who coined the term "Grand Ole Opry" and served as the show's longtime announcer. Since he wasn't a performer, there are no recordings available on him. But, if you'd like to see Hay and his beloved steamboat whistle doing his "Solemn Old Judge" bit, filmed footage exists on the Hillous Buttrum video, *Legends of Country Music* (V1W). This VHS tape, a popular favorite among Nashville Warehouse products, features Hay along with many of the legendary Opry acts he worked with: Grandpa Jones, Rod Brasfield, Minnie Pearl, Bill Monroe, Ernest Tubb, Marty Robbins, Johnnie and Jack, The Carter Family, George Morgan, The Wilburn Brothers, Chet Atkins, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Jime Reeves, The Louvin Brothers, Cowboy Copas, Stringbean and nearly 20 other Opry greats, all performing classic songs. It's a virtual "who's who" of Opry legends. Regular price \$39.95. CMSA Members' price \$34.95. See ordering instructions at the end of this page, and include membership number when taking discount.

#### Buried Treasures Special

CMSA members are entitled to discounts on all products offered in Buried Treasures. Members may deduct \$20.00 off the regular price of the Jerry Lee Lewis boxed set. Take \$10.00 off the Pee Wee King boxed set. A \$5.00 discount is available to members purchasing the Monument Records two-CD set or the *Decca Country Classics* boxed set. Deduct \$2.00 off the price of all other items, including the reissues on the best of Porter and

Dolly, George Jones singing Bob Wills, Charlie Rich's early Epic Records albums, Merle Haggard's famous Jimmie Rodgers tribute album, and the various artist *Boppin' Hillbilly* set. Include membership number if taking discount. See complete ordering instructions in Buried Treasures.

#### Essential Collector Special

CMSA members also get a discount off the items found in Essential Collector. Take \$5.00 off the regular prices listed for the video on songwriting technique with Max D. Barnes and the guitar instruction video with James Burton. Deduct \$2.00 off the price of all other items, including the Lester "Roadhog" Moran and The Cadillac Cowboys reissue, the Willie Nelson lyric book, and the best-of reissues on Jerry Lee Lewis, Donna Fargo, Ed Bruce and Joe Stampley. Include your membership number when taking discount, and see ordering details on the Essential Collector page.

#### Classic Photo

Our classic photo this time features George D. Hay with two of his Opry stars of the 1940's, Pee Wee King and Ernest Tubb. Tubb's electric instruments were a bone of contention with Hay—for details, see our feature in *Legends of Country Music* in the *Newsletter* this time—but all seems to be well here. The drink of choice looks like Royal Crown Cola. This photo came to us through Justin Tubb; it's from his mother's collection.

#### How to Order

To order items listed on this page, send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 050695N, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, Tennessee 37229. Include \$3.00 postage and handling per order. Canadian orders, add \$3.00 additional postage.



Only 3  
payments  
of \$18.33

## Great Spirit, Give me the Strength and Courage of the Wolf

The tribe has gathered on the eve of the hunt, and in the fire's flickering light, unseen spirits are called upon. The proud brave leads the dance dressed in the costume of the wolf. With hands upraised, clutching his arrow and bow, he asks the Great Spirit to give him the courage and cunning of the wolf.

Presenting "Spirit of the Wolf," by Western artist, Stephen Douglas. Vividly lifelike and detailed; absolute in its historic authenticity, this hand-painted sculpture boldly summons the excitement and wonder of this fascinating, age-old ritual — the hunter's sacred dance.

"Spirit of the Wolf" premieres the *Mystic Spirits Sculpture Collection*, sensitively and realistically portraying Native Americans as they strive to achieve a mystic communion with the creatures who share their world. Each exquisite sculpture will be accompanied by a numbered Certificate of Authenticity. And as the owner you will have the opportunity, but never the obligation, to preview subsequent issues. Our 30 Day, 100% Satisfaction Guarantee assures you order at no risk.

Considering the enormous popularity of Western-theme sculptures, along with the power of Stephen Douglas' art — this series is expected to attract intense demand. Submit your reservation without delay!

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•Highly detailed and  
hand-painted

Shown smaller than actual  
size of 9'4" in height

by  
**Stephen  
Douglas**

# SPIRIT OF THE WOLF

### Respond by: June 30, 1995

Please accept my reservation for  
\_\_\_\_(Qty.) "Spirit of the Wolf"  
sculpture(s), payable in three equal  
monthly installments of \$18.33\* each.

I need send no money now. On  
acceptance, I will be billed for my first  
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\*Plus \$1.46 shipping and handling per sculpture payment.  
For deliveries to FL, add \$1.10 per sculpture payment for  
state sales tax. All reservations must be signed and are  
subject to acceptance.

### The Hamilton Collection

4810 Executive Park Ct., P.O. Box 44051,  
Jacksonville, FL 32231-4051

# TOP 25

## Albums

1. Garth Brooks ..... *The Hits*
2. Tim McGraw ..... *Not a Moment Too Soon*
3. Jeff Foxworthy ..... *You Might Be a Redneck If...*
4. Clay Walker ..... *If I Could Make a Living*
5. Mary Chapin Carpenter.... *Stones in the Road*
6. Trisha Yearwood ..... *Thinkin' About You*
7. Tracy Byrd ..... *No Ordinary Man*
8. Sawyer Brown ..... *Greatest Hits: 1990-1995*
9. The Tractors ..... *The Tractors*
10. Alan Jackson ..... *Who I Am*
11. Alison Krauss..... *Now That I've Found You: A Collection*
12. Vince Gill ..... *When Love Finds You*
13. Neal McCoy ..... *You Gotta Love That*
14. Joe Diffie ..... *Third Rock from the Sun*
15. The Mavericks ..... *What a Crying Shame*
16. Reba McEntire ..... *Read My Mind*
17. George Strait..... *Lead On*
18. Alabama ..... *Greatest Hits, Volume 3*
19. David Ball ..... *Thinkin' Problem*
20. Brooks & Dunn ..... *Waitin' on Sundown*
21. John Michael Montgomery . *Kickin' It Up*
22. Wade Hayes ..... *Old Enough to Know Better*
23. Tracy Lawrence ..... *I See It Now*
24. Diamond Rio ..... *Love a Little Stronger*
25. John Berry ..... *Standing on the Edge*

## Singles

1. Clay Walker ..... *This Woman and This Man*
2. Trisha Yearwood..... *Thinkin' About You*
3. Neal McCoy..... *For a Change*
4. Clint Black ..... *Wherever You Go*
5. Little Texas..... *Amy's Back in Austin*
6. Tracy Lawrence ..... *As Any Fool Can See*
7. Shenandoah and  
Alison Krauss..... *Somewhere in the Vicinity  
of the Heart*
8. Vince Gill ..... *Which Bridge to Cross (Which  
Bridge to Burn)*
9. Joe Diffie ..... *So Help Me Girl*
10. Blackhawk ..... *Down in Flames*
11. Reba McEntire ..... *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*
12. John Anderson..... *Bend Until It Breaks*
13. George Ducas ..... *Lipstick Promises*
14. George Strait..... *You Can't Make a Heart Love  
Somebody*
15. Alabama ..... *Give Me One More Shot*
16. David Ball ..... *Look What Followed Me Home*
17. Randy Travis ..... *The Box*
18. Diamond Ria ..... *Bubba Hyde*
19. Brooks & Dunn ..... *Little Miss Honky Tonk*
20. John Michael Montgomery . *I Can Love You Like That*
21. Doug Supernaw..... *What'll You Do About Me*
22. Tim McGraw ..... *Refried Dreams*
23. Alan Jackson ..... *Song for the Life*
24. Lari White ..... *That's How You Know  
(When You're in Love)*
25. Bryan White..... *Look at Me Now*

Make check payable to *Country Music*. Mail to: Top 25, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, TN 37229

Check one:  Cassette \$9.98, CMSA Members \$7.49  
 CD \$16.98, CMSA Members \$12.74

Add \$3.00 postage and handling. Circle numbers you want from album list above. Offer expires September 30, 1995

1	6	11	16	21
2	7	12	17	22
3	8	13	18	23
4	9	14	19	24
5	10	15	20	25

Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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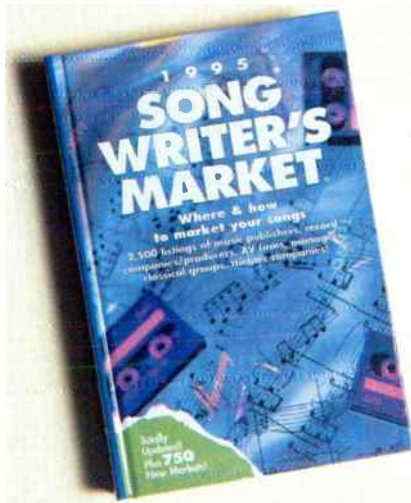
I want to join the CMSA and get Member's price. I'm adding \$16 for membership which includes an extra year's subscription to *Country Music Magazine*. **050695T**

## A 25% Discount For CMSA Members Only

Here it is, folks! Your quick and easy order form for your choice of the Top 25 **Albums** currently on the country music charts. Everyone may order, but members of *Country Music Magazine's* own Country Music Society of America get 25% off list price. Albums listed on this page are available on CD or cassette. **Sorry, no singles, LP's or 8-track tapes available.** To order, fill out coupon on this page and include your check or money order. Be sure to specify format. Allow six to eight weeks for delivery. To join the CMSA and save 25% on every CD or cassette you buy, send \$16 to cover membership dues and use members' prices. Dues entitle you to an additional year of *Country Music Magazine*, the CMSA Newsletter with every issue, membership card, discount coupons, other merchandise discounts and more.

# EDITOR'S CHOICE

## ALL NEW REVISED EDITION! 1995 SONGWRITER'S MARKET



Get your songs into the right person's hands, and do it the right way, with this year's newly revised edition of the *Songwriter's Market*. This valuable reference tool contains 2,500 listings of song markets, each with the most complete and current information on contact names, royalty/pay rates, song submissions, types of songs wanted and vital tips from the "buyers." Plus, there are listings of clubs, associations, contests, workshops and songwriting publications. You'll also find sections on getting started in the songwriting business, the structure of the music business, submitting your songs, contracts, copyright, record keeping, international markets and co-writing. Even if you have a past edition of this valuable songwriter's tool, this new version is a must for anyone who wants the most correct and up-to-date information. It's your expressway to today's music buyers. #B5N, \$21.99.



## CLASSIC COUNTRY MUSIC SETS BRAND NEW RELEASES!

**SPADE COOLEY**—*Spadella: The Essential Spade Years* is a 20-track CD collection of what most experts agree were Cooley's best recordings, 1944-46 with Columbia. It includes 20 out of his 21 recordings, all of his hits, from "Detour" and the biggest, "Shame on You," to "A Pair of Broken Hearts," "Hide Your Face," "Crazy 'Cause I Love You," "You Can't Break My Heart," "I'm Little but I'm Loud," "Take an Old Cold Tater and Wait," "We Could," "Spadella" AND MANY MORE! Sorry, CD only. Ask for item #EK57392, \$21.95.

**LORETTA LYNN**—*Honky Tonk Girl: The Loretta Lynn Collection* from MCA contains 70 hits on three CD's or three cassettes. There's also a fine 43-page illustrated booklet. Some of the selections on this essential collection are: "I'm a Honky Tonk Girl," "Whispering Sea," "There Goes My Everything," "Coal Miner's Daughter," "The Pill," "Fist City," "Blue Kentucky Girl," "Trouble in Paradise," "The Devil Gets His Due," "The Home You're Tearin' Down," "The Shoe Goes on the Other Foot," "The Morning After Baby Let Me Down," "Who Was That Stranger?" and "I've Got a Picture of Us on My Mind." For CD's ask for item #CD53, \$49.95, for cassettes item #CASS53, \$39.95.

**CONWAY TWITTY**—*The Conway Twitty Collection* is another new MCA set on four CD's or four cassettes with 89 songs. There's a 76-page illustrated booklet with rare vintage photographs. Just some of the songs included are "Cry Baby Heart," "Maybellene," "I Wonder What She'll Think About Me Leaving," "I Can't Stop Loving You," "I've Already Loved You in My Mind," "The Grandest Lady of Them All," "That's My Job," "How Much More Can She Stand," "That's When She Started to Stop Loving You," "Hello Darlin'," "Saturday Night Special," "Baby's Gone," "I May Never Get to Heaven" and "Play Guitar Play." For CD's ask for item #CD54, \$59.95, for cassettes item #CASS54, \$49.95.



## HOT NEW 1996 CALENDARS! RESERVE YOURS NOW...AND SAVE 10%!!!

It may seem early to be thinking about 1996 calendars, but actually, now is the best time, because you'll SAVE 10% on each calendar you order! We have nine 12" x 12" calendars to suit everyone's taste and style. You'll recognize two of our country music bestsellers, the *Billy Ray Cyrus Calendar* (Item #G3G) and the *Elvis Calendar* (Item #G6F). Each features twelve high-quality, glossy photos. There's the popular *Country Music Foundation Calendar* (Item #G1B, not shown), with twelve different shots of country music's finest. For the rugged cowboy—or anyone who's into real Western life—there's the *Kris Kristofferson Rodeo Calendar* (Item #G2M) with shots of bucking broncos and cowboys in action. And for

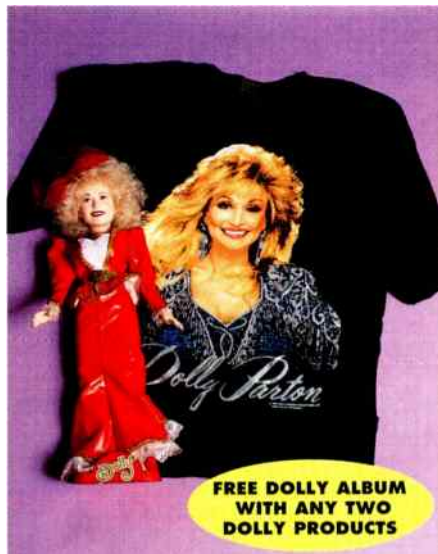
those who enjoy the wild life indoors, there's the *World Wrestling Federation Calendar* (Item #G2R) with your favorite "masters of disaster." We also have the all-new *Studs in Spurs Calendar* (Item #G2T), which needs no further explanation. There's the *Portraits of Native Americans Calendar* (Item #G3H), with a stunning portrait for each month, and *The Saturday Evening Post Calendar* (Item #G2C) with those familiar classic depictions of American life. Another American legend is featured in the *Marilyn Monroe Calendar* (Item #G2F), and, for those who fancy life at pasture, there's the fun-loving *Holy Cow Calendar* (Item #G3C). Each calendar regularly sells for \$10.99. Now pay just \$9.89. Calendars due in October.

## THE DIVINE DOLLY PARTON THE DOLLY T-SHIRT

This officially licensed, American made T-shirt is 100% cotton and comes in black with a full color portrait of Dolly on the front and the title of her hit, "Slow Dancing with the Moon," on the back. Specify men's sizes M, L, XL. Ask for item #G6B, \$15.95.

## THE DOLLY DOLL

This doll, which stands one-and-a-half feet tall, has all the glitz, charm and flamboyance that are characteristic of the artist herself. The doll's long red dress is fringed with gold and white lace. In typical Dolly style, the doll is fully accessorized, with a gold necklace, a gold belt with a ruby-esque stone in the center and a red lace bow in her hair. And, of course, Dolly wouldn't be Dolly without her glorious blonde locks. This collector's doll is only \$49.95. Ask for Item #D1A. A display stand is included.



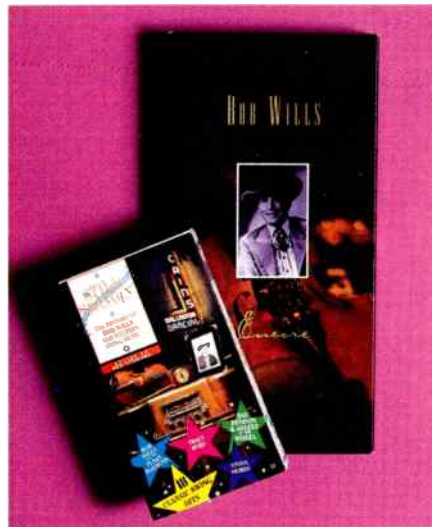
## DOLLY: MY LIFE AND OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS (NOT SHOWN)

In her fascinating autobiography, for the first time Dolly talks openly about her life—both public and private. She reveals how she got to where she is today, her no-nonsense attitude and the down-home philosophy that has helped her from the start. Whether discussing her sense of style, her inability to have children, the music she loves, her unique marriage or her friendship with other stars, Dolly is amazingly candid, incredibly warm, wise and funny, proving over and over again why she is so loved. Hardcover, 6 1/2" x 9 1/4", 256 pages, illustrated. Ask for Item #B40, \$25.

## LISTEN TO DOLLY TELL YOU HER STORY

(4 Cassettes, Lightly Abridged - NOT SHOWN) And here's Dolly herself telling her story, *My Life and Other Unfinished Business*, with all her distinctive grace, humor, and un-failing wit captured on four audio cassettes. Ask for #C2D, \$25.

**Order any TWO Dolly items above and we'll send you a FREE Dolly album, Just the Way I Am, on cassette.**

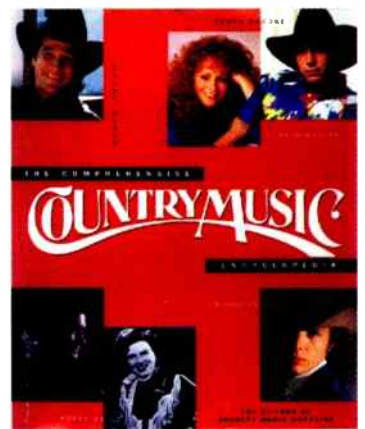


## BRAND NEW! BOB WILLS VIDEO AND BOXED SET

**Still Swingin'—57 mins.** This new video takes a look at the roots of Western swing music. You'll stop in at the famous Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and experience a "live" broadcast from the radio station that started it all, KVOO. There are segments of early 40's Playboy appearances and retrospectives of Bob Wills and Johnnie Lee Wills and their bands plus interviews with several original Playboys who are still out there playing today. Item #V4S, \$19.95. **Bob Wills, Encore** Western swing lovers won't want to miss the new Bob Wills release on Liberty. *Encore*, a three-CD set, covers 57 songs, 44 of 57 are Liberty recordings. Wills' two hit singles for Liberty are included, "Image of Me" and "Heart to Heart Talk." Sorry, CD only. No cassettes available. Item CDP30275, \$49.95.

## NEW! COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE'S COMPREHENSIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA

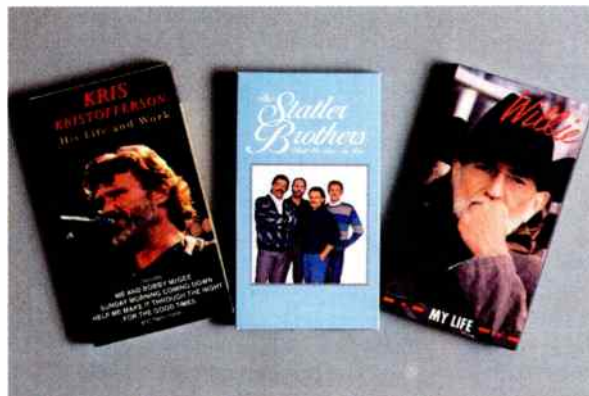
*Country Music Magazine's* new encyclopedia is the best country music reference book available. In 680 entries—from Acuff to Zydeco—you'll find the answers to all your questions on country music's past, present and future. It's lavishly illustrated with MORE THAN 600 photographs...including many rarely seen. Over 20 years have passed since we published our original encyclopedia. Not only has a lot happened in country music since 1974, but old "facts" have been discovered to be incorrect, new facts have come to light, and, most importantly, the young and relatively inexperienced *Country Music* staff of 1974 has become mature, experienced and America's absolute authority on the subject of country music. So, recognizing the need for an up-to-date book, rather than revise the original, we started from scratch to produce a completely new book. Item #B1S/G1B, \$25.



## THREE HOT COUNTRY VIDEOS: KRISTOFFERSON, THE STATLERS & NELSON

Here are three of country music's best-selling videos, two new and one classic. First, there's Kris Kristofferson's *His Life and Work*. This new 90-minute video profiles the career and life of the actor, songwriter and performer. It includes interviews with notables like Willie Nelson and Johnny Cash and features such songs as "Me and Bobby McGee," "Sunday Morning Coming Down," "F for the Good Times"

AND MANY MORE! For Kris ask for Item #V6H, \$19.95. Next, there's The Statler Brothers' *What We Love to Do*. This new 40-minute video is their first in a decade and it celebrates their 30th anniversary. It features 13 songs including "Elizabeth," "My Only Love," "What We Love to Do," "Atlanta Blue," "Maple Street Memories," "Sweeter & Sweeter," "You've Been Like a Mother to Me," "Let's Get Started" AND MORE! Ask for Item #V6A, \$19.95. Finally, there's Willie Nelson's classic *My Life*. This 60-minute video gives a riveting, close-up portrait of Willie's days as a starving songwriter through his long struggle to superstardom. It's a story of hardship, courage, love, friendship and music as told by Willie himself. Includes 20 great hits. Ask for Item #V5L, \$29.95.



# Nashville Warehouse

## CHET ATKINS VIDEO INSTRUCTION COURSE: GET STARTED ON GUITAR

Here's your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn to play guitar (or sharpen your existing skills) with one of the grandmasters of guitar pickin'. With this video course, beginners can have fun learning the basics, and advanced players will discover a true goldmine of helpful hints and ideas. It includes a one-hour video cassette, a 112-page instruction book and a 40-minute audio cassette—all three components cross-referenced to each other and packaged in a sturdy plastic case for convenient carrying and access. The instruction book will guide you through the music Chet plays in the video. There are also special easy-to-read reference sections titled "Playing Chords," "Finger-picking Chords," "Playing Melodies" and "Playing by Ear." Split-screen close-ups show exactly how techniques are done. There are on-screen chord symbols that let you play along as you watch...plus an on-screen clock to help you go instantly to specific spots on the video. You receive the video, audio cassette, instruction booklet and the binder case all for only \$69.95. Specify Item #B2G.



### THE BILLY RAY CYRUS T-SHIRT

Billy Ray fan's won't want to miss his officially licensed, 100% cotton Hanes T-shirt. It features a great color portrait of Billy Ray on the front side and "Achy Breaky Heart" on the back. Specify men's sizes M, L, XL, item #G5P, only \$15.95.

### NEW BOOK AND FREE CASSETTE—OUTLAWS AND GUNFIGHTERS

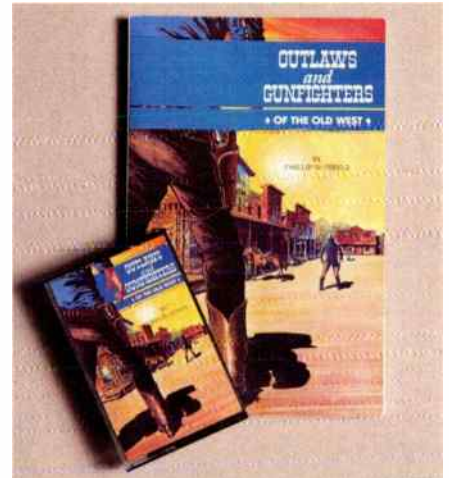
Fans of the old West won't want to miss this book. Western writer and board member of the National Outlaw and Lawman History Association, Phillip W. Steele, and country music artist John D. LeVan have merged talents and interests to bring true stories about the old West to life in this exciting narrative. This book tells true stories, from the fearsome to the gruesome, of outlaw legends and gunmen like Jesse James, The Daltons, John Wesley Hardin, Belle Starr, Billy the Kid and the Gunfight at the OK Corral. LeVan's original songs, on the accompanying cassette, are not only entertaining but are based on true history of these personalities and events. For the book and cassette, ask for Item #B5E, only \$16.95.

### THE BILLY RAY CYRUS SCRAPBOOK

This photo-filled book is the most intimate look at Billy Ray that you'll find. The author traveled to Billy's hometown of Flatwoods, Kentucky, and visited with the friends and family who know him best. There are over 325 photos (some even taken from BRC's old bedroom walls) and personal, detailed captions chronicling his life and career. Billy Ray says, "Man you really hit the nail right on the head. Pictures don't lie!" Softcover, 159 pages. Item #B4J, \$19.95.

### BILLY RAY CONCERT VIDEO

*Live On Tour* (not shown) is a 60-minute video which features 14 hits including "Should I Stay or Should I Go," "She's Not Cryin' Anymore," "Achy Breaky Heart," "Wher'm I Gonna Live," "I'm So Miserable," and more. Ask for Item #V2B, only \$29.95.



## NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE ORDER FORM

050695-1

MAIL TO: Nashville Warehouse, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, TN 37229

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ENCLOSED IS A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR \$ PAYABLE TO <b>NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE</b> OR CHARGE MY: <input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER EXP. DATE:					
ACCOUNT #	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, I ordered ... Dolly item(s), send me ... Dolly cassette(s) (R4A).				
SIGNATURE					
Add \$3.00 postage and handling for first item and \$.95 for each additional item.					
TN residents add 8.25% Sales Tax/Canadian orders add \$3.00 extra.					
<b>This Offer Expires On 9/30/95!</b>				Amount due \$	

Over 25 years have passed since Glen Travis Campbell made his first mark on the scene with "By the Time I Get to Phoenix" and with his TV shows, including *The Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour*. Beginning his career as a rock musician, then becoming a top Los Angeles studio guitarist, Campbell enjoyed strong record sales for nearly 20 years. At the same time he made tabloid headlines with a lifestyle heavy on booze and drugs, living in the fast lane with girlfriend Tanya Tucker. She and Campbell eventually separated, and both got their demons under control. Campbell's 1994 autobiography, *Rhinestone Cowboy*, detailed it all, including his return to religion. Today at age 59, he still tours, but puts in more time at his Branson theater. We connected with him on the road, during a brief stop in Nashville, and he had much to say about what's been and what is.

**1** You're out on the road now? Where've you been?

We did some shows up north of here, we go down to Mississippi, up to Arnold, Missouri, then home. We stopped in here to do that Ricky Skaggs show. We had to fly through the cold from St. Louis to Nashville last night. I'm gonna tell my business manager, I don't want to travel this time of year. If I'm gonna travel, we'll go to Australia where it's fall this time of year instead of spring, visit some kangaroos.

**2** Do you like living in Phoenix? And do you have a mansion in Branson like it says in the song?

Phoenix, as a place to live, the wide open spaces, man. That's the best place. It's just awesome out there, especially in the winter.

I got a theater in Branson...I got a house in Branson. We got twice as many buses there this year as we had last year. Last year I was so pleased with the way everything went. But at the other end of the spectrum, people who do the gettin' of the buses, the



## 20 Questions with GLEN CAMPBELL

—by Rich Kienzle—

marketing people. They thought marketing was like going to a Safeway, if you get my drift. So we changed all that around, and it seems to be workin' out great. That's the best theater I've ever played in. We've got the sound, the stage and lighting.

**3** Does it make a difference for artists to control the setup? It's different than having to go in to some auditorium and be at the mercy of the equipment...

That's exactly right. We're doin' a production show, we've got eight dancers and a band,

very sophisticated, you could take it to Broadway. The whole thing's kinda reminiscent of the old *Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour*.

**4** You did *The Smothers Brothers* summer replacement show first. Then when CBS fired *The Brothers* for their political jokes, your *Goodtime Hour* took their Sunday night spot. Did you realize TV would launch you? When Tommy Smothers asked me to host *The Summer Brothers Smothers Show*, I had no idea it would just explode into the popularity that it did.

With *The Goodtime Hour*, 50 million people a week were watching the show. That's a lot of people. I didn't get so political. The more controversy I could keep off the show, that's the way I wanted it.

**5** John Hartford first got noticed as a performer on *The Goodtime Hour*, didn't he? Yeah, Hartford was great. His agent took him off the show after the first year. He said, "I got bigger and better things for ya," and you never heard from John for a long time after that. We did a little mini-tour with Jim Stafford and Nicolette Larson, we must have done 40 shows. I asked John, "Why did you leave *The Goodtime Hour*? I never did understand that." He said, "I had a 'smart' agent at that time." That's when Larry McNeely came in, but John was perfect for that show. Larry was with Roy Acuff ten years before Roy died.

**6** It's amazing to think back at the new talent who appeared on that show early on. I saw a video of the rock band Cream with Eric Clapton, on your show, and nobody outside rock knew who they were. I remember that well. Kenny Rogers and The First Edition were on that same show. I should put together a special on that.

**7** But when you were playing guitar in the studios, you worked with a lot of people who were just starting.



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*Didn't you pick and sing on a lot of Merle Haggard's early records?*

Yeah, almost all of it. I played rhythm guitar and sang harmony, me, Merle and Bonnie Owens.

**8** *Did you realize Merle was going to be as great as he was?*  
I knew he was very good. You just know when somebody's good or not, you don't know how big they're gonna be. That's another element of the business that's always fascinated me. You hear somebody that can't carry a tune tied to their britches leg and they're a big star, and you hear somebody like Haggard who was so great and it seemed like it never was gonna come.

**9** *Did studio work give you the push to be versatile?*  
Oh, yeah. Definitely. You go from a Merle Haggard session to a Beach Boys session to a Sinatra session. It's quite a bit of difference.

**10** *I heard something you did over 30 years ago, a record with Tex Williams at the Mint in Las Vegas. You let rip with a real hot solo.*  
"My Window Faces the South." That was the early 60's. What was Roger Miller's line? "I don't think I'm half as good as I really am."

**11** *You did a lot of hits as a studio picker, you got into some of that in your book. What were the biggest pop hits you were on that would surprise people?*

There was a bunch of guys, Hal Blaine on drums, Tommy Tedesco on guitar, Carol Kaye on bass, that did a lot of sessions, whether it was country or pop. They did a lot of work. I did "Strangers in the Night" by Sinatra, "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'" by The Righteous Brothers, I did all The Righteous Brothers' stuff, we did Darlene Love, The Ronettes, "He's a Rebel," all The Beach Boys' stuff, The Byrds, Jan and Dean, The Association, Dean Martin's stuff. Jimmy Bowen was produc'in' Dean.

**12** *Were you surprised Bowen became a super-producer?*

We used to do demos for music publishing companies. Bowen and I'd go in and do like seven or eight songs in three hours. He went from there. Bowen always had an ear for a good song. He was very fast and he was so easy to work with. One thing about Bowen, you know where you stand with him. You know, if he tells ya a hog weighs five pounds...wrap it up!

**13** *Liberty's reissuing that album you cut with Tennessee Ernie Ford and a bass player back in 1975. Recall that one?*

I wish we'd have had more time to do it. Because I was busier than a two-headed woodpecker at that time. Ernie was, too, but I wish we'd had more time. But as I listen to it now, it actually sounds pretty raw, pretty good. It sounds good and it sounds raw at the same time. I really loved Ernie. He was such a sweet human being.

**14** *You were one of the first artists to endorse the famous Ovation Round-Back guitars, with the backs molded from synthetic materials and not wood. Do you still use them?*

Yeah. They just started the company when I started my TV show. I love 'em. They got a mandolin now that's just awesome. It's the best one I ever played. They last. I can leave my 12-string tuned in the case, and the neck don't warp, it don't come up and don't do nothin'—just fabulous. They're a road guitar, they're rugged. You can throw 'em around.

**15** *Did you like those 12-string guitar albums you did, that one in 1963 under the name of The Folk-swingers?*

That old 12-string album on World Pacific that I did with The Dillards, that's a good one. The one I did on Capitol, *The Astounding Twelve-String Guitar*, didn't knock me out that much.

**16** *Everybody's doing box sets. Do you think they ought to bring out your older records now?*

They've done pretty much everything on CD. I would like them to do a set of the songs that were in my albums that I like, that I wanted singles on, like "Highwayman." I had that in 1980. Capitol wouldn't release it as a single. It just burnt my rump. In fact, I left Capitol over that. I said you know what you can do with your record label...

*The first country record you did that charted was Merle Travis' song, "Kentucky Means Paradise" with the Green River Boys back in 1962. Did you know Merle?*  
Oh, yeah, a marvelous man. We'd sit around and play. I did a Hank Thompson session when Merle and Hank was messin' around, it was at Studio B at Capitol. (Note: Travis played uncredited lead guitar on most of Hank Thompson's Capitol recordings—R.K.)

*...Is your middle name, "Travis," for Merle Travis?*

I don't know. It probably is. I don't know anybody in the family named Travis. I named my son Travis.

**17** *Who produced your Capitol stuff?*

Nik Venet came in. But I never got a direction when I started with Capitol. I'd had a hit with "Turn Around, Look at Me" on Crest Records. I didn't have any say over what I recorded for the first two years at Capitol. They wanted to take me country.

I produced my stuff starting with "Gentle on my Mind." As luck would have it, Voyle Gilmore, when he was head of A&R at Capitol, he said, "Glen, what do you want to do? You've been on the label five years." I said, "I'm havin' to go in and do stuff that I really don't like." I did "Too Late to Worry, Too Blue to Cry," I liked that. That old bluegrass album was something Nik Venet wanted to do, I couldn't believe it, but I'm glad I did it.

When I got Al DeLory, he was a session musician like I

was, and he'd gone to work producing at Capitol, so I told Voyle, "Let me work with Al." That hit it off really good. I'd go in and do the songs like I wanted to do 'em, and Al would take me and arrange 'em, mix 'em and sweeten 'em. It worked out great.

**18** *Are you frustrated over country radio's narrow-mindedness today?*

It's outcome-based music, what records you can and can't get played. I think when they put the consultants at the radio stations and the record companies, all artistic creation probably just went out the window. You gotta leave the picture-painting in the hands of the artist. I think that's why Alan Jackson is doin' so good. Alan is doing what he truly loves and wants to do. He always did, and I'm glad he did. Check out the consultants' background—it's programming: shovin' it down their throats, the new, the bigger and the better. I don't think the new music is bigger and better. Alan kept it country, Randy Travis kept it there. The other stuff? I don't know, man. It's outcome-based music, like outcome-based education. It isn't necessarily what's good that's gonna get played.

**19** *What are you working on record-wise these days?*

I'm workin' on a new Christmas album for Laserlight Records. They got the K-Marts, the Wal-Marts, that routine. They do a good job. I'm just doin' it with me and my hand, and it's comin' out kinda jazz, country-jazz, pop-jazz, you know. I'm doing it live, in Branson, onstage.

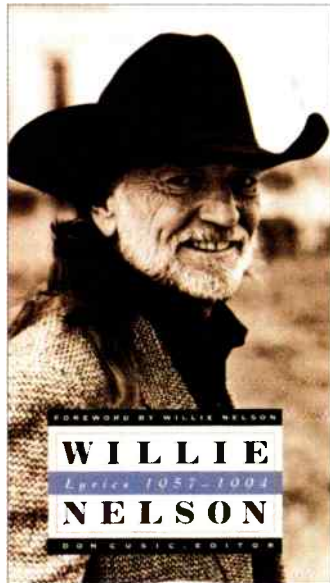
**20** *Back to traveling, isn't it different now from the days you traveled by car?*

I traveled by car with The Champs. We put 105,000 miles on a '59 Pontiac station wagon pulling a trailer in 1960. We were the band for Danny and The Juniors and Jack Scott. That was 35 years ago. I was 15... (laughs). If you believe that, you'll believe there'll be a Richard Simmons Jr.

# Essential Collector by Rich Kienzle

## ▪ Books ▪

**Willie Nelson Song Lyrics:** If anyone's songs need publishing in book form, it's the songs of Willie Nelson. *Willie Nelson Lyrics: 1957-1994*, edited by Don Cusic, is part of St. Martin's Press Country Poets series. Lyrics for 182 of Willie's songs from the beginning to the present are the star of this show. The order is chronological, and it is possible to note that many of his skills were



fully formed even in the earliest material. Having all these lyrics in one place, in such a small, well-done package, is a delight and should please many Willie fans.

Of course, this wouldn't be a Don Cusic book without some of his usual dull logic such as his statement that "If the child is father to the man, then the key to understanding the grown man is knowing the little boy." That's not all. How about this: "Yes, most country songs are sad, but Willie Nelson's songs have been dangerously, seriously sad." I bet none of you Willie fans ever knew that! As usual, Cusic's narrative has its share of factual errors. The first record label Willie recorded for was not "Big D" records, but Pappy

Daily's (not "Dailey" as Cusic writes it) Houston-based "D" Records. Willie's Tennessee home burned in 1970, not 1971. There's so much wrong with Cusic's essay that I could waste half this column explaining it all. Readers who ignore Cusic and concentrate on the songs will find much of value.

## ▪ Recordings ▪

**Lester "Roadhog" Moran:** As this magazine's resident traditionalist, I've gotten correspondence and records from small-time acts. One act tried for years to convince me (and themselves) they were preserving and promoting "real country," though their awful music gave traditional country a bad name. Over 20 years ago, The Statler Brothers created a hilarious satirical group of alter egos to lampoon such acts: Lester "Roadhog" Moran and The Cadillac Cowboys. Their material was a terrific satire on the third-rate, no-talent small-town country bands who once populated local radio stations in the 50's and 60's (and less so in subsequent decades). Now, Mercury has released the entire recorded output of old Roadhog on *The Complete Lester "Roadhog" Moran and The Cadillac Cowboys* (Mercury 314-518 944).

These groups considered themselves the epitome of "real" country music—no strings, no Anita Kerr Singers, no vibes and few electric guitars or drums. Yet the singers usually couldn't sing, the fiddler and guitarists were fumbler, and only occasionally did the whole bunch manage to stay on key. Ironically, the session musicians on the satire were some of Nashville's best 1970's pickers, including guitarist Ray Edenton and fiddler Buddy Spicher, who did masterful jobs playing like amateurs. Roadhog read the usual dedications to small-town listeners and ads for local businesses (usually read incorrectly). They also included in-

side jokes (Roadhog says he was in the Navy with Johnny Cash, a real life Air Force veteran). In one segment, they're set to play Conway's "Hello Darlin'" and mix it up with Willie's "Hello Walls." The only improvement would have been for Mercury to treat this as a "serious" reissue, with tongue-in-cheek scholarly essay, sessionography, etc. Seriously, the set's fine as is.

**Jerry Lee Lewis:** In *Buried Treasures*, we reviewed the first of Bear Family's comprehensive Jerry Lee Lewis CD boxed sets. These will cover his entire recorded output (save a few lost recordings) for Smash and Mercury Records. In the real world, not everyone can afford Bear Family boxed sets, of course. That's why it's nice that Mercury has released the 20-track *Killer Country* (Mercury 314-526 542). This one concentrates on his country years, starting with "Another Place, Another Time," the honky tonk ballad that restored him to the Top Ten of the country charts. Also included are such obvious hits as "What's Made Milwaukee Famous (Has Made a Loser Out of Me)," "She Still Comes Around (To Love What's Left of Me)," "She Even Woke Me Up to Say Goodbye," "There Must Be More to Love than This," "Touching Home," "Me and Bobby McGee," "Once More With Feeling," "He Can't Fill My Shoes," "Middle Age Crazy" and so on.

Not all the great material here made the charts. Compiler Colin Escott wisely included some non-hits that reflected just how skillfully The Killer could incorporate the older country songs he loved into his own style. That's why his rocking version of "Walking the Floor Over You" and Jimmie Rodgers' "Waitin' for a Train" were well worth including. The latter isn't Jerry's Top 20 version from 1970. That was recorded for Sun in 1962, issued as a single only after

Jerry began having country hits on Smash. The version here is a remake. He likewise put his own stamp on Merle Haggard's "Workin' Man Blues," and a few obscure later tunes, like "Jack Daniels (Old No. 7)" and "You're All Too Ugly Tonight," fit nicely into the mix as well.

**Donna Fargo:** While many record companies are covering old material from the 20's through the 60's, Varese Sarabande, a California label, has picked up the best of three 70's artists. Donna Fargo, whose greatest years came in the early 70's, hasn't been heard from much in recent years, in part due to her problems with multiple sclerosis, though she's been in remission. Likewise, her songs, which were the country equivalent of smiley-face buttons, are no longer fashionable. For her many fans, however, there's not been much available. *The Best of Donna Fargo* (VSD-5567) covers the 18 songs from Dot and MCA over the nine peak years of her career start-



ing with her first sunny, upbeat hit, "The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A." The biggest ones beyond that, many of them written by Fargo herself, include "Funny Face," "Manhattan, Kansas," "Superman," "You Were Always There," "Little Girl Gone," "I'll Try a Little Bit Harder," "You Can't Be a Beacon (If Your Light Don't Shine)," "U.S. of A.," "It Do Feel Good," "Hello Little Bluebird," "Whatever I Say," "What Will the New Year Bring," "You're Not Charlie

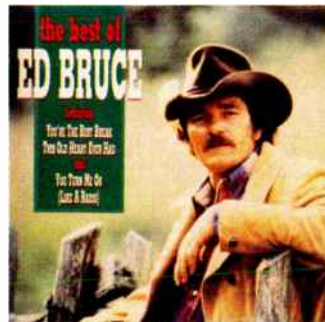
Brown (And I'm Not Raggedy Ann)," "Don't Be Angry," "Heartbreak Hotel" and "Say I Do." The package is adequate, though Todd Everett's notes are shallow fan magazine fare, without much insight into Fargo's career or the music itself.

**Joe Stampley:** No decent compilation of Joe Stampley's hits, particularly his Dot material, has appeared anywhere. Finally, L.A.'s Varese Sarabande records has filled the need with *The Best of Joe Stampley* (VSD 5568). The 18 tracks cover all of the high points of Stampley's early career, which began with his first hit on Dot, a cover of Percy Sledge's R&B ballad, "Take Time to Know Her." From there all the Top Tens are here, "Soul Song," "Bring It On Home (To Your Woman)," "Take Me Home to Somewhere" and "All These Things." So is his first hit from Epic Records, "Roll On, Big Mama" (from the CB-trucker craze of 20 years ago) and one Moe and Joe duet, "Just Good Ole Boys.

A number of his Top 20's from Dot, including "Too Far Gone" and "Everything I Own" also appear. Since Varese has a relationship with MCA, they had no trouble licensing the Dot material. Stampley's Epic years aren't ignored, though Sony might consider a separate set to complement this one.

**Ed Bruce:** Ed Bruce did his first recordings for Sun as a 17-year-old rockabilly. He never became a hitmaker despite recording for several other labels, until signing with MCA in the early 80's. Until then, his biggest achievement had been writing "Mamas, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys." *The Best of Ed Bruce* (VSD 5566) covers 18 of his hits, including material from RCA, United Artists and MCA. The earliest number is the original "Mamas, Don't Let Your Babies" from 1975. From there, the set runs through "Diane," his 1980 duet "The Last Cowboy Song" with Willie, "Girls, Women & Ladies," "Evil Angel," "(When You Fall in Love) Everything's a Waltz," "You're the Best Break This Old Heart

Ever Had," "Love's Found You and Me," "Ever, Never Lovin' You," "My First Taste of Texas," "You're Not Leavin' Here Tonight" and "If It Was Easy," and his later RCA hits, "You Turn Me On (Like a Ra-



dio," "When Giving Up Was Easy" and "Nights." This covers Bruce's career about as well as a single CD could.

### ■ Videos ■

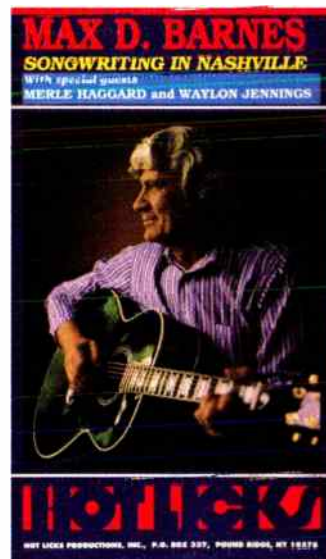
**James Burton Guitar:** Louisiana country and rockabilly guitarist James Burton made his first appearance on a hit record in 1957 when his gutsy Fender Telecaster riffs helped make Louisiana rocker Dale Hawkins' "Suzie Q" a hit. From there Burton went to California with Texas rockabilly Bob Luman's band, where they joined L.A.'s famous *Town Hall Party* TV show. Discovered by Ozzie Nelson, Burton became Rick Nelson's lead guitarist from the late 50's through most of the 60's, playing on nearly all of his biggest hits for Imperial. In the mid-60's he started doing record sessions, playing on many country dates, including many of Merle Haggard's first hits. By 1969 he was touring

and recording with Elvis and stayed with Presley until his death. During that period he also worked with Emmylou Harris' early Hot Band and later with John Denver and Jerry Lee Lewis.

Burton is a guitar fountainhead, and a major influence on pickers from Pete Anderson to Albert Lee. Hot Licks' *The Legendary Guitar of James Burton* features the master himself, modest and soft-spoken, demonstrating many of his best known licks and solos. A booklet with the set features the musical examples in notation and tablature. Excellent split-screen techniques (not quite as sophisticated as those of Homespun Videos) show his picking close up. His trademark licks from Nelson's "Fools Rush In," "Traveling Man" and "Hello Mary Lou" start things off. He discusses string bending and his choice of strings and picks (an unorthodox combination of both flatpick and fingerpick). And Haggard fans will be delighted as Burton explains his solos from such early favorites as "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive" and "The Bottle Let Me Down." Burton is as exciting now as he was nearly 40 years ago, and it's great to hear him revealing his secrets.

**Max D. Barnes Songwriting Video:** The first country star to give any songwriting instruction was Hank Williams, who wrote a book titled *How to Write Folk and Western Music to Sell*. Nobody's done an actual instruction video on songwriting until Max D. Barnes, whose best known songs in-

clude Randy Travis' "Storms of Life," Vern Gosdin's 1988 hit "Chiseled in Stone" and Vince Gill's 1992 hit "Look at Us." Barnes' 70-minute Hot Licks video, *Songwriting in Nashville*, taped in 1993, is an important effort, with a cameo from Waylon Jennings and a longer segment with another friend. A onetime Nebraska trucker, Barnes, like most writers, broke in from the bottom. He casually discusses his musical roots and how his wife, who knew of his dreams of writing, pushed him to move to Nashville after two of their three kids left home to pursue their own lives.



His first big break came when Charley Pride recorded one of his songs, which got him signed with Pride's song publishing company. Barnes discusses how and where to write, as well as such business practices as artists or producers putting a song "on hold," meaning it's not auditioned for anyone else until a given artist or producer decides whether to record it. "The Gambler," Barnes remembers, wasn't put on hold, resulting in several recordings of it appearing around the same time as Kenny Rogers' hit. One segment shows Barnes and Merle Haggard actually collaborating on a song. Moments like this make this the only coherent explanation of modern country songwriting around today. Even fans not interested in songwriting can learn much about the business from Barnes.

### How to Get These Collectibles

**Videos:** Max D. Barnes, *Songwriting in Nashville* (V7K), \$19.95/James Burton, *The Legendary Guitar of James Burton* (V7M) \$39.95. **Books:** Don Cusic, *Willie Nelson: Lyrics 1957-1994* (B5G) \$16.95. **Recordings:** Lester "Roadhog" Moran and The Cadillac Cowboys, *The Complete Lester "Roadhog" Moran and The Cadillac Cowboys* (Mercury 314-518 944), \$7.95 cassette, \$14.95 CD/Jerry Lewis, *Killer Country* (Mercury 314-526 542), \$7.95 cassette, \$14.95 CD/Donna Fargo, *The Best of Donna Fargo* (VSD 5567), \$9.95 cassette, \$19.95 CD/Ed Bruce, *The Best of Ed Bruce* (VSD 5566), \$9.95 cassette, \$19.95 CD/Joe Stampley, *The Best of Joe Stampley* (VSD 5568), \$9.95 cassette, \$19.95 CD. Send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 050695EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, Tennessee 37229. Add \$3.95 postage and handling per order. Canadian orders, add \$3.00 extra for postage. **CMSA members, see For Members Only page for discounts.**

*Offer expires September 30, 1995*



## Accentuate the Positive

**M**y “Accentuate the Positive” campaign is going okay, but not all the time. I’ve been backsliding.

Like when I went to Nashville a couple of weeks ago, I just *had* to check out the Country Radio Seminar at the Opryland mega-mega-Hotel, which was half like sticking my most precious body part in a Veg-O-Matic and half like being a shark in a feeding frenzy. That is, I got lots of blood in my eyes, and my delight was excruciating—which is exactly why I swore off that kind of thing in my last column. If you’ll recall, I said I wouldn’t even think about country radio (or any other killer-instinct-provoking aspect of the music business), let alone go among hundreds and hundreds of the very people who make it the way it is, as they conspire to make it even more so.

So how do I “Think Positive!” about all *that*? Well, I’ve come up with something: a whole new way to look at the music business. Here, you see, you have an industry which meets a human need we don’t often think about: the need of people born without creative talent to find employment in a glamorous line of work. In the music biz, you see, many thousands of people who might otherwise have to go into home heating or accountancy get to rub elbows with, and hold power over, famous, creative people, meanwhile getting rich.

And that’s good, isn’t it? Isn’t it?

I know what you’re thinking (they don’t call me paranoid for nothing). What I’ve just written comes perilously close to fitting a music writer like me, doesn’t it? Well, I’d just like you to know that 1) there’s no money in what I do; and 2) writing is creative, isn’t it? Isn’t it?

And now, Final Note Fact-lets. Did you know that the average budget for a country video is \$90,000, or about half the cost of a whole album? And that in 1994, 44 percent of all white Americans, and 20 percent of all black and Asian Americans, listened to country music at least once a week? Or that between 1992 and 1993, there was a 48 percent rise in people listening to country music in the Northeastern states? That explains a lot, doesn’t it?

And gee, I guess I just can’t resist.

Something else impressed itself upon me at the Country Radio Seminar, in the “Hospitality Suites” where record companies present their “New Faces,” buffet-style, to the hungry radio hordes.

For a start, I personally wouldn’t walk from one side of Bleecker Street to the other, let alone part with money, to hear about 85 percent of the “talent” on sale. I also have a sneaking suspicion (make that a thundering conviction) that said talent

of the right ideas, but also some of the wrong ones, so it won’t do. Got any better ideas?

It was a cold mid-afternoon in Nashville, and there I was on the sidewalk outside the Ryman Auditorium, which is to a better, alternate country music universe what the Opryland Hotel is to the forces of darkness (even if, in an entirely fitting irony, both facilities are owned by the same people, who also own TNN and CMT).

I looked up the hill, and saw the only moving figure in the cityscape, a scruffy young man with a guitar case over his shoulder, walking down towards Lower Broadway. He had long, straight, black hair, and there was something Indian or Asian in his face, and I noticed that he was wearing combat boots. It could have been 1969, I thought. He could be a hobo, or a grunge star.

Hobos don’t carry guitars, though, and grunge stars take limos, they don’t walk—not in daylight and a straight line, anyway. No, this guy was *going somewhere*, to an open mike or a street corner

or an appointment with someone in the business who might do something for him. It was a real life Nashville moment, man, the way it’s been for 60 years.

And oh, yeah, the following day I met the next Faith Hill, who waits tables at the Macaroni Grill, and the day after that I met the next Mark Collie, who’ll help you out at Boot Country. He asked if I had any advice for him, so I had to think about that and come up with something. I did, and I’ll pass it along to you.

If you want to make a long, good life in country music (as opposed to a splash, or a killing), here’s what I think you need: talent, intelligence, honesty, and ethics. You have to persevere, even when everything seems set against you, and you should concentrate on writing songs. Good luck and God bless.

Finally, a Final Note Quote. It’s from Junior Brown, on why he won’t rekindle an old flame: “cause you’re wanted by the po-lice, and my wife thinks you’re dead.” My hero.

*Editor-at-Large Patrick Carr has been with CMM since September 1972.*



Junior Brown—Patrick’s described him as an ‘offbeat revivalist.’

would *much* rather be Billy Joel or Carole King than Hank Williams or Tammy Wynette. The record and radio people selling and buying them would rather have it that way, too. Sad.

And now, the latest flash from the ongoing, all-cosmos “Johnny Cash: Too Punk or Too Retro?” debate. My nephew Robin, who dropped in on his way from London to Sydney and whose favorite bands right now are Rocket From The Crypt and The Jesus Lizard (the latter out of Chicago, featuring ex-Scratch Acid members), said that Cash’s *American Recordings* are “like country music without the country.”

“What do you mean by that?” I asked.

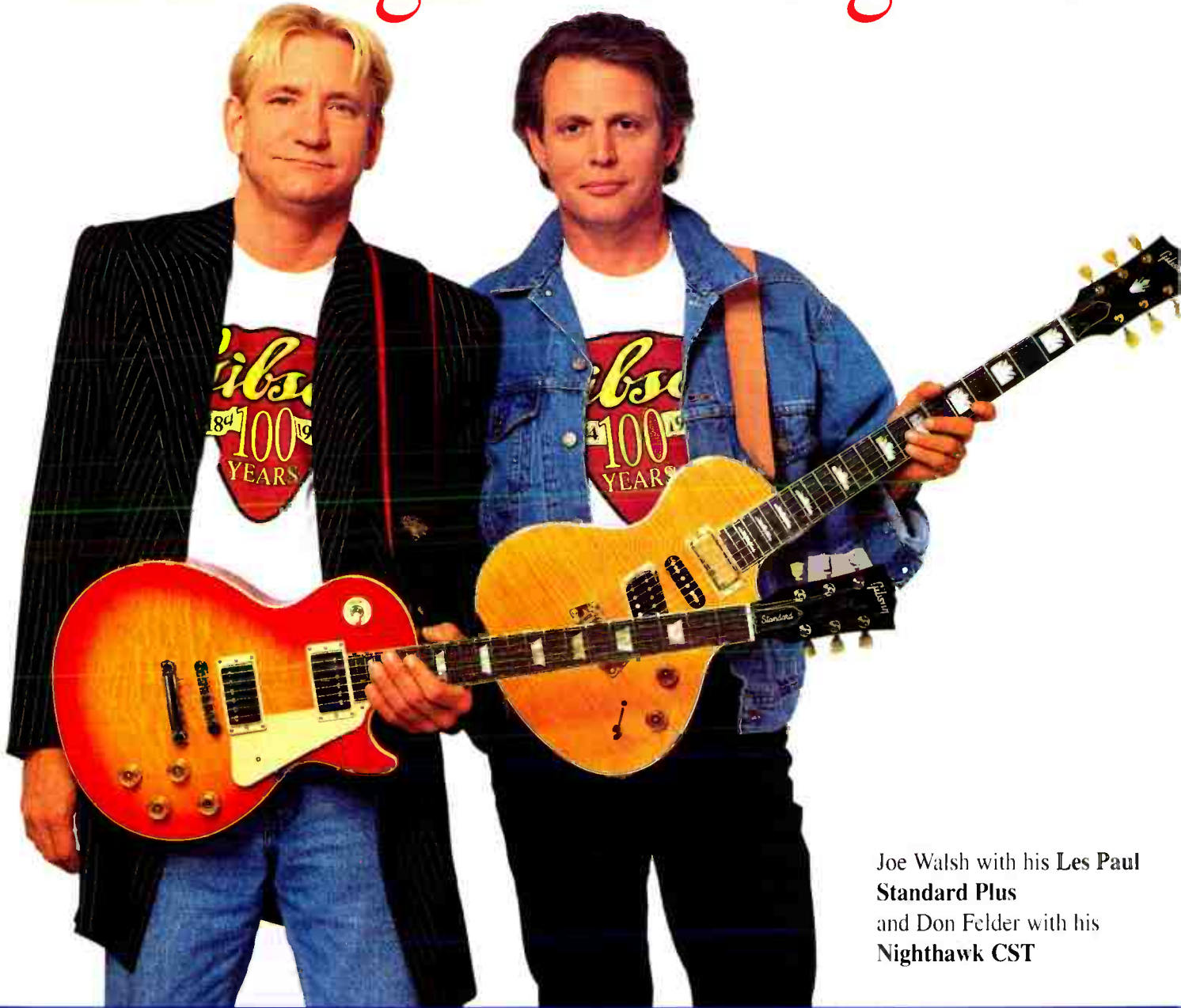
“Well, you know: without all the big hats and bullshit.”

He’s a good ’un, that Robin.

Do you see closeups of Joe Diffie every time you turn on TNN, or is it just me? It’s getting so I can tell at a glance just how little sleep he’s had.

Do you like the term “fan,” as in “country fan”? I don’t. “Lover” conveys some

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