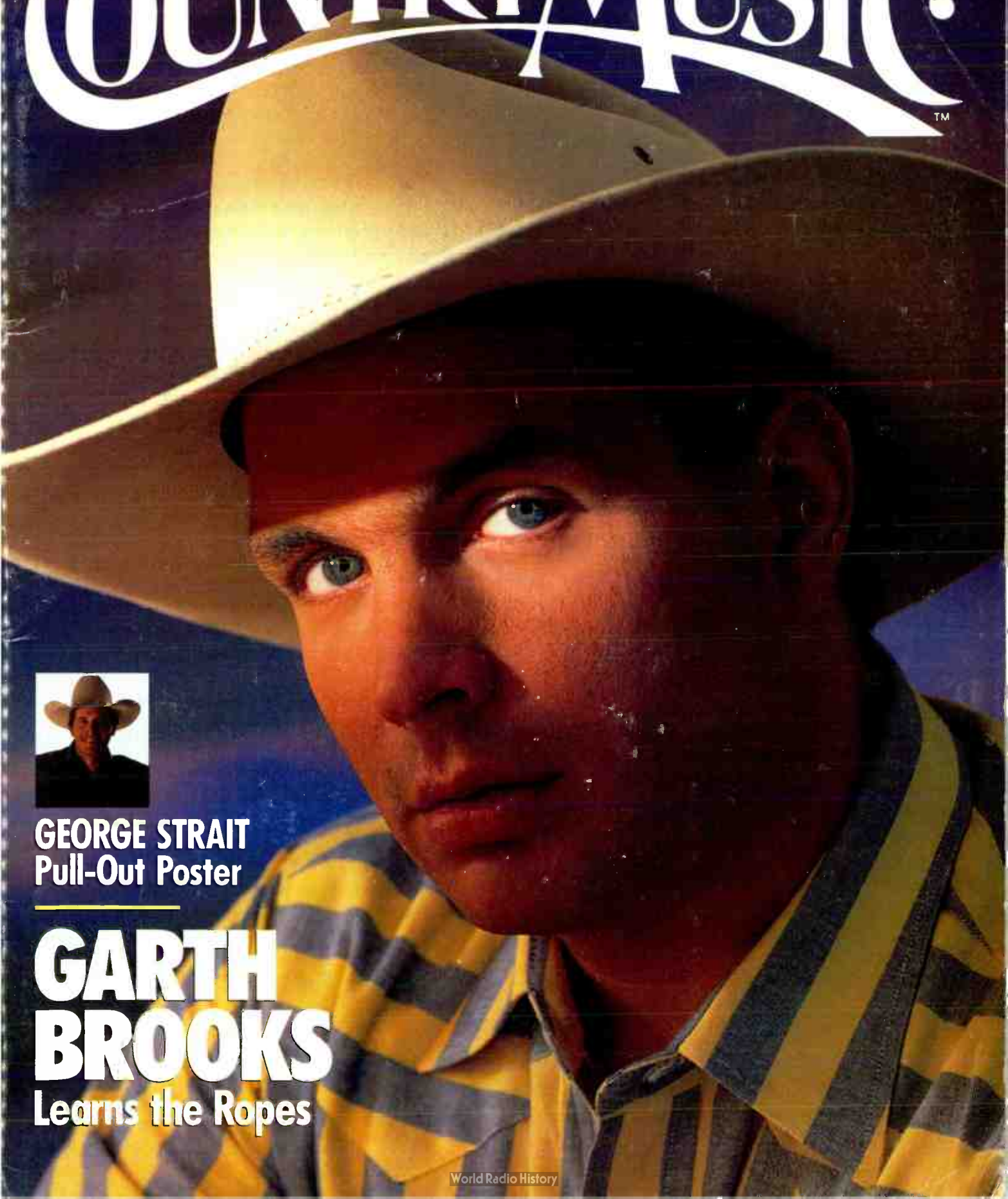


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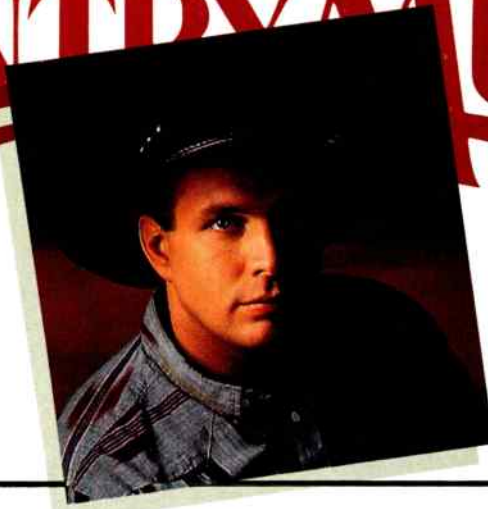
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4 Letters

Readers support Reba and Ricky Van. They give three cheers for Twitty and Wynette and love the last two centerfolds. Reviews on Brooks and Stewart receive high marks, those on Bogguss, Bellamys and Texas Tornados are booed. "Whatever Happened to" turns up good questions, plus Reba speaks out.

17 People

The Judds say farewell, and we bid farewell to some Opry greats. K.T. Oslin's got a new video and Patty Loveless a new husband. Harlan Howard celebrates another year, rock 'n' roll celebrates Johnny Cash, Clint Black gets fooled and Delbert McClinton gets a fan club. Plus a CMM update on Merle Kilgore, and more.

by Hazel Smith

28 20 Questions with Don Williams

The Gentle Giant lets Michael in on a few secrets of his success. He must be doing something right—his current album is another winner.

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In the short time he's been in the business, Brooks has had to learn a thing or two about how to handle success. He's a quick study, though, and handles his lessons well. The 1990 CMA Horizon Award winner's teacher is his wife.

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Can't get enough of that Strait boy. A poster of the 1990 CMA Entertainer of the Year—who could resist?

40 Tanya Tucker's Greatest Hit

Years ago, if anyone had asked Tanya Tucker what she'd be up to today, she'd probably have said partying, playing music and having a good time. Who would have guessed she'd be a single mother instead, who takes her daughter on the road and takes child care seriously? She cares about the world around her, too.

by Patrick Carr

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by Rich Kienzle

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Letters

Reba Has the Last Word

I want to thank you for the cover and the feature article that you ran in the November/December issue. I really enjoyed visiting with Bob Allen and the time we spent together. I'm sorry he didn't feel the same.

Reba McEntire



Loyal Reba Fan

Reba, hon, you have the right to sing anything you want to, anyway you want to. We country fans are nothing if not loyal. We'll still buy your concert tickets as long as you leave in a medley of the old stuff, and we'll still buy your albums hoping there will be one cut with something sounding like Narvel on steel, or a little something that sounds like a fiddle. I just wish you sounded like you believe in the new stuff, and you enjoy doing it like you did the traditional country. But, whatever the reasons for growing and moving forward, we aren't going anywhere. We'll be right here waiting for you, hoping for an occasional swing in our direction. Just don't stay away too long. We miss you.

Sue Barnhart
Ceres, California

Applaud Reba Feature

No doubt, you will receive many angry letters concerning Bob Allen's article on Reba McEntire, in the November/December issue. Well, this isn't one of them! I applaud Mr. Allen for having the courage to criticize Reba for her attitude towards country music. She has certainly forgotten where she came from, and I believe it is high time someone reminded her of how she is treating her fans.

Having seen her live show twice, I have to agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Allen's comments about the glitzy, packaged, "Vegas-style" show she does. I would have preferred a show that gave less emphasis to the fancy production numbers and more to her early hit records (which she simply strings together in a short medley).

Susan Casey
Des Plaines, Illinois



Reba—The Real Country Singer

I really liked the article on Reba McEntire in the November/December issue of *Country Music Magazine*. The only negative thing I have to say about it is that it focused on how Reba is changing her style. Why don't you take the time to notice it doesn't matter what type of songs Reba sings. Her voice is still as lovely and powerful as before. All she is doing is expanding her talent. She will always be the "real country" singer.

I'd love to see more on Reba in your magazine. I've had the pleasure of meeting her four times, and she is the nicest person on earth!

Rachel Rye
Fairmount, Indiana

Support for Reba

Your November/December article about Reba McEntire was unsettling. I wonder how many other people out there are as closed to change as Mr. Allen seems to be. After I read the article, I did two things: I pulled out my old LP, *My Kind of Country*, and listened to it for the first time in a while. Then, I put on my new *Rumor Has It* CD, and listened to it again. Granted, the music has changed, and yes, gasp, she has forsaken the steel guitar for the synthesizer. But, that's not the point. The one thing that has remained constant throughout 17 albums and over a period of 15 plus years, is her ability to touch a person's heart with the song she brings to life—whatever that song may be.

I applaud Reba for exploring every possible facet of her career. I applaud her for living her own life, regardless of the countless opinions tossed at her.

Michelle Miller
Las Cruces, New Mexico

Freaked over Reba and Conway

I've just received my November/December issue of *Country Music Magazine* and I freaked! You have featured both of my favorite country music singers—Reba McEntire and Conway Twitty!

I finally got to see Reba in concert and it was fantastic. When she started singing "Rumor Has It," I got goose bumps! The lady sure can sing. She is wonderful.

I grew up listening to Conway's music. I'm 35 years old, and still listening to him. I hope to be listening to him when I'm 96 years old! He may be 56 years old, but he can still sing to me anytime he wants! I remember hearing a quote from him, saying he "knows what a woman wants to hear." And you know what? He's right!

Keep it coming, Reba and Conway!

Bonnie Menard
Abbeville, Louisiana

Mixed Messages from Shelton

I was very disappointed in the interview with Ricky Van Shelton in the September/October issue. He seems to be getting his story lines mixed up from what other interviews have revealed about him and his family. He used to have a lot of praise for his wife and now doesn't even know what is going on in her life. I know he has said, "I'm not a very interesting person," and this article sure proved that statement. He can still sing a beautiful song—even though he doesn't know who wrote it!

Millie White
Frankford, Delaware

Took a Hatchet to Ricky

I think the article on Ricky Van Shelton in the September/October issue revealed more about Patrick Carr than about Ricky. What a hatchet job! It seems surrounding oneself with competent agents is a crime, and looking good is not to be desired. Also, the comment about picking old songs, frankly I prefer his wonderful renditions of my favorites—I wish more songs were done this way. Ricky can't be doing so bad with all the records sold and awards won. His voice is the

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best in the business. At least Mr. Carr recognizes talent. The interview seems to reveal that Mr. Carr's techniques were lacking or maybe Ricky didn't like him either.

H. Worgan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Sexy Twitty

Sex symbol? You bet! I will never get through saying thank you for the wonderful article on Conway Twitty in your November/December issue. He is my all-time favorite, and has been ever since I bought his first record, 30 years ago. He is as sexy now as he was back then. He grows better with age.

Conway is the reason I subscribed to *Country Music Magazine* back in 1984—you ran a cover story on him. Now I would love to see him in the centerfold, if my heart could stand it!

Carolyn Campbell
Abbeville, South Carolina

Magical Tammy Wynette

I was pleasantly surprised to find an article on Tammy Wynette in the September/October issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I am 20 years old and recently saw Tammy's show for the 14th time. Needless to say, it was a spectacular and heartfelt experience. Tammy's roadshow is twice as good as the majority of those nominated for Entertainer of the Year.

Tammy's new album, *Heart Over Mind*, is absolutely wonderful. I would like to say to all the DJ's, this album deserves airplay on your stations. Give your listeners the chance to experience its magic.

Elizabeth Nanna
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

For more on Tammy's new album, see *Record Reviews* in this issue.—Ed.

Jackson Centerfold Sells

Thanks so much for the poster of Alan Jackson in your September/October issue. He's terrific and so handsome! I was in a bookstore looking at a 1991 calendar, and when I turned to look at the magazines, I saw *Country Music* with Alan's name and picture on the cover. I bought the magazine immediately, read the whole thing, and then took out Alan's centerfold and hung it on my wall. It looks great! Thanks again. I've been waiting for something on Alan.

Karen Baita
Antigo, Wisconsin

Pleased with Black Centerfold

As a new subscriber, I was very pleased to receive my first issue with my little guy, Clint Black, as the centerfold. Now, how about a cover story?

I've seen Clint twice in concert, and I am getting ready to travel to South Carolina for my third show. Clint is not only a great singer and songwriter, but he is

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Russell D. Barnard

Vice President/Managing Editor
Rochelle Friedman

Editors-at-large
**Michael Bane, Patrick Carr
Bob Allen**

Art Director
Katheryn Gray

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Contributing Editors
**Peter Guralnick, Leonard Kamsler,
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Merchandising Manager
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Administrative Assistants
Rebecca Graviano, Bari Reiner

Editorial, Executive and Advertising Offices

329 Riverside Avenue,
Westport, Connecticut 06880.
Telephone (203) 222-5800.

Advertising Offices

West Coast, Leonard Mendelson,
P.O. Box 5489,
Santa Monica, California 90405.
Telephone (313) 207-4948

Ohio/Michigan, Pete Kelly,
Peter Kelly Associates,
725 South Adams Road,
Birmingham, Michigan 48011.
Telephone (313) 642-1228.

New York

342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118,
New York, New York 10173.
Telephone (212) 503-0770.

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also an extremely nice person, as well as his other band members.

Hey, Clint—you wear your jeans well!
Cheryl Bigham
Lincroft, New Jersey

Stay tuned!—Ed.

Centerfold is Double Treat

Thank you for having both my favorite guys as your centerfolds in *Country Music Magazine*—first, Alan Jackson in the September/October issue, and then Clint Black in the November/December issue. I had the pleasure of seeing the two of them in concert. I even had the pleasure of meeting Alan after the show. They are truly talented men!

Tammy Augustine
Youngstown, Ohio

The centerfold was one of our most popular features years ago. Now it is again. We're delighted.—Ed.



Peggy Scheerer, Ruth Houser, Betty Scheerer, Roy Orbison and Sheila Hansen in 1985.

Roy Orbison Review

I would like to commend *Country Music Magazine* on its supportive coverage of Roy Orbison's career over the years. Some of the best articles about Roy come from your magazine, making you my favorite, and me a subscriber since 1978.

I really must comment on the book *Dark Star*, a Roy Orbison biography written by Ellis Amburn and reviewed in *Essential Collector* in the September/October issue. To quote a sentence in the review, "He (Amburn) makes factual error upon factual error and comes to numerous incorrect conclusions." To quote one of Roy's song titles, "You Got It!"

In 1977, at age 14, I became a fan of Roy's. From 1982-1986 I was his fan club president. When I moved to Nashville in 1983, I fell on hard times, and the Orbisons came to the rescue, inviting me to stay with them twice. I was close enough to know what went on behind the scenes. I cherish the memories!

Sheila Hansen
Nashville, Tennessee
Sheila provided the following address for Roy Orbison fans: *In Dreams: Roy Orbison Newsletter*, Burt Kaufman, Editor, 484 Lake Park Avenue, #80, Oakland, CA 94612.—Ed.

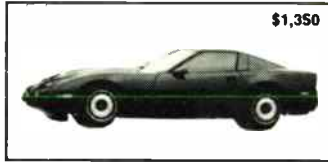


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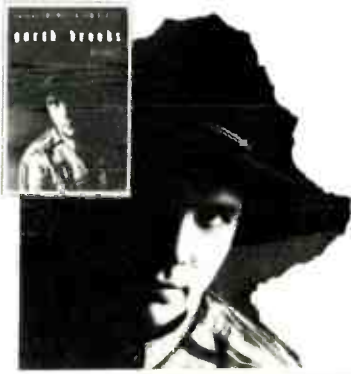


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Hello, Bobby Helms?

Could you please tell me what has happened to Bobby Helms? I used to love to hear him sing. I saw him on TNN over a year ago, and he was wearing a black patch over one eye. He sang "My Special Angel," which has been one of my all-time favorite songs since I was a senior in high school.

Ann Reeves
Wapiti, Wyoming

Helm fans, what news?—Ed.



That lucky Charlotte Loesch and Margaret Mikeska meet Clint Black.

Radio Winner Meets Black

My friend, Charlotte Loesch, was the winner of a national contest which provided the two of us a memorable trip to Tampa, Florida, and a personal meeting with Clint Black. *The Country Today Show*, produced by MJI Broadcasting in New York and broadcast over Houston radio station KIKK, awarded Charlotte airfare, meals, hotel and tickets to Busch Gardens. Charlotte won her trip by sending in 20 postcards with her name and address to MJI Broadcasting in New York. One of her cards was drawn from the thousands they received.

We really had a great time.

Margaret Mikeska
Brenham, Texas



Prize-winner Deena Frankhouser with Randy Travis.

Fan Club Winner Meets Travis

I have been a member of the Randy Travis Fan Club for three years and since age 13 have followed his music (I am now 17 years old).

In April of 1990, I had a chance to get that dream visit with Randy. His fan club set up a contest—whichever sold the most new memberships would win an all-expense-paid trip to Fan Fair in Nashville, \$200 in spending money and breakfast with Randy.

Considering I live in a small country town called Barrville, with a population

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10. I certify that the statements made by the above are correct and complete; Russell D. Barnard, Publisher.

of 92, many people found my confidence hard to believe, especially since this contest included fan club members from all over the world. However, I did sell 62 memberships to my family, friends and teachers. On May 23rd, the fan club president called me and told me I had won! Randy Travis was so nice, and he put me at ease. It was one of the most exciting trips of my life.

Deena Frankhouser
Reedsville, Pennsylvania

Correction on Cash Letter

A portion of a letter I wrote was taken out of context and printed in your November/December issue under the title, Cash Is a Miracle. The statements "Then a miracle occurred" and "The next day Travis was healed" were not written by me. I wrote, "Next day Travis was better. A miracle or a little boy's deep love for and faith in his idol?" I feel what you printed could cause problems.

I hope you will print the picture I sent with the letter. In it, Heather and Travis McDowell proudly presented their new baby sister, Ashley, with part of their Cash collection. The shirt in the background was given to Travis after the concert he attended. It is Johnny's own shirt, not a t-shirt as printed.

In keeping with your policy of correcting any errors, I feel printing this explanation will make mine the type of letter it was meant to be.

Simone Nugent
West Camp, New York

We apologize for the errors that occurred. We reserve the right to edit letters, but it is never our intention to change the writer's meaning. Thanks for setting the record straight.—Ed.



Heather, Ashley and Travis McDowell with a portion of their Cash collection. They are young fans but good fans.

No Beef for k.d. lang

I'm writing about the Canadian singer, k.d. lang. What gives her the right to come into the U.S. when she isn't a citizen and run a "meat stinks" campaign? It is her choice to be a vegetarian, but I happen to be a beef producer, and I do not agree with what she is doing. I would remind her that singers come and go, but American hamburger will always stay! k.d., next time you make a commercial, make sure it's a beef cow and not a dairy! Meat is the only food with all the amino acids essential to health.

Dawn Schindele
McCleary, Washington



Air Force members and one of their machines—a C-130 transport—in Saudi Arabia—standing are Greg Johnson, Gerald Williams, John Bennet, Vic Schandler, Randy Nelson and Paul Scrudder; kneeling Keith Henry, Greg Bailey, Nancy Fairbanks, Kevin Pace, James "Buddah" Brannan holding Country Music and Herb Romero. Brannan says he's "the good-looking one"! Servicepeople, we salute you. Leonard Mendelson, the President salutes you!

Air Force Responds to Mendelson

Hello! I've been a pen pal with *Country Music Magazine's* Associate Publisher, Leonard Mendelson. Leonard recently wrote and said he was going on a vacation. Sure must be nice! I'm going to have to contact my travel agent because I'm sure he sent me to the wrong place! Ha! Ha!

We are all active duty Air Force members and were stationed at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. We all miss Arkansas and families very much, and we're ready to go home (can't wait to hear some good ole country music). However, we do know what we're doing is very important, so we'll be able to handle the situation. We are also very proud of the American people for supporting us. You would not believe the amount of mail that comes in addressed to "Any Service Member." We even have our tent walls decorated in crayon drawings from a grade school.

Take care and we wish your magazine continued success. Best wishes to the staff members of *Country Music Magazine*, and thanks for the July/August issue—everyone here has enjoyed it. A special thanks to Leonard Mendelson for his kind and thoughtful letters.

James A. Brannan
Second Mobile Aerial Port Squadron

In Defense of Merle Haggard

I'm writing in response to the letter about Merle Haggard in your September/October issue titled, "His Own Worst Enemy." I've been to 36 Merle Haggard concerts in the past five years. Merle gives personally to his audience and individual fans because he writes, plays and sings from the roots of his experiences. I've heard Merle sing

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
November 1, 1990

PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Mendelson:

Many thanks for your thoughtful message following my address to the Joint Session of Congress. I'm pleased to know what you are doing for our service men and women. I am heartened by the number of Americans like you who have initiated such projects. Your letters let our Armed Forces serving in the Persian Gulf know that they have the backing of the American people.

Again, I appreciate all you are doing for those who are defending the cause of freedom in the Persian Gulf and for their families.

Sincerely,

Mr. Leonard Mendelson
Associate Publisher
Country Music Magazine
Post Office Box 5489
Santa Monica, California 90405

outdoors in 110-degree heat for almost two hours. I've heard him tell spontaneous, heart-touching stories about why a song was written or what he thinks about when he sings it. I've learned to love the major country music legends whom Haggard has honored with tribute recordings. What do people want from him—blood? His intuitive sense of what's right for him has created an autobiographical, 26-year-long musical tale, of which we're always enjoying the current chapter!

Gail Larrick
Palo Alto, California

Absorbed by K.T. Oslin

You had to be there! Oh, the glory! After going goofy over K.T. Oslin for two years, I finally saw her in concert in Chicago on August 19th. The feelings? I was shaken, nearly senseless with sensations. She walked out there and gathered us all in her arms and held us lovingly for

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one hour. In all my years, I have never encountered anything like it. I was surrounded by K.T., and the crowd was at one with her as she was with us. We adored her. We screamed, hollered, laughed and cried. When it was all over, we couldn't let go.

If she had beckoned us to follow her, we would have!

Jan Weaver
Chicago, Illinois

Genius Gary Stewart

Bob Allen does it again! His review of Gary Stewart's album, *Battleground*, in the November/December issue is right on target. When Bob started his review with the statement, "Among all the singers who've emerged in country music in the last twenty years, including all those in white hats, there's not one who can touch Gary Stewart," I thought to myself—Amen, brother! I knew Bob recognized the pure genius of Gary's latest album. When Gary recorded his album, *Brand New*, two years ago, I bought it in every format available—including CD, even though I don't have a CD player. But, when I found out Gary was coming out with the *Battleground* record, I got a CD player just for Gary's music.

Lorene Hopkins
Kernersville, North Carolina

Sure About Skip

I just received my November/December issue—I love *Country Music Magazine*. This is the first time I've written but I'm so mad! I had to express my feelings on the Skip Ewing Record Review in the November/December issue. I have this to say to Bob Millard—do you need us Skip fans to buy you a hearing aid? Skip's voice is pure gold and full of emotion. Are you sure you listened or just decided to express a negative opinion? I hope to see some positive articles on Skip in the future. He is a very talented man! I also would love to see more on Billy Joe Royal. Do these two need a cowboy hat to get the coverage they deserve?

Debbi Gaiter
Sanford, North Carolina

Great George Jones

I just received the November/December issue of *Country Music Magazine*, with John Morthland's review of George Jones' album, *You Oughta Be Here With Me*. John missed the point about this great album! I do agree with him on the first single, "Hell Stays Open (All Night Long)"—it was super. But it seems to me Billy Sherrill always messes things up when he puts the second and third single out—he picks the wrong ones.

To me, George's voice is superb. He has not lost his flow or touch at all. Only one other singer had as great a voice, but now he has left us—Marty Robbins. The song, "A Few Old Country Boys," with

Randy Travis was great. It should win duet of the year. I can't wait for George's next album. Hope to see an article on George Jones—and by the way, great magazine.

Raymond Arthur
Grankfort, Indiana

Suzy Bogguss—Sensational

After reading Patrick Carr's review of Suzy Bogguss' *Moment Of Truth* album in the November/December issue, it's obvious he needs to see his audiologist—the wax must be packed in his ears. We think the whole album is great. Good thing he wasn't around when Beethoven wrote his "Fifth" or he probably would have said it had no energy, originality, etc. How could he listen to, "As If I Didn't Know," and not get chills when her voice breaks on the last chorus—sensational! I think Carr has an ax to grind with Bowen, and Bogguss got caught in the middle.

P. Murray
Aurora, Illinois

It's Not All in the Lungs

I think Patrick Carr better have his ears checked or clean them out real good. How can he put down an album like *Moment of Truth*, by Suzy Bogguss, in Record Reviews in the November/December issue? Suzy is a great singer!! Just because there are no loud horns or synthesizers and she doesn't scream her lungs out, it's not good enough for Patrick. This album is good and country.

Pat Price
Everett, Pennsylvania

Pat Price sent a Q-tip for Patrick.—Ed.

One-Sided Review?

Your review of the album, *Texas Tornadoes*, in Record Reviews in the November/December issue is 80% correct and 20% full of crap. Your one-sided opinion of Freddy Fender is nothing less than cruel. We love our Texas Tornadoes. All four of them.

Bobby Joe Sens
San Antonio, Texas

Disagrees on Bellamys

In Record Reviews in the September/October issue, Bob Millard seems to have listened to a different Bellamy Brothers recording of *Reality Check*, because the one I bought is great! I don't leave home without it!

I don't believe most women felt insulted by the song, "If I Said You Had a Beautiful Body Would You Hold It Against Me." Facts are, some women work very hard to have a beautiful body and not just for health reasons.

Glenda Schlicker
Phoenix, Arizona

Send Letters to the Editor to *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Mark your envelope, Attention: Letters.

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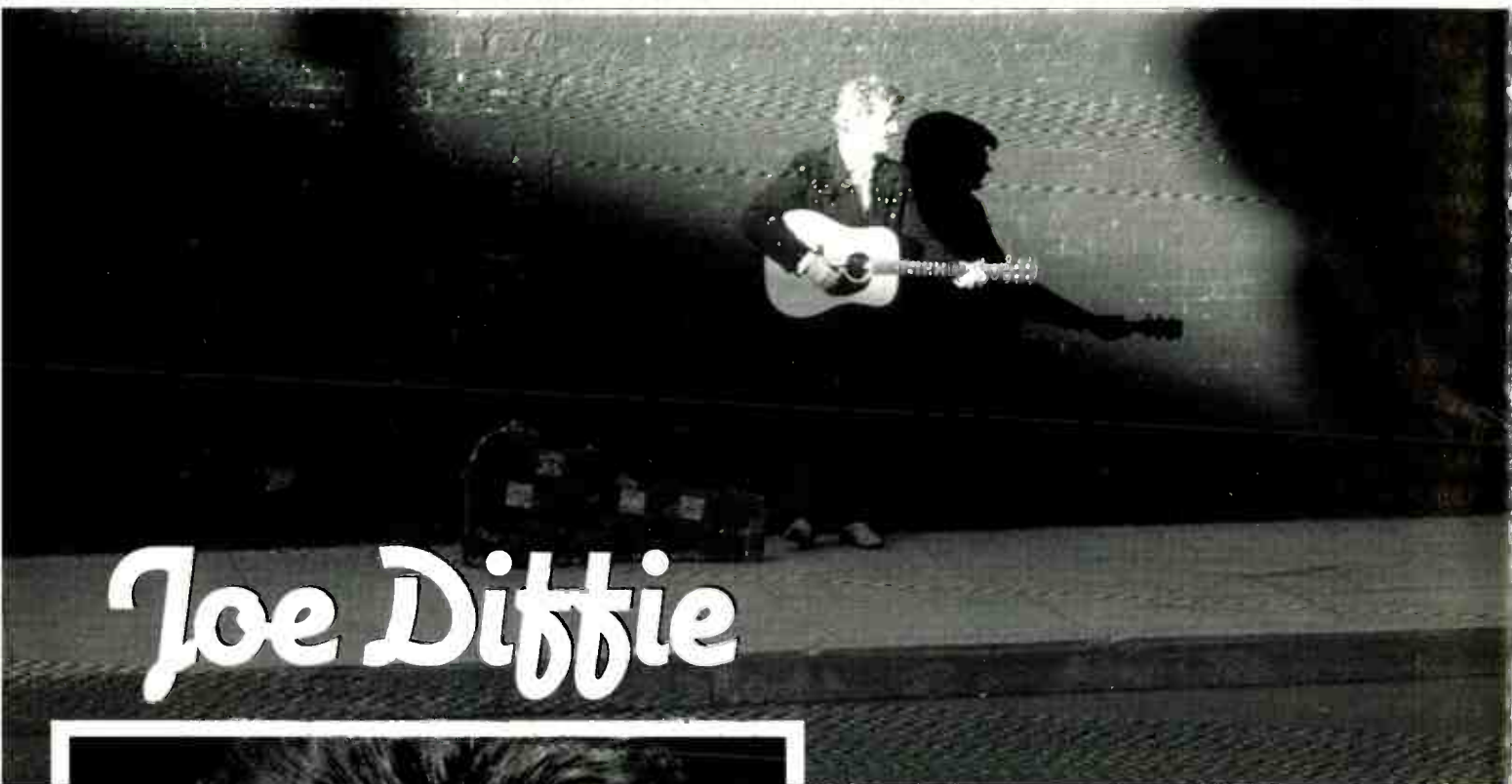
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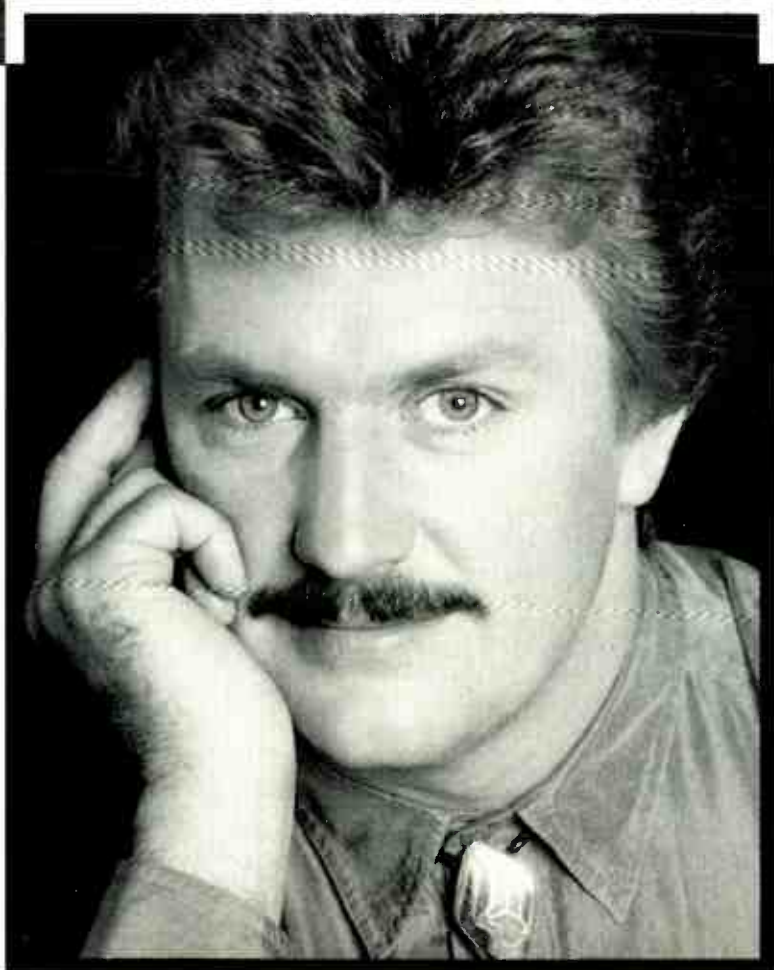
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SAD TO REPORT

With great sorrow, **The Judds** announced that at the end of their 1990-91 concert tour, they will disband. **Naomi Judd** revealed that she plans to retire at the end of that tour. Having been diagnosed with hepatitis ten months ago, the 44-year old Naomi says that her health condition prompted her decision. "I have always told Wy and our fans the only thing that could stop me from this career that I so desperately love would be my health. Unfortunately, that is what has happened. I have prayed the prayer of faith, and my God has heard me. I have many blessings, and with the love of my family, friends, and fans, I will make it. I will miss touring and the daily interplay with our fans." Naomi said she will continue songwriting.

Wynonna announced that she would embark on a solo career at the completion of the tour. Her first solo recording sessions will take place in late 1991 with an anticipated release date sometime in the spring of 1992. "The decision to begin a solo career has all happened so fast because of Mom's health that I have not put a lot of thought into it. My main concern right now is Mom's welfare. However, I have the complete support of my manager, my mother and others around me. I will certainly give it my best shot."

Of course, all of us here at *Country Music Magazine* wish both Judds the best. We will keep you posted with more details as they become available.

In other Judds' news, the rumor around town is that Wynonna will marry **Tony King**, who co-wrote "I've Cried My Last Tear for You" with Chris Waters for Ricky Van Shelton. Word has it that they've been an item for quite some time. Here's hoping much happiness for Wynonna, and, for Tony, lots of success as a songwriter/singer.

D-I-V-O-R-C-E

Connie Smith and hubby **Marshal Haynes** undo their vows after several years of marriage.



BETH GWINN

A heartfelt acceptance speech by the 1990 CMA Duo of the Year.

VEGAS NEWS

Gentle **Don Williams** worked the Vegas Strip for the first time in his career recently. From what I hear, he liked it, too. **Crystal Gayle** filled the bill with him.

MANDRELL HONORED

Superstar **Barbara Mandrell** was named recipient of the Annual Tribute Award at a benefit for the Arthritis Foundation held at the Vanderbilt Plaza Hotel in downtown Nashville recently. Hosted by Mandrell's friend, **Ralph Emery**, the event also boasted a number of honorary chairpersons, including **Roy Acuff, Patrick Duffy, Morgan Fairchild, Gerry House, Gladys Knight, Tommy LaSorda, Brenda Lee, Irby & Mary Mandrell, Irlene & Louise Mandrell, Walter Payton, Minnie Pearl** and Emery. Not a bad bunch, huh? This is a very worthy cause. Some

422,000 people suffer with arthritis in the middle Tennessee area while some 37 million people in the U.S. are afflicted with the dread disease. If you really want to get personal, I take a pill a day to ease pain in my joints, and fortunately it works. There are many less fortunate. Thanks, Barbara and gang, for helping out so many with this benefit.

HERE IN MUSIC CITY

Where the guitars pick, the stars play, the songwriters sing and the has-beens and never-wills complain and blame everyone but themselves, it's Music Row. The place that I call home. It's so wonderful to drive out the alley behind my office and meet three of **The Kentucky HeadHunters** walking out the other alley with their guitars. I said howdy and re-introduced myself. Those guys have the Midas touch as singers and as human beings. The way they look is the way they are. Their hair is long,

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People

their music's hot and their jeans are worn. That's what they are. Like 'em or lump 'em. I don't think they are gonna change. 'Cause the Midas album, *Pickin' on Nashville*, is about to be platinum. The Kentucky HeadHunters are about to be rich, thanks to you. And they are nice enough to be stars. Congratulations go to them for their CMA Awards also.

T.G. HAS NO IOU'S

Playing Las Vegas can be expensive for a hillbilly, especially if the hillbilly in question has a hankering to hit the slots or the tables. Lucky T.G. Sheppard came home with more than he left with. Seems T.G. was lunching at the Desert Inn coffee shop where he was performing. Between the soup and salad, he decided to play a little keno at the table. Won 500 bucks. Finishing dessert and feeling a bit more cocky than lucky, T.G. strolled to the poker machine. Dropped in five two-bits. Lo and behold, the flashing of lights and ringing of bells preceded T.G.'s royal flush. The attendant handed Mr. Sheppard four thousand smackeros. I mean 4,000, as in dollars. Congratulations, T.G.! All that for a dollar and a quarter. And he left Vegas with money in his jeans and a smile on his face.

THANX, STARWOOD

Thanx to the wonderful Starwood venue here in Music City for bringing country acts like George Strait, Hank Williams Jr., The Kentucky HeadHunters, Doug Stone, Reba McEntire, Sawyer Brown, Clint Black, Alabama, K.T. Oslin and others to delight the fans. Across the country there's other venues too numerous to mention. I wish I knew the names of them all. I'd like to say thanks and God bless. You're earning stars in your crown bringing good country music to any town.

THE ROLL IS CALLED

We've lost three Opry stalwarts since my last column. When one person is cut, the entire Opry roster bleeds. It's called love, family and music. The first to go was longtime Opry staff drummer, Harold Weakley, who was stricken with cancer. From every direction, I heard the funeral was the saddest ever. Pallbearers were the Opry staff band: Billy Linneman, Spider Wilson, Leon Rhodes, Ralph Davis, Glen Davis, Joe Edwards, Sonny Burnette, Weldon Myrick, Jimmy Capps and Jerry Whitehurst. There wasn't a dry eye in this crowd as they carried their peer to



Ricky Van Shelton, Reba McEntire and Doug Stone were some of the stars Starwood played host to this year.

rest. All the Opry stagehands, ushers and crew were in attendance. Opry star Billy Walker sang "Where No One Stands Alone," a tune that Harold always sang on the Opry, and Connie Smith sang "Because He Loves" and "How Great Thou Art." Some of the other people who paid their condolences were Opry stars Ray Pillow, Charlie Louvin, Jeannie Seely, Jan Howard, Hank Snow, Johnny Russell, The Whites and Carole Lee Cooper. Grand Ole Opry manager Hal Durham and Opry publicist Jerry Strobel attended, as did Opry announcers Hairl Hensley and Grant Turner and longtime friend, Mae Axton. We send our sympathy.

The second star who passed on was Ben Smathers of Ben Smathers & The Stoney Mountain Cloggers, Opry members for 32 years. Ben's lovely wife, Margaret, two daughters, Candy and Debbie, and two sons, Hal and Mickey, made up the square dance team. The Smathers have a third daughter, Sally, who is not part of the group. The Smathers are friends of mine and have been for a long time. Ben was 62 and had suffered a heart attack about 10 years ago. Like so many, he never followed through with the doctor. After the death of a friend from a heart attack, Ben got scared and went to the doctor. His heart was so bad they just kept him at Vanderbilt Hospital. The following day, after a triple bypass, Ben just

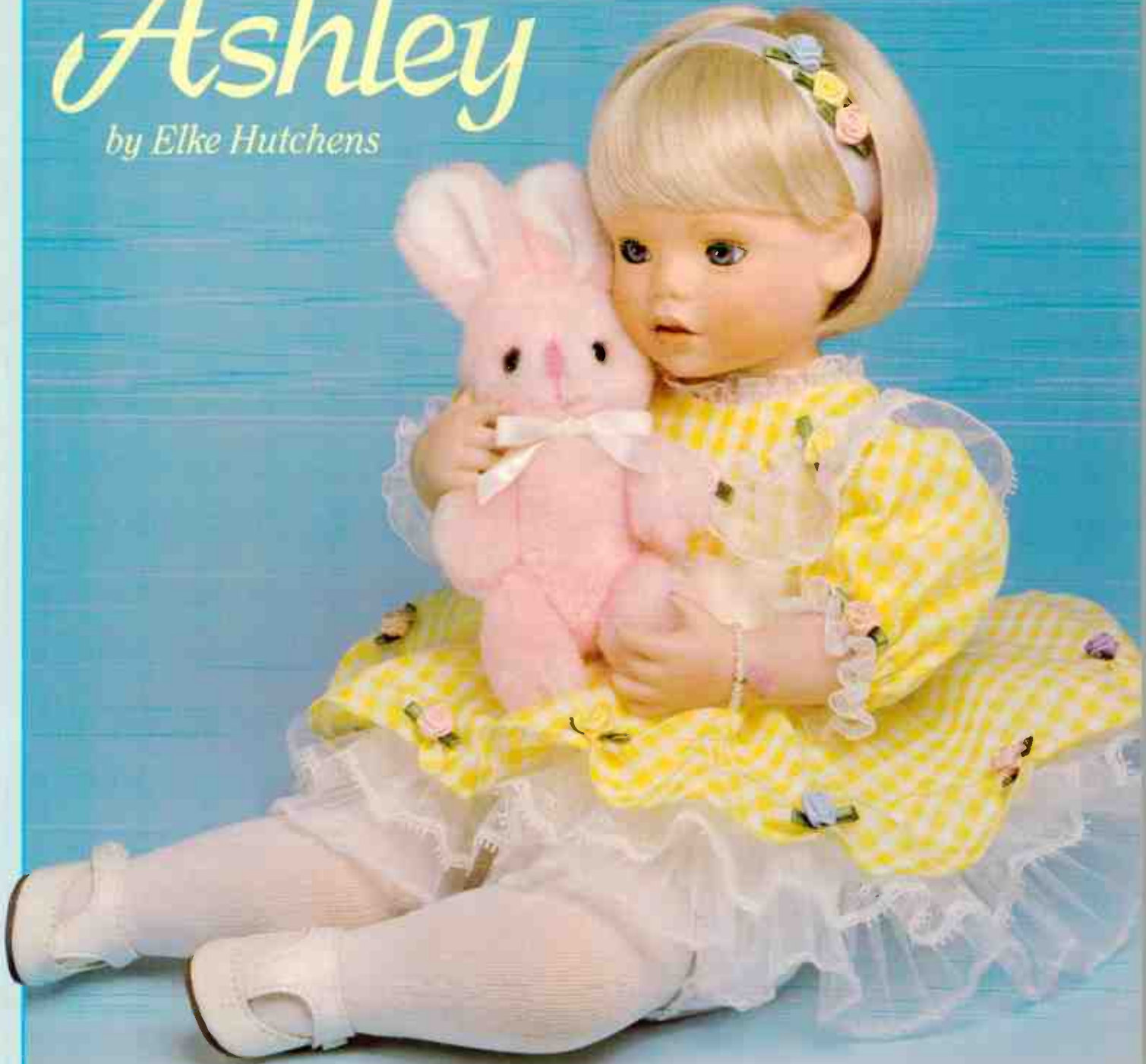
WHO'S INTERVIEWING WHOM?



Lorianne Crook visits with Alyssa Bonagura, daughter of Kathie Baillie and Michael Bonagura of Baillie and The Boys, on the set of *Crook and Chase*. Wonder what behind-the-scenes gossip Alyssa told Lorianne.

Ashley

by Elke Hutchens



Doll shown smaller than actual seated height of approximately 8½ inches tall.

People

never came around. His arteries were so weakened and so was the area around the heart that he just couldn't make it. Ben's good friends, **The Whites**, provided the music at the funeral service, singing his favorite song, "Rank Stranger," also "Whispering Hope" and "Where the Soul Never Dies." Some of the friends who came to pay their last respects to the world's greatest square dancer were **Bill Anderson**, **Rose Lee Maphis**, **Grandpa and Ramona Jones**, **Sam Lovullo**, **Jeannie Seely**, **Connie Smith**, **Roy Acuff** and his band, **Hal Durham**, **Biff and Barbara Collie**, **Irlene Mandrell**, **T. Tommy Cutrer**, **Jean Shepard**, **Mona (Mrs. Jimmy) Dickens**, **Hairl Hensley**, **Melvin Sloan**, **Ray Pillow**, **Skeeter Davis**, **Jerry Strobel**, **Billy Walker**, **Dee Kilpatrick**, **Jan Howard** and Opry band members, **Jimmy Capps**, **Joe Edwards** and **Leon Rhodes**. Friends, every time you cross the Blue Ridge Mountains, slow down and smile for the ashes of a great man were strewn over these beautiful hills. Those of us who knew and loved Ben Smathers will surely think of him every

WATCH FOR DWIGHT



By the time you read this, Dwight Yoakam's first all-new album in two years, *If There Was a Way*, will have hit the stores. Here he is during a break in the recording session with producer/collaborator Pete Anderson.

IT'S KILLING TIME



Even a superstar like Clint Black is bound to get upset when his prized Porsche is towed away. As part of his TV special, *Funny Business*, Charlie Chase of TNN got an actor to pose as a car repossessor and tell Black that the payments were overdue. Clint almost fell for it. He was relieved when Charlie returned the car. The practical joke was part of an hour-long TV show.

time we see the North Carolina border and head down the other side of the mountain. Late some night some trucker or some bus driver will look up at a full moon and see Ben Smathers dancing in time to the music of David on the harp and Lester Flatt on a flattop Martin playing "Old Joe Clark." Yep, they took Ben's ashes home to North Carolina and scattered them on the mountains he so loved. If this doesn't give you a chill, then nothing will. Goodbye, Ben. We will miss you.

The third person to leave us was Lester Wilburn, oldest of The Wilburn Brothers. Lester played bass with the brother act and continued to play with several Opry stars after Doyle died. An avid golfer, Lester was on the golf course when he was stricken. He drove himself to the hospital, but died shortly thereafter. He is survived by his brothers, Teddy and Leslie, a sister, Geraldine, his wife, Linda, and his children. These three men will be greatly missed. When the roll is called, all of us mourn. The consolation is, see you on the other side....

DOUBLE CONGRATULATIONS

Double congratulations are in order to two of my favorite folks, Dean and Keni Dillon, on the birth of twin boys, Kenneth Basfield Dillon and Dean Chance Dillon Jr., weighing in at 6 lbs. 10 oz. and 5 lbs. 13 oz., respectively. Born at

Vanderbilt Hospital, the duo joins their sister, Jessi, to make the Dillon homestead quite different and exciting these days. Thank God bad boy Dean and wild child Keni have grown up to be the most wonderful parents and people you'd ever want to meet. All they need now to make this family perfect is for Dean to have some hit records. The boy is a star. After all, Dean decided that he wanted two sons, placed the order and got two at a time. He just didn't want Keni to have to fool with going through childbirth twice more.

ANOTHER BRANSON NEIGHBOR

Honky tonk favorite, Moe Bandy, has joined the ranks of Roy Clark, Boxcar Willie, Mel Tillis, Freddy Fender and others at Branson, Missouri, with a theater bearing his name. I gotta go out there someday.

CARLTON NOT TOO WELL

Reidsville, North Carolina's Carlton Haney, who produced the very first Bluegrass Festival in Fincastle, Virginia, and was the first promoter to take acts out of the schools and into the coliseums, is not doing too well. Carlton's health is not the best. It would be good if some of the stars he helped then, fifteen or 30 years ago, could send him a card. I know he'd appreciate hearing from anybody. Get his address from me.

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LET'S TALK ABOUT MY HERO

Waylon Jennings, who has never been without an ace up his sleeve, is playing with a full deck these days. His Epic album, *The Eagle*, is Top Ten in the national country charts, his first single from the album, "Wrong," made the Top Ten easily, and the second single, "Where Corn Don't Grow," looks even stronger. Waylon, on tour with **The Highwaymen** and on his own also, finds time to make speaking engagements regarding the G.E.D. (General Education Diploma), which is the equivalent of a high school diploma. Most of you recall from reading this column that Waylon finished high school last year through G.E.D. and now encourages others to do the same. See, there's a zillion reasons this man is my hero. Sharing with people who have not finished school is a way of helping others help themselves. Atta boy, W.J. You are the best.

NOW THAT'S A REAL CHESNUTT

It's a country saying, "That's a real chestnut." Since **Mark** came to town, we Nashvillians spell Chesnutt with two t's. It's been love at first song ever since his song, "Too Cold at Home." The video didn't hurt, either. He's not as handsome as **George Strait**, but he is as cute and sexy as they come. He sure sings good, too.

THE QUEEN TOOK HERSELF TO THE PALACE

Queen Hazel Smith (me), out for a night of dining, partying and being entertained, went to the Nashville Palace on Music Valley Drive. **John Hobbs**, owner of the Palace, and his associate, **Carole Harper**, joined me for dinner. Fans, the prime rib was excellent, the entertainment was superb and dining with John and Ms. Harper was more fun than the law should allow. I've told you about John before—he's the man who helped **Randy Travis** and **Lib Hatcher** when they came to town. The Palace is where Randy slung hamburgers and sang on stage. If you want to hear some real-life stories, go to the Palace and talk to John Hobbs. By the way, thanks to John Hobbs and **Carole Harper**, **Russell Barnard** and **Rochelle Friedman** got accommodations at the Ramada Inn on Music Valley Drive during CMA Week, when every room in Music City was sold out. The good Lord has sure blessed me with good friends. I deem our friendship a privilege, Mr. John Hobbs.

CASH ROCKS



Johnny Cash was honored recently at Hollywood's Rock Walk, a five-year-old sidewalk gallery which honors innovators in rock music. Also inducted, posthumously, was **Elvis Presley**. Cash and Presley join previously inducted **Jerry Lee Lewis**. A forthcoming ceremony will pay homage to **Carl Perkins**, the last of **Sun Records' Million Dollar Quartet**. The Rock Walk has honored many other stars throughout the years including **Roy Orbison**, **B.B. King**, **Carole King** and **Stevie Wonder**, to name a few.

ALAN'S GOLD

With nothing between us but the clothes on our bodies, we were eyeball to eyeball, me and **Alan Jackson**. The occasion was the celebration in honor of Alan's debut album going Gold. Titled *Here in the Real World*, the record is on the Arista label, a product of its newly-formed country division. Alan's first single and video, also chart-toppers, were likewise titled "Here in the Real World." Tall, lanky, sexy and handsome, not only does he sing great, he looks about as good as **George Strait**. Girls, eyes on and hands off! Seriously, though, congratulations to Alan, label person **Tim Dubois** and all the other good folks at Arista. And in case anybody's mind fails to recall, it was ASCAP's young **Shelby Kennedy** who brought Jackson to the attention of the Arista folks.

GRASS IS GREENER FOR GREENWOOD

It's all in the song. **Lee Greenwood**'s been hanging out with **Prez George** and **Mrs. Barbara Bush**, been gigging all over the country, signed with Capitol Records, but no hit singles in might'nigh four years, if I'm counting right. Then my pal, **Bill Isaacs**, with Malaco Music, came across a great song, "Holding a Good Hand." Lee recorded it and that sucker chart-topped for him. Lee's album sports the same title. Hope it does as well. Congrats to Lee, Bill and Capitol Records.

EVERLYS STILL DRAWING THEM CROWDS

The third annual **Everly Brothers** Homecoming brought over 20,000 people to Central City, Kentucky, the place the boys call home. Friends who appeared on the one-day bill along with the brothers included **Chet Atkins**, **The Kentucky Headhunters**, **Duane Eddy**, **John Prine**, **Thom Bresh**, **Lane Brody**, **Jonelle Mosser** and **David Schnauffer** on his dynamite dulcimer. Schnauffer opened a bunch of shows during the summer for The Everlys and, I hear, was much praised.

DID I SWEAR?

I was speaking with my friend, **Eppie Thompson**, in Reidsville, North Carolina, who is a huge country music fan. I mean, she and hubby **Aaron** have the original **George Jones/Melba Montgomery** duet album that is a treasure. Well, Eppie allowed as how I did swear in my column. I did not mean it as swearing. And if I did, I am positive that the good Lord understood and knew that I was just frustrated and that in reality I was praying and not swearing.

MY FRIEND, MR. KILGORE

Was talking with my friend, **Merle Kilgore**, the other day. Merle's boss, **Hank Williams Jr.**, was in Africa hunting with his bride. Merle told me that before **Hank Jr.** departed, he conjured up a little ditty to give the Iraqis some thought titled, "Don't Give Us a Reason." Big-hearted **Hank** donated all the proceeds from the tune to the American Red Cross. Lyrics are a simple warning to **Sadam Hussein** not to mess with the USA. Tell 'em, **Hank**, while I tap my foot.

CMM UPDATE: Merle Kilgore

Merle Kilgore still laughs when he tells the story.

"It was April 4th, 1986. We were on Hank's jet, and he was awful quiet that day, and he turned and looked at me, and he says, 'Brother when this plane lands, you will be my manager.' And I said, 'What are you talkin' about?' He said, 'I've decided we're gonna move our operation from Alabama to Tennessee and expand. We don't have any room, there's no sense buying property in Alabama when I got more in Tennessee. We're gonna move to Tennessee, and you're gonna be my personal manager.'"

"I said, 'Wait a minute. Warner Brothers just picked up my option, and I'd like another shot at being a star.' And Hank said, 'Really? Give me your pen and a paper.' He wrote something down and showed it to me, and he said, 'This is what I made last year.' Then he wrote something down and said, 'This is what *you* would have earned.' And I said, 'I don't care if I ever sing again!' April 6, 1986, I was installed as Executive Vice President and Personal Manager of Hank Williams Jr. Enterprises."

Bocephus was no fool. Kilgore, his opening act since 1964, was an artist with business expertise, having spent ten years managing radio stations and launching the Al Gallico Music Publishing house in Nashville in 1962. When Hank severed ties with his former manager, Merle came in cold. "Eighty percent of the employees were the ex-manager's family, and they left without showin' anybody anything," Merle explains. "I had to come in with new employees and figure everything out."

Today Kilgore manages a 32-person road staff (including the band) and a 17-person office staff based at Hank's World Headquarters (formerly Hank's nightclub) in Paris, Tennessee. Headquarters includes business offices, their thriving T-shirt concession and the fan club. The whole thing opened July 4, 1986.

Kilgore's own career began in 1948, in Shreveport, Louisiana, home of the *Louisiana Hayride*. As he tells



1990 CMA Manager of the Year.

it, he "started carrying different artists' guitars, including Hank Williams Sr.'s. Kitty Wells was a housewife just singing occasionally...." When Merle finally became a full-fledged *Hayride* artist, he "roomed with Elvis on the road," he recollects gleefully. Thanks to the prompting of another *Hayride* member-turned-superstar, Webb Pierce, Merle got a contract with Imperial Records. But aside from minor hits, he had only one Top 10 record, "Love Has Made You Beautiful," for Starday in 1960.

The career of Kilgore, the songwriter, is another matter. Among his 334 recorded compositions are "More and More" for Webb Pierce (written at age 18), "Wolverton Mountain" for Claude King, "Johnny Reb" for Johnny Horton and "Ring of Fire" (written with June Carter) for Johnny Cash. Songwriting, he says, is a different game today. "I'm Vice President of the Nashville Songwriters Association," he explains. "Since I've been on the board, I've gotten close to the industry. The new guys are educated. The songwriters I was raised with were pure old country boys who

didn't know how to read a contract but yet wrote hit songs. They didn't have any education.

"As a kid I traveled with Hank Sr. in Shreveport, and he'd read *True Romance* comic books and get a lot of his ideas out of there. He would make notes and say, 'There's a good line,' and write it down. I said, 'How do you write those songs?' He said, 'Boy, you just can't write about love unless your heart's been broken in a million pieces.'"

Over 40 years later, though retired from performing, Merle still tours with—and introduces—Hank Jr. "Audiences want to hear that ol' raspy voice," he explains. When Merle experimented with having Hank appear onstage *without* his introduction, audiences who were accustomed to Kilgore's presence actually became confused.

ABC Monday Night Football, for which Hank wrote the theme, has broadened Hank Jr.'s audience. "There's people joining our fan club that never liked country music," Merle says, amazed. "They'll write and say, 'Tell Hank to have his father record some of his stuff. We really liked that 'Tear in my Beer' that his father wrote,' or 'Why doesn't Hank and his father record one of Hank Jr.'s songs? It seems like they'd be more modern.' We had disc jockeys when 'Tear' first came out who were rock 'n' roll DJs who were hired to take over big country stations. They told our promotion guy, 'You mean Hank's father sings?'" Merle dissolves into laughter.

This past fall Merle became the first-ever recipient of the Country Music Association's new Manager of the Year Award. "It blew me away, I couldn't believe it," he says. As for future plans, Merle says, "When he congratulated me on the award, Hank told me, 'I've been Entertainer of the Year five times, three for ACM and two for CMA, and you are the first Manager of the Year for the CMA. Where we gonna go from here?'"

"And I said, 'We'll think of something.'" —RICH KIENZLE

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by Michael Bane

20 Questions with Don Williams

Don Williams is an unlikely superstar. With his sincere, evocative delivery and his straightforward stage presence, he's created a following that's second to none in country music. He has relentlessly refused to compromise on his brand of music—one critic referred to him as the "Gary Cooper of country music"—and, along the way, he's helped make more than a few songwriters very wealthy. We caught up with Don on his farm outside Nashville, where, in between the early morning chores and the mid-morning chores, he agreed to answer the proverbial 20 Questions.

1

By your own admission, you listen to thousands of songs a year. What is it that really catches your ear?

I don't really know how to answer that. I guess you could say that I'm really open to anything that feels fresh. Something about the song has to strike me as fresh.

2

Let's talk about a couple of songwriters. What comes to mind when I say Bob McDill ("Come Early Morning," "Rake and Ramblin' Man")? The first thing that pops to mind is consistency. He is the most consistent writer I've ever seen. I don't know where he keeps coming up with it all. Bob has a beautiful way of saying things that get inside you without getting tricky or too clichéd. He's introspective. When one of Bob's songs hits me, it hits me hard.

3

Wayland Holyfield ("You're My Best Friend," "Till the Rivers All Run Dry")?

In his own way, as good as McDill. When we were working together, the things that he wrote for me were a good deal like McDill's.

4

How about Jesse Winchester, one of my favorites, who has the cut "Just 'Cause I'm

in Love With You" on the new album?

That song is stated so simply that it feels like the approach writers used some years back. A more basic melody. Real straightforward. It's simple, but what he says just grabs you. It's like he's talking to you personally.

5

Okay, how about that songwriter guy, Don Williams ("The Shelter of Your Eyes," "Down the Road I Go")?

I don't know what to say on that one. The biggest problem I've always had as a writer was trying to judge my own stuff. I'm really harder than I should be on myself. Unless everybody else likes it, unless I have some super reviews from ears I trust, my songs go begging.

6

You haven't been doing much songwriting in a long time.

Oh, there's just so many business things to do. I've been working a lot out on the road lately. It's just hard to sit still and go in a closet and write songs. Writing is a very alone process. I've really not felt like sitting down with just a guitar.

7

You've made use of some of Music City's greatest songwriting talent.

We're lucky to have a lot of good songwriters right now in Nashville. And, really the songwriters are addressing most of what I want to address. When I started in this business, the songwriters weren't addressing the kinds of issues I wanted to address. I was compelled to write. But I don't feel that kind of pressure anymore.

8

You have a reputation for being a songwriter's singer. Well, I feel very responsible to songwriters. If I make any changes, which I have done

numerous times on numerous occasions, I'm always very concerned that what I do is okay with the writers before I do anything with the song. I really wonder what they'll think of my treatment of the song.

9

What do you think when other people record your songs?

I'm interested in seeing the different kind of treatment they're going to give them. I'm really interested in seeing what they're going to do with 'em.

10

I've been around a couple of different types of songwriters. One, like Willie Nelson, seems to pull the songs out of the air, poof, and there it is. I've known other great songwriters who seem like craftsmen, building a song a piece at a time. How about you?

I'm more like Willie. My best songs, the way they come to me, they come so fast, I'm afraid I can't write it down fast enough. I'm afraid it's going to escape me before I get it written.

11

Like magic?

It's a gift. *Bang!* It just comes to you. A voice inside you says, "You better get it down, boy, or it's gone!"

12

You once said that, next to songwriting, working in the studio was the most creative thing in the process of creating a song. How do you work in the studio?

I always go in with more songs than I need. The reason is, I never know how I'm going to feel, and I like to have enough to choose from. You know, go over the list and say, "Hey, this one would be fun after the last tough one." I also lean very heavy on the musicians. I don't have a predetermined, preconceived notion for a song. There are some I have a demo for where

I'm so knocked out by the writer's presentation that I want to stay pretty close to the original, but that's not usually the case. The musicians are the specialists. They're very creative people.

13

You've been with your co-producer, Garth Fundis, a long time.

It's been a long run there. Seventeen years.

14

That long! He's up for retirement.

Believe me, we've been at it a long time. Garth has been with me since *Volume 1*, in 1972. He started out as assistant engineer when I was working with Allen Reynolds, and he very quickly became engineer. We worked on *Volume 1* for a year, off and on.

15

I hadn't realized he was with you that far back.

Yep. It was Garth's idea to put the high part on "Amanda." We were really infatuated with that song, but Allen and I felt there was something else we needed. Stewed over it, you know. Kept searching. Then one day we came in, and Garth was there. He said we might laugh, but what about a high part, and he sang along with the tape. We said, "Whoa, get in there and record it, boy!"

16

What are the other benefits of working with one producer that long?

Well, I think it's one of the things that's made us last as long as we have. He's not a producer. It's a co-production effort. If it was a normal producer-artist arrangement, with him calling all the shots and going through all the changes people go through, we'd have had a parting of the ways a long time ago. As it is, we have to seek a level every time we go into the studio. Garth brings things to the project that would never have been there without him.

17

And that helps keep your music fresh.

Yes. There's a big mutual respect thing there. We get in there and try really hard. We don't play a bunch of mind games or ego stuff. Our total interest is the project—make the best of what we're working on at the time. And our musicians are the same way. If it's necessary to make a better record, they're willing to totally back off and not even be on the track.

18

You have one of the most incredible audiences in popular music. They believe in Don Williams. It must be an incredible feeling.

It's tremendous. It's just a shame it takes so long on the road to have these incredible few minutes with the audience; the hours it takes to have those few minutes on stage....

19

I love "Jamaica Farewell," the old Harry Belafonte song you included on the new album.

You know, that song has been with me since I was a kid. Since it was a hit, I guess. It's the third song I've brought forward from that time—"Country Boy" and "Ties That Bind" are the other two. They're just songs that, every time I sat down and looked back, those songs surfaced. And a lot of people aren't familiar with them. It would make me feel fantastic if "Jamaica Farewell" led people back to Harry Belafonte.

20

The last thing your publicist told me was, "For heaven's sake, Michael, don't ask him any stupid questions like what his favorite color is. He hates that." As the guy said in the *Dirty Harry* movie, "I gots to know...." *Laughs.* I don't know, Michael. I guess I would have to say blue.



by Bob Millard

It has been an incredible year-and-a-half for Garth Brooks. Behind it all is a love story, which we'll get to in a minute, but first comes his amazing 18-month vault from being *Garth Who?* to being the guy who topped the 1990 Country Music Association Awards nominations by making the finals in five different categories: more than any other individual artist or group this year. As you probably know, he wound up winning two—the prestigious Horizon Award and the Music Video of the Year award for “The Dance.”

Because the CMA Awards Show director began to sense a time pinch near the end of the first hour, Garth was awarded the Video of the Year award for “The Dance” with no build-up and no opportunity to make an acceptance speech. You may recall that the camera barely had time to find him and wife Sandy in the crowd, to share the winner's glance he gave her in his nano-second of glory. It may have looked like he was telling her, “It's okay, honey, I didn't need to go up there anyway.” But, actually, he was saying, “Alright, that's the one I wanted.” The music video was his baby. He had forced about half a dozen re-edits and taken personal responsibility for it...cost over-runs and all.

“I had really gone there for the video award,” Brooks explains a few weeks later. “Once I got that, I said, ‘Just relax.’ The HeadHunters were doing so well that night I never dreamed I would beat them.” But he did. When he copped the Horizon Award, Brooks dragged Sandy to the podium with him. His first words on stage were, “I'm not much good at it, but when I don't sing, I try and be a husband. This is my wife, Sandy.”

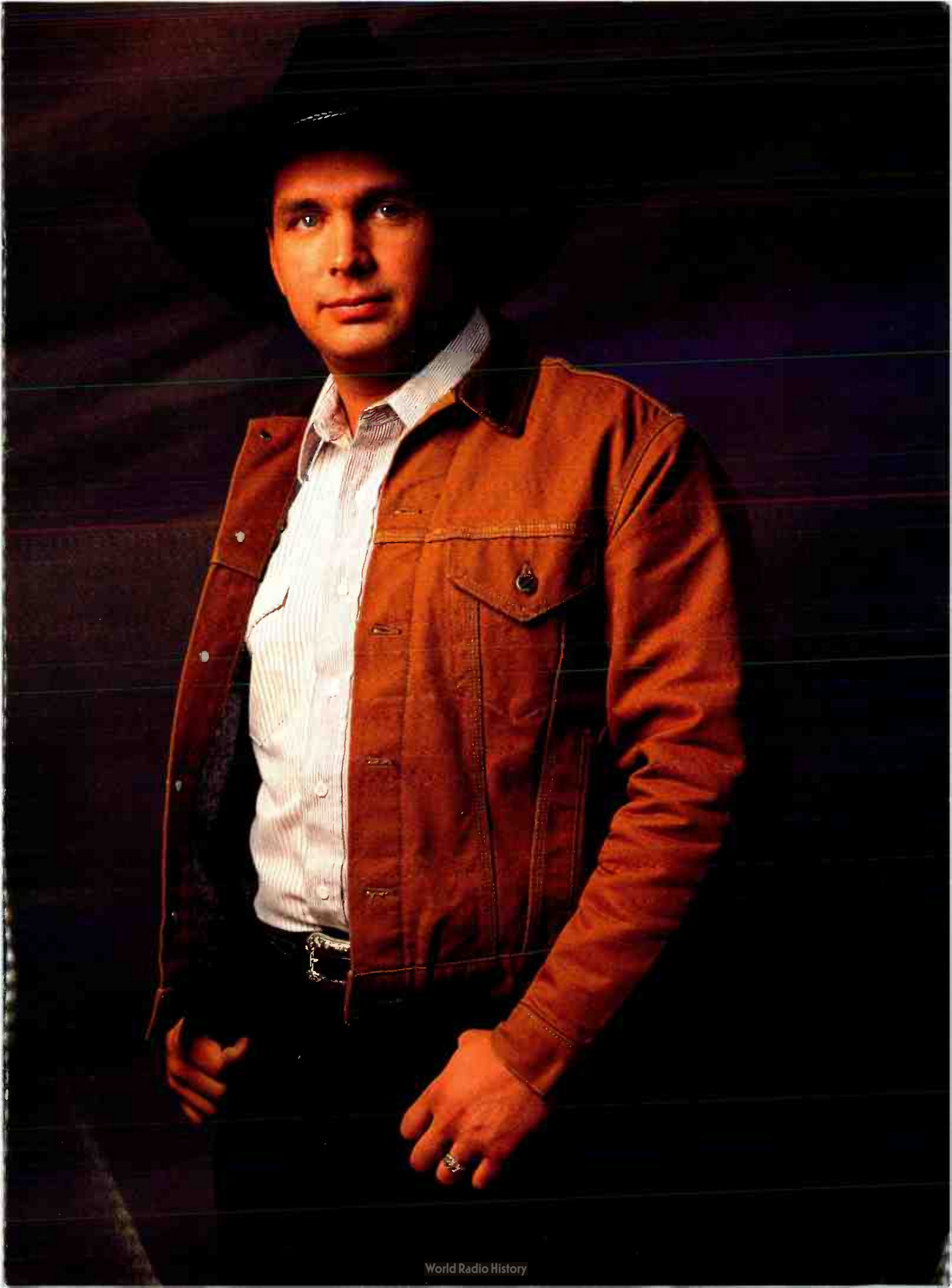
As Brooks puts it later, “We'd been holding hands all night, and to tell you the truth, it seemed more unnatural to leave her than to take her with me. She was very excited.” As things turned out, it's a good thing he had Sandy up there to coach him. Brooks blanked out once he got the trophy in his hands, just as he had days earlier when he was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry.

“Only two times in my life have I ever stood before a microphone and not had anything to say—and they both happened to me in the same week,” he laughs. At the CMA Awards he did, however, recover enough to thank all the appropriate people, including “the good Lord because he's done a hell of a lot for me.”

Garth Brooks

Learns the Ropes

The Country Music Association's 1990 Horizon Award winner has learned a thing or two in his short career—and not only about the music business. With success has come new awareness and a growing respect for his wife.



As for the awards themselves, Brooks is quite clear about their place in his life. "I've got a closet in the guest bedroom," he confesses. "That's where I put them all. I want to get up in the morning and have the score be zero-to-zero. I really don't want to lose the hunger and the scaredness of possibly losing everything. The most priceless thing I could lose would be the chance to sing. It's a wonderful way to make a living. So I gotta remain hungry. I got the rest of my life after I quit singing to look at those things."

Perhaps because of his experience in the past, Brooks knows that success is very tentative. He first came to Nashville in 1985, a talented, ambitious young singer/songwriter mainly influenced by James Taylor and Dan Fogelberg. He made one of the classic mistakes of musical hopefuls, expecting to be discovered, signed and given a large amount of money—all within his two-week vacation period. It didn't take him long to learn differently.

"Yeah, there's nothing like an idiot with confidence," he laughs now. "I was sitting in Merlin Littlefield's office at ASCAP when someone he called 'one of the best songwriters in Nashville' came in, and he needed help paying back a \$500 loan. At that time I was making \$600 a week playing in a club in Stillwater, Oklahoma. That's when reality hit me right between the eyes."

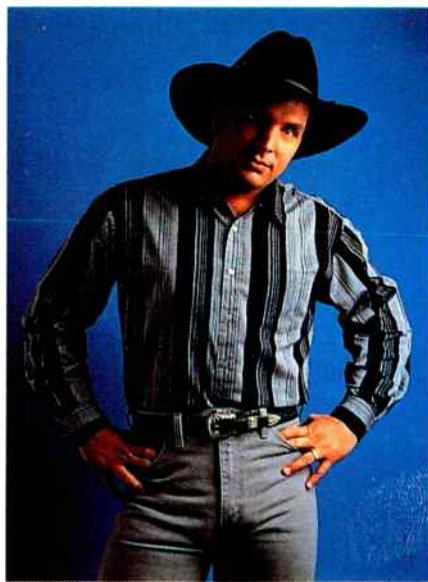
Brooks only stayed in Nashville 23 hours that first trip, but a few years later, after he had married, he decided to come back and commit to 40 years of paying his dues if that was what it took to make it in music. He found managers, signed a contract with Capitol Records and was recording his first album within 10 months.

Interestingly, Garth's mother, Colleen Carroll, was also a Capitol recording artist during a brief period in the late 1950's in Hollywood. She even made regular appearances on Red Foley's *Ozark Mountain Jamboree*. But his father, an ex-marine, called a halt to his wife's dalliance with the music business when her star failed to materialize, moving the family back to Oklahoma. Although both parents tried to dissuade their son from following in her footsteps, Garth inherited his mother's yen to perform. He also inherited his father's intense, Jekyll-and-Hyde personality.

"If I could wrap my dad up in two words, it would be thundering tenderness," Brooks explains. "He's a man with the shortest temper I ever saw, and at the same time he's got the biggest heart. Some of the greatest conflicts are not between two people but between one person and himself. He knows what's right and he doesn't have

any tolerance for what isn't right, but at the same time he is so forgiving...I learned from him that you gotta be thankful for what you got and treat people like you want to be treated. My dad drilled that into my head all my life...we're a lot alike in that way."

When Brooks' debut single, "Much Too Young to Feel This Damn Old," hit the Top 10, Garth stood to become "the country discovery of 1989," but the million-dollar roll-out of Houston singer, Clint Black (who dresses in the same striped shirts and cowboy hat and turns



"Some of the greatest conflicts are not between two people but between one person and himself."

out to be only three days older), shifted attention away from Brooks. Press attention, which Black's rock 'n' roll management company zealously sought, quickly focused on whether overnight success would spoil Black. As Brooks' star continued to rise, albeit slightly slower than Clint's, numerous comparisons were made between the two finds of 1989, as though there were a personal competition going between them. Brooks couldn't avoid it, but he refused to buy into the Brooks vs. Black routine. He knew all too well how tough success was to handle.

"If you want to know the truth, I have all the respect for him in the world," says Brooks. "Unless I'm mistaken, he's a pretty sharp kid—and that's just what he is, too, man. He's just a kid. They're throwing all this in his face, and he's handling it the best that he can."

Brooks might as well have been talking about himself—and here's where the love story begins.

With the success of his first single, Brooks put together a first-rate band and hit the road on a wing and a prayer. Whereas Black had the ZZ Top empire financing his debut, Brooks' management was street-level, growing and reinvesting dollar for dollar, step by step, right along with their artist. In the months to come, while the media was waiting for Clint to stumble over his own ego instead of keeping its eye on Garth, Brooks went crazy. The first blush of success went to his head.

"At first I was on stage and people would bring up drinks, and you'd feel like you ought do something about it, so you'd salute the crowd and nail it," he explains. "As the night would go on, things got looser. I was losing my voice real bad because I was screaming and just kind of going nuts, staying up all night with the guys."

Then there were the various opportunities of the flesh, heady stuff for a guy in his mid-20's, even if he was a happily married man. His young wife, Sandy, had a cool head but—it turns out—little patience with his road antics.

"I was signing a lot of...uh...things," Brooks confesses. "Sandy pointed that out. I took her out with me one night to Abilene, and that night blew the lid off everything. To start off, you sign articles of clothing, but as the night goes on, you are signing articles of people, you know. She sat me down, and even though she's a lot younger than me, she told me something about respect. She said, 'They would respect you more if you didn't do that...because you are married and you have a commitment to someone not to do that.'"

Brooks managed to gain a responsible perspective on his mounting success just as it began to build in earnest. "When we first hit the road, we were wondering if we'd still have any work by Christmastime," Brooks allows. But by Christmas 1989 his second single, "If Tomorrow Never Comes," was entering its second week at the top of *Billboard's* country charts, proving that tomorrow was already there for him. "Not Counting You," his third single, also topped the charts. Things were changing rapidly, and mostly for the better.

From that point on, Brooks not only turned around his behavior in crowds, he also began re-evaluating his attitude toward Sandy. They had met under unusual circumstances at a nightclub where he was working his way through college as a bouncer. She had gotten into a ruckus in the ladies' room, thrown a punch that missed and still had her hand caught in the sheetrock when Brooks came to see what was going on.

From the beginning he approached her in the typical macho way, paying more attention to how she fit into his plans than he did to who she was or what made her tick.

"I threw her out of the club," Brooks recalls. "That's how we met, and I couldn't take my eyes off of her. I asked her to go home with me that first night, and she told me to drop dead."

When Brooks persisted via a more respectful route, calling and asking for a date, he found Sandy responsive. That was the first of many small lessons Sandy offered in what Brooks calls his "process of maturing." It says a lot for Brooks and the sensitivity that drives his music that he continues to want to become more mature in that relationship, for life at the center of the singing star hurricane is hardly the most conducive place to experience "personal growth."

Sandy Brooks is in her mid-20's and has bright, sparkling eyes and a look of cute vulnerability about her as she comes out of the back of the bus Garth and his band share on the road, straightening her cowgirl hat and hitching up her tight blue jeans. It is a rainy night in Lancaster, Texas, 10 miles south of Dallas, where Garth is scheduled to play in a couple of hours at a large dance club called Borrowed Money's Crystal Chandelier. Garth and a couple of bandmembers had just returned from pushing some honky tonk cowboy's truck out of a mud hole behind the club—the cowboy probably never knew his help came from the star of the show he'd come out in the torrential downpour to see. No one had asked Garth to do that—he'd just heard wheels spinning and had gone out to see if he could help.

Anyway, the bus is crowded with band members and a steady stream of staunch fans and strangers brought along by fans to meet Sandy's husband. The place is littered with pizza boxes and soft drink cans. The din of a TV movie and band guys cutting up does not disturb her as she stands in the narrow aisleway silently waiting for Brooks to approve of her outfit. At length, he looks up and beams at her. She blushes, noticing that I have witnessed their one brief, intimate moment of eye contact in the middle of this miniature mad house. The fans file out, and the band goes to check their instruments as Sandy closes the stateroom door demurely, smiling out at Brooks once more. I remember thinking she may be better than this guy deserves—just seconds before he wipes his brow with the sleeve of his "Oklahoma" sweatshirt, exhausted from travel and smiling at strangers, and humbly tells me the same thing.

BETH GWINN



HOWARD JAY ROSENTHAL



Special moments: above, wife Sandy helps Garth accept the CMA's 1990 Horizon Award; center, he and his mother, Colleen Carroll Brooks, donate stage outfits to Bill Ivey of the Country Music Hall of Fame; below, with record producer Jimmy Bowen, his mom and his dad, Raymond.





Playing the Opry was always one of Garth's dreams. He became its 65th member on its 65th birthday during Country Music Month last October.

Months later he tells a similar story, crediting his wife for keeping things straight in his head, which he admits still has a tendency to swell. It is reliably reported in Nashville, for example, that he caused one of his music videos to be re-edited at least six times, overriding budgetary considerations and the fact that everybody else in his camp was satisfied with the first effort, because of his demanding perfectionism. Be that as it may, Sandy's influence is apparently being felt by Brooks even when she's not around.

"She's been the difference," he says. "I'll be honest with you, with it being the first time and the competition and all, I was going real wild. I'd have lasted maybe another year, year-and-a-half at the rate I was going, but she sat me down and just said I needed to settle down—with or without her—because she wasn't going to sit around and watch me kill myself. So there's been a big change in me. I don't know if

anybody sees it but me and her, but I'm happy to be me now."

As he has grown into the responsibilities of his new life as a star, his appreciation of his wife has increased. Despite the remarkable emotional openness of his ballads—he started writing "If Tomorrow Never Comes" while watching his wife sleep one night—it has been difficult for him to express that appreciation appropriately, raised in a household where his dad called all the shots and had all the last words.

What Brooks calls his "process of maturing" in his relationship with the young wife who saved his life and career took an interesting turn one night this summer as he chanced to catch Sandy on The Nashville Network. "Now I was on the outside looking in, and it was a whole different perspective," he explains, at pains to find the right words for what had obviously been a moment of emotion and revelation. "It had always been difficult for me to be

both a singer and a husband, because I always thought they both demanded so much attention and that they were different things. So I just sat there and watched her talk. It wasn't so much what she said, but how she said it. I just watched her mouth move, and for once I was where I couldn't interrupt her and talk over her. I realized that this is not just Garth Brooks' wife, this is an individual human being. It gave me a whole new respect for her."

Success has given the music industry a whole new respect for Garth Brooks, too. He was recently inducted into the Grand Ole Opry, the realization of a lifelong ambition. The induction took place during the Opry's week-long 65th birthday celebration in October. That same week Garth donated a signature hat to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum while his mom donated a stage costume of her own.

The popularity of "The Dance" pushed his debut album, *Garth Brooks*, over the 1,000,000-record sales mark last summer. By the time his rollicking sing-along, "Friends in Low Places," came out a few weeks later, it was apparent that you could no longer adequately describe Brooks as "the guy who would have won the Horizon Award if it weren't for Clint Black." Brooks was second to no one.

His second album, *No Fences*, came out in late August and shipped Gold, with advance sales in excess of 500,000 copies, representing the latest chapter in artistic and career growth for Garth. Brooks has found widespread acceptance with the creative expressions that roll out of the inner conflicts experienced by a bright, talented and emotionally complex person like himself. Eighteen months into his remarkable journey to stardom, he is still amazed at how far he has come in such a short time.

"Every day it's a shock," he says. "Capitol said they didn't put any singles out on 'The Dance,' so all the sales on that were albums. You know, for a song to come out and your album isn't even Gold yet, then suddenly you go platinum, it's amazing. I thought that only happened in rock music."

The personal journey he somehow finds time to ponder within his eight-day-a-week career schedule is just as interesting, especially since it seems to fuel his earnest ballads—an important part of the music he creates. Still, he doesn't feel that the tender emotions he expresses in those ballads make him an unusual guy.

"It may not be what most men singers would do, but there's lots of men out there who feel just like I do," he says. "They come up to me after the show and say, 'Yeah'. I ain't alone out there." ■

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

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Have you ordered something from someone on the Collections page and never received your merchandise?

The Postal Service tells us that you can call or write the Postal Inspector *in the city or town you sent your money to*. Explain what happened, and the Inspector will investigate. However, before taking this step, it's important that you have first attempted correspondence with the party in question—in other words, if you've sent someone a check or money order and haven't received merchandise in return, write a follow-up letter to that person. If you still do not receive a response, *then* contact the Postal Inspector.

While we're covering this subject again, there are two ways of avoiding problems. One is to use COD terms—this puts neither seller nor buyer at risk. Another is to use a check as opposed to a money order—you can stop payment on your personal check and it's much easier to trace than a money order.

Turning now to the contents of this issue, we've assembled an interesting set of features covering the United States from coast to coast—while the slant's on the West, with details on the California Country Music Association and its activities, the legendary Cliffie Stone and the death of Los Angeles record label founder Martin Haerle, we also take you east for profiles of two New York area entertainers.

Also, we're happy to report that the Collections page is now reopened! We've gotten through our back-log, returned out-of-date submissions and are ready to accept your letters for Pen Pals, Collecting the Magazine and Information, Please. Send your requests to: *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, CT 06880. Mark your envelope, Attention: Newsletter. **Remember: Include the mailing label from your magazine or your entry will be returned.**

New Artists Spotlight

One of the most popular features in the *Newsletter* is our occasional series on new artists. This time around we focus on two artists who are active in the New York metropolitan area—Luce Amen and Ralph Litwin. Luce is in the process of making a name for herself nationwide.

RALPH LITWIN

From Mendham, New Jersey, comes the multi-instrumentalist, Ralph Litwin. He has twice been awarded 1st Place in the New Jersey Old-Style Banjo Championship, he has his own cable television show in New Jersey, and he recently released his own CD and cassette. Ralph is also a CMSA Charter Member. Ralph thinks he may not be famous enough outside of New Jersey to rate a review of his album in the magazine, but he hoped he'd fit in the Newsletter.

Here in New Jersey, I am the host of a cable program called *Horses Sing None of It*. It's a down home, acoustic music program with plenty of country music. Our guests have included fiddlers, guitarists, banjoists, clog dancers, a champion dobro player, a gospel singer and many others. The show has been on for more than a year, and last September moved from our local cable channel to CTN (New Jersey's statewide cable channel), which goes out to 1.5 million people. The show airs 4:30-5:00 P.M., second and fourth Wednesdays each month.

Ralph Litwin
Mendham, New Jersey



Ralph Litwin



Luce Amen

LUCE AMEN

Luce Amen, who was born in Savannah, Georgia, and spent much of her young life traveling throughout Western Europe as the daughter of a United States Air Force colonel, started her country music career in New York and is beginning to make waves on the national scene. With three albums to her credit already, Luce has seen her following grow tremendously.

Luce Amen's musical career began when her family finally settled in her mother's home town of San Antonio, Texas. There

they formed a band that performed at colleges and nursing homes. This experience led the sixth-generation Texan to major in music at the University of Texas in Austin. After graduation she taught music in the San Antonio public schools. In 1981, Luce packed her things and headed to New York to pursue a career as a full-time performer. That, she says, has been her biggest challenge so far. Her first few years in New York were spent meeting that challenge by playing various styles of music, but her interest in country music continued to grow.

In 1987, the time seemed right to follow her heart and go after a career specifically in country music. Recognition was not long in coming, with 1988 bringing many accolades to the singer/songwriter/guitarist. In that year, Luce was the New York regional winner in the Marlboro Talent Round-up, giving her the privilege of opening for Randy Travis, George Strait, The Judds and Alabama at their Marlboro Concert Tour stop at New York's Madison Square Garden. This, Luce tells us, was the largest crowd she's ever played for—20,000 people—and the opportunity to do so still ranks as one of her biggest honors. That same year she recorded her first album for Straight Ahead Records, titled *We Were Meant to be Lovers*, and garnered a rave review for her live performance from Tanya Tucker, who called her "the future of country music" after coming to see her perform

In This Issue

- California Country Music
- New Artist Spotlight
- Celebrating Cliffie Stone
- Readers Create
- Collections

Readers Create

Sweet Dreams and Imagination

Carolyn Kellogg, of Alfred, New York, a college town along New York State's Southern Tier, sends this thoughtful Patsy Cline tribute.

Country Rain

On evenings of misty rain,
She seems alive again
On late-night radio shows.
Drivers on lonesome highways
Adjust their dials to
Hear her husky voice
Tell of love and wistful longing.

Windshield wipers drone on
With the gentle swish of tires
Against the damp pavement.
Over the southern countryside,
She sings—gutsy and mellow—
For she once knew
These desolate, winding roads.

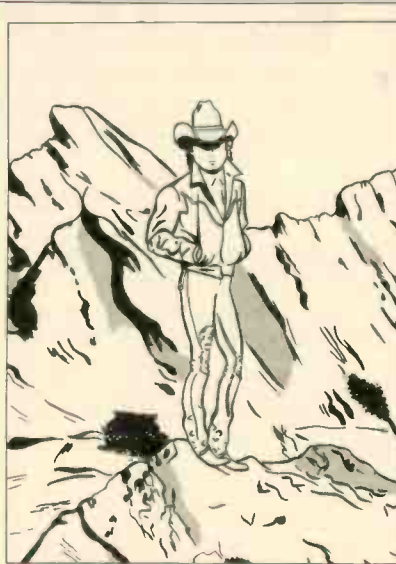
The gray tapestry of daylight
Displays heavy, black clouds;
The songs now a memory.
Mournful showers fall
On the abandoned taverns
Where she used to sing.
Yet Patsy Cline still
Goes walking after midnight.

—Carolyn Kellogg



Remembering Keith Whitley

The cover of Keith Whitley's album, *Don't Close Your Eyes*, inspired this drawing by Randy Money of Forest, Mississippi.



Just Lookin' For a Break

Scott King of Grahm, Kentucky, is hoping to get his own original comic strip into syndication. He is self-employed as a sign painter, he says, "until my big break comes." Scott shows us his talent with this Dwight Yoakam sketch.

A Rose of a Poem

Charles E. Coffee, a member from Portsmouth, Ohio, sends this poem he wrote for his daughter. "I'd love to hear George Jones wrap a melody around it," says Charles.

Tennessee Rose

You're as pure as the water
That flows from a spring on the mountain
You're as fresh as a dewdrop
That clings to a rose in the spring
You're as true as the seashore
That cradles the waves from the ocean
You're my Tennessee Rose—and you're my everything.

You're as bright as the starlight
That glows in the night up in Heaven
You're as sweet as the music
From a bell with a soft, tender ring
You're as soft as a warm wind
As it tenderly blows in the springtime
You're my Tennessee Rose—and you're my everything.

You're as sweet as the angels
Who sing for the Master in Heaven
You're the touch of perfection
That comes from a beautiful dream
You're the part of my heartbeat
That keeps me from falling to pieces
You're my Tennessee Rose—and you're my everything

—Charles E. Coffee

One on One

Relationships, and the hurt they often produce, have always been important themes in country music. Here, three female CMSA members tackle these feelings, each with quite different points of view.

First up, from Tampa, Florida, comes Donna Lee Henry. She tells us, "I originally set out to write some lyrics in support of all the other single mothers out there, sharing the joys as well as the hardships. But I soon realized it's probably more important to appeal to the walk-away fathers. I'd like to think that somebody will hear this and decide that he doesn't want to be just anyone to his child."

Anyone to Her

She smiles at the hand-me-down dress
as if it were brand new.

A single mom's pay doesn't go very far
but we've learned to make do.

'Cause the laughter and smiles, the hugs and the kisses

well, they're still comin' easy.

On television evenings and playground weekends
we make our memories.

But time and time again she forgets your name
and it may be wrong when I tell her,
If it matters enough, she'll remember.

Anyone can be a father

It takes someone special to be a daddy.

Now you're just anyone to her.

The bills pile up and the car breaks down
we just grin and bear it.

You wanted your life no strings attached
is it worth the price you're paying?

I've seen Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy all come and go.

The simple joys of a child's pure love
that you'll never know.

'Cause time and time again she forgets your name

and it may be wrong when I tell her,
If it matters enough, she'll remember.

Anyone can be a father

It takes someone special to be a daddy.

Now you're just anyone to her.

—Donna Lee Henry

Next, Sharon Frye Best of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, looks at the male point of view after *the woman* has walked out. Sharon says that she loves the magazine and tried sharing it with her dad, but he wouldn't give it back!

Hard Times

Hard Times just walked out my door
Said she won't be back no more
I hope God gave her two good feet
It's a long, long walk to Easy Street.

Where she's heading—I don't know
Never would say where she'd go
Just says she don't need me no more
Sure hope she finds what she's looking for.

Baby, baby, won't you come back home?

It don't matter who or what went wrong
As I recall, all the Good Times that we knew
Were all the Hard Times baby I had with you.

We both knew it wouldn't last
But her leaving seemed to happen so damn fast
Gave all I had, I guess she needed more
Seems to me we've been down that road before.

There's just one thing that I need to say
Before I let you turn and walk away
As I recall, all the Good Times that we knew
Were all the Hard Times baby that I had with
you.
—Sharon Frye Best

"Thank you for a very informative and entertaining magazine," says Marianne Baby of Sioux City, Iowa. She sends along this work, making up the third part of our female writers' spotlight.

Dreams

Where did they go?
My dreams of yesterday.
Lost, but not forgotten
Somewhere along the way.
Life's a funny thing
Gains for chances missed.
Can I go back again?
Would I feel like this?
Baby wants his milk
Dinner burns away.
Camouflaging feeling
By living day to day.
Do you ever think of me?
I often think of you.
If this were a perfect world
Our dreams would all come true.
I have never stopped loving
I love you still today.
So many little things
Lost along the way.
You will probably never hear this
We may never meet again.
But in my dreams you're always mine
That's how my story ends. —Marianne Baby

One More From Vern Dailey

In our July/August issue, we featured Vern Dailey's lyrics to "Weeds in the Sandbox (And Rust on the Swing)." Vern, a member in Wills Point, Texas, tells us that he's put a melody to those lyrics, and has a contract on the song with Dove Branch Music-BMI, of Lufkin, Texas. The music was co-written with Karen Wodke of Hutchinson, Kansas. Best of luck, Vern! Here's another of his lyric-writing efforts, this one with a Paul Overstreet-style message.

Happy Hour at Home

Put in my time on that assembly line
Eight hours seems like years
Heaven knows when that old whistle blows
It's music to my ears
The gang can't wait to congregate
Down on Second Avenue
Where they'll unwind at Happy Hour time
Sippin' that bargain brew.

I'll spend my Happy Hour at home with you
'Cause your sweet, warm kiss will bring
happiness

More than that old, cold brew can do
No cheatin', no lyin', no closin' time
No hangover when we're through
Oh honey that's why I've decided that I
Will spend my Happy Hour with you
Spend my Happy Hour at home with you.

Hey, all my buddies know that I won't show
And I'll take a little bit of teasin'
They say I'm hen-pecked, but aw what the heck
They'll know that ain't the reason
I don't need that booze to lose this achin' in my
bones

Everthing I need is waitin' for me
To spend my Happy Hours at home.

—Vern Dailey



Tribute to Hank Williams

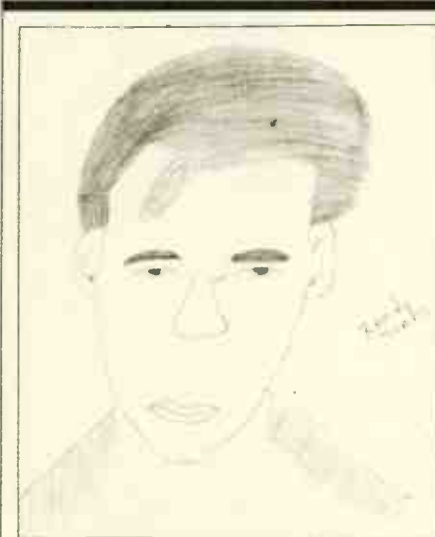
Tim Woolett of Sheperdsville, Kentucky, sends along this drawing of the legendary Hank Williams. Tim is currently serving time in a county jail, but he hopes for a career in commercial art. Of the sketch, he says, "It's not perfect, but I spent a lot of time on it, because it was a special drawing for an important person in my life."

Now For a Change of Pace...

Scott Ivy of Mexia, Texas, has written "People of the Promised Land," which touches on themes similar to those in the Charlie Daniels hit, "Simple Man." Says Scott, "I'm a brand new singer-songwriter, and I sure would love to have one of my songs printed in your magazine."

The People of the Promised Land

Well it's a day and age when fits of rage are as common as the common man.
And folks just watch as other folks drop and they won't even lend a hand.
Well don't you think it's time we put a halt to crime and made the streets safe to walk again.
I'm talkin' pull together not strapping on leather cause wrong fighting wrong won't win.
We've got to stand up proud and say it loud that America's our country.
You know our forefathers fought and with their blood they bought this land so we'd be free.
Yeah we're running out of time if we're to get in line, 'cause the whole thing's getting out of hand.
We've got to come together or it's all bad weather for the people of the promised land.
Well the President's talking environment, and it's about time somebody cared.
We've got to all pitch in if we are to win yeah, we've all got to do our share.
We've got to quit talking greed and the need to succeed and start talking harmony.
Or else there won't be any in the land of plenty except plentiful misery.
—Scott Ivy



Young Reader's Corner

Some of our younger CMSA members have been reading these pages and wanting to try their hand at contributing to the section. We're happy to encourage these budding artists, both 13 years old. Wendy Sumner, of Phil Campbell, Alabama, sent along her sketch of Randy Travis, while Tanya Sonoqui of Tucson, Arizona, gives us Reba McEntire. Keep up the good work, girls!

Collecting the Magazine

Members help each other complete their Country Music Magazine collections.

• Wanted: March/April 1990 issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Will pay newsstand cost plus postage. **Elizabeth S. Fox, 10853 E. Wesley Ave., Aurora, CO 80014.**

• For Sale: *Country Music Magazine*, 1973-81 and 1985-88. *Music City News*, 1964-65 and 1968-70. *Country Song Roundup*, 1967-84. Send SASE for list and prices. **Ron Kluth, 119 E. Howard St., Portage, WI 53901.**

• I need the February 1973 *Country Music Magazine* to complete my collection. Also, I have for sale 25 *Country Music Magazines*, 1980-88 and 85 *Country Song Roundups*, 1965-85. **C.D. Moore, 423 Fayette Park, Lexington, KY 40508.**

Pen Pals

Make new friends by mail.

• Hi! My name is Wendy and I'm 18 years old. I love country music and would like to correspond with other country music lovers. My favorites are Reba McEntire, Tanya Tucker, K.T. Oslin, The Judds, Ricky Van Shelton, Alabama. I will answer all letters. **Wendy Burdorf, Rt. 1, Box 38, Hamburg, MN 55339.**

• Hi, I'm 19 years old and love country music. My favorites include George Strait, Sawyer Brown, Steve Wariner and Clint Black. Would like to hear from anyone who likes country music. **Cindy Bancescu, P.O. Box 98, Glentworth, Sask, Canada S0H 1V0.**

• Hi! I'm a 12-year-old girl who would like to hear from anyone age 12 to 15. I'm a big country fan, also like some rock. My country favorites are Hank Jr., Tanya Tucker, George Jones, Conway Twitty, Keith Whitley, Bobby Bare, Ray Stevens, Jo-El Sonnier and Sawyer Brown. Some of my rock favorites are New Kids On The Block, Debbie Gibson, Cher, Cyndi Lauper and Tiffany. My hobbies are collecting rocks and shells, drawing, playing piano, and writing letters. **Shannon Brooks, 5822 Vore Ridge Rd., Athens, OH 45701.**

• I am a 48-year-old, died-in-the-wool country gal; love George Jones, Merle Haggard, Vern Gosdin, dancing, camping, cooking. Not looking for romance, just friends. **Wanda Hearon, 212 Harding, Cleveland, TX 77327.**

• Hi. My name is Nancy. I'm a 25-year-old, single female. I like all kinds of country music. Some of my favorites are Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam, Hank Williams Jr. and Hank Sr., Travis Tritt, John Schneider, also George Strait and Ricky Van Shelton. My hobbies are hunting, fishing, talking on the C.B. radio and going to country music shows. I would like to hear from single males age 20 to 40. I will answer all letters. Please, send a picture. **Nancy Brown, Star Rt. 2, Box 179, Augusta, WV 26704.**

• Hi! My name is Shannon. I would like to hear from all girls out there age 13 to 19. Please send picture. I am 17 years old. I will answer all letters. **Shannon Campbell, 1210 3rd St. S.W., Cullman, AL 35055.**

• Hi. I'm a 40-year-old, married lady who has been a Bocephus fan forever. I'd love to hear from any of his fans across the

country and especially Alaska, a place I'd love to visit. I also love Elvis and fishing. **Rosanna Hintz, 33721 Lake Rd., Avon Lake, OH 44012.**

• I'm a lonely widow in my sixties. I love C&W music and bluegrass. My favorites are George Jones, Vern Gosdin, the late Keith Whitley and Lorrie Morgan, just to name a few. Would like to hear from other C&W fans. Will answer all letters. Would like a photo. **G. Templeton, P.O. Box 915, Porter, TX 77365.**

• Hi! I would love to hear from a female of any age who likes Sawyer Brown. My name is Samantha. **Samantha J. Arwood, 118 Cox Cr., Greenville, TN 37743.**

• Hi. My name is Brian. I am 32 years old and single. I love country music. I enjoy Reba McEntire, Patty Loveless, Randy Travis, George Strait, Ricky Van Shelton, Alabama, Clint Black and Highway 101. Would like to hear from all female country music fans. Will answer all letters. **Brian Bowden, 2750 Carousel Crescent, Apt. 311, Gloucester, Ontario, Canada, K1T 125**

• God bless y'all! I'm a 43-year-old, blonde female who is married. Would love to hear from anyone. I enjoy many different singers including Marie Osmond and The Forester Sisters. **Milly Hornbraye, 3 British Colonial #6, 164 Whitehall Rd., Amesbury, MA 01913.**

• Hi. My name is Nancy Slebodnik and I am 37 years old. I am divorced. I am a country music fan and a big fan of Ricky Van Shelton. He's my favorite singer. I also like Loretta Lynn, Tammy Wynette, Patsy Cline, Tanya Tucker, Marie Osmond, Janie Fricke, Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam, George Strait, Ronnie McDowell, Johnny Rodriguez and The Oak Ridge Boys. I would love to hear from other country music fans of any age. **Nancy Slebodnik, 308 Ridge Ave. Apt. 2, Washington, PA 15301.**

• My name is Debbie Thornburg. I am 38 years old and love country music. There is no particular singer I like more than another. My hobbies are country music, collecting country tapes, crafts, sewing, walking and meeting new people like pen pals. I would love to hear from any country fan. I will answer all letters. **Debbie Thornburg, 600 West Franklin St., Winchester, IN 47394.**

• I'm a 36-year-old female with one child. I enjoy The Statlers, Clint Black, Michael Martin Murphey, Restless Heart, Highway 101, Steve Earle, Alabama and others. I watch *CMT*. I also like fishing, hiking and camping. Would especially like to hear from people my age with similar interests in Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Northern California. Other states welcome. Single parent, like me, encouraged to write. **P. Johnson, P.O. Box 688, Quincy, CA 95971.**

• If you are a rodeo cowboy or cowgirl I wish to correspond with you. If interested, please write. **Eugene Dedman, P.O. Box 1016, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.**

• My name is Linda Caldwell. I'm a 51-year-old widow who loves country music. Some of my favorites are Ricky Van Shelton, Reba McEntire, Alabama, Vern Gosdin, Clint Black, George Jones, Dolly Parton and Elvis. I have recently moved from Texas to Pennsylvania and would

love to hear from anyone. **Linda Caldwell, 41 Lindenwood Dr., Exton, PA 19341.**

• Howdy! My name is Tammy. I am 16 years old. I love to sing, dance, play and listen to country music. Some of my favorites are George Strait, Kathy Mattea, Randy Travis, Alabama and Clint Black. I would love to hear from anyone between the ages of 15 and 21. Please send pictures! **Tammy Jenkins, 609 Arbor Creek, Desoto, TX 75115.**

• Looking for single men, 20-28, or for female friends, any age, married or single, with or without children. I am a 21-year-old, single mother with a one-year-old daughter. I like Loretta Lynn, Patsy Cline, Marie Osmond, Kenny Rogers, John Schneider, Olivia Newton-John. Also love many other types of music. I enjoy horses, cats, weight-lifting, dancing, and movies. Send descriptive letter, and we'll take it from there. **Stephanie Clark, 181 W. Tompkins, Galesburg, IL 61401.**

• Hi! My name is Marge, I am 55 years old and I love country music and Nashville. I would love to hear from senior citizens from the Nashville area. **Marge Lagsdin, 46 Griggs S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49506.**

• I am a 17-year-old country music fan. Would like to hear from other fans in foreign countries especially Spanish speaking. My favorites are Hank Jr. and Clint Black. Any reply welcome. Will answer all letters. No prisoners please. **Jennifer Gooding, Rt. 1, Box 221, Early Branch, SC 29916.**

• 48-years-young country gal lookin' for penpals, male or female. I love to sing, dance, swim, bike, walks, rainy nights, fireplaces, camping, log-cabins, colonial homes, cats and cardinals. I can cook and bake-up a mean dish. Some of my favorite artists are Ricky Van Shelton, George Strait, Barbara Mandrell, Alabama and Kenny Rogers. I've written and had some songs of mine copyrighted. Please, no inmates or jokers! Will answer all down-to-earth replies only. **Cher Ann Charon, 276 Manchester Rd. #59, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.**

• I would like to hear from anyone wanting to hear from me. I love Dwight Yoakam, Ricky Van Shelton, Randy Travis, Bob Wills and Skeets McDonald, plus Lefty Frizzell. I also play guitar and ride my motorbike in my spare time. Cajun and Tex-Mex are high in my list for enjoyment too. Photo if possible. **Paul Richardson, 451 Chapel Street, South Yarra 3141, Melbourne Victoria, Australia.**

• Would like to correspond with fans of Carl Perkins, Sleepy LaBeef, Dick Curless and Gary Stewart, also Sun Records and all of the rockabilly music. **Edward Leonardo, P.O. Box 5334, Deltona, FL 32728.**

• Hi y'all! I'm a 13-year-old girl and a country/rock music lover. I like all the entertainers of today. Looking for guys and gals my own age to correspond with. Will answer all! Please include photo. **J.C. Taylor, 11151 Sharp Ave., Mission Hills, CA 91345.**

• Hi, I'm a 23-year-old female from Iowa. I am a very avid country music fan and love animals. I would like to hear from males 21-26 (no inmates please). My

favorites are Kenny Rogers, Dolly Parton and George Strait. Waiting to hear from you. **Rhonda Fox, 1 Stewart Rd., Iowa City, IA 52240.**

• Hi, I'm 26 years old and love country music. Some of my favorite stars are Kenny Rogers, The Statler Brothers, Anne Murray and many more. Anyone who likes country music, please write. I'll try to answer all letters. Thank you. **Cindy Anne Kowalczyk, P.O. Box 50003, New Bedford, MA 02745.**

• Hi. My name is Bonnie Kay Stepp. I'm 43 years old. I'm from Ohio. I love country music, especially Patsy Cline, Ricky Van Shelton, Hank Jr. and many more. I do not smoke or drink. I believe in taking care of what you have. I'm a single lady and would like to hear from nice men 35-55. **Bonnie Kay Stepp, Rt. 1, Box 63, Vinton, OH 45686.**

• Hi! I'm JoAnne and I'm 16 years old. I love country music. Looking for a pen pal age 15 to 18. Some of my hobbies are reading, writing, camping and listening to country music. Some of my favorites are Reba McEntire, Lorrie Morgan and especially Crystal Gayle. Will try to answer all who write. **JoAnne Kennedy, 1517 Brook Ct., Ellensburg, WA 98926.**

• Hi, I am a great country music fan. I am a single female, 27 years old. I am looking for lasting relationships or friendship. The age range should be 20 to 37. I like meeting people I write to, getting to know people through letters and talking about my favorite artists. I will answer all. **Molly Thompson, 314 W. Butler St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802**

• Hi there! My name is Christie and I'm 19 years old. I love country music! Some favorites of mine are Alabama, Southern Pacific, Restless Heart and Sawyer Brown. My hobbies include horseback riding, camping, fishing, going to rodeos and concerts. I would like to hear from anyone age 16 to 25. **Christie Ohe, 57 El Monte Way, Napa, CA 94558.**

• I am a 31-year-old, single man who loves country music and would like to correspond with single ladies from Indiana age 21-40. Will answer all letters and would be happy to exchange pictures with all who write. **Dave Lempke, 6157 96th Place, Indianapolis, IN 46250.**

• Hi, my name is Millie. I am a widowed female in my early 60s. I love country music. Some of my favorites are Randy Travis, Ricky Van Shelton and George Strait. I also love all kinds of sports. I would love to hear from guys and gals of all ages who love country music. **Millie Wilbourn, 725 South Division, Sapulpa, OK 74066.**

• Hi! My name is JoAnn Jarvis. I'm 46 years old. I love country music especially Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Porter Wagoner, Loretta Lynn and Kitty Wells. I would like to hear from Southern country guys who are 40-50 years old and love country music. I'll answer all who write. I love writing letters, country fairs, country drives, making new friends and watching TV. Photo not required, but it would be nice. **JoAnn Jarvis, 442 East St. Apt. 434, Grinnell, IA 50112.**

• I am a 29-year-old country music songwriter who would like to write a love song for a Southern lady, age 29-39. We could be a hit! Some of my favorites are Hank



GEORGE STRAIT

COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1991

PULL-OUT
CENTERFOLD
OF THE MONTH

GEORGE STRAIT Hits the Road

Current Events

In 1990, George Strait became the CMA Entertainer of the Year for the second time in a row. His 13th album, *Livin' It Up*, released in 1990, was close to the platinum sales mark at presstime. "Love Without End, Amen," his first single off the album, spent five weeks at Number One. George and The Ace in the Hole Band are currently out on the road.

Hit Song

LOVE WITHOUT END, AMEN
by Aaron G. Barker

I got sent home from school one day
With a shiner on my eye
Fightin' was against the rules
And it didn't matter why
When dad got home I told that story
Just like I'd rehearsed
And then stood there on those
tremblin' knees
And waited for the worst
He said.

Let me tell you a secret
About a father's love
A secret that my daddy said
Was just between us
He said daddies don't just love their
children
Every now and then
It's a love without end, Amen
It's a love without end, Amen.

When I became a father
In the spring of eighty-one
There was no doubt that stubborn boy
Was just like my father's son
And when I thought my patience
Had been tested to the end
I took my daddy's secret
And I passed it on to him
I said.

Let me tell you a secret
About a father's love



A secret that my daddy said
Was just between us
He said daddies don't just love their
children
Every now and then
It's a love without end, Amen
It's a love without end, Amen.

Last night I dreamed I died
And stood outside those pearly gates
When suddenly I realized
There must be some mistake
If they know half the things I've done
They'll never let me in
Then somewhere from the other side
I heard these words again
They said.

Let me tell you a secret
About a father's love
A secret that my daddy said
Was just between us
You see daddies don't just love their
children
Every now and then
It's a love without end, Amen
It's a love without end, Amen.

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Tour Dates

LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

Cajundome, January 18
318-232-7328/On sale December 17

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Coliseum, January 19
601-353-0603/On sale December 17

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

Civic Center, January 25
205-241-2105/Sale date to be announced

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

Hirsch Memorial Coliseum, January 26
318-635-1361/On sale December 17

BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Miss. Coast Coliseum, February 1
601-388-8222/On sale January 7

BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Civic Center, February 2
409-838-3421/On sale January 7

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

Memorial Coliseum, February 3
512-884-8227/On sale January 7

AMARILLO, TEXAS

Civic Center, February 14
806-378-3096/On sale January 7

ABILENE, TEXAS

Taylor County Coliseum, February 15
915-677-4376/On sale January 21

MALLEN, TEXAS

Villa Real, February 16
512-687-6463/Sale date to be announced

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Memorial Auditorium, March 8
803-242-6393/On sale February 11

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Veterans Memorial Coliseum, March 9
904-630-3975/On sale February 11

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

Civic Center, March 14
404-724-2400/On sale February 18

YOU CAN MAKE UP TO

\$9,800 in 24 Hours!

Dear Friend,

I made \$9,800 in 24 hours. You may do better!

My name is John Wright. Not too long ago I was flat broke. I was \$31,000 in debt. The bank repossessed my car because I couldn't keep up with the payments. And one day the landlord gave me an eviction notice because I hadn't paid the rent for three months. So we had to move out. My family and I stayed at my cousin's place for the rest of that month before I could manage to get another apartment. That was very embarrassing.

Things have changed now. I own four homes in Southern California. The one I'm living in now in Beverly Hills is worth more than one million dollars. I own several cars, among them a brand new Mercedes and a brand new Cadillac. Right now, I have a million dollar line of credit with the banks and have certificates of deposit at \$100,000 each in my bank in Beverly Hills.

Best of all, I have time to have fun. To be me. To do what I want. I work about 4 hours a day, the rest of the day, I do things that please me. Some days I go swimming and sailing — shopping. Other days, I play racquetball or tennis. Sometimes, frankly, I just lie out under the sun with a good book. I love to take long vacations. I just got back from a two week vacation from — Maui, Hawaii.

I'm not really trying to impress you with my wealth. All I'm trying to do here is to prove to you that if it wasn't because of that money secret I was lucky enough to find that day, I still would have been poor or may be even bankrupt. It was only through this amazing money secret that I could pull myself out of debt and become wealthy. Who knows what would have happened to my family and me.

Knowing about this secret changed my life completely. It brought me wealth, happiness, and most important of all — peace of mind. This secret will change your life, too! It will give you everything you need and will solve all your money problems. Of course you don't have to take my word for it. You can try it for yourself. To see that you try this secret, I'm willing to give you \$20.00 in cash. (I'm giving my address at the bottom of this page.) I figure, if I spend \$20.00, I get your attention. And you will prove it to yourself this amazing money secret will work for you, too!

Why, you may ask, am I willing to share this secret with you? To make money? Hardly. First, I already have all the money and possessions I'll ever need. Second, my secret does not involve any sort of competition whatsoever. Third, nothing is more satisfying to me than sharing my secret only with those who realize a golden opportunity and get on it quickly.

This secret is incredibly simple. Anyone can use it. You can get started with practically no money at all and the risk is almost zero. You don't need special training or even a high school education. It doesn't matter how young or old you are and it will work for you at home or even while you are on vacation.

Let me tell you more about this fascinating money making secret:

With this secret the money can roll in fast. In some cases you may be able to cash in literally overnight. If you can follow simple instructions you can get started in a single afternoon and it is possible to have spendable money in your hands the very next morning. In fact, this just might be the fastest legal way to make money that has ever been invented!

This is a very safe way to get extra cash. It is practically risk free. It is not a dangerous gamble. Everything you do has already been tested and you can get started for less money than most people spend for a night on the town.

One of the nicest things about this whole idea is that you can do it at home in your spare time. You don't need equipment or an office. It doesn't matter where you live either. You can use this secret to make money if you live in a big city or on a farm or anywhere in between. A husband and wife team from New York used my secret, worked at home in their spare time, and made \$45,000 in one year.

This secret is simple. It would be hard to make a mistake if you tried. You don't need a college degree or even a high school education. All you need is a little common sense and the ability to follow simple, easy, step-by-step instructions. I personally know a man from New England who used this secret and made \$2 million in just 3 years.

You can use this secret to make money no matter how old or how young you may be. There is no physical labor involved and everything is so easy it can be done

Here's what newspapers and magazines are saying about this incredible secret:

The Washington Times:

The Royal Road to Riches is paved with golden tips.

National Examiner:

John Wright has an excellent guide for achieving wealth in your spare time.

Income Opportunities:

The Royal Road to Riches is an invaluable guide for finding success in your own back yard.

News Tribune:

Wright's material is a MUST for anyone who contemplates making it as an independent entrepreneur.

Success!

John Wright believes in success, pure and simple.

Money Making Opportunities:

John Wright has a rare gift for helping people with no experience make lots of money. He's made many people wealthy.

California Political Week:

... The politics of high finance made easy.

The Toluca:

You'll love... *The Royal Road to Riches*. It's filled with valuable information... only wish I'd known about it years ago!

Hollywood Citizen News:

He does more than give general ideas. He gives people a detailed A to Z plan to make big money.

The Desert Sun:

Wright's *Royal Road to Riches* lives up to its title in offering an uncomplicated path to financial success.

whether you're a teenager or 90 years old. I know one woman who is over 65 and is making all the money she needs with this secret.

When you use this secret to make money you never have to try to convince anybody of anything. This has nothing to do with door-to-door selling, telephone solicitation, real estate or anything else that involves personal contact.

Everything about this idea is perfectly legal and honest. You will be proud of what you are doing and you will be providing a very valuable service.

It will only take you two hours to learn how to use this secret. After that everything is almost automatic. After you get started you can probably do everything that is necessary in three hours per week.

PROOF

I know you are skeptical. That simply shows your good business sense. Well, here is proof from people who have put this amazing secret into use and have gotten all the money they ever desired. Their initials have been used in order to protect their privacy, but I have full information and the actual proof of their success in my files.

'More Money Than I Ever Dreamed'

"All I can say — your plan is great! In just 8 weeks, I took in over \$100,000. More money than I ever dreamed of making. At this rate, I honestly believe, I can make over a million dollars per year." A. F., Providence, R.I.

'\$9,800 In 24 Hours!'

"I didn't believe it when you said the secret could produce money the next morning. Boy, was I wrong, and you were right! I purchased your *Royal Road to Riches*. On the basis of your advice, \$9,800 poured in, in less than 24 hours! John, your secret is incredible!" J. K., Laguna Hills, CA

'Made \$15,000 In 2 Months At 22!'

"I was able to earn over \$15,000 with your plan — in just the past two months. As a 22 year old girl, I never thought that I'd ever be able to make as much money, as fast as I've been able to do. I really do wish to thank you, with all of my heart." Ms. E. L., Los Angeles, CA

'Made \$126,000 In 3 Months'

"For years, I passed up all the plans that promised to make me rich. Probably I am lucky I did — but I am even more lucky that I took the time to send for your

material. It changed my whole life. Thanks to you, I made \$126,000 in 3 months." S. W., Plainfield, IN

'Made \$203,000 In 8 Months'

"I never believed those success stories... never believed I would be one of them... using your techniques, in just 8 months, I made over \$203,000... made over \$20,000 more in the last 22 days! Not just well prepared, but simple, easy, fast... John, thank you for your *Royal Road to Riches!*" C. M., Los Angeles, CA

'\$500,000 In Six Months'

"I'm amazed at my success! By using your secret I made \$500,000 in six months. That's more than twenty times what I've made in any single year before! I've never made so much money in such short time with minimum effort. My whole life I was waiting for this amazing miracle! Thank you, John Wright." R. S., Mclean, VA

As you can tell by now I have come across something pretty good. I believe I have discovered the sweetest little money-making secret you could ever imagine. Remember — I guarantee it.

Most of the time, it takes big money to make money. This is an exception. With this secret you can start in your spare time with almost nothing. But of course, you don't have to start small or stay small. You can go as fast and as far as you wish. The size of your profits is totally up to you. I can't guarantee how much you will make with this secret but I can tell you this — so far this amazing money producing secret makes the profits from most other ideas look like peanuts!

Now at last, I've completely explained this remarkable secret in a special money making plan. I call it "The Royal Road to Riches". Some call it a miracle. You'll probably call it "The Secret of Riches". You will learn everything you need to know step-by-step. So you too can put this amazing money making secret to work for you and make all the money you need.

To prove this secret will solve all your money problems, don't send me any money, *instead postdate* your check for a month and a half from today. I guarantee not to deposit it for 45 days. I won't cash your check for 45 days before I know for sure that you are completely satisfied with my material.

\$20.00 FREE!

There is no way you can lose. You either solve all your money problems with this secret (in just 30 days) or you get your money back *plus \$20.00 in cash FREE!*

Do you realize what this means? You can put my simple secret into use. Be able to solve all your money problems. And if for any reason whatsoever you are not 100% satisfied after using the secret for 30 days, you may return my material. And then I will not only return your original UNCASHED CHECK, but I will also send you an *extra \$20.00 cashiers check* just for giving the secret an honest try according to the simple instructions.

I GUARANTEE IT! With my unconditional guarantee, there is absolutely NO RISK ON YOUR PART.

To order, simply write your name and address on a piece of paper. Enclose your postdated check or money order for \$12.95 and send it to:

JOHN WRIGHT
Dept. 164
3340 Ocean Park Blvd.
Suite 3065
Santa Monica, CA 90405

But the supply of my material is limited. So send in your order now while the supply lasts.

If you wish to charge it to your Visa or MasterCard — be sure to include your account number and expiration date. That's all there is to it. I'll send you my material right away by return mail, along with our unconditional guarantee.

SWORN STATEMENT:

"As Mr. John Wright's accountant, I certify that his assets exceed one million dollars."

Mark Davis

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Jr., Charlie Daniels, Kentucky Headhunters and Tanya Tucker. I would also like to hear from other songwriters. I plan on moving to Nashville later this year. I will answer all. **Tim Stroud, Rt. 3, Box 59, Mitchell, IN 47446.**

• Hi! I'm a single, 20-year-old female country music fan. My favorite performers are Sawyer Brown, Ricky Van Shelton, Randy Travis. I would like to hear from guys age 20-30. **Rachel Woodruff, Rt. 8, Box 1266, Waco, TX 76705.**

• Hi, I'm a 36-year-old male who loves country music. My favorites are Don Williams, Alan Jackson, Billy Joe Royal, Reba McEntire, The Nitty Dirt Band, Conway Twitty, The McCarters, Merle Haggard, George Strait, Randy Travis, Charly McClain. Would write to any ladies 25-37. Would appreciate photos of any lady who would like to be my pen pal. **Frank Jones, 4100 Taft Ave. Apt. 3, Graves, TX 77619.**

• Hello, my name is Judy, and I'm like the rest of you folks out there, I like country music. My favorites are Vern Gosdin, Eddie Rabbit, The Judds, Loretta Lynn and others. I'm a young 59 years old and divorced. I live in the country and like art. Fill my mail box. **Judy Miller, P.O. Box 101, Vallonia, IN 47281.**

• Hi! My name is Traci! I'm 14 years old and I love country music! I especially love Randy Travis and Reba McEntire. Some of my other favorites are George Strait, Shenandoah, Garth Brooks and Travis Tritt! I will answer all letters from anyone at any age! **Traci McMillan, 111 N. Hennipin, Ladd, IL 61329.**

• Hi! My name is Bobbie Helton. I'm 23 years old. I love all types of country music and some rock. I mostly listen to The Judds, Randy Travis, Keith Whitley and many more. I would love to hear from anyone, especially guys 20 to 28. (No inmates, please.) Will answer all letters. **Bobbie J. Helton, 626 Orchard St., Elsmere, KY 41018-2033.**

• Hi, My name is Evelyn Trainor. I am 30 years old, married and have a 3-year-old girl. I love country music. Some of my favorites are Ricky Scaggs, Highway 101, Loretta Lynn, Randy Travis and Kitty Wells. I would love to hear from country music fans. **Evelyn Trainor, P.O. Box 271, Georgetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada COA ILO.**

• Hi, I'm a 43-year-old, single male and love country music, especially Emmylou Harris. Would like to hear from other country music fans. Please send photo. **Anthony Burke, P.O. Box 168, Georgetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada COA ILO.**

• Howdy Partner! My name is Candi. I'm 17 years old and looking for tall, hillbilly rockin' guys to share my interests. Ages 17-25. Gals welcome. **Candi Drennen, 1724 N. Jackson St., Waukegan, IL 60085.**

• I am a country gal who would like to hear from nice guys. I am 55 years old and love country music. Please send photo and stats. **Virginia McGill, Rt. 1, Box 149, Huron, TN 38345.**

• I am a married, 39-year-old woman who is an avid fan of George Strait, Charlie Daniels, Clint Black, Randy Travis, The Judds and Anne Murray, plus oldies from the 50's through the 70's. I am inter-

ested in quality correspondence for friendship only with both men and women. Please, though, no incarcerated. **Pam Howell, 435 S.E. 1st Street, Williston, FL 32696.**

• Hi! I am a lonely, 57-year-old, single male who has just discovered the joys of country music and would like to share them with you females out there. Will answer all, picture or not. Favorites are Ricky Van Shelton and Lacy J. Dalton. **Thomas E. Vautter, 236 E. Lawrence, Mishawaka, IN 46545.**

• Hey! I am a 20-year-old redhead from Kentucky who loves country music. I would like to hear from anyone, especially cowboys, and all letters will be answered. My favorites are Hank Williams Jr., George Strait, Waylon Jennings and Randy Travis. **Caroline Cone, 102 Wilkinson Street, Frankfort, KY 40601.**

• Female studying paralegalism. Interests are real estate, bookkeeping, accounting, insurance. Seek correspondence with all country and western professional people. Hobbies include country and western music, porcelain dolls, plants, law books and making new friends. All letters will be answered. **D. Rettenour, P.O. Box 372, Honeybrook, PA 19344.**

• Hi! I am a 27-year-old, single female and have been a country music fan from the age of 16. I don't have any favorite groups, but enjoy listening to Alabama, George Jones, Hank Williams Jr., Don Williams, John Anderson, The Judds and many more. I would like to hear from other country fans. Age doesn't matter. Send picture and I'll send one in return. Will answer all. **God Bless. Dianne Evans, 3610 Dame St., Port Orange, FL 32119.**

• I'm a 21-year-old country boy who loves the music and life of the country. Wish to hear from country girls who also love the country and its simple ways. I love to listen to Clint Black, Garth Brooks, Larry Boone, Chris LeDoux and Lorrie Morgan. My hobbies are 4-wheeling, hunting, horses and hard work. I'm originally from Oregon, but currently I'm in the Marines. I want to meet new people. Send pictures, I'll do the same. **Andy Matovich, MWSS-173 MWSG-37, 3rd MAW FMF PAC, Twentynine Palms, CA 92278.**

• Hi, I'm a 64-year-old widow and a long time lover of country music. My favorites are George Strait, Clint Black and Don Williams. I live in a small town and I like outdoors, fishing, boating, camping and flowers. This country lady would like to hear from single men and ladies of like age. **Virginia Cox, P.O. Box 463, 209 W. Parsons, Manor, TX 78653-0463.**

• Hi! My name is Holly. I am 19 years old. I love country music and a wide variety of other music. I love the great outdoors, camping, water sports, etc. I'm also a fan of muscle cars, Harleys and Cheech & Chong. I'd love to hear from any guys or chicks between the ages of 19-22 who share similar interest. **Holly Martin, 15709 S. Eden Dr., Eden Prairie, MN 55346.**

• I am 39 years old and a country music fan. I also love western music and cowboy stars like Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Tex Ritter and Jimmy Wakely. My favorite

country music stars are Patsy Cline, Ernest Tubb and Red Foley. I am looking for a Red Foley tape with "Peace in the Valley" and Hank Thompson on tape singing "Oklahoma Hills." Interested in anyone who loves country music. **Glenn Blumankourst, 3912 East 10th, Des Moines, IA 50316.**

• Hi! I'm 27 years old and would love to hear from all sincere ladies who love Sawyer Brown, George Strait, and The Judds. Please, no men or prisoners! **Elaine Hendrix, 1041 Brighton, Tucson, AZ 85711.**

• Hi, Strait fans. My name is Sheri Bashan. I'm married, have two children, and I'm 37 years old. As you have guessed, I'm a George Strait fan who also enjoys Ricky Van Shelton, Randy Travis and Patty Loveless. I enjoy family genealogy, and collect cookbooks and recipes. Really enjoy writing letters and making new friends. I'll answer all letters. Write soon. **Sheri Bashan, Rt. 1, Box 223, Tenaha, TX 75974.**

• Howdy! My name is Rob. I love country music, especially the late, great Patsy Cline. I played her brother John in the movie *Sweet Dreams*. Would like to hear from males and females any age. Will answer all. **Robert L. Dasch, 7601 Main Street-Apt. E7, Middletown, VA 22645.**

• Clean cut, 27-year-old, single male who loves country music would like to correspond with single females, age 25-40, who love country music. Hobbies are sports and traveling. My favorites are Dolly Parton and Reba McEntire. Will answer all and, please, send photo. **Mark McFadden, 3229 Agate Dr., Santa Clara, CA 95051-1107.**

• Hi! My name is Jay Houston. I am a female in my 30's who would love to hear from other country music fans, male or female, any age. I would especially like to hear from someone who lives in or around Nashville. My favorites are Hank Williams Jr., Clint Black, Conway Twitty, Loretta Lynn, George Jones, Patty Loveless and a local Nashville artist, Roger Hughes. Also, I would love to find out where I could write Freddy Weller. **Jay Houston, 5535 Georgia St., Camp Le Jeune, NC 28542.**

• Hi! My name is Debbie Truelove! I am an 18-year-old female. I would love to hear from anyone of any age. I like Garth Brooks, George Strait, Clint Black, Reba McEntire and many more. Please write and I will try to respond to everyone. I'll be waiting to hear from all of you country music lovers! **Debbie Truelove, Box 345, Charenton, LA 70523.**

• Hi! I am a 26-year-old, avid country music fan. I'd love to hear from others who enjoy it also. My favorites include T. Graham Brown, Clint Black, K.T. Oslin, Reba McEntire. I'll answer all. **Rina Plourde, R.R. 3 Baisley Rd., Edmundston, NB, Canada E3V 3K5.**

• My name is Karin, I am 38 years old and single. I love country music. My all-time favorites are Conway Twitty, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Clint Black and Patty Loveless. I would like to hear from male country music fans age 38-45. Send pictures if you want to, will answer all. **Karin Kerns, 744 S. Richardson Ave., Columbus, OH 43204.**

• Hi! My name is Richard Apperson. I

am 19 years old and would love to correspond with any fans of the Bailes Brothers of Opry and Louisiana Hayride fame. Will answer all. **Richard Apperson, Rt. 1, Box 498A, Kellem Creek Rd., Sevierville, TN 37862.**

• Country music is such a big part of my life. I am Virginia Belleau, 32 years old. Would love to correspond with other fans to share our interest together. My personal #1 is Ricky Van Shelton along with Billy Joe Royal, K.T. Oslin, Conway and Loretta, to name just a few. I promise to answer all letters. Patiently waiting for your letter. **Virginia Belleau, Rt. 3, Box 156, Church Point, LA 70525.**

• Howdy! My name is Cheryl Koterak. I am 21 years old, and I would love to hear from any country music fans, male or female, any age. Some of my favorites are Randy Travis, The Oaks, Alabama. I also love cowboys. So y'all write. I need some new friends. Send photo please. No inmates. I'll answer all letters and exchange photos. **Cheryl Koterak, 496 Howard St., Buffalo, NY 14206.**

• I'm a single, 29-year-old male and devoted Shelby Lynn fan. I've had the pleasure of meeting Shelby Lynn in person. Would love to hear from single, females, age 26 to 30, from Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee or Alabama, who are fans of Shelby Lynn. Please send photo in first letter. **Benton Kennedy Jr., Rt. 3, Box 424, Angie, LA 70426.**

• Hi, my name is Ralph. I'm 38 years old and need a male pen pal for a friend. I will answer all letters. I'm a country music lover. My favorites are Loretta Lynn, Conway Twitty, Elvis Presley, Reba McEntire. Pictures are welcome. **Ralph E. Dyer, Rt. 2, Box 104, Wallingford, KY 41093.**

• Hi! I am 17 years old. I love country music and rock and roll. I like Sawyer Brown, Restless Heart, Reba McEntire, Clint Black, Randy Travis, Keith Whitley and Ricky Van Shelton. I have never put my name in any kind of pen pal column, so I am excited to hear from anyone who loves to write and would like to have a pen pal. All letters will be answered. **Solena Nonamaker, P.O. Box 144, Kirwin, KS 67644.**

• Hi there! I'm 53 years old. I love the oldies country singers, such as Hank Snow, Hank Williams Sr., Johnny Cash, Mel Tillis, Hank Thompson. If any of you out there want a pen pal I will answer your letters. I'm married and work as a certified nurse's aide in a nursing home. Love to hear from you. **Dee Iverson, 10 1/2 Emerson St., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819.**

• Hi! I am a 29-year-old, semi-professional clown. I love kids, country music and making people smile. I like Randy Travis, Vern Gosdin, George Strait, Reba McEntire and trying to sing like them. That's sure to bring a smile or even laughter. They say clowns shed tears too. Please don't make me do that. Write soon and send me a photo! **Steve Askew, Rt. 1, Box 84, Gatesville, NC 27938.**

Send material for Newsletter to *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Mark envelope, Attention: Newsletter. Include magazine label.

Cliffie Stone

Cliffie Stone's name may not be a household word, but he's had an extraordinary impact on country music—as a producer, writer, radio personality, record company executive, manager, musician and recording artist.

When Cliffie Stone was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1989, a lot of people didn't recognize the name. After all, it wasn't a household word like Flatt and Scruggs or Eddy Arnold. And people couldn't be blamed for saying, "Who?"

Unlike most individuals profiled here in Legends of Country Music, Stone was not a major, well-known, national recording artist. He had exactly three hit recordings under his own name. Nor did his work earn him Gold records or Grammys. He worked almost exclusively on the West Coast, not in Nashville. So why the Hall of Fame?

Because this year's Hall of Famer, Tennessee Ernie Ford, would never have had his spectacular career without Stone, who managed him through his most successful years. Without Cliffie there would be no Merle Travis, no Molly Bee, no Jimmy Bryant or Speedy West—and no West Coast country music industry as we now know it. He almost single-handedly created Capitol Records' Country Music division in the late 1940's. Mind you, all Cliffie's discoveries weren't country. They also include satirist-impressionist-advertising genius, Stan Freberg, and soft-rock singer, Tommy Sands. And we can be *certain* that without Cliffie, his son, Highway 101 bassist Curtis Stone, would not be here.

Cliffie Stone was a catalyst, a man who made things happen. He totally understood the music business: performing, staging, publishing and recording. Not only could he spot talented performers a mile away, he could mold them without ruining what made them special. He was among the first to see the potential of TV to reach audiences and recognized the value of hit records at a time when many country artists felt them secondary to performing live. The records he produced hold up as well today as they did when they were cre-



ated over 40 years ago.

Cliffie's—and Tennessee Ernie Ford's—inductions into the Country Music Hall of Fame may prove to be major steps toward reconciling the West Coast and Nashville. For years, West Coast country performers and musicians felt Music City ignored their contributions. It was on the West Coast that the use of electric guitars in country music was refined and a more daring, sophisticated country sound was born, long before the "Nashville Sound" came into existence. Eventually Nashville picked up and improved on the California sound, but the animosity remained for years.

Clifford Gilpin Snyder was born March 1, 1917, in Stockton, California. His parents moved to Burbank nine months later. His father, Herman, who owned both a tree nursery and kennels, also worked in movies. His movie roles led to his joining West Coast country singer Stuart Hamblen's radio show in the 1930's. Because of

Herman's beard and long hair, grown for a movie role and worn more than thirty years before they became fashionable, Hamblen named him "Herman the Hermit."

Cliffie was playing bass fiddle in high school, and in 1935 his dad recruited him to fill in as bassist on Hamblen's two daily radio shows. To cover the fact that Cliffie and Herman were father and son, Hamblen nicknamed him "Cliffie Stonehead." Cliffie even emceed the show on occasion. By the time he'd left high school, he was working on numerous L.A.-area radio stations simultaneously, emceeding, doing comedy, playing records and reading commercials. He kept his stage name, but to boost his credibility he shortened it to "Stone."

In 1942, songwriters Johnny Mercer, Buddy DeSylva and L.A. music store owner, Glenn Wallichs, founded Capitol Records. By signing artists like Tex Ritter, Jo Stafford and Nat "King" Cole, all of whom became enormously popular, Capitol became a major record company in a short time. Still working in radio, Cliffie also played bass on some of Capitol's earliest pop and country recordings, including Tex Ritter's "Jingle, Jangle, Jingle" and "Rye Whiskey." As a bassist he was good enough to perform with the Jan Garber, Anson Weeks and Freddie Slack pop orchestras.

Briefly, in the mid-1940's, Cliffie ran his own label, Lariat Records, which released early recordings by then-unknowns such as Merle Travis and Stan Freberg (Stan began his career doing imitations on Cliffie's radio shows). Cliffie also produced records for the L.A.-based Bel-Tone label. Capitol's A & R Director, Lee Gillette, was impressed by the Bel-Tone records and amazed to find that his studio bass player produced them. Gillette hired him as Capitol's country producer. He not only handled sessions for Tex Ritter, Jimmy Wakely, Wesley Tuttle and Jack Guthrie, he signed

PHOTO COURTESY GENE BEAR ARCHIVES



PHOTO COURTESY CLIFFIE STONE

Pioneers of West Coast country in 1943—Wes Tuttle, Cliffie, Roy Rogers, Frank Liddell and Eddie Cletro in photo left. What Cliffie calls the “bare bones cast” of the Dinner Bell Round-Up in photo right, taken in 1946-47—Wes Tuttle, Eddie Kirk (“Sonny”), Merle Travis, Cliffie, Texanne Nation, Herman the Hermit (Cliffie’s dad) and Tex Atchison. Two men kneeling were sponsors.

Merle Travis to Capitol and often played bass on the recordings.

Cliffie not only produced hits for Merle Travis, together they created a number of country standards. Cliffie gave him the title, “No Vacancy,” for which Merle wrote the song that became his first hit record. In 1946, Cliffie asked Merle for a song for Tex Williams, whose career at Capitol was faltering. Merle came back with “Smoke! Smoke! Smoke! (That Cigarette).” It not only saved Tex’s Capitol contract, it was the label’s first million-seller. Cliffie himself played the memorable walking bass fiddle intro. In fact, the country hits Cliffie produced may well have helped Capitol survive some rocky financial times in the late 40’s.

Cliffie’s own records were novelty songs. By his own admission, he didn’t have much of a singing voice, but the musicianship was strong. His three hit records all came within a year’s time. “Silver Stars, Purple Sage, Eyes of Blue” reached Number Four in the spring of 1947. “Peepin’ Through the Keyhole (Watchin’ Jole Blon)” was a novelty “answer” tune to the Cajun number, “Jole Blon,” that was a huge hit for both Roy Acuff and Cajun fiddler Harry Choates in 1947. In the spring of 1948 “Peepin’” also went to Number Four. That fall his version of the Wiley Walker-Gene Sullivan ballad, “When My Blue Moon Turns to Gold Again,” made it to Number Eleven.

Meanwhile, Cliffie was also establishing himself in radio. In 1946, he began putting together his own radio show at KXLA Radio in Pasadena. He called it the *Dinner Bell Round-Up* and used a small cast of performers, including Travis and Stan Freberg.

Ernest J. Ford, who’d abandoned his attempts to become a singer in order to

work in radio, had been hired by KXLA owner, Loyal King, in 1947 as a staff announcer and host of the morning program *Bar Nothing Ranch Time*. It was here he created his “Pea-Picker” persona. Ernie played records, sang along with them and did comedy. Cliffie, impressed with Ernie’s singing voice, asked him to sing on the *Round-Up* and to perform in skits.

Cliffie wanted Ernie in the cast, but Ernie, concerned about holding onto his announcer’s job and the security that came with it, was reluctant. In the end he joined Cliffie’s cast. In 1948, the show was renamed the *Hometown Jamboree* and moved onto TV. The *Jamboree* launched the careers of West Coast performers Eddie Kirk, Bucky Tibbs and Ferlin Husky. All recorded for Capitol. Kirk had two hits: a version of George Morgan’s hit, “Candy Kisses,” in 1948, and “The Gods Were Angry With Me” in 1949.

Among Cliffie’s cohorts, Ernie’s career was the one that soared. Hit records like “Shot Gun Boogie,” “Mule Train” and “Anticipation Blues” established him. “I’ll Never Be Free,” his 1950 hit with pop singer Kay Starr, was such a huge crossover hit that it alone took his career beyond *Hometown*. As Ernie’s success grew, he was offered better-paying engagements. He didn’t have a manager, so Cliffie was pressed into service. In 1953, he took Ernie to the London Palladium and helped him land his CBS radio show, his 1955 daytime NBC-TV show and his 1956-61 NBC evening variety shows.

When “Sixteen Tons” sent Ernie’s career skyrocketing in 1956, Cliffie was reluctant to give up the *Hometown Jamboree*. Instead, he quit producing records for Capitol—the legendary Ken Nelson replaced him. Old

habits die hard, however, and Cliffie did slip back to the Capitol studios to produce an occasional album for them. Eventually, Cliffie found himself stretched too thin as the pressures of Tennessee Ernie Ford’s career continued to build. Health problems finally forced him to turn Ernie’s management over to second-in-command, Jim Loakes, who manages Ernie today.

The *Hometown Jamboree* ended in the early 1960’s. However, Cliffie had plenty to do managing his song publishing concerns, Snyder Music and American Music/Central Songs, both of which controlled a considerable number of hit songs, including all of Merle Travis’. Both companies were eventually sold to Capitol. Cliffie managed a few clients and in the 70’s went to work managing the country division of ATV Music. He also founded a new record company called Granite Records that yielded minor hits for Molly Bee and Tex Williams.

When ATV was sold to Michael Jackson several years ago, Cliffie was out of a job—but not for long. Old friend Gene Autry hired him to run Gene Autry Music, which also holds a considerable number of country classics in its catalog. It’s still his job today. He also finds time to emcee local shows.

What is amazing about Stone is that, at 73, his gregarious personality, energy, business skills and understanding of audiences as well as artists are unimpaired. His skill at packaging remains unique in the field. In fact, much of what our music is today—in Nashville, California and around the world—can be traced to the vision and genius of Cliffie Stone. —RICH KIENZLE

Albums Available
See For Members Only next month.

at the New York club, O'Lunney's, not once but twice!

Luce has played clubs, fairs and concerts all over the New York metropolitan area, as well as in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Colorado and, of course, Texas. She's appeared at concerts sponsored by New York's country radio station, WYNY, and at the Ernest Tubb Record Shop's *Midnight Jamboree*. In 1989 she moved to Nashville and made several appearances on The Nashville Network. This past year, 1990, was also a good one for Luce. She was featured in the *Music City News*' 1990 "Who's Who in Country Music," had her own booth at Fan Fair and released her third album on Straight Ahead, *Never Did You Wrong*.

Although she's now a Nashville resident and has amassed a following there, Luce still spends a lot of time in New York performing and keeping in touch with her fans in the Northeast. She enjoys all the traveling and hopes for a major label deal. Luce's favorite artists—and those who have

influenced her the most—include Patsy Cline, Linda Ronstadt, Reba McEntire and George Strait.

—George Fletcher
For further information on Luce, her fan club or her albums, write: *Luce Amen International Fan Club, P.O. Box 12371, San Antonio, Texas 78212.*

Martin Haerle: 1939-1990

Martin Haerle, owner of the Los Angeles-based traditional country label, CMH Records, died on September 4, 1990, the victim of a heart attack. He was 51. The CMH label, established in 1975, released dozens of bluegrass and traditional country albums. Lester Flatt, Pearl Butler, Merle Travis, Don Reno and Joe Maphis are among those who made some of their final recordings for CMH. The roster also boasted Jim & Jesse, Josh Graves, Mac Wiseman and The Osborne Brothers as well as more progressive bluegrassers like banjoist-guitarist Eddie Adcock.

Several CMH albums were Grammy

nominees. And unlike many smaller specialty labels that placed low priority on appearance, CMH albums were known for their clean, attractive graphics and superb color photography, largely due to the work of the late CMH art director, Woody Woodward.

Haerle's country music roots actually began in another country. He first heard the music over American Armed Forces Radio in his native Stuttgart, Germany, after World War II. When he was 21, he went to Nashville and, with no experience, wangled a job with Starday Records. There he learned the nuts and bolts of marketing traditional music.

Except for a brief hiatus in the early 1980's, Haerle continued the label, and was in the process of releasing many of the old LP's on compact disc and recording new material at the time of his death. At this point, it appears that his family—including wife, Glenda, and son, David—plan to carry on. —Rich Kienzle

REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS: A SPECIAL SERIES

Last issue, we covered the country music scene in New England—its performers, associations and awards shows. Now, in Part Two of our continuing series, we turn to California, the home of many country music legends—including this issue's Legend,

Cliffie Stone. Thanks to California Country Music Association Executive Director Gary Murray for providing the materials for this article.

For other regional associations, stay tuned.

California Country Music Association

The CCMA is a statewide, non-profit organization whose mission is to recognize, support and award aspiring country artists within the state. The CCMA was chartered in 1982 and has grown to approximately 4500 members, including fans, entertainers and industry professionals. The organization is an active member of the Country Music Associations of America (CMAA). Because of California's size, the association uses a regional chapter system for coordination on a local basis. Presently, six chapters have been officially incorpo-



Scenes from CCMA Awards Shows: Dwight Yoakam with CCMA's Jay Anthony and Executive Director, Gary Murray; Red Simpson with CCMA's Cindy Delmore.

rated in the CCMA.

The CCMA stages its annual awards show—the CCMA American Eagle Awards—each November, with awards given in 20 categories. In order to be nominated for

statewide awards, acts must first win at their chapter level shows. Award winners at the chapter level are chosen by a vote of the members. Then the chapter winners come together for a regional run-off where they are judged on their live performance. And finally, the winners are announced at the state-wide American Eagle Awards Ceremony. The 1990 American Eagle Award Ceremony took place on November 5, in Long Beach, California; and included performances by two California-based (and nationally recognized) stars, Jann Browne and Rosie Flores. The evening also featured an appearance by Cliffie Stone, who was inducted into the CCMA's Hall of Fame.

In addition to the CCMA's statewide newsletter, each CCMA chapter publishes its own newsletter to keep the membership informed of all country music happenings in the local area. *Active* is a good description for the CCMA—besides the awards shows, there are "Battle of the Bands" competitions, country dance contests, showcases, chili cook-offs, golf tournaments and charity fund-raisers. That's a lot of work for a non-profit, volunteer-based organization—and an indication of the dedication and persistence of the CCMA's members.

—George Fletcher

For further information on the California Country Music Association, write to them at P.O. Box 6116, Fullerton, CA 92631-4251.

NOVEMBER 1990 POLL Album of the Month

George Strait *Livin' It Up*
It's hunk month in the CMSA Poll. Hazel Smith's favorite, George Strait, is first with *Livin' It Up*. Alan Jackson comes in second with his debut album, *Here in the Real World*. Vince Gill captures third with *When I Call Your Name* featuring the award-winning song of the same name. Clint Black turns up fourth with *Killin' Time*, while Ricky Van Shelton makes a showing in fifth with *RVS III*. Funny, all these boys have been in the center-fold...except Vince Gill.

Sorry, we can't report on singles this time. The poll included albums only. Don't forget to vote in this month's poll!

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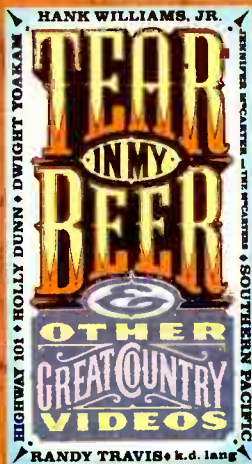
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Holly Dunn	<i>Strangers Again</i>
Michael Martin Murphey	<i>Route 66</i>
k.d. lang	<i>Pullin' Back The Reins</i>
Kevin Welch	<i>Till I See You Again</i>
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Jennifer McCarter & The McCarters	<i>Better Be Home Soon</i>
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Hank Williams, Jr.	<i>Young Country</i>
The Forrester Sisters	<i>I Fell In Love Again Last Night</i>
Nitty Gritty Dirt Band	<i>Partners, Brothers And Friends</i>
Gary Morris	<i>100% Chance Of Rain</i>
Michael Martin Murphey	<i>Long Line Of Love</i>
Highway 101	<i>Cry, Cry, Cry</i>
Dwight Yoakam	<i>Honky Tonk Man</i>



Available Now on Warner Reprise Video





TANYA TUCKER'S

Greatest Hit

Country music's favorite party girl is now a single mother of a baby girl. Patrick Carr spent a day with the pair and their entourage and discussed everything from bringing up baby to selling hit records. ■ by Patrick Carr

These days Tanya Tucker is, infamously, a mother, and so the most interesting question about her is obvious: How has motherhood changed her, if in fact it has?

It's changed her world, that's for sure. Consider what she says one day in New York City, during a break in the taping of a cable TV *Dr. Ruth Show*, as she sits in the TV studio's Green Room smoking a cigarette and watching her daughter, Presley Tanita Tucker, struggle to take her first unassisted step.

"God, yes, it's wonderful, but it's *hard*," she says in that frank, matter-of-fact way she has. "I take Presley on the road with me whenever I can, so I don't get hardly any sleep, and when I have to leave her at home, I miss her so much I can't stand it, so the end result's the same: no sleep."

Yes, indeed, say I, speaking as one who knows all too well. For parents of infants, sleep does become a thing of the past.

A light flicks on in Tanya's eyes, and she grins. She throws her head back, blows a jet of smoke at the ceiling, gives a fast, husky chuckle, and nails it. "Well," she says, "sleep always *was* a thing of the past."

On the Green Room monitor, Dr. Ruth is introducing her guest in unusual style but with acceptable accuracy. "She has always been a person to spik her mind ant go after vot she vants, ant now she is one of ze biggest country music stars in ze world! Velcome, Tanyatuckerrr!!"

It's an odd moment, this, but no odder than many the trendsetting Tanya has given us. She has, after all, been country music's first 13-year-old sex kitten (in her "Delta Dawn" period); its only female Elvis impersonator (during her black leather phase); its most notorious divorcee (from Glen Campbell, her former co-star of the *Star* and other tabloids); and lately its only chart-topping, utterly

unapologetic single mother. So if Nashville and Dr. Ruth are to commence a dialogue on sexual politics, who better than Tanya to start things off with a bang?

No bang today, though. This potentially explosive combination of characters delivers nothing more lively than some feel-good Dr. Ruthisms about standing up for yourself (womanly assertiveness being the theme of the show) and some snippets of Tanya's reality. In her marriage with Glen Campbell, for instance, she notes that "I would lash out at him; it became quite physical at times."

Dr. Ruth cackles delightedly at this revelation, then scolds the use of "aggression, not assertiveness!"


Tanya replies that well, she was a lot younger then, it was almost ten years ago; and so we move on from that quite spectacularly sleepless period of her life.

A little later, after a lot of ho-hum stuff about the difficulties of show biz relationships, Dr. Ruth brings up what she calls "the ultimate assertiveness": Tanya's decision to go ahead and have a baby without being married, engaged, committed or otherwise mated on a long-term basis.

Tanya takes it in her stride. "Well, I wanted a child, and on my 30th birthday I decided that I'd have a baby," she says. "It just happened that I had a relationship with this person which didn't work out, and we discussed it in depth; he knew it was what I wanted. It wasn't the only thing I wanted out of the relationship—I would love to have made it work—but it wasn't right, and now I have one of the most beautiful little girls in the world. I feel very lucky that I can support her myself."

Tanya still won't reveal who "this person" is, not even to Dr. Ruth. Doubtless we'll be reading all about him if she ever does.

So far, none of this is news, especially not to the insiders in


And baby makes two—
Tanya and Presley Tanita.
Presley goes on the road
with her ma. Tanya says
motherhood's been a
learning experience. It's
made her more aware.



Chet Atkins

"I Just Want to Play"



Tonight at Opryland an event of no great significance is about to take place. Its precise venue, the small Roy Acuff Theater next to the much grander Opry House, is a backwater to the main current of the country music business, and its audience, great white male doctors of the Southern Medical Association visiting Nashville for their annual convention, aren't the kind of people who buy country records.

What's about to happen here, in fact, isn't really a concert at all; it's after-dinner entertainment. At this moment the docs and their wives are being served dessert at tables set up on the theater floor, and the hired entertainers are waiting backstage amid a clatter of waitresses.

Things are running a little late on account of a minor problem with the entree, prime rib, and so the entertainers, Minnie Pearl and Chet Atkins, have some time to kill.

They're good at this; they've had a little experience, after all. As she is wont, Minnie does most of the talking—speculating on the Opry's upcoming 65th anniversary and her own 50th as an Opry performer (both of which took place in October), remembering the sight of blood staining the back of Pee Wee King's jacket under his accordion straps

during a grueling, ten-performances-per-day tour of "soldier shows" in Panama in World War II, remembering Chester Atkins new to Nashville in the early 1950's as "just the *niciest* young man"—while Chet attends quietly and calmly to donning his tuxedo, tuning his nylon-stringed, solid-body electric guitar and other little pre-performance chores. As is *his* way, he is sparing with his comments, which often have a dry, sardonic quality.

When Minnie, assuming her mischievous face, remarks that "I saw Eddie Arnold get a standing ovation one time"—a two-beat pause—"with 'The Star Spangled Banner'!", Chet comes back in fine form: "You know, they keep plugging that song, but it'll never be a hit."

The banter flows easily on, enjoyed by everyone in the dressing room: Minnie, Chet, Chet's veteran road manager, George Lunn; the Opry's longtime photographer, Les Leverett, and myself and Chet's accompanist, Paul Yandell, both just whippersnappers in our 40's. Listening, I feel a sense of real privilege to be among these people, who are genuinely historic figures in American cultural life, but I'm also aware of how relaxed I am, and how that's a phenomenon peculiar to my travels within the country music community. I can't imagine experiencing the natural graciousness of this occasion in Hollywood, politics, rock 'n' roll, or any other sector of show business save perhaps country's cousin, the blues—but the blues would be even less likely after-dinner entertainment than the hillbilly fare the docs have ordered tonight.

There's reasoning behind the docs' choice, though, and it becomes apparent when their organization's president, a large-girthed, florid-faced gentleman of soothing demeanor (a psychiatrist, he says) visits the dressing room. A few years back, he and his wife were at a concert where Chet was playing classical music with an orchestra, as he does from time to time, and they loved it. So with the annual dinner being in Nashville....

Chet's reaction is thoroughly noncommittal, so the doc moves on: Would Chet like to be introduced in any special way tonight? No, says Chet, whatever you think best, and George Lunn seconds that thought.

The doc seems disappointed. You get the sense that he could really use some help here.

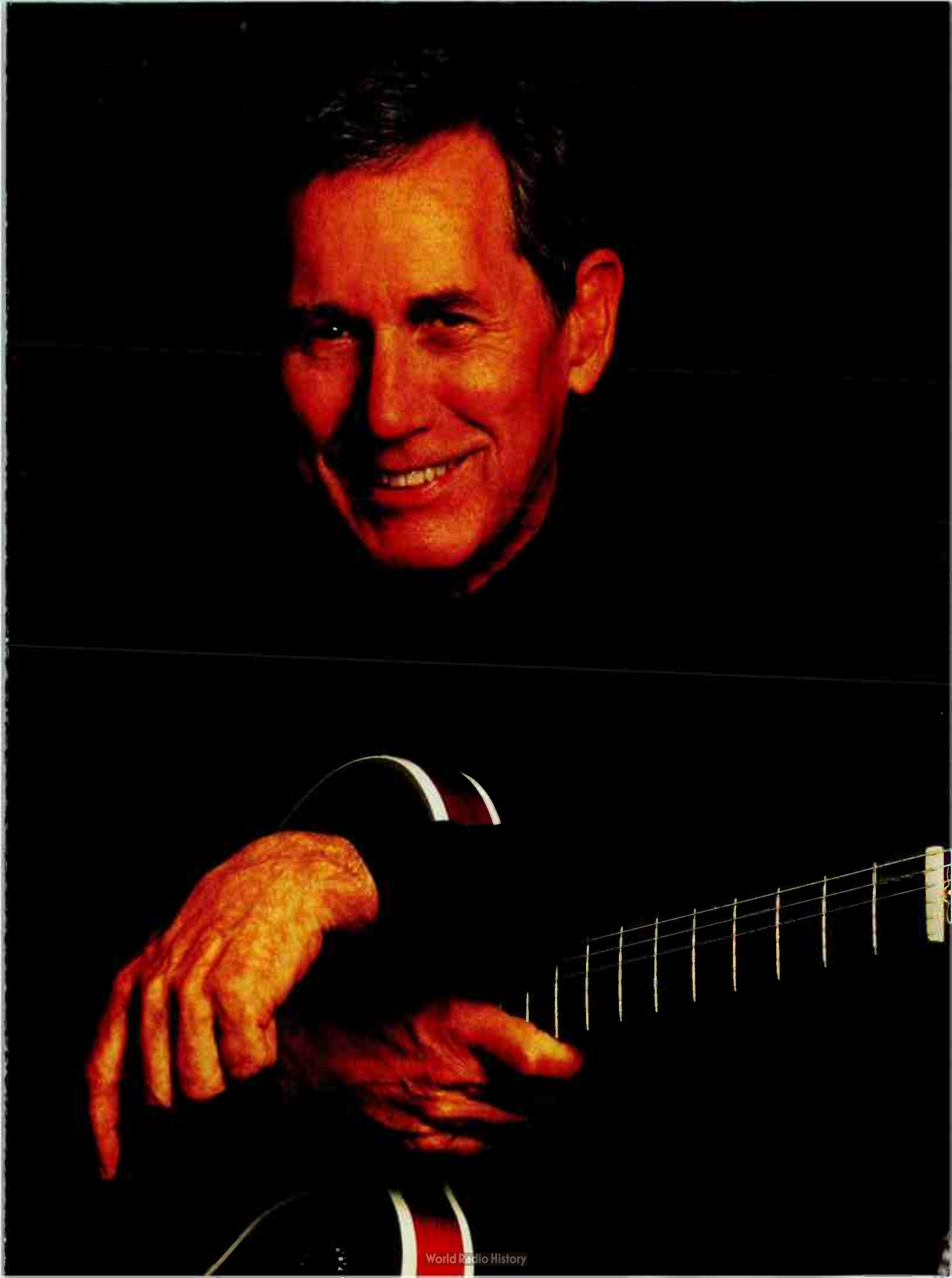
It's Minnie who steps in. "Well, you might say that Chester is known as the greatest hillbilly guitar player in the world," she says sweetly.

At show time the doc takes a short, safe path. His introduction consists of mentioning the classical performance he and his wife enjoyed, then announcing "the premier guitarist of the United States, Chet Atkins." The applause, although decently loud, is more polite than enthusiastic.

The legendary musician has made history as a picker, producer and inventor of musical styles. But don't take away his guitar—he's not through making music.



By Patrick Carr



If you wanted to, you could elaborate for quite some time on Chet Atkins as the premier guitarist of the United States, or for that matter the greatest hillbilly guitar player in the world, ever, bar none. An accounting of only the man's major credits as a musician, let alone his minor triumphs or his accomplishments as a producer and technologist and executive, would easily fill up this article's word allotment.

Just the basics here, then, and those delivered almost hesitantly, for Chet Atkins is a figure of such importance to modern country music that it feels strange indeed to speculate that some readers—younger fans, newer fans—might hardly know what to associate with his name.

You could begin the list of associations with an item of some importance: the very existence of country music as a thriving popular art form and of Nashville as a major recording center. It is not impossible, you see, that without Chet's development of what came to be called "The Nashville Sound" in the mid-1950's, the monster known as rock 'n' roll might have eaten Nashville whole, relegating mainstream country to the commercial backwaters where you find bluegrass, folk and old-timey music today.

Put quite simply, Chet invented country-pop music. That is, he came up with the arrangements and ran the recording sessions and as often as not chose the songs which became the first commercially significant country hits of the rock 'n' roll era, and thereby he saved Nashville's bacon. It's possible, of course, that some other person or combination of creative and market forces could have kept Nashville kicking throughout the lean years and perhaps even spurred as much commercial growth as Chet's work did, but in that case the subsequent history wouldn't be what it's been. Without the smooth, swing-and-twang hybrid Chet crafted in RCA's Studio B during his years as the head of Artists & Repertoire for RCA, there may well have been no Nashville establishment for outlaws to rebel against in the 70's, no cultural mother lode for urban cowboys to strip-mine in the 80's and no country-politan radio programmers for New Traditionalists to convert today.

That's the broad sweep. The specifics are also impressive. Chet produced Elvis Presley's biggest and arguably best records. He produced the first great Nashville Sound hit, Don Gibson's "Lonesome Me," and all Jim Reeves' hits were his work. He discovered or signed or produced or otherwise contributed very significantly to the careers of (in alphabetical order) Eddy

Arnold, Bobby Bare, Rosemary Clooney, Perry Como, Floyd Cramer, Danny Davis, Skeeter Davis, The Everly Brothers, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Roy Orbison, Dolly Parton, Charley Pride, Boots Randolph, Jerry Reed, Hank Snow, Porter Wagoner, Dottie West, Hank Williams and a few dozen lesser lights. He contributed his guitar and his ideas to hundreds of recording sessions, including the one in which Hank Williams sang "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive" just before that last Cadillac ride. He introduced Cowboy Jack Clement to Nashville, and



"It goes in cycles, you know. It's all slick and sophisticated, then it's all the opposite."

Charley Pride, and those weren't his only startling innovations: With his Studio B crew, notably engineers Bob Ferris and Ray Butts, he pioneered all sorts of now indispensable recording technology and developed the most essential items in the modern electric guitarist's bag of tricks (reverb in 1955, tremolo in 1956, wah-wah in 1959, fuzz-tone in 1960) as well as a whole family of electric guitars, beginning with the renowned Gretsch Country Gentleman.

A good case can also be made for Chet having been crucial to the development of whole new forms of music: country-pop, of course, but also fully-realized rock 'n' roll (through his production of Elvis Presley records such as "Hound Dog" and "Heartbreak Hotel") and, via his seminal collaborations with vibraphonist Gary Burton, the style known as jazz fusion. He must also be recognized as the father of a musical fusion

not widely credited as its own separate form but nonetheless entirely legitimate: hillbilly jazz. That, basically, is what Chet actually plays more than anything else. He arrived at the style in his youth, by combining the finger-picking technique of the great country guitarist/songwriter Merle Travis with the folk-dance-jazz innovations of the brilliant Belgian gypsy guitarist, Django Reinhardt, and he has been expanding and developing it ever since. It is the core of his own music, and through the generations of guitarists who have learned from him, it has permeated virtually everywhere; his influence has been so great for so long now that the authoritative *Guitar Player Magazine* has called him, clearly and simply, "Popular Music's Most Influential Stylist." His own 70-something records have sold well in excess of 30 million copies, and at the age of 66 he's still making them. He has been a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame since 1973.

The journey to such status began at the very bottom of the social and economic ladder in the hills outside the little town of Luttrell, in Union County, Tennessee. Chet, whose music teacher father left his family to fend for themselves, was a child afflicted with asthma and stunted by malnutrition—for him, mere survival was questionable—and a youth burdened by hard labor on the land. Today, typically, he acknowledges the effect of such roots without the rosy glow of nostalgia. "The isolation, the poverty, that's where I came from," he has said. "That's what makes you fight. That's what makes you learn. That's what makes you develop your talent, if you have any, to try to get out of that damned place."

In his case, escape began with a broken ukelele strung with wires he'd pulled from a screen door, continued with a guitar received in trade for an old Owl's Head pistol he'd been using as a toy and went right on from there. "I picked my way out of East Tennessee," he says.

He made his professional debut at the age of 17 playing fiddle behind Archie Campbell and Bill Carlisle on WNOX Knoxville's *Midday Merry Go-Round*, and then he worked a string of cities and radio stations, including Nashville's WSM ("I got fired a lot") until Mother Maybelle Carter hired him to play guitar for her and The Carter Sisters. That job turned out to be his big break when, in 1950, The Carters were invited to join WSM's Grand Ole Opry. Chet went with them and survived new attempts to dispense with his services, and so ended his years of struggle. His first hit record, the instrumental "Galloping Guitars," came in 1951. In 1952, he took

his job at RCA Records under the wing of Steve Sholes, the pioneering New York executive who'd been hiring him to run Nashville recording sessions on a freelance basis, and so began his illustrious career in Studio B.

Chet no longer produces records, scouts for talent, administers staffs, shuffles papers, answers to higher-ups or performs any other executive function, and neither is he associated with RCA Records. Since 1982 his name has graced only his own records, which bear the Columbia label, and these days he does his very best to confine his music business activity to matters affecting his own case as an artist. Or as he himself puts it, with typical economy, "I just want to play. Somebody else can do all the other bullshit."

That remark suggests some disaffection with the executive role. Was Chet unhappy in his later years at RCA?

It seems so. "Oh, it was terrible," he says. "You know, I'm a high school dropout, and I used to have such trouble writing business letters and so on. I was good at the studio. I was great in the studio. I'd gather around with my best friends and make a record, and they'd suggest something and I'd select what I liked, and we made a lot of hits that way, you know? But then the company got a big personnel department, and they'd write every year and say (*assuming a snooty Yankee tone*), 'What are your goals for 1968? What are your expectations for this employee and that employee?' And all that kind of bullshit."

"It was such a drag. I had to start turning the artists over to other people to produce. It had been fun in the studio—*great* fun—but oh, man, that paperwork."

Chet admits that because of his lack of formal education, he always felt at a disadvantage when dealing with RCA's New York bosses. On the other hand, "I educated myself over the years, and I think I'm better educated than a lot of the college graduates I talk to. I know I *know* a lot more than they do about some things. But you know, when you're in my shoes in that situation, you tend to read things you enjoy. I bought books on English grammar, for instance, but I never was really interested in that, so I'm not too good in it. I only know how to speak *fairly* good English. But if you know where I came from. I mean, *so* far back in the sticks..."

He laughs. "I mean, we all talked like Loretta used to talk, or like Roy Acuff still does. I tried to get out of it, but look how much money *they* made. I should have kept that going, shouldn't I?"

Well, no. Today's Chet Atkins, an even-mannered gentleman in a quiet,



Making headlines on a recent cover of *Guitar Extra Magazine*.

richly paneled, book-lined office—a figure more suggestive of some long-tenured academic than a world-beating hillbilly guitar picker—seems very well integrated. His respectability complements his country common sense rather nicely, and vice versa; it's refreshing to find a man who can reflect knowledgeably on the composition of Nixon's Supreme Court one moment, then quite rightly reduce the issue of country music's current health and complexion to one simple statement: "Oh, it goes in cycles, you know. It's all slick and sophisticated, then it's all the opposite. It doesn't matter. The only thing that really matters is the song, and there are only so many really good songs. That hasn't changed, and it never will."

Master of the concise statement that he is—a characteristic he ascribes to

chronic shyness in his youth, then adult habit—Chet seems quite happy to summarize his post-RCA career in a few easy words: "Well, I've been keeping myself reasonably busy."

Pressed, though, he'll admit that the five albums he has made for Columbia since 1982 represent just a fraction of his creative output. A reprise of his 1990 calendar, for example, reveals the following (partial) itinerary:

A month of concerts with Garrison Keillor; the folksy star of public radio's *Prairie Home Companion* show.

Solo performances at a classical and jazz festival in Cannes, France, and collaborations with jazz star Stanley Jordan at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina.

A "beautiful melodies" album marketed on TV.

The annual convention of the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society, a workshop-type event attended by several hundred guitarists.

A new duet album, reminiscent of the 1970's wonderful *Chester & Lester*, entitled *Neck & Neck*. The Lester in *Chester & Lester* was Chet's wild and woolly contemporary, Les Paul, while the collaborating/competing guitar on *Neck & Neck* is handled by a somewhat younger man, the very tasteful, appropriately respectful English guitarist/songwriter Mark Knopfler, founder of the British band, Dire Straits. Knopfler's evidently growing attraction to country music and Nashville (his work on *Neck & Neck* having been preceded by his 1989 *Notting Hillbillies* album and hints that he might be considering residence in Music City) is just the kind of thing to cause near delirium on Music Row, where pop stars are regarded as near deities by otherwise



On stage with Garrison Keillor and Charlie McCoy. Atkins and Keillor have been touring on and off together since 1983. A good time is had by all.

unimpressible business persons, but Chet takes it all in his easy stride. International icons are nothing new to him, and "Mark's fun. We had a good time with that record."

It sure sounds like it. *Neck & Neck's* musical swing is supple and strong and free, and the lighthearted banter between the two principals, in reality conceived and recorded with some deliberation, sounds thoroughly relaxed and spontaneous. And of course the album has Chet's fingerprints all over it: frighteningly difficult guitar work performed with seemingly effortless grace and consummate taste, and comfortable, cornball-oddball wit.

Chet doesn't have much to say about *Neck & Neck*, and that's not surprising, for throughout his creative life it's been his way to have little or no interest in the music he's already played.

This is a very healthy attitude in some ways. "I've heard of guys who sit around and listen to their old records all the time," Chet says, "and you know, they're right back there where they were, they haven't progressed at all. Me, I like to keep moving."

His stance does have its odd aspects, though. "On the road, kids come up and play things for me, and I say, 'Where'd you get that?' They say, 'Off your record.' So I have to say, 'Okay. Which one was it? I want to learn it again.' That happens all the time."

Sometimes, too, Chet can be extreme in his attitude, if not downright perverse, even if he does make sense of a kind. "You know, when you make a record, you're in a certain mood," he explains. "So when you listen to it months later, it's like you're listening to a different person. You say, 'Damn. Why did I play that like that? That's stupid. Why did I do that? Take that off!'"

He laughs. "One time a little while ago a lady gave me a tape of an interview with James Burton, the great chicken-picker, and on the tape there was someone playing 'Folsom Prison Blues.' I thought, 'Man, that's good. Who is that?'"

Then I realized it was me. I asked my wife, Leona, 'Is that me?' She said, 'Well, it sure sounds like you.' Then I heard Boots Randolph on there, then Charlie McCoy, and yeah, it was me all right. So then it didn't sound good any more. I said, 'Ah, that stinks. Take it off!'"

There's not much danger of Chet being stuck with just his old work, it seems. He's still expanding his art and craft. He plays guitar every day, either alone or with whoever happens by (George Benson, Earl Klugh, Mark Knopfler, etc.), and he's constantly developing new techniques and technologies



Going neck and neck with Knopfler during the video shoot of "Poor Boy Blues."

and scheduling new projects. When we talk, for instance, he's into Jerry Reed and a new duet album tentatively titled *Fingerpicking*. He's always thought Reed to be "just a monster" and loves to play with him; this will be the two bilities' third album together.

Then too, he accepts stage jobs from time to time, whatever appeals to him and fits his schedules; symphony dates, jazz festivals or his old staple, "playing for the rich people here in town. They took to me early on, and I've always had that work. I don't do it so much these days, but now and again I do. I have to keep some rhubarb coming in, you know, and I have to go out and work about once a month. If it goes any longer I start forgetting my ad libs."

Chet's show is a peculiar mixture, part pure ham and part real art. At one point, for instance, he delivers a creakily humorous introduction to the song "Vincent"—"This is about Van Gogh...the painter... He's the one who cut off his ear... 'cause his girlfriend left him, you know... That showed her"—but then he and Paul Yandell play the song so movingly that even the recently-dined docs seem touched. Maybe they're ready to forgive him for perpetrating "Would Jesus Wear a Rolex?" on them (a touch too close to home, healing-for-profit-wise, that one) and unsettling them with references to people most of them have never heard of: Mark Knopfler, Merle Travis, Larry Carlton. Maybe Chet's performance should be even more liberally sprinkled with "ad libs" such as his dreadful "This is a genuine Stradivarius. I know, 'cause I got it new."

All in all, the docs aren't really the

best crowd for the world's best fingerpicker, or for its worst cornball. But that's okay. It certainly seems all right with Chet when he heads back to the dressing room to wipe off his guitar and change out of his tuxedo; his face bears the vaguely distracted, quietly amused expression with which he indicates active happiness as opposed to the vaguely distracted, slightly annoyed expression which signals his extreme displeasure, and he's forthcoming rather than aloof (he'd call it shy) with the three separate audience members who come seeking a word or autographs.

One of the visitors is a doctor now in his late middle age, with a fond memory of a long-ago Chet Atkins concert where he met his wife. Another is a vivacious woman in her 40's who confesses to a secret, lifelong love of country music in general and a collection of 20-plus Chet Atkins records in particular: She thanks Chet rather warmly for the pleasure he has given her. Last comes a young man, pale and lanky and wiry much as Chet must have been in his younger years (and indeed still is; even at 66 he carries almost no extraneous weight). This boy just wants to pay his respects. He's a guitar player, of course, and he says that Chet has taught him more than any other master of the art.

Chet accepts all these comments and compliments quietly, with a grace that reflects well on the Living Legend profession, until the visitors leave. Then he turns to Paul Yandell and, with a quick precise review of tonight's performance and suggestions about what might be done to improve it next time—a shortening of this intro here, a repetition of that riff there—he gets on with the business of being a creative musician. ■

EDITOR'S CHOICE

COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE KEY CHAIN

Can you believe it! We now have the *Country Music Magazine* cover on a key chain. Just think, accompanying you all day can be Ricky Van Shelton, Randy Travis, George Strait, Dwight Yoakam, Garth Brooks, Reba McEntire, The Judds, Tammy Wynette or Dolly Parton, to name a few. Or, if you have a favorite *Country Music Magazine* cover-person not listed here, but would like to have him or her made into a key chain, just send us the artist's name and the month and year of the *Country Music Magazine* cover on which he or she appears, and we'll special order at no extra charge. You'll receive the authentic *Country Music Magazine* cover proudly mounted on a classic brass key chain—just between you and me, this key chain looks like real gold! It's gorgeous! What a beautiful gift to give, and to have for yourself! To personalize your key chain, you can even take it to a jeweler and have it inscribed with your initials or name. Sorry, we can't do that for you!



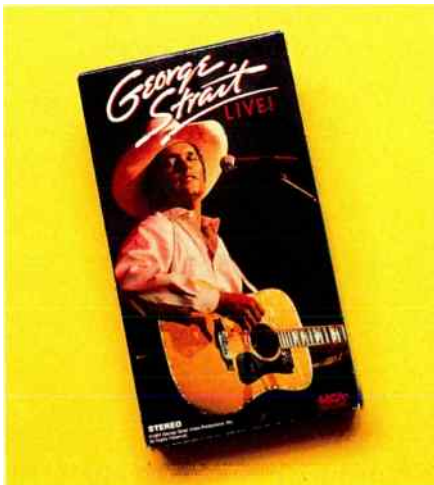
Each key chain costs only \$3.95. Save money and buy two key chains for \$5.95 or three key chains for \$7.95, #K5B. Add \$1.50 postage and handling per order (not for each item). Please do not use the order form at the end of this ad for your key chain order. Mail your key chain order to the following address: *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, CT 06880, Attn: Key chains. Don't forget to state your cover star.

George Strait *George Strait*

GEORGE STRAIT LIVE!

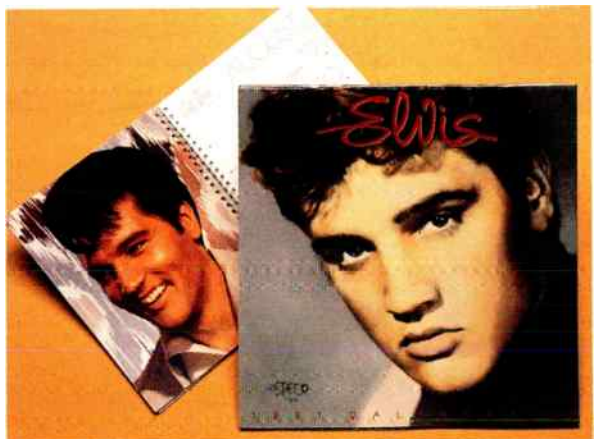
George Strait, the platinum-selling Country Music Entertainer of the Year, is captured for the first time on video. Performing live at the Dallas Reunion Arena, George Strait is accompanied by his Ace in the Hole Band. In *George Strait Live!*, George sings all of his greatest hits, including: "The Fireman," "Deep Water," "The Cowboy Rides Away," "Hot Burning Flames," "Does Ft. Worth Ever Cross Your Mind," "Dance Time in Texas," "You're Something Special to Me," "A Six Pack to Go," "Nobody in His Right Mind Would've Left Her," "Amarillo by Morning," "All My Ex's Live in Texas," "Rhythm of the Road," "Any Old Time," "You Look So Good in Love," "Marina Del

Rey" and "Unwound." *George Strait Live!* is 52 minutes of colorful entertainment. If you like George, you can't help but love his video. Rich Kienzle states it very nicely in *Essential Collector* (July/August 1990 issue, *Country Music*), "He tears through 16 numbers...showing clearly why he's one of the best entertainers the industry's seen in years." *George Strait Live!* costs \$29.95, #G2G.

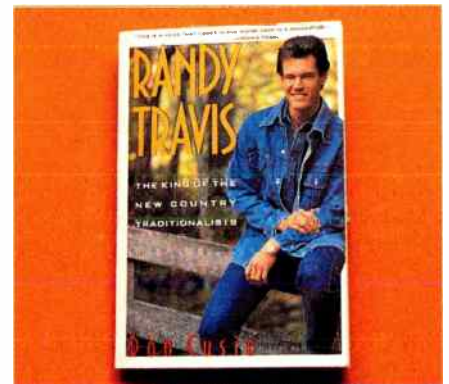


ELVIS 1991 CALENDAR AND ENGAGEMENT BOOK

Wow! Look at dreamy-eyed Elvis Presley captured on 12 months of the 1991 Elvis Wall Calendar. All 12 glossy, close-up pictures of Elvis are 12" x 12", and the entire calendar opens up to 12" x 24". Also, throughout the calendar are facts about Elvis' life and career. For example, do you know when Elvis performed four sold-out concerts at Madison Square Garden? Find out the answer on your Elvis 1991 Calendar. If you prefer engagement calendars, we have one for you, too! The 1991 Elvis Engagement Calendar is great for keeping track of your daily and weekly events. Each week starts you off with a striking 7" x 9" close-up of Elvis (55 total photos), while each page offers you plenty of space for writing seven days of notes. Also, in the back of the Engagement Cal-



...the world to speak with any - his way. Now you are given the opportunity to meet this man through the biography, *Randy Travis*. You will learn about his childhood mischievousness, his plight with the courts, his growing success and his relationship with Lib Hatcher. You also get childhood and current photos of Randy and a discography. *Randy Travis* is 196 pages long and costs \$8.95, #B6F.

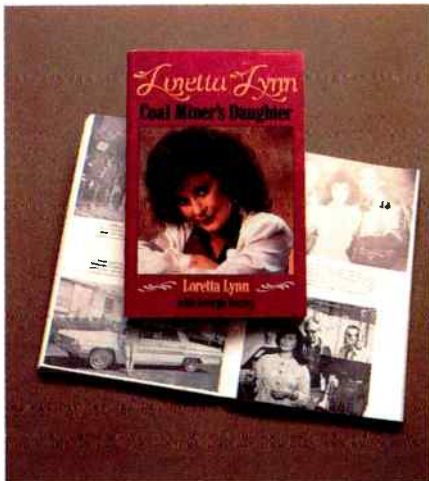


Nashville Warehouse

LORETTA LYNN: COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER
Coal Miner's Daughter
autobiography written by Loretta Lynn
Country Music, Loretta Lynn
expresses her true
it is language,
experience her
Kentucky
Loretta
lived in
her

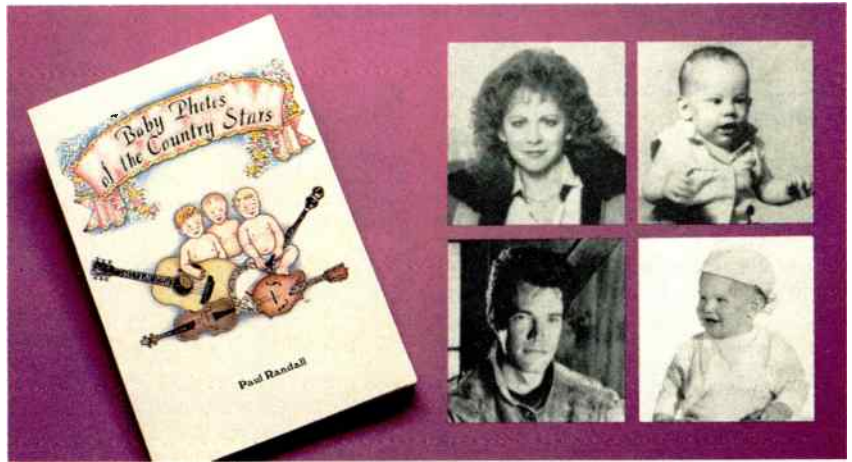
ER is a spectacular
 on by The Queen of
 Loretta Lynn. Loretta
 e emotions in tell-it-like-
 taking you back in time to
 er life from Butcher Holler,
 , to present-day stardom.
 shares the depressed times she
 n—her father couldn't afford to buy
 shoes, her mother had to insulate the
 ills with Sears catalog pages, and they'd
 go weeks eating only bread and gravy. Yet
 all these hardships brought her family
 closer together.

As Loretta continues her story, you'll find yourself captured by the emotions of a 13-year-old bride on her honeymoon night, the confusion of a deserted 14-year-old sent home pregnant, and the anger of a child, very close to her father when he died of black lung disease. In addition, Loretta goes into detail about her very close relationship with Patsy Cline and Patsy's influence on her life and career. As *Bill-*



board Magazine put it, "Few subjects are too personal to deal with here, yet there is nothing sensationalistic...Those reading this can be assured they have met the real Loretta Lynn." I agree.

When I started reading *Coal Miner's Daughter*, I could hardly put it down to eat or sleep. I felt every emotion of Loretta's. She told intimate moments of her life, drawing me in to share them. There I was, laughing and crying, just me and Loretta. *Coal Miner's Daughter* has been out of print for a while, but has been reissued now in a larger version with a new cover of Loretta, larger type, bigger pages and better quality paper. Loretta also included a layout of her bus and her own 16-page photo album—fabulous pictures you can't afford to miss. Before this novelty book goes out of print again, I recommend buying it for its insightful content, its rare photos and its status as a collector's item. *Coal Miner's Daughter* sells for \$7.95, #B8W.



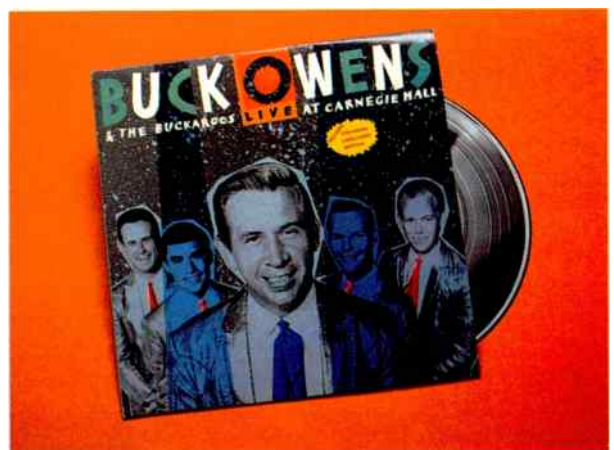
BABY PHOTOS OF THE COUNTRY STARS

If you ever wondered what Naomi and Wynonna Judd looked like when they were three years old, look no further. *Baby Photos of the Country Stars* shows baby or childhood photographs of each country music star included. It also gives stars' ages and factual information. The fun part is guessing who the adorable child is, then flipping to the designated page to see the child grown-up into your favorite star. I got a charge out of Marty Stuart's baby photo—sticking his tongue out! Some of the big-name country artists whose rare baby photos you will see are George Jones, Reba McEntire, Keith Whitley, Patty Loveless, Randy Travis, Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash and Tammy Wynette, to name a few. The baby photos and the current photos were provided by the artists, members of their families, close friends, personal managers, office staffs, booking agents, publicity departments, public relations firms and recording companies. Needless to say, these are invaluable photos you will treasure forever. In addition, there are blank autograph pages in the back of the book for your favorite country music star to sign, and don't forget to have them sign their picture too! This 190-page, paperback book features over 150 country music stars and sells for \$10.00, #B30.

BUCK OWENS LIVE AT CARNEGIE HALL

All you *Country Music Magazine* readers made *Buck Owens Live at Carnegie Hall* our top-selling record in 1989. Taped live at Carnegie Hall in 1966, Buck was backed up by his great band, The Buckaroos. *Live at Carnegie Hall* includes: "Act Naturally," "Together Again," "Love's Gonna Live Here," "In the Palm of Your Hand," "Cryin' Time," "Don't Let Her Know," "Only You (Can Break My Heart)," "I Don't Care (Just as Long as You Love Me)," "My Heart Skips a Beat," "Gonna Have Love," "Waitin' in Your Welfare Line," "Buckaroo," "The Streets of Laredo," "I've Got a Tiger by the Tail," "Fun 'n' Games with Don & Doyle," "Twist and Shout," "Under Your Spell Again," "Above and Beyond," "Excuse Me (I Think I've Got a Heartache)," "Foolin' Around," "Hello Trouble" and "Truck Drivin' Man." Rich Kienzle reviewed *Buck Owens Live at Carnegie Hall* in *Buried Treasures* (May/June 1989

issue, *Country Music*) and says *Live at Carnegie Hall* was "recorded when Buck was at his absolute peak with his best-ever group of Buckaroos (Don Rich, guitar and vocals; Tom Brumley, steel; Doyle Holly, bass and Willie Cantu, drums)." You definitely don't want to miss out on this high quality music, especially when you consider the scarcity of Buck Owens recordings. *Buck Owens Live at Carnegie Hall* is available on LP or cassette, and costs \$9.98 each. #CMF 012.



THE REAL PATSY CLINE

As everyone knows, Patsy Cline had a spectacular voice, a rocky personal life and a career on the rise when she died. In the video, *The Real Patsy Cline*, you watch the complete, true story of Patsy's rise to stardom, and her tragic death at the peak of her career. This unique videobiography features rare, classic appearances by Patsy performing her hit songs, "Crazy," "I Fall to Pieces" and more. You also see rare photographs and clips of Patsy's TV appearances. To add to this video's uniqueness, you observe heartfelt

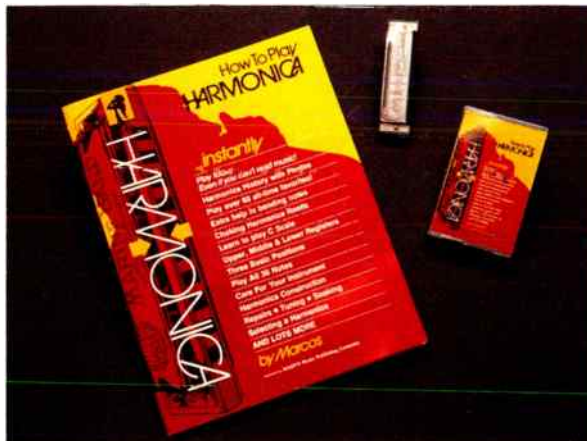


commentary by the people who were closest to her and saw it all: Loretta Lynn, Dottie West, Charlie Dick (Patsy's husband), Julie and Randy Dick (Patsy's children), Harlan Howard (songwriter), Owen Bradley (Patsy's producer), Carl Perkins, Mel

Tillis and Billy Walker. This video gives it all to you—Patsy's singing career and her life. *The Real Patsy Cline* has even appeared on TNN. I have watched this video several times and just love it! Rich Kienzle confirmed my opinion of *The Real Patsy Cline* when he stated in *Essential Collector* (September/October 1990 issue, *Country Music*), "...the video's highly worthwhile." *The Real Patsy Cline* is 43 minutes long and only costs \$24.95, #G5C.

THE MUSIC ADDRESS BOOK

At age 35, Michael Levine is regarded as the world's foremost address expert. He wrote *The Address Book* and *The New Address Book*, the latter creating overwhelming praise. Joan Lunden of *Good Morning America* said, "I love the book...and plan to use it!" *USA Today* remarked, "A gem...remarkable, thorough, and accurate." Mr. Levine has gone one step further with his new creation, *The Music Address Book*. This book contains complete and up-to-date addresses for more than 3,000 singers, performers, managers, record companies and fan clubs. This is the ultimate sourcebook for anyone who wants to send a letter, tape or song to the appropriate person. For all you Randy Travis fans, *The Music Address Book* will show you how to contact him. I'm a Clint Black fan, and now I know where to send Clint a letter. For any songwriters trying to break into the music industry, this book is a great resource for contacting record labels and/or singers. *The Music Address Book* is



HOW TO PLAY HARMONICA COURSE

...And you never thought you could play a note of music. Now you can! With the *How to Play Harmonica Course*, you can learn to play the harmonica overnight, even if you can't read music or play a musical instrument. *How to Play Harmonica Course* was written by Marcos, a recog-

nized virtuoso on harmonica, sought after by many harmonica lovers and students for instruction on his insights and techniques. Now, with this course, you can learn his great techniques, too. Your harmonica package includes an easy-to-follow, 57-page illustrated guide with over 30 songs, a step-by-step cassette tape and your very own, world famous Hohner Harmonica. The instruction booklet ranges from the basics to the advanced techniques, and even includes history of

the harmonica. The tunes in the instruction book are your old favorites—the type of familiar songs you have always associated with the harmonica. *How to Play Harmonica Course* is a big seller in *Country Music Magazine*—something you definitely don't want to miss out on! The course is only \$16.95, #G5Y.

BONNIE OWENS & MERLE HAGGARD: JUST BETWEEN THE TWO OF US

Just Between the Two of Us presents a great selection of songs in which making beautiful music together comes naturally to two great country stars, Bonnie Owens and Merle Haggard. Both young and richly talented when this album was recorded, Bonnie and Merle let their individual warmth and honest approach to a song shine throughout each performance, making listeners feel a part of their music. Bonnie sings the melody superbly, Merle



harmonizes handsomely, and they create a record of not-to-be-forgotten songs accompanied by The Strangers. For Hank Williams fans, there's a moving rendition of "A House Without Love Is not a Home." Songwriter Harlan Howard is represented by the tender number, "Our Hearts Are Holding Hands," and Buck Owens' songs, "Forever and Ever" and "I'll Take a Chance," contribute an uptempo touch. Also included are, "Just Between the Two of Us," "Slowly But Surely," "I Wanna Live Again," "That Makes Two of Us," "Stranger in My Arms," "Too Used to Being With You," "So Much for Me, So Much for You" and "Wait a Little Longer, Please Jesus." This is Merle and Bonnie's first album together, re-issued in its original form. We advertised *Just Between the Two of Us* in our Buried Treasures section (January/February 1989 issue, *Country Music*), and it sold tremendously—a big top-seller. *Just Between the Two of Us* is available in LP and cassette formats, and sells for \$13.98 each, #HAT 3073.

alphabetized by name and organized into three sections: The Addresses, Record Labels and Music Business Glossary. *The Music Address Book* also informs you on "Getting Your Music Heard" and "Avoiding Ripoffs." This 228-page book sells for \$8.95, #B1C.



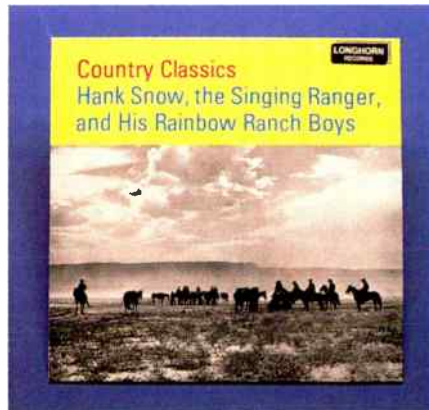


COUNTRY MUSIC ON BROADWAY

Filmed 1964, in New York City, *Country Music on Broadway* is the first feature-length, all-country-music motion picture ever filmed on Broadway. Ralph Emery introduces you to some of the greatest country music stars in the world. You'll see legendary Hank Williams Sr. in his only filmed appearance, uncut and crystal clear. You'll also see George Jones, Hank Snow, Hank Williams Jr., Audrey Williams, Buck Owens, Bill Anderson, Porter Wagoner, Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs, Stonewall Jackson, Ferlin Husky, Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper, Skeeter Davis, Roy Drusky and Merle Kilgore. This film has over 30 hit songs, including: "Hey, Good Looking," "White Lightning," "Waterloo," "Cold, Cold Heart," "Moving On," "Flint Hill Special," "There's a Big Wheel," "A Fool Such as I," "Poor Folks," "Jambalaya," "Big Midnight Special," "Long Gone Daddy" and "Second Hand Rose." This video is in color with better picture quality than the original. You'll just love it, especially if you enjoy seeing superstars early in their careers. *Country Music on Broadway* is 96 mins. long and costs \$49.95, #G8F.

HANK SNOW: COUNTRY CLASSICS

Hank Snow has been singing and playing country music since he was a boy in his native Canada. Hank was on his own when he was very young, and worked for a living at an age when other children were still in school. Knowing what it meant to be poor, and experiencing many different jobs, Hank gained a wide knowledge of the world. Undoubtedly, it was these early experiences that gave Hank the sincerity which was key to his success as a singer. *Country Classics* is a reissue of Hank Snow's first Greatest Hits album, issued in 1955. It includes 12 of his recordings from 1950 on: "I'm Moving On," "Down the Trail of Achin' Hearts," "The Rhumba Boogie," "Bluebird Island," "I Don't Hurt Anymore," "(Now and Then, There's) A Fool Such as I," "The Golden Rocket," "Unwanted Sign Upon Your Heart," "Music Makin' Mama from Memphis," "Marriage Vow," "The Gal Who Invented Kissin'" and "With This Ring I Thee Wed." *Country Classics* is full of "the essential stuff," as Rich Kienzle put it in *Buried Treasures* (May/June 1989 issue, *Country Music*). *Country Classics* is available on LP or cassette and sells for \$13.98 each, #HAT 3084.



WEBB PIERCE: THE WONDERING BOY

Webb Pierce has been very ill this year. From his peak years comes *The Wandering Boy* with 12 of Webb Pierce's best recordings: "Wondering," "There Stands the Glass," "That's Me Without You," "Don't Throw Your Life Away," "Love, Love, Love," "If You Were Me (And I Were You)," "Back Street Affair," "It's Been So Long," "Slowly," "That Heart Belongs to Me," "Yes I Know Why" and "I'm Gonna Fall Out of Love with You." As Rich Kienzle put it in *Buried Treasures* (January/February 1990 issue, *Country Music*), "...those songs encompass nearly all of his best-selling early 1950's honky tonk recordings for Decca, including six of the best honky tonk recordings ever made by anyone." *The Wandering Boy* features the original recordings of these songs and is one of our top-selling records. All you Webb Pierce fans definitely should not miss out on this fantastic collection! As Rich Kienzle states it, "If one album qualifies as the Holy Grail for fans of Webb Pierce's greatest early hits, it's *The Wandering Boy*." *The Wandering Boy* is available in either LP or cassette format, selling for \$13.98 each. #HAT 3119.

NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE

Mail to: Nashville Warehouse. P.O. Box 5090, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779

(Please Print Clearly)	ITEM NO.	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION/COLOR/SIZE	ITEM PRICE	SHPG./HNDLG.	TOTAL
NAME						
ADDRESS						
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ENCLOSED IS A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR \$ PAYABLE TO NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE						
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Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item and \$.95 for each additional item.						1291-1

MEMBERS POLL/JANUARY 1991

VOTE

Your opinions can help influence record companies, radio stations, record stores, concert promoters, managers and performers. As a CMSA member, you have an organized way of making your opinion known, by filling out the Members Poll. We forward the results of the Polls to those involved in the business of country music who are interested in what fans are thinking and doing, and we publish the results.

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records, cassettes or compact discs) in the last month? Yes No
How many records? _____ cassettes? _____ CDs? _____
2. Which ones did you like best? List performers and album titles.

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

3. To vote, list the numbers of your top five favorites from the Top 25 on the last page in this issue.

Singles (list 5 numbers) Albums (list 5 numbers)

Want a Free Fan Club Membership?

4. If you could get a free membership in one country music performer's fan club, whose would you choose?

Been to Any Good Concerts Lately?

5. How many concerts, stage shows or fairs featuring country stars have you attended in the past 12 months? _____
Who were the stars you saw?

Do You Own These Things?

6. Check any of the following owned by you or anyone in your household:
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stereo Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Any 4-Wheel Drive Vehicle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compact Disc Player | <input type="checkbox"/> Roto-Tiller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video Cassette Recorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Riding Lawn Mower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sport Utility Vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Tractor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pickup Truck (Compact) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chain Saw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pickup Truck (Full Size) | <input type="checkbox"/> Power Tools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) | <input type="checkbox"/> Guitar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cowboy Boots | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Musical Instruments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Pickup Truck Accessories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Car or Truck Cassette or CD player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting Equipment | |

Do You Use Blank Tape?

7. How many blank audio tapes did you or anyone in your household buy in the past year? _____

8. How many blank video tapes did you or anyone in your household buy in the past year? _____

9. Which brands of blank audio or video tape did you buy in the past year? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Memorex	<input type="checkbox"/> Scotch-3M	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuji
<input type="checkbox"/> Maxell	<input type="checkbox"/> Kodak	<input type="checkbox"/> Sony
<input type="checkbox"/> TDK	<input type="checkbox"/> BASF	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Do You Use These Products?

10. Do you or anyone in your household use any tobacco product? Yes No

Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Cigarettes	<input type="checkbox"/> Cigars
<input type="checkbox"/> Chewing Tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipe Tobacco
	<input type="checkbox"/> Snuff

11. Check any of the following beverages used by you or anyone else in your household:

<input type="checkbox"/> Bourbon	<input type="checkbox"/> Vodka	<input type="checkbox"/> Brandy (Cognac)
<input type="checkbox"/> Scotch	<input type="checkbox"/> Gin	<input type="checkbox"/> Beer
<input type="checkbox"/> Blended Rye	<input type="checkbox"/> Tequila	<input type="checkbox"/> Wine
<input type="checkbox"/> Blended Canadian	<input type="checkbox"/> Rum	<input type="checkbox"/> Wine Coolers

12. Which fast-food restaurants do you patronize?

<input type="checkbox"/> McDonald's	<input type="checkbox"/> Roy Rogers	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoney's
<input type="checkbox"/> Taco Bell	<input type="checkbox"/> Kentucky Fried Chicken	<input type="checkbox"/> Denny's
<input type="checkbox"/> Burger King	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardee's	<input type="checkbox"/> Wendy's
<input type="checkbox"/> Dairy Queen	<input type="checkbox"/> Pizza Hut	<input type="checkbox"/> Arby's

13. Times per month you visit fast-food restaurants? _____

Do You Do These Things?

14. Check any of the following activities you or anyone in your household do:

<input type="checkbox"/> Attend car races	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable gardening
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a video camera	<input type="checkbox"/> Flower gardening
<input type="checkbox"/> Do-it-yourself home repairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Needlecrafts
<input type="checkbox"/> Do-it-yourself car repairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend country music shows
<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Hunting
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> Camping

15. How old are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 40-44
<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-49
<input type="checkbox"/> 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-54
<input type="checkbox"/> 30-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-59
<input type="checkbox"/> 35-39	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 or over

16. Are you male or female? Male Female

17. Check the appropriate amount of the combined annual income of everyone in your household. Be sure to include all salaries, wages, interest, rent and profits from business or farming.

<input type="checkbox"/> Under \$15,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to \$34,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$19,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 to \$39,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to \$24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to \$49,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 to \$29,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 or more

18. Which means of transportation have you used for vacation travel in the past year? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Airline	<input type="checkbox"/> Train	<input type="checkbox"/> RV
<input type="checkbox"/> Automobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Cruise Ship	

Who Can Vote

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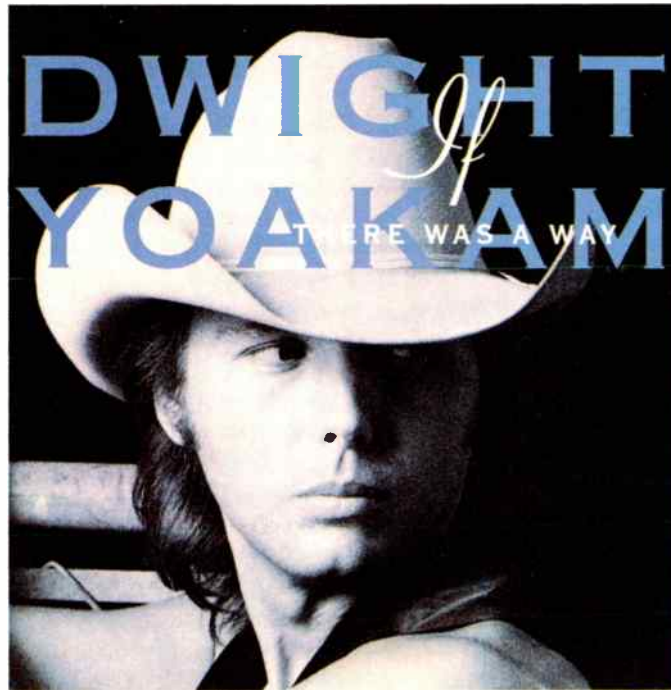
Record Reviews

Dwight Yoakam
If There Was a Way
Warner Bros. 26344-2

I'm not sure where the New Traditionalist movement is at the moment. Some real talent is still out there, but to me, some of the big names are losing their edge or softening to the point of losing what made them special in the first place. A few have been releasing almost too much product, while others seem ill at ease with raw country. They look and sound like folkie singers, comfortable with nothing more than the blue jeans aspect of honky tonk; they'd rather sing "sensitive" ballads than drinking songs. On the other hand, maybe the problem can just be blamed on the fact that New Traditionalism's not the New Thing anymore.

With Dwight Yoakam, however, it's a different story. Actually, it's been two years since we've seen an all-new album by Dwight. Last year all we got was a Greatest Hits collection. When I listen to this new set of 14 songs, I am reminded that Dwight's albums can seem stylized. Each has a quota of certain types of songs: the hard-driving rocker, the back-country ballad, the duet and the cover of a rock or country classic.

This new album's no exception. There's the tale of hopeless alienation, as in "The Distance Between You and Me" and "The Heart That You Own," similar in tone to "I Got You" from *Buenas Noches from a Lonely Room*. Similarly, the straight-ahead rock of "Takes a Lot to Rock You" is much like "Long White Cadillac" from *Just Lookin' for a Hit*.



This pattern would bother me except for one thing: the 14 songs here are of such uniformly high quality and are so well-performed, they almost fall beyond criticism, including the numbers I just mentioned. Dwight's "If There Was a Way" is a punchy rhythm-and-blues ballad that doesn't sound like Buck Owens (the organ is straight old Otis Redding) but is still consistent with Dwight's musical vision. "Dangerous Man" rips from start to finish.

The same goes for "Sad, Sad Music," which has the feel of Willie's early recordings. "I Don't Need It Done," a John Sieger number, conjures up early Fats Domino. Dwight's own song, "You're the One," is a bit more crossover than I would have expected (with strings yet!), but there's no doubt whatsoever he's not aiming for the pop-schlock market (though a

whole album of this might make me worry).

Kostas, one of the hot songwriters of the moment, contributes "Turn It On, Turn It Up, Turn Me Loose," a song custom-tailored to the basic Yoakam sound: Bakersfield honky tonk with plenty of twanging Telecaster from Pete Anderson clanging in and around the vocal.

"Send a Message to My Heart," a Kostas-Kathy Louvin number, pairs Yoakam and Patty Loveless. This was a performance I feared would be empty hype (quota: one duet per album), but as it turns out, it's excellent. The same goes for the gleefully smartass bluegrass tune, "Since I Started Drinkin' Again." Its upbeat cockiness stands out in contrast to the morose, guilt-laden tone of most songs with similar titles.

Dwight and Kostas came up with "Nothing's Changed

Here," a number which the Reprise publicity handout awkwardly characterizes as "almost Patsy Cline-ish." The shuffle beat, similar to "Walkin' After Midnight," probably accounted for this comparison. But this song, too, is consistent with the Yoakam sound, a gutsy, bluesy, medium-tempo song, nicely undersung.

Dwight and Roger Miller, both of whom have previously written their songs alone, teamed up to write "It Only Hurts When I Cry," a number that conjures up Roger's pre-"Dang Me" days when he penned numbers like "When Two Worlds Collide" and "Invitation to the Blues." You can almost tell who contributed which lines. Case in point: "I tell the truth 'cept when I lie" is quintessential Roger.

"Let's Work Together" was a 1970 rock hit for rhythm-and-blues singer, Wilbert Harrison, and the blues-rock band, Canned Heat. It's the closest thing to an outright dud here. Musically it cooks (it might even be a hit for a third time), but the 1960's hippie philosophizing doesn't fit into the tone of the album, standing out like incense burning in a honky tonk.

Pete Anderson's production occasionally strikes me as a bit too perfect. It'd be nice to hear an occasional rough edge. In the end, however, Yoakam's as strong this time as he was on *Guitars, Cadillacs, etc., etc.* four years ago. These 14 tracks give him a chance to stretch and experiment, and he does it well. When he took a year off, some feared he might degenerate into self-parody. He didn't. A year off might help some of his peers as well.

—RICH KIENZLE

*Latest albums from Dwight Yoakam, Clint Black,
Chet Atkins and Mark Knopfler, Michelle Wright,
Don Williams, Tammy Wynette, Tim Ryan, Randy Travis,
Willie Nelson and Mary Chapin Carpenter.*

Clint Black

Put Yourself in My Shoes

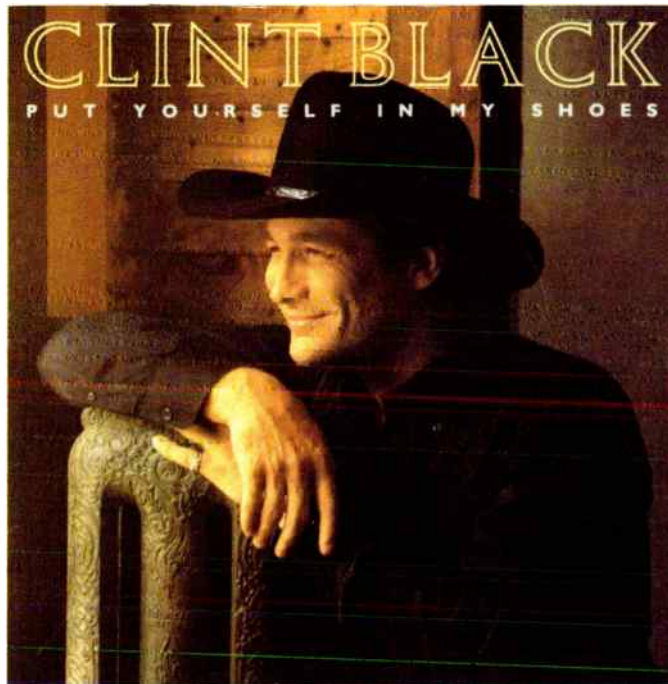
RCA/BMG 2372-4-R

All you really have to do to gauge just how far Clint Black has come in such a short time is take a glance at the cover photo of his debut album, *Killin' Time*, released about two years ago. Back then, Black was just another unknown with a hit single: one more fresh-faced urban cowboy from the nightclub jungles of Houston with a shy sort of grin that seemed to say, "Who, me?"

Today, on the strength of his outstanding debut album, his string of five Number One singles, his fine live show and his undeniable good looks, Black is a bona fide superstar with a confident, mile-wide smile, a big, black cowboy hat and a double-platinum album to prove it. He's kind of like George Strait, only a little less reserved.

Under these circumstances, it's hard to imagine the pressure Black and producer James Stroud must have felt attempting a follow-up album that would keep Clint's phenomenal momentum rolling and stand up to comparison with *Killin' Time*.

Happily, on *Put Yourself in My Shoes*, Black's second album, pressure has resulted in excellence. The more I listen to it and ponder the fact that Black co-wrote all ten selections, the more amazed I am. This is not just a fine album; it's damn near a great one. On it, Black wrote most of the ten songs with his guitarist, Hayden Nicholas, his co-writer on "Killin' Time," "Better Man" and most of the



other hits from *Killin' Time*. He also wrote some alone and one or two with Shake Russell.

Not only has Stroud become a bit more adventurous as a producer and arranger (the evocative synthesizer intro on "Muddy Water," the sad cello on "Loving Blind"). He's also nudged Black toward more adventurous and mature heights as a vocalist. Take, for instance, the frantic falsetto on the final verses of "This Night Life" or Clint's understated but emotionally devastating reading of "A Heart Like Mine."

There's no shortage of fine uptempo songs on here. The title tune, which Black has been performing live for months, is as instrumentally shuffly as it is emotionally doleful. "This Night Life," which kicks off side two, is the frenetic lament of a man who's having so much fun

burning the candle at both ends that he's running himself ragged. "Muddy Water," a wonderfully macho ballad about a man who values his personal freedom even more highly than he does his life, is delightfully reminiscent of one of those "way up north" Johnny Horton ballads of old.

But it's the slow, soulful songs that dominate side two that hit the hardest, dig the deepest and leave the strongest aftertaste. On "Loving Blind" (which Black wrote alone) and "A Heart Like Mine," he seems to have tapped into some deep emotional vein of his own and, in the process, brought to life some dark universal truths about loneliness and alienation in our contemporary land of plenty.

In "A Heart Like Mine," a drunk, pathetically lonely man makes a clumsy, desperate pass at a younger woman, then struggles with the self-

pity and bitter irony of the rejection that seemed destined to follow: *On the dance floor, wanting so much more/ I cross that line just to get that cold shoulder...* "Loving Blind" is the sad, chilling confession of a man who learns the hard way that to need love *too* much or to love *too* desperately can bring down worse consequences than not loving at all. "I sit here all alone, no one's gonna do me wrong tonight," he broods. Black sings these songs with such gut-wrenching credibility that he's surely been there a time or two himself.

All in all, this is pretty strong stuff coming from a fresh-faced guy with the world on a string. The songs on *Put Yourself in My Shoes* bring us face to face with the depths of talent and emotion that lurk beneath Black's urban cowboy good looks and hint at how much more good music he undoubtedly has in store.

—BOB ALLEN

Chet Atkins & Mark Knopfler

Neck and Neck
Columbia CT 45307

Over the years, some of Chet's best albums have teamed him with other great players who either influenced him or were good enough to bring out his best. Merle Travis, Les Paul, Jerry Reed, Hank Snow and Doc Watson are several who come to mind. The quality of his recent work for CBS, however, has been uneven at best, moving between jazz-fusion elevator Muzak and New Age noodling that hardly showed his talent.

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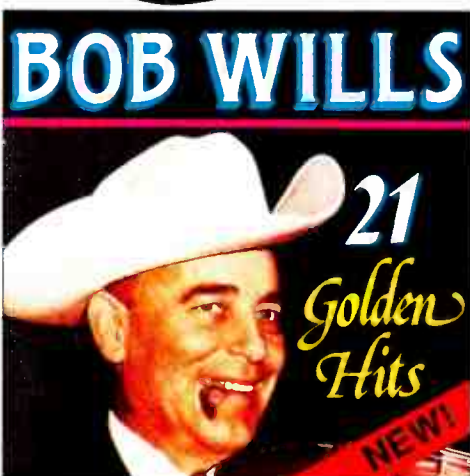
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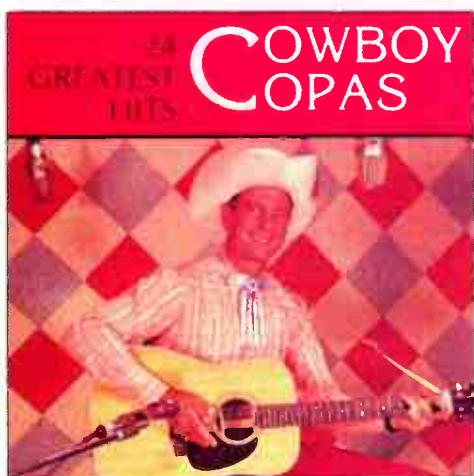
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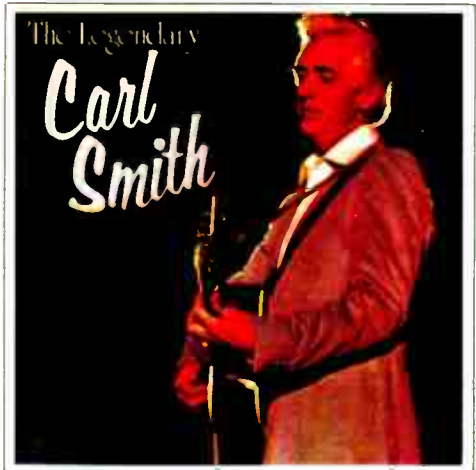
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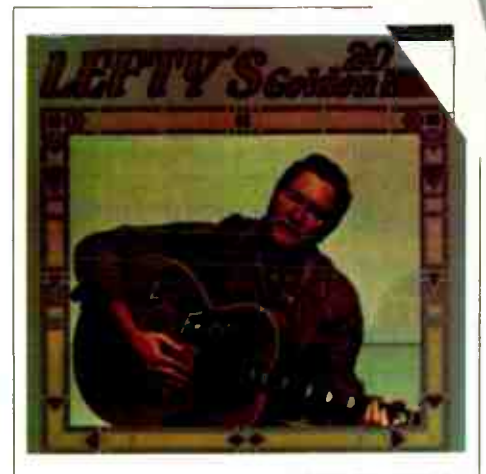
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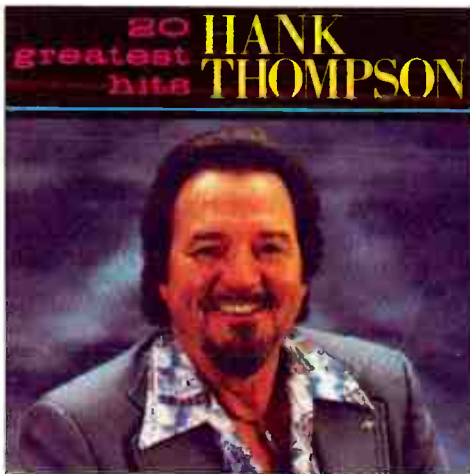
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Record Reviews

baked project as an attack on motherhood and the flag, but it ain't so. I think Travis is a helluva nice guy and a tremendous talent. That's why I hate to see him waste it on this sort of career filler.

—BOB MILLARD

(Unless you think I ought to be shot for saying this, in which case I'm Bob Allen.)

Mary Chapin Carpenter
Shooting Straight in the Dark
Columbia CK 46077

“What we have here is a failure to communicate.” That old line from the movie, *Cool Hand Luke*, unfortunately applies to Mary Chapin Carpenter's latest record.

Carpenter penned or collaborated on nearly every tune on this collection, and there's no faulting her music or her lyrics. In fact, I could go so far as to gush about her songs. “When She's Gone” is a passionate look at the dispassionate business of leaving a cooled romance. “The Moon and St. Christopher” is personal, concrete exploration of the costs of independence, backed by “Middle Ground,” which is as complex and insightful as any song K.T. Oslin ever wrote on that same subject. “What You Didn't Say” is a heartfelt song, and its presentation comes close at times to selling it, only to fall back into the dry lethargy that infects all the tracks here except the first single, “You Win Again.” It's her production and her vocal delivery that fall short.

I don't get it. *Shooting Straight in the Dark* is produced by Carpenter and John Jennings, the same couple who produced Carpenter's previous album, *State of the Heart*, yet the energy and edge that made that collection so remarkable is missing here. *State of the Heart* even



included such great hit songs as “How Do,” “Never Had It So Good,” “Something of a Dreamer” and “Quitting Time.” So, whatever happened to consistency?

Mary Chapin's underlying talent remains unquestioned, but she has basically turned in a mish-mash of dynamic emotions read in monotone. Knowing how great these songs are, I wanted to tear my hair. —BOB MILLARD

Willie Nelson
Born for Trouble
CBS CL 45492

After making a string of pleasant but carelessly tossed off albums in his own Texas studio, then taking yet another excursion into the pop music annals of yesteryear with *What a Wonderful World*, released in 1988, Willie Nelson reentered the country mainstream with his 1989 album, *A Horse Called Music*. Produced by Nashville veteran Fred Foster, *A Horse Called Music* yielded Nelson's first Number One single in some time (“Nothing I Can Do About It Now”) and made it clear that, after more than 30 albums on the Columbia label, Willie still had a grasp on the contemporary music scene.

Born for Trouble, his latest album, also produced by Fred Foster, mines the same mixed bag of mainstream country and easy-listening pop nostalgia as did *A Horse Called Music*. It's been a long, long time—more than a



decade and a half—since Nelson's rough and rowdy musical heyday when he was coming on strong with hard-riding, high-energy barnstormers like *Shotgun Willie* and *Red Headed Stranger*. And some of the semi-geriatric croonfests on *Born for Trouble*—“The Piper Came Today” by Chester Lester, Beth Nielsen Chapman's “You Decide” and Nelson's lazy rendition of the oft-recorded pop standard, “Little Things Mean a Lot”—reinforce just how long it's been. Though pleasant, these slightly syrupy, string-laden anthems of mid-life crisis make you wonder if Nelson isn't hankering to become country's answer to Perry Como.

Happily, the album includes a few low-key but reassuring tips of the hat to the free-wheeling lifestyle Nelson celebrated so brilliantly in his younger days. “Ten With a Two” (co-written by—who else!—that unregenerate, honky tonk rake, Mac Vickery) is bound to rankle the feminists. It's the hilarious confession of a silver-tongued barstool lothario whose perception of the Bo Derek/vital statistics/Richter scale is so hopelessly muddled by whiskey that he's forever leaving the bar at two with a ten and waking up at ten with a two. The album's title tune, written by Fred Carter Jr., is a similar celebration of wayward ways, good times and fortuitous misadventure. Contrite it isn't.

Singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman, who wrote Nelson's recent hit, “Nothing

I Can Do About It Now,” as well as one other song on *A Horse Called Music*, emerges as something of a hero on *Born for Trouble*. She seems to have gotten the knack for writing “Willie Nelson” songs down pat. Two of her songs here, the whimsical, philosophical “Ain't Necessarily So” and the similar-sounding “It'll Come to Me” (co-written with the ubiquitous Don Schlitz), are vivid summations of Nelson's own devil-may-care, let-the-chips-fall-where-they-may life view.

In addition to Fred Foster (who produced some of Nelson's earliest albums), Nelson has also touched base with another noted sidekick of yesteryear. He and veteran songwriter, Hank Cochran, contribute two contemporary laments on lost love, “This Is How Without You Goes” and “(I Don't Have a Reason) To Go to California Anymore.”

Born for Trouble is a faint cry when stacked against powerhouse Nelson albums of old such as *Shotgun Willie* and *Red Headed Stranger*. (Why is it everything Willie records these days sounds as if it were done between rounds of golf?) All the same, this one's a satisfying collection. Its musical styles and attitudes pleasantly reinforce the notion that ol' Willie still has some “chart life” left in him. —BOB ALLEN

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Essential Collector / Books, Videos and Recordings

■ Books ■

Barbara Mandrell: Barbara Mandrell's *Get to the Heart* (written with George Vecsey) is Number Four on the *New York Times* bestseller list as I write this. I've never been the biggest fan of Barbara's music. But for those who think stars are immune to the sort of tragedies that strike everyone else, this is a sobering and inspiring book. The thread tying it together is her near-fatal 1984 automobile accident. The book's format is similar to that of Bill Anderson's autobiography, which alternated chapters dealing with the development of his own career with chapters on his wife's auto accident and subsequent recovery from brain damage. Given the similar circumstances, this wasn't a bad format for Mandrell to use for her story.

One thing you can say, Barb doesn't hold much back. Though some detractors consider her image sticky sweet, she's blunt, gossipy and outspoken here. The feistiness and determination she demonstrated back in her youth is reflected on every page. And though she didn't grow up in backbreaking poverty as many other artists did, she started her active performing career far earlier than many of her peers, learning first accordion and later, steel guitar and saxophone.

Her anecdotes about getting her feet wet at age 11 onstage in Vegas with Joe and Rose Lee Maphis, performing in Vietnam in the late 1960's and working her way to superstardom in the 70's and 80's are both revealing and, at times, funny. She's just as frank about the ups and downs of her youthful (but successful) marriage to Ken Dudney and about the trials and the joys she experienced with sisters Louise and Irlene doing their NBC

prime-time variety series.

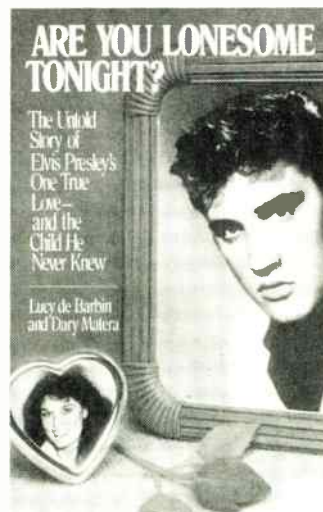
But her chilling account of her post-wreck ordeal elevates this beyond being just another country music autobiography. Driving with her son and daughter outside Nashville, Barbara was struck head-on by another car, and her life changed in seconds. The driver of the other car was killed. Normally she ignored seat belts; the fact that all three were them that day saved their lives. A severe concussion left her temporarily spouting obscenities she'd never have used and caused memory lapses. It took metal pins and surgery to repair serious damage to her broken leg; brutal depression nearly ended her career. On top of it all, a legal technicality that required she sue the deceased driver's estate brought her an avalanche of bad publicity. She struggled back, but the physical and emotional toll made the climb anything but easy. With a supportive family, she finally resumed her career and even had a third child.

Elvis: Are You Lonesome Tonight? by Lucy de Barbin with Dary Matera purports to be the story of Elvis' first real love, which produced his first child. That much *may* be correct. Lucy was a Louisiana girl who'd grown up in extremely rough conditions, and her battles against adversity, including an abusive husband, are a real study in courage. On that level, the story works fine.

But as far as Elvis' life is concerned, much of this book is so shaky factually that its overall credibility is wide open to question. Example: Elvis is depicted for the first time anyplace as hanging around Louisiana in 1953 trying to get into the music business. That's over a year before he actually began recording for Sun. When this was supposed to have hap-

pened, he was working at Crown Electric, and the idea of a serious singing career was still some months away.

Some diehard fans refuse to believe Elvis died of drug abuse and was at times out of touch with reality. Those folks won't want to read *Life with Elvis*, written by his stepbrother, David Stanley. This is not a hatchet job like Albert Goldman's *Elvis*, though. Stanley, who's frank about his own serious bouts with drug abuse, saw Elvis at both his best and his worst.



Some of the stories are funny, but overall it's a dark book, filled with ugly stories about the arrogance of David and his brother Ricky because they were Elvis' stepbrothers. Since this book appeared, Stanley's stated that he felt Elvis, depressed over his drug problems, committed suicide, a point he doesn't make here. Stanley's credibility can be looked at two ways. For one who was admittedly out of it himself through much of his time with Presley, he has a surprisingly precise memory. But much of this has been corroborated elsewhere. And Elvis' position about drugs is ambiguous, too; he lectures David against them, all the while abusing them himself.

The Boy Who Would Be

King, penned by Elvis' cousin Earl Greenwood, is less trustworthy than the Stanley volume. Greenwood was around in Elvis' youthful days in Tupelo, before the Presleys moved to Memphis, and some of his stories make good reading. One of his revelations involves Gladys Presley's drinking, but this has been described elsewhere.

A few errors are apparent. The film, *Viva Las Vegas*, appeared in 1964, not 1966. Likewise, it would have been impossible for Colonel Parker to regale Elvis' parents with stories about country stars Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash in 1955 since both men were unknowns. Jerry wasn't yet recording, Cash was just getting started, and neither ever had much to do with the colonel.

■ Videos ■

Legends of Country Music:

This video is among the most important historical country music videos on the market today. In the mid-1950's, filmmaker Al Gannaway came to Nashville to produce film shorts of a number of Opry stars in performance. These movies remain among the best mementos of the Nashville of the 1950's, shot in beautiful color that brings out the flashy Nudie suits worn by many artists then. Performances by Ernest Tubb, Webb Pierce, Ferlin Husky, The Wilburn Brothers and The Louvin Brothers, Marty Robbins, Carl Smith and Chet Atkins are all first-rate. Opry founder George D. Hay, "The Solemn Ole Judge," was nearing the end of his time with the show, but he kicks things off with his famous steamboat whistle.

Some of the best moments come from Opry artists seldom seen on film, including rare comedy appearances by Lew Childre and Rod Brasfield (with longtime

partner, Minnie Pearl), Texas piano legend Moon Mullican, and The Jordanaires in their pre-Elvis gospel phase. A few stars are all but unrecognizable in their youth, such as a short-haired June Carter. There are only a few duds, most notably the Old Hickory Singers. The finale, a rousing version of "Why Baby Why" sung by Pierce, Robbins and Smith (inexplicably wearing six-guns), ties everything together nicely.

Video: Video documentaries, unlike books, aren't easy to fictionalize. And if you're weary of Elvis books and want to concentrate on what really mattered—the early music—this two-volume set, *Elvis: The Great Performances*, made up of class acts from start to finish, will suit you fine. Narrated by George Klein, disc jockey and long-time Elvis crony, this extremely well-done series is built around some of his most essential live performances.

Though "My Happiness," the newly-discovered 1953 custom recording he made for his mother, is prominent in this collection, the high points from his early appearances on the Milton Berle, Steve Allen, Dorsey Brothers and Ed Sullivan shows are what make it worthwhile. The TV appearances have been available before, but by culling the absolute best performances from all of them, the producers make it possible to hear Elvis at his finest. One of the few lows is his spot on Frank Sinatra's *Welcome Home Elvis* special, which took place in 1960 shortly after his discharge from the Army. It shows him repressing his rock instincts, as he did all too often after leaving the Army, in favor of singing something that would please Ol' Blue Eyes, who made little secret of his contempt for rock 'n' roll when Elvis burst onto the scene four years earlier.

The movie clips are noteworthy since they concentrate on the better musical performances, like "Got a Lotta Livin' to Do" from *Loving You* and "Trouble"



from *King Creole*. For fans of his earliest days, when he started recording for Sun, the rare home movies of Elvis onstage during that period are revelations. If you've hated those Elvis videos that emphasize the legend over the music, both these hour-long videos are the answer. The beautifully designed slipcovers incorporate excellent booklets written by Peter Guralnick.

Ernest Tubb: *Thanks, Troubadour, Thanks*, a documentary salute to Ernest Tubb, remains the only such production on E.T. Unless someone can do better, it stands as the definitive review of his career from its beginnings. It brings together rare film and video clips and firsthand accounts from Ernest's vast number of friends.

Former duet partners

Loretta Lynn and Kitty Wells, Kitty's husband Johnny Wright, singers Merle Kilgore (now Hank Jr.'s manager), Porter Wagoner, Billy Walker, Skeeter Davis, Jean Shepard and Charlie Walker all contribute vivid recollections of their friendships with E.T. So do ex-Troubadours Jack Greene, Buddy Emmons, Cal Smith, Steve Chapman and Lynn Ousley. Cal Smith recalls a drunken night when Ernest kicked him (and later, Jack Greene) off the bus. Ex-Troubadour Billy Parker recalls asking E.T. if the band could quit wearing their famous white hats. (Yes, Tubb replied, if they first quit the band.) The tape ends with a clip from the Dick Clark special, *Ernest Tubb: An American Original*, one of his last major TV appearances.

■ Recordings ■

Hank Williams: Several years ago the Country Music Foundation released two LP's worth of rare Hank Williams demo recordings which included early versions, accompanied only by his own acoustic guitar, of some of his biggest hits. Demo recordings were (and still are) used to interest other singers in recording a writer's songs. Now, with LP's on the way out, the CMF has combined both albums on one compact disc titled *Rare Demos: First to Last* (CMF 067D).

These 24 songs, all either Hank tunes or songs he co-wrote, bring together the first versions, before he

recorded them commercially, of "Jambalaya," "Honky Tonk Blues," "Your Cheatin' Heart," "You Better Keep It on Your Mind" and "Pan American." Some of the earliest demos, including "Pan American," were made in Alabama before he began recording for Sterling Records in 1946. A number of the other songs were hits for other artists. Molly O'Day recorded "Singing Waterfall." "There's Nothing as Sweet as My Baby" was a hit for Carl Smith in 1951. Some of these numbers were released after Hank's death with overdubbed accompaniment. One, the gospel song, "Heaven Holds All My Treasures," was not included on the earlier albums. The booklet included has three rarely seen photos of Hank and fine notes by the CMF's Bob Pinson, the expert on Hank's recording career.

Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper: In last issue's Essential Collector, we reviewed Wilma Lee & Stoney Cooper's gospel album, *Walking My Lord Up Calvary Hill*. Another album by this raw-edged, traditional duo, released by Starday around the time of Stoney's death in 1977, was *Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper Sing The Carter Family's Greatest Hits*. Now available on cassette (Hollywood HT-236), its content is pretty self-explanatory: the pair singing some of the most enduring material of The Carters. Some numbers have become virtual country-folk standards, including "Wildwood Flower" and "Hello Central, Give Me Heaven."

It's clear Wilma and Stoney knew this material inside and out when they recorded it, for the performances were both intense and knowing (if a little bit samey in places). Not many singers today have Wilma Lee's intense, throaty, rough-edged vocal style, which particularly stands out on "Worried Man Blues," "Lulla Walls," "You Are My Flower" and the enduring, upbeat hymn, "Keep on the Firing Line."

How to Get These Collectibles

Available at prices shown. Books: Barbara Mandrell, *Get to the Heart* (B1G) \$19.95/de Barbin, *Are You Lonesome Tonight* (B2K) \$15.95/Stanley, *Life with Elvis* (B2M) \$13.95/Greenwood, *The Boy Who Would be King* (B2A) \$19.95. VHS Videos: Elvis, *Great Performances* Volume One (G5F) and Volume Two (G5H) each volume \$19.95/Ernest Tubb, *Thanks, Troubadour, Thanks* (V2N) \$14.95/*Legends of Country Music* (V1W) \$49.95. Recordings: Hank Williams, *Rare Demos: First to Last* (CMF-067D) CD only \$19.98/Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, *Sing The Carter Family's Greatest Hits* (HT 236) cassette only \$6.98. To order, send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 1291EC, P.O. Box 5090, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779. Add \$2.50 postage and handling for first item ordered, \$1.00 each additional. To insure proper processing of your order, you MUST include the product code of each item ordered (given in parentheses following product name) and the department number, 1291EC.

Buried Treasures /

Reissues,
Rarities and the
Hard-to-Find

Webb Pierce: Webb Pierce's brilliant and influential 1950's recordings for Decca helped define the idiom we all know as honky tonk. His voice was among the most distinctive and powerful of any singer's of any era. His expressive phrasing remains unmatched today. He retired from active performing years before his current bout with cancer, so material has been scarce for awhile. Decca's successor, MCA, hasn't exactly hustled to keep his stuff in print either.

Bear Family's four-CD boxed set, *Webb Pierce: 1951-1958* (BCD 15522), rectifies all that by offering nearly every issued and unissued number Webb recorded for Decca through those years—his most important period. You get the original versions (as opposed to those awful, later remakes) of "Wondering," "Back Street Affair," "The Last Waltz," "More and More," "Slowly," "Yes I Know Why" and "There Stands the Glass," with crystal-clear digital sound far superior to the sound on the original singles.

The collection also provides real insight into Webb's perfectionism. He often cut songs that became big hits—like "Slowly," "Yes I Know Why" and "I'm Gonna Fall Out of Love With You"—several times before he got a version he felt worthy of release. The non-hits include some interesting gospel numbers—some never released—as well as "Why Baby Why" and "Little Rosa," his hit duets with Red Sovine, and a little known vocal version of Bill Justis' instrumental hit, "Raunchy," released under the name "Shady Wall."

For Pierce fans, the booklet enclosed with the CD's is illustrated with rare and incredible photos, some in color, and the discography is finely detailed. Otto Kittsinger's research is superb (I



didn't know Webb was among the first country singers to overdub). Unfortunately, the organization of his liner notes makes all this fine research seem dull and difficult to read. By breaking up the story into unrelated sections and overemphasizing how the research was done, Kittsinger allows the point of Webb's recording career to get lost. Such fine work deserves to be better presented.

Hank Snow: When Bear Family's Richard Weize says he's doing the *complete* Hank Snow, he's not kidding. The second boxed set, *The Singing Ranger, Volume Two* (BCD 15476), is just out: four CD's covering all 105 of Hank's 1954-1958 RCA recordings, 23 never before released. Bear Family's third Snow CD box, a collection of his Thesaurus radio transcriptions, will be ready soon.

By 1953, Snow was one of country music's superstars, with the freedom to experiment in the studio. He continued recording his Hawaiian and Caribbean-flavored numbers but also cut some fine instrumentals, like the 1955 hit, "Silver Bell," a duet with Chet Atkins (Chet began producing Hank's RCA records in 1957). The hits of this period, "Yellow Roses," "Cryin' Prayin' Waitin' Hopin'," "Mainliner," "Born to Be Happy," "Hula Rock" and "Conscience I'm Guilty," all benefit from the digital sound.

No set this large gets by

without some duds. The maudlin recitations, "Old Doc Brown," "What Is a Father" and "The Horse's Prayer," evoke a more sentimental, innocent era. They sound hilarious and campy today. However, they make up only a small part of the entire set, and with a CD player you can bypass them easily. Charles Wolfe's notes, based on extensive new interviews with Snow (who's seldom talked about his career in detail), reveals much about how the music was made. As usual, Wolfe's research is superb and highly readable.

Some major U.S. labels try hard with country reissues, some don't. With *Hank Snow: Collector's Series* (RCA 2279), RCA doesn't. This stingily-programmed, eight-song cassette has only three real hits: "I'm Movin' On" (produced by Steve Sholes, not Chet Atkins as the "notes" indicate), "Hula Love" and "A Fool Such As I." "Ramblin' Rose" was a very minor hit (Number 93). RCA should be ashamed of themselves for this mess.

Carl Perkins: Depending on your budget, two Carl Perkins collections might prove worthwhile. The first one, Bear Family's *The Classic Carl Perkins* (BCD 15494), is a five-CD boxed set that covers Carl's entire career—his 1954 emergence from the honky tonk scene around Jackson, Tennessee, his early ballads for Sun and his rockabilly glory in "Blue Suede

Shoes" and "Boppin' The Blues." Rounding out the collection are the complete recordings from his late 1950's run at Columbia and mid-1960's stint with Decca.

The Sun period speaks for itself, and though most of this material has been released in other forms, it's never before been available with Bear's breathtaking digital sound. Hearing Carl develop "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Honey, Don't" in alternate takes in the studio proves that, despite the much-touted spontaneity of the Sun sound, it was never quite as off-the-cuff as everyone assumes. The occasional, off-the-wall country hits, like Freddie Hart's "Drink Up and Go Home" and Carl Belew's "Lonely Street," remind us of Perkins' country roots, ties he himself never lost sight of.

In February 1958, Perkins began recording for Columbia but with far less success. Some of the 45 songs he cut in his four years there were good, a few were even great, but many were merely adequate. Only a few made the charts, and the more he used Nashville session musicians, the more predictable he became. The later Decca material suffered from many of the same problems, with the best sides being six numbers recorded in England in 1964 with the British rock band, Nashville Teens.

The second Carl Perkins collection is Rhino's *Five After Five: The Best of Carl Perkins* (R 70958). Available on CD and cassette, it picks up his post-Sun years but sticks to the essential, and best, late 1950's and 1960's Columbia and Decca material ("Pink Pedal Pushers" and "Five After Five"). Among the standouts are three strong, late 1960's Columbia numbers, including his 1968 hit, "Restless," and the beautiful "Just Coastin'," a brief solo guitar excursion that would

do Merle Travis proud. The 1970's Mercury recordings include his ferocious 1975 version of "Big Bad Blues" featuring searing lead guitar from Scotty Moore. Carl's version of Fats Domino's "I'm in Love Again," from his acclaimed 1978 album, *Old Blue Suede's Back*, rounds things out.

Legends of Country Guitar: I programmed and annotated Rhino Records' *Legends of Country Guitar, Volume One* (R70718), so, as usual, just the facts. Done in conjunction with *Guitar Player Magazine*, the collection features instrumentals spotlighting specific guitarists. The cassette has 14 tracks, the CD 17. Joe Maphis and Larry Collins are represented by "Hurricane," Chet Atkins by his 1949 number, "Galloping on the Guitar" (backed by Homer & Jethro). The set includes the original instrumental versions of Arthur Smith's "Guitar Boogie" and Hank Garland's "Sugarfoot Rag," plus Doc Watson's "Windy and Warm," Carl Perkins' Sun recording of "Tennessee" and Jimmy Bryant and Speedy West's "The Night Rider."

Legendary Nashville studio guitarist, Grady Martin, is represented by his sublime Tex-Mex guitar work on Marty Robbins' "El Paso." Steel guitarists spotlighted are Joaquin Murphey on Spade Cooley's "Oklahoma Stomp," Bud Isaacs on Webb Pierce's "Slowly" (the song that launched the pedal steel in Nashville) and pioneer electric steel player, Bob Dunn, on Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies' 1936 number, "Cheesy Breeze." The CD-only numbers are Roy Lanham's "Lost Weekend," the Texas Troubadours' "Honey Fingers" (featuring guitarist Leon Rhodes and steelman Buddy Charleton) and Merle Haggard's "I Think I'll Just Stay Here and Drink," with solos by Nashville studio guitarist, Reggie Young.

Note: The initial run of these albums includes a horribly noisy, distorted version of

Bob Wills' "Twin Guitar Special." Rhino will correct this defect on the next pressing and replace any defective versions returned.

Jimmy Bryant and Speedy West: Guitarist Jimmy Bryant and steel guitarist Speedy West hadn't recorded together in nearly 20 years when they reunited in Nashville in 1975, long after the wild instrumental duets they recorded for Capitol made them legends. With Pete Drake producing, they recaptured their old fire, but the album was never released. Jimmy died in 1980; a year later a stroke ended Speedy's playing days. Drake held onto the tapes, as did his widow Rose after Pete died in 1988. Earlier this year, Speedy and Rose decided to release the album.

The result is *For the Last Time* (Step One SOR-0062), a 10-song cassette. The music varies, as it always did. The mellow, laid-back tone of Speedy's songs, "Moonlight Valley" and "The West Is Calling," and Bryant's "Rolling Sky" is balanced by Bryant's bluesy, rock-oriented "Boogie Man" and "On the Move," on which Bryant doubles fiddle and guitar. The driving "Chase" and "Wound Tight" revive their dizzying ensemble work, which also shines on the more relaxed "Speedy Recovery."

Billboard Top Country Hits: Rhino's just released five more volumes of its *Billboard Magazine* series, *Billboard Top Country Hits*, this bunch covering the years 1964-1968. The cassettes and CD's con-

tain the same r songs, all ten among the greatest hits of that year.

1964 was the year of Miller, and two of his biggest hits, "Dang Me" and "A-Lug," are many cases are the de for each r son's di Smith, f that yer Lefty Frizzell. Michigan." Buck O. "My Heart Skips a Beat" and "Together Again." Marty Robbins' "Begging to You" was his biggest hit that year. George Jones had "The Race Is On," while Johnny Cash checked in with "Understand Your Man." Jim Reeves' "I Guess I'm Crazy" was climbing the charts when he died in a plane crash on July 31, 1964.

1965 gave Roger Miller his crossover smash, "King of the Road." Buck gave us three classics that year: "Tiger by the Tail," the instrumental "Buckaroo" and "Before You Go." Del Reeves' "Girl on the Billboard" was his first Number One record. Eddy Arnold had "Make the World Go Away." Sonny James had both "I'll Keep Holding On" and "Behind the Tear." Jim Reeves' posthumous hits included "This Is It," while Dave Dudley's "Truck Drivin' Son of a Gun" became a trucker standard that year.

1966 marked the beginning of Jack Greene's hitmaking career with "There Goes My Everything." David Houston's "Almost Persuaded" estab-

1967 year. "All the Time," Tammy Wynette's "My Elusive Dreams," David's "You Mean the World to Me," Tammy's "I Don't Wanna Play House," Bill Anderson and Jan Howard's "For Loving You" and George Jones' "Walk Through This World With Me." Sonny James continued turning pop hits into country hits, this time with The Seekers' "I'll Never Find Another You." It was also a good year for Bakersfield musicians. Wynn Stewart had his biggest hit ever with "It's Such a Pretty World Today." Buck Owens' "Sam's Place" continued his string of Number Ones, while Merle Haggard hit with "The Fugitive."

1968 brought Jeannie C. Riley to the forefront with "Harper Valley P.T.A.," while "Stand by Your Man" became forever associated with Tammy Wynette. Sonny James had "Heaven Says Hello." Hag gave us two of his greatest: "Mama Tried" and "Sing Me Back Home." Johnny Cash made himself a household word with his live version of "Folsom Prison Blues." Henson Cargill had his only Number One record, "Skip a Rope." Conway Twitty's first Number One country record, "Next in Line," came that year. Glen Campbell continued his path to crossover stardom with "Wichita Lineman," and Eddy Arnold had his 28th Number One record with "Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye." —RICH KIENZLE

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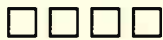
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TOP 25

Singles

1. K.T. Oslin *Come Next Monday*
2. Conway Twitty *Crazy in Love*
3. George Strait *I've Come to Expect It From You*
4. Alan Jackson *Chasin' That Neon Rainbow*
5. Clint Black *Put Yourself in My Shoes*
6. Shenandoah *Ghost in This House*
7. Don Williams *Back in My Younger Days*
8. Garth Brooks *Unanswered Prayers*
9. Vince Gill *Never Knew Lonely*
10. Joe Diffie *Home*
11. Holly Dunn *You Really Had Me Going*
12. Exile *Yet*
13. Alabama *Forever's as Far as I'll Go*
14. Ricky Van Shelton *Life's Little Ups and Downs*
15. Reba McEntire *You Lie*
16. Highway 101 *Someone Else's Trouble Now*
17. Garth Brooks *Friends in Low Places*
18. T Graham Brown *Moonshadow Road*
19. Baillie and The Boys.. *Fool Such as I*
20. Willie Nelson *Ain't Necessarily So*
21. Randy Travis & George Jones *A Few Ole Country Boys*
22. Marty Stuart *Western Girls*
23. Mark Chesnutt *Too Cold at Home*
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7. Garth Brooks *Garth Brooks*
8. George Strait *Livin' It Up*
9. Alan Jackson *Here in the Real World*
10. Kathy Mattea *A Collection of Hits*
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12. Keith Whitley *Greatest Hits*
13. Clint Black *Put Yourself in My Shoes*
14. Ricky Van Shelton *RVS III*
15. Mark Chesnutt *Too Cold at Home*
16. Travis Tritt *Country Club*
17. The Judds *Love Can Build a Bridge*
18. Shenandoah *Extra Mile*
19. Alabama *Pass It On Down*
20. Lorrie Morgan *Leave the Light On*
21. Dwight Yoakam *If There Was a Way*
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