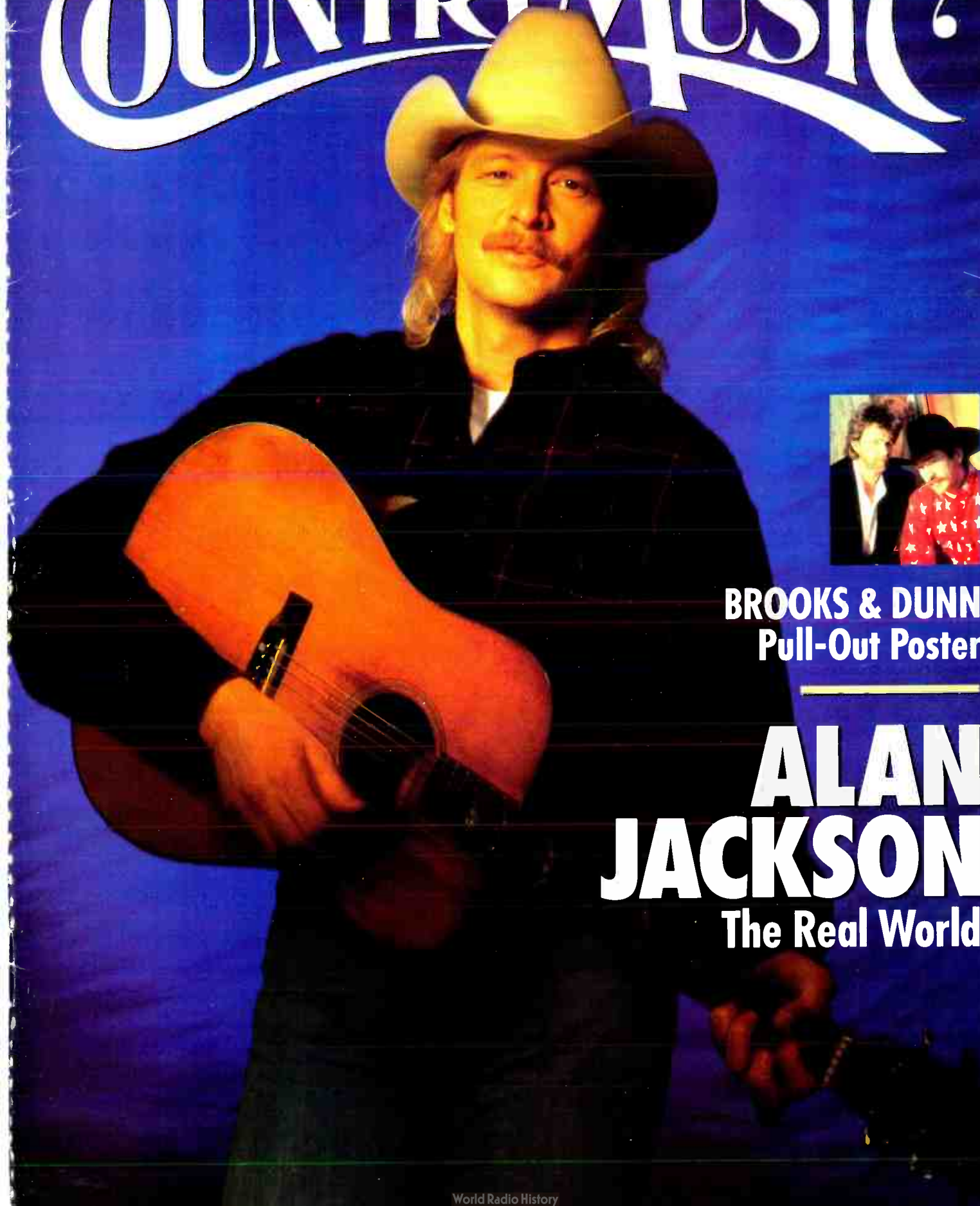


John Michael Montgomery • Naomi Judd • Alison Krauss

MAY/JUNE 1994

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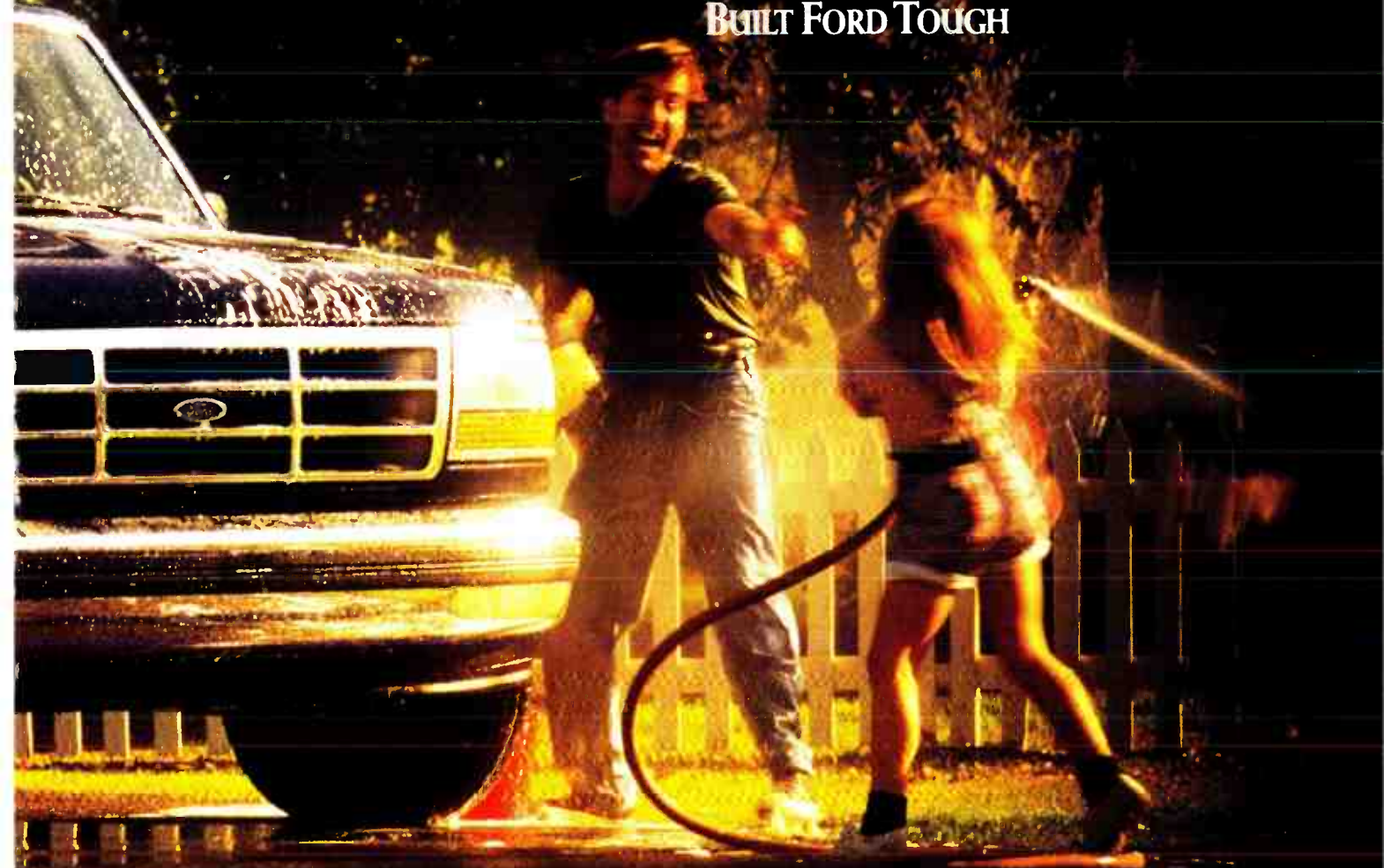
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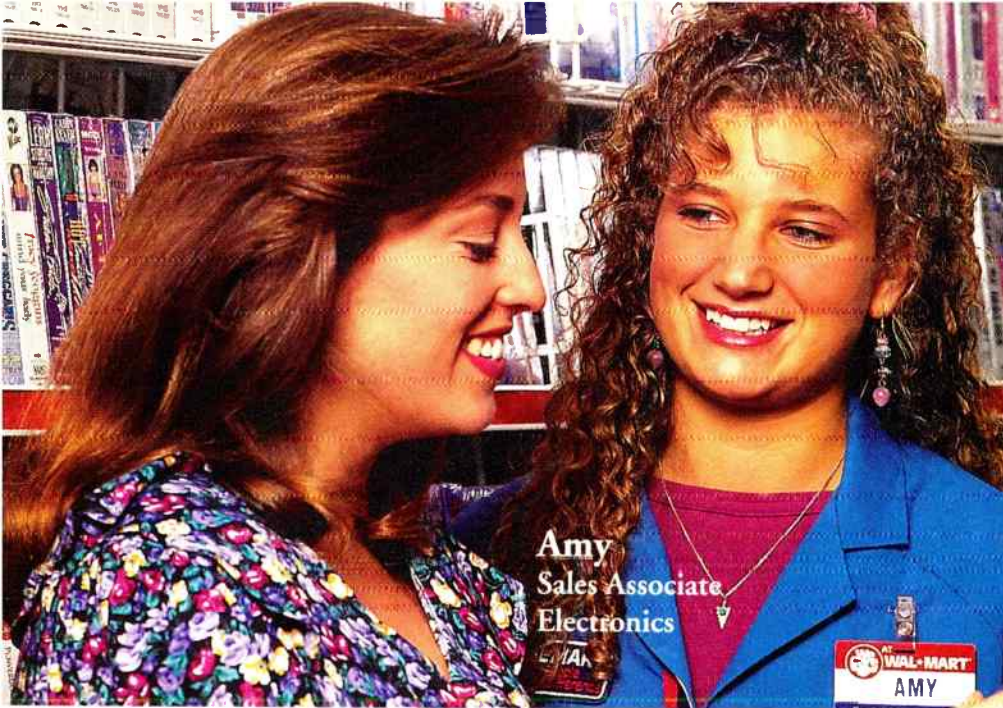
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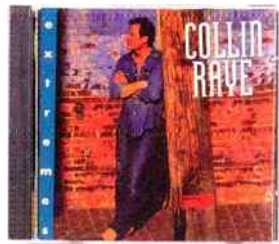


*"When I like
a new song
that I hear
on the radio,
I always want
to get the CD."*

Amy



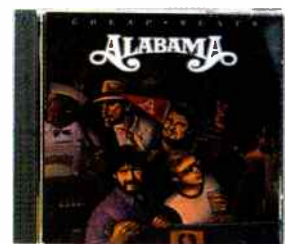
Reba McEntire
"Greatest Hits Volume Two"
MCA



Collin Raye
"Extremes"
Epic



Doug Stone
"More Love"
Epic



Alabama
"Cheap Seats"
RCA



Confederate Railroad
"Notorious"
Atlantic



Clint Black
"No Time to Kill"
RCA



Neal McCoy
"No Doubt About It"
Atlantic



Trisha Yearwood
"The Song Remembers When"
MCA



John Michael Montgomery
"Kickin' It Up"
Atlantic

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COUNTRY MUSIC

FEATURES

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Just how tall are they? How many Number Ones? Get the facts and photos too on the boot-scootin' twosome who make people dance.
- 43 John Michael Montgomery Kicks Back** *by Michael McCall*
We see a different side of John Michael Montgomery as he enters into his second year of success. It's time to have more fun both onstage and off. You hear it in his music, too.
- 48 Alison Krauss: Music That's Timeless** *by Geoffrey Himes*
Take old-timey bluegrass, a little folk, some country and an original sound, and you've got something like Alison Krauss' musical mix. It's a recipe that works. Now she's into producing, too.
- 52 20 Questions with Naomi Judd** *by Michael Bane*
With her current autobiography a resounding success, Mama Judd is still touching people's lives. What with book signings and book tours, she's doing what she loves—meeting people. Early retirement hasn't hurt Naomi.



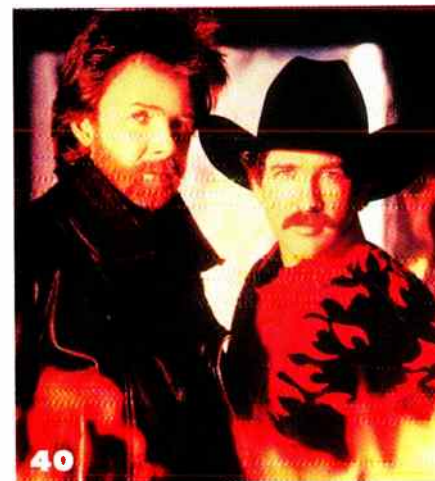
COVER STORY

- 34 Alan Jackson Lives in the Real World** *by Michael McCall*
Wanna meet a down-to-earth guy? Well, here's one, right down to his cowboy boots and love of family. You won't find anything controversial about this Jackson, just a man who calls his own shots, sings from the heart and writes that way, too. He's under new management, but he's still the boss.



DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
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| People
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World Radio History

People



National Founding Chairwoman Liz Taylor spoke at the recent AmFAR benefit, Clint Black entertained, and the crowd sang "Happy Birthday."

TWO-STEPPING FOR A CURE

Country music was the theme of "Two-Stepping for a Cure," the American Foundation for AIDS Research's recent fund-raiser in Los Angeles. The benefit, which raised \$850,000, also served as a tribute to AmFAR founder **Elizabeth Taylor**, who was celebrating a birthday. **Clint Black** provided entertainment, and afterward led the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" to Ms. Liz, whose charitable works are well known. Clint, who was accompanied by his wife, **Lisa Hartman**, has been involved in the country music AIDS awareness program since its inception earlier this year.

CLOSE ENOUGH TO FEEL THE SWEAT

There he was, **Sammy Kershaw**, hot off the farm, wearing boots and jeans with dirt on the knees and his shirttail out. "My favorite lady," he said as he saw me standing there, and on his knees he went (I swear), with witnesses like **Sandy Neese** and the entire media department at Mercury Records looking on. Then we embraced and embraced. Close enough to see the sweat? Close enough to feel the

sweat! And it don't get no better than that. Sam's got new music coming out in June. Titled *Feelin' Good Train*, the album contains a duet with hillbilly god, **George Jones**. This third CD/cassette promises to go platinum just as his other two, *Don't Go Near the Water* and *Haunted Heart*, have. Sam's one of my faves and a fave of you fans as well. He's like us...real.

SIXTEEN TONS AGAIN

Years ago, the great **Merle Travis** penned the wonderful "Sixteen Tons," and it went on to become a megahit record for **Tennessee Ernie Ford**. Done my heart good to learn that Liberty's **Cactus Brothers** had recorded the gem, and featured Ernie in the video. Both Travis and Ford are Hall of Famers, and both, unfortunately, have passed away.

TOBY KEITH

A kiss and a hug and another of both from **Toby Keith**. All the young men love me, and I love them right back. Speaking of Toby, did you hear the band at the Super Bowl play his "Should've Been a Cowboy" every time the Cowboys scored?

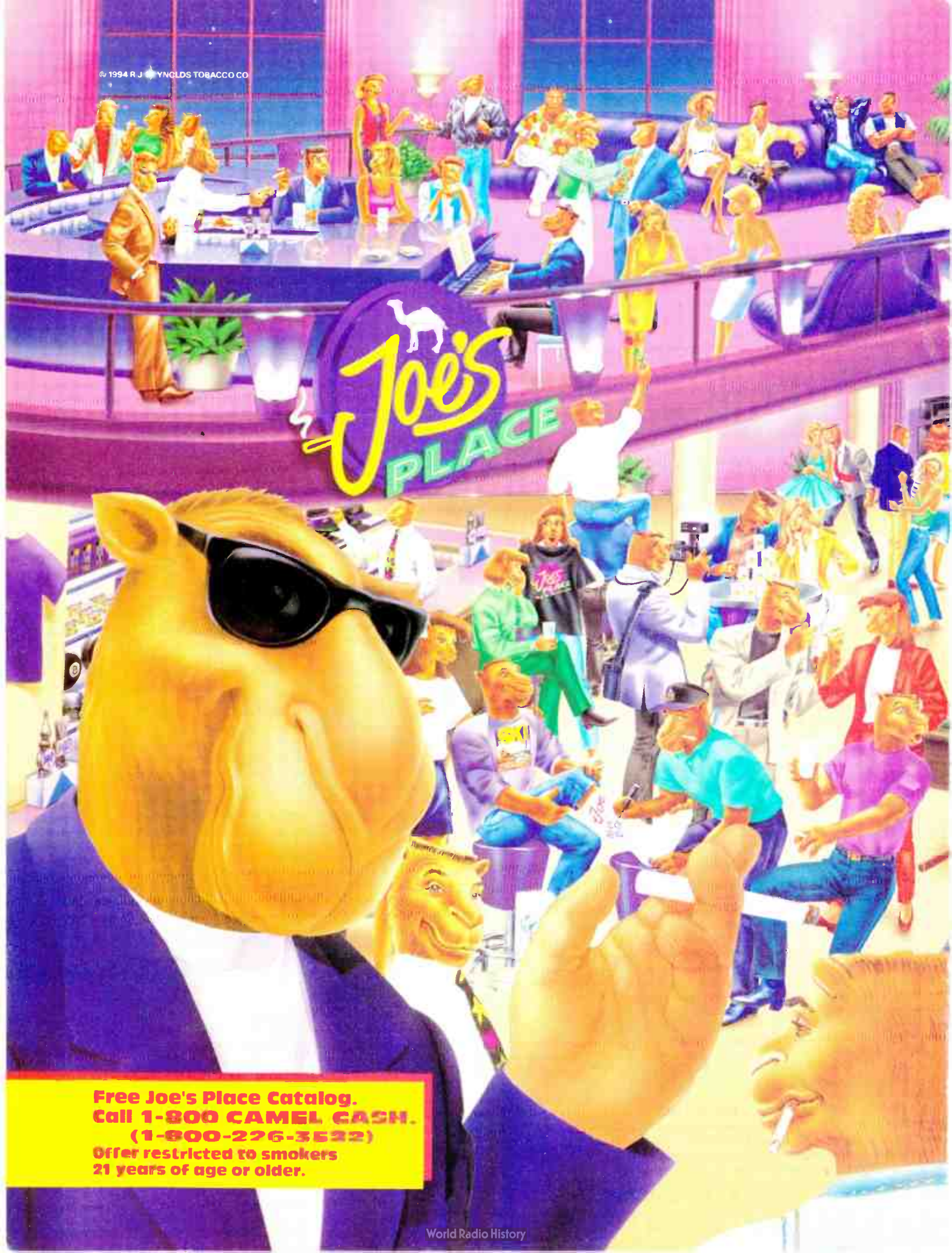
Since Toby wrote the song and sang it, he'll make a bundle. Well, he won't make as much as **Dolly Parton** made off of **Whitney Houston's** cover of "I Will Always Love You." I bet Dolly's made a couple mill off the worldwide hit. As for Toby, he and me kiss every time we meet—including at the Gold party for his self-titled debut album.

DECCA UP AND RUNNING

Congratulations to my friends in new positions who are set to resurrect Decca Records on Music Row: **Shelia Shipley** (yep, female and a beauty) is Senior VP and General Manager. **Mark Wright** is VP and head of A&R. **Frank Liddell** (the man with the ears) is Director of A&R, and **Lori Evans** is Promotions Management/Executive Assistant (Queen of Everything). Their first music will be by the wonderful **Dawn Sears**. I believe **Mark Chesnutt** will ease over to the MCA-owned label since Mark Wright has produced his music since day one. This is exciting for Music Row. Anytime a female gets a job they deserve, it makes good sense. Women have waited for the men to finish their golf game since the 1940's in this hillbilly town.

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman



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People

to rush back to the hotel for a breakfast show. Ain't show biz wonderful and glamorous! Sony's newest act, **Ken Mellons**, not only created a buzz for himself, the Nashville native recalled sneaking into the Seminar in past years, thinking how great it would be if he had a record deal. Another answered prayer, Mr. Mellon.

"**David Ball** is the best. I'm betting on him," says publicity-minded **Susan Niles** with Warner Brothers. His showcase drew as much applause as John Michael Montgomery, according to Susan. Warner's **Victoria Shaw** wowed 'em from the Unistar suite with her unplugged performance. **Diamond Rio**, Arista's fab group, flew in specifically for the seminar. Labelmate **Pam Tillis** was looking sharp. Liberty's **Renee Bell** is definitely a friend of Nashville's songwriters. The label's new Songwriter's Series is being implemented as we speak. Renee's choice of writers, **Jon Vezner**, **Kostas**, **Pat Alger** and **Jill Colucci**, tested their wares at the Liberty suite, and radio just flipped out. It was a great week of stars for all our radio friends.

SONGWRITERS GET THEIR DUE

TNN's Country Songwriters Awards required "casual dress." Friends, "Nashville casual" is boots 'n' jeans, floor-length lace gowns, suits and ties for regular suit



Loretta Lynn performed Conway Twitty's hit, "It's Only Make Believe," bringing the Opry house to its feet.

wearers, trashy/colorful dress for yours truly, and white and black and every other color in between. In other words, anything goes. Hosted by **George Jones** and **Lorrie Morgan**. **Alan Jackson** led off the night performing "Chattahoochee," which he co-wrote with **Jim McBride**. It

was named Song of the Year by the fan vote. Alan was also honored with **Randy Travis** for "She's Got the Rhythm and I Got the Blues" and for his self-penned "Tonight I Climbed the Walls." **Vince Gill**, too cute with a three-day old beard, was honored with his pianist, **Pete Wasner**, for "Don't Let Our Love Start Slipping Away" and for "One More Last Chance" with **Gary Nicholson**. **Monty Holmes** and **Donny Kees** were honored for the **George Strait** song, "When Did You Stop Loving Me," which George Jones performed live with ease.

The following night the Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) held their annual banquet/award ceremony at Lowes Vanderbilt. NSAI members voted **Clint Black** as Songwriter/Artist of the Year. Song of the Year was **Hugh Prestwood's** "The Song Remembers When," recorded by **Trisha Yearwood**. **Dennis Linde's** son, 17-year-old **Will Linde**, accepted his dad's Songwriter of the Year Award. Recent Linde hits are "John Deere Green," "It Sure Is Monday," "Janie Baker's Love Slave" and "Queen of My Double Wide Trailer." Other winners were **Kostas' "Ain't That Lonely Yet,"** which also garnered a Grammy recently for **Dwight Yoakam** (Best Country Vocal Performance, Male); Jackson's "Chattahoochee"; the wonderful "Queen of Denial" (written by **Pam Tillis**, hubby **Bob DiPiero** and **Gretchen Peters** and sung by Pam); also Pam's hit "Let That Pony Run," penned by Peters; "Trashy Women" written by **Chris Wall** and recorded by **Confederate Railroad** and **Sammy Kershaw's** "She Don't Know She's Beautiful," from the pens of **Bob McDill** and **Paul Harrison**.

For Alan Jackson, who didn't understand how come all the people loved "Chattahoochee," a song about "a lil ole river in Georgia" so much, let me just say, Mr. Jackson, everybody has got a Chattahoochee. It may have a different name and be in a different locale, but all of us have one. I sure recall mine.

The very best part of the songwriting do's was when the legendary **Loretta Lynn**, honoring her best friend, the late **Conway Twitty**, performed his "It's Only Make Believe." There wasn't a dry eye in the Opry house. On camera, **Dee Henry**, Conway's second wife, and his eldest son **Michael** (from wife number one) sat on one side in tears, while former wife **Mickey's** two daughters **Joanie** and **Kathy** sat on the other side and wept. All parties involved loved Conway, but they don't love each other. As the bitter battle of Dee not being included in the will continues, the rift gets wider and deeper.

ACM NOMINEES



Hanging around at Universal Studios in Hollywood after announcing the nominees for the Academy of Country Music Awards were Crystal Bernard (of the sitcom, *Wings*), Doug Supernaw, Finola Hughes (of TV's *Blossom*), Buck Owens and Mark Miller (of *Sawyer Brown*). The ACM show airs May 3rd on NBC. Bet all the friends and neighbors will be watching.

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Words and Music by Dolly Parton
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People

BIG BUCKS



Buddy Killen and Ricky Van Shelton at the annual Easter Seals fund-raiser event held at Killen's Stockyard in the City of Music. Music and bidding was what happened. Killen had mercy on no one. The clothes you see on Ricky belong to him no longer...they were literally sold off his back, as were his Mickey Mouse watch and two rings, belt, buckle and pocket knife. They also took the shirt off Tracy Byrd's back and his hat, etc., etc. Others who showed up to "sing and give" were Billy Ray Cyrus, Lorrie Morgan, Mark Collie, Joy White, Toby Keith and Gibson Miller Band. Donating auction items were Garth Brooks, Troy Aikman, Dolly Parton and Tanya Tucker. Over \$138,000 was raised.

STRAIT TALK

George Strait is as handsome today as he was 12 years ago when he first came to town and signed a deal with MCA Records. Celebrating a couple of Number One singles—"Easy Come, Easy Go" and "I'd Like to Have That One Back"—the handsome Texan came into town riding in a stretch limo. He was also presented a triple platinum award for the soundtrack album, *Pure Country*. George recollected how, when he first visited MCA and saw all the Gold on the wall, he asked manager **Erv Woolsey**, "Reckon I'll ever get one of these?" Erv allowed as he might. Songwriters **Aaron Barker** and **Bill Shore** were honored for penning the two singles. After presenting George with platinum, MCA's **Bruce Hinton** and **Tony (wow) Brown**, gave him a hand-tooled leather saddle with MCA written in the leather and silver trim. The party, held at the Wild Boar, was truly wonderful. It was obvious that George enjoyed seeing the room filled with guests, but he liked

me best of all....Can you imagine, me in the room with both George Strait and Tony (wow) Brown at the same time? Overworked hormones, ladies, as well as sweat glands.

CONNIE AND EVE IN THE GARDEN OF ASCAP WITH SHELBY

Connie Bradley, **Eve Vaupel**, **Shelby Kennedy** and all the other ASCAP-ers honored songwriters who write and stars who sing with do after do, and I was there. Honorees were "I Never Knew Love" from the pens of **Larry Boone** and **Will Robinson**, sung by **Mr. Doug Stone**; "My Second Home" written and sung by **Tracy Lawrence**, whose co-writers were **Kenny Beard** and **Paul Nelson**; "I Just Wanted to Know" recorded by **Mark Chesnutt**, writer **Tim Mensy**; and "I Swear" penned by the hot team of **Gary Baker** and **Frank J. Myers** and recorded by **John Michael Montgomery**. ASCAP-ers always have a table bountifully filled with almost everything your heart desires, plus plenty of liquid refreshment.

HEAVY, HEAVY METAL

An amazing collection of ten album and video certifications were recently presented to Music City's most famous red-head (besides me)—**Reba McEntire**. Honored were her *Merry Christmas to You* album (Gold), the videos *In Concert* and *For My Broken Heart* (both platinum), *It's Your Call*, *Greatest Hits Volume Two*, *Whoever's in New England*, *Reba* and *Sweet Sixteen* (platinum albums), plus double-platinum awards for *It's Your Call* and *Rumor Has It*. Nobody told me how much money all this makes, so I can't tell you. But I'll tell you this: Reba and husband/manager **Narvel Blackstock** are building a complex on Music Row's 17th Avenue South. And you can't buy that land with pennies.

MONROE ON THE MEND

Following a fall at his Goodlettsville farm, **Bill Monroe** underwent surgery at Baptist Hospital where they placed a pin in his hip. He's now at home and hopes to be back on the road in late spring.

HARD ROCK AND HILLBILLIES

Nashville's Second Avenue is the newest location for a Hard Rock Cafe. With rockers like **Elvis Presley**, **Carl Perkins** and **Bob Dylan** once favoring Music City as a recording venue and rockers like **John Hiatt** and **Steve Winwood** currently residing here, there are some hard rock connections in this hillbilly town. On hand for the groundbreaking ceremony with Mayor **Phil Bredesen** were **Vince Gill** and **Charlie Daniels**.

TRAVIS GETS NERVOUS

Travis Tritt is the official host of VH1's weekly show, *Country Countdown*, but that doesn't make him nervous. What makes him nervous, he says, is singing on the stage of the Opry and performing the National Anthem on any stage.

TWO-STEPPING TANYA

Once again those smart folks at Black Velvet will sponsor their Smooth Steppin' Showdown with the two-steppiest gal in country music, **Miss Tanya Tucker**. The finals will again be held at Opryland on August 8th. Watch local newspapers to see when the semi-finals will be in your area, or call 1-900-TWO-STEP for details. Cost is 99 cents a minute, proceeds to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

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Brooks & Dunn



Mary-Chapin Carpenter



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THE NOMINEES

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- A Lot About Livin'—Alan Jackson
- Common Thread—The Songs of the Eagles
- Hard Workin' Man—Brooks & Dunn
- I Still Believe In You—Vince Gill
- It Won't Be The Last—Billy Ray Cyrus
- This Time—Dwight Yoakam

SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

- A Bad Goodbye—Clint Black/Wynonna
- Ain't Going Down—Garth Brooks
- Ain't That Lonely Yet—Dwight Yoakam
- Chattahoochee—Alan Jackson
- Does He Love You—Reba McEntire/Linda Davis

SONG OF THE YEAR

- Can I Trust You With My Heart—Travis Tritt
- Chattahoochee—Alan Jackson
- Does He Love You—Reba McEntire & Linda Davis
- I Don't Call Him Daddy—Doug Supernaw
- I Love The Way You Love Me—John Michael Montgomery

TOP MALE VOCALIST

- Clint Black
- Garth Brooks
- Billy Ray Cyrus
- Vince Gill
- Alan Jackson

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

- Mary-Chapin Carpenter
- Reba McEntire
- Pam Tillis
- Tanya Tucker
- Wynonna

NEW MALE VOCALIST

- John Michael Montgomery
- Doug Supernaw
- Clay Walker

TOP VOCAL GROUP

- Asleep At The Wheel
- Confederate Railroad
- Diamond Rio
- Little Texas
- Sawyer Brown

TOP VOCAL DUET

- Clint Black/Wynonna
- Brooks & Dunn
- Darryl & Don Ellis
- Reba McEntire/Linda Davis
- Reba McEntire/Vince Gill

NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

- Faith Hill
- Lari White
- Kelly Willis

NEW VOCAL DUET OR GROUP

- Blackhawk
- Boy Howdy
- Gibson Miller Band

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

- Clint Black
- Garth Brooks
- Alan Jackson
- Reba McEntire
- Travis Tritt



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People

MORE MARTHA

For 12 weeks this year, on Tuesday nights beginning in June, Martha White Flour will again sponsor bluegrass, this time at the beloved (and renovated) Ryman Auditorium. The grand ole man of bluegrass, **Bill Monroe**, will start off the shows as he did the music in 1939. Others skedded to perform in the summer-long series are **Marty Stuart**, **Tammy and Jerry Sullivan**, **Bela Fleck**, **Jerry Douglas**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Johnson Mountain Boys**, **Alison Krauss**, **Del McCoury**, **John Hartford**, **The Nashville Bluegrass Band**, **Fairfield Four**, **The Cox Family**, **The Osborne Brothers** and **Jim & Jesse**, and more. Doesn't this sound fabulous?

CONGRATS—AND SYMPATHY—FOR KETCHUM

With the passing of **David Houston**, **Hal Ketchum's** induction into the Grand Ole Opry made him active member Number 71 (**Joe Diffie** held that number when he joined before Houston's death). The Opry has a poet in Ketchum, and he proved so with the wonderful rhyme he penned upon his arrival. Our sympathy to Hal on



Hal Ketchum was joined onstage by **Ferlin Husky** at the Grand Ole Opry when Ketchum sang Husky's classic hit, "Wings of a Dove," at his induction.

the death of his father **Frank Ketchum**. When Hal was made an Opry member, his dad braved the journey from upstate New York for the event. Three weeks later he succumbed to the cancer that had plagued him for a long time.

BLONDIE ON A CYCLE



Lorianne Crook and **Charlie Chase**, hosts of TNN's *Music City Tonight*, and record producer **Richard Landis** stare at a shocked **Lorrie Morgan's** doubled-over heehaw. **Lorrie** was obviously happy with the motorcycle, a gift from Landis, and will no doubt ride it. Her late hubby, **Keith Whitley**, was a lover of cycles, and the two used to ride a lot. You may be interested in knowing that **Lorianne** is a cyclist as well. **Lorrie's** current album, *Watch Me*, by the way, has been certified platinum, making her three for three. Her new one's on the way.

DINAH SHORE A NATIONAL TREASURE

Tennessee lost its first lady of song, and country music lost a real good friend. Saying that is saying this: We were deeply saddened by the death of **Dinah Shore**. The Winchester native and Vanderbilt graduate never forgot her Tennessee roots. She was as down to earth as a country mama, yet as classy as a politician's wife; as sharp as a college professor, yet as witty as a comic. Her kind heart and ready smile endeared her to all of America when decades ago she sang "See the USA in your Chevrolet," and we all went out and bought one. **Dinah Shore** was one of the first to introduce country music to mainstream network television. I remember seeing stars the likes of **Mel Tillis** and **Roy Clark** in living black and white receiving the type of thunderous applause usually reserved for the pop artists of the day. I also recall meeting **Dinah** on her daytime TV set in Hollywood when I accompanied an act out there. She treated me with the same respect as the stars on the show. **Dinah Shore**—a national treasure. She will be sorely missed.

BRC

Must let you fans know that good-hearted **Billy Ray Cyrus** had three young guests from Vanderbilt Children's Hospital at his recent recording session. **BRC** arranged a limo to pick up the ailing youngsters. And if that isn't love, God didn't make big red apples.

People

VICTORY FOR REBA AND LINDA



Reba McEntire and Linda Davis' hit duet, "Does He Love You," picked up a Grammy this year for Best Country Vocal Collaboration. The two celebrated their win at the Country Radio Seminar.

Decca label (owned by MCA—see story elsewhere in this section) were present, as were their new employees, Frank Lidell and Lori Evans. Other MCA-ers included the great Walt Wilson, Jim Kemp, John Day, Katie Gillon, Sarah Brosmer, Janet Rickman, Scott Borchetta and the whole MCA gang. We do party!

A WOMAN'S HOUSE

Frances Anne Varallo works in a production capacity on The Statler Brothers' television show on TNN. Frances Anne was named to a committee to help raise funds for "A Woman's House," the first all female-built and sponsored woman's home by Habitat for Humanity. Narvel Blackstock, who is Reba McEntire's manager/hubby (and a handsome one at that), overheard Frances Anne talking about the project and the effort to raise the \$40,000 needed to commence building. Narvel went home and told Reba, who was so impressed that she wanted to underwrite the 40G's and did! The all-female building crew completed the house in nine days, and a single mother of two children ages five and two moved in. The working mother will pay for the house through an interest-free loan. This good work was done via the heart and purse of Miss Reba McEntire. Fans, now that's a star.

LO AND OFF IT CAME

There he was, without white bucks but wearing white boots, on the *Music City Tonight* set showing how to cast a fishing line, and off lifted his toupee right from his head. I'm speaking of the forever young Pat Boone. Losing your head is one thing, losing your hair, now that's another. Pat borrowed Aaron Neville's hat, and host Lorianne Crook totally lost her composure.

WYNONNA

Did you see Wynonna on *Late Night with David Letterman*? I swear, the woman is now in the Patsy Cline category when it comes to belting out a song. And the way she handled Letterman once she was "on the chair" just blew me away. Speaking of the great Ms. Wynonna, she and all the other MCA-ers have new digs these days, situated on 16th Avenue, Comfort as well as quality best describes the house that Wynonna, Reba, George Strait and Vince Gill built. MCA threw a party to celebrate the grand opening, and, naturally, I attended. Except for Tammy Wynette, I didn't see any other stars, but the Powers That Be were on hand, let me tell you. Head of the World of MCA, Al Teller, along with Zach Horowitz and Uni Prez John Burns all came from L.A. for the do. After hugging me, MCA/Nashville Prez Tony (wow) Brown took a can

of green spray paint and sprayed "I love Hazel" on the huge billboard, one of four, placed just for spraying. So naturally I sprayed "Tony (wow) Brown" so labelhead Bruce Hinton and the whole Row could see. Shelia Shipley and Mark Wright, who are set to resurrect the old

RANDY'S LATEST FILM



Randy Travis' latest made-for-TV movie, *Wind in the Wire*, debuted on TNN in late April. Lou Diamond Phillips (right) has a cameo. Check local listings for repeat dates, and check record stores for new music from Randy—his latest album, *This Is Me*, was also due in late April.



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World Radio History

People

TOP GROSSING

The five top-grossing touring acts in the U.S. for 1993 were **Grateful Dead**, **Paul McCartney**, **Rod Stewart**, **Jimmy Buffett** and **Garth Brooks**. Music City scored with two out of five, and that ain't bad. Garth, of course, is country's top everything, and Jimmy Buffett is guilty by association. See, Buffett lives in Nashville. Besides, he's so close to being country that I count him as one of us. So there.

JAM KICKOFF

Branson's Americana Television's second Jam, held at the Grand Palace Theater, featured **Mel Tillis**, **Mickey Gilley**, **B.J. Thomas**, **The Lennon Sisters**, **The Baldknobbers** and **Bob Eubanks**, who hosts a game show this season at Moe Bandy's Americana Theater. Also, on hand: **Tony Orlando**, **Shoji Tabuchi**, **The Osmonds**, **The Presleys**, **Charley Pride**, **Moe Bandy**, **John Davidson**, **Louise Mandrell** and **Boxcar Willie**. The event helped kick off the network's new 24-hour-a-day original programming.

STONES AND JONES

The Rolling Stones' bad boy guitarist, **Keith Richards**, graced Music City for a paying gig. Richards added his talents to **George Jones'** forthcoming unplugged CD. Don't get scared, **Emmylou Harris** was there as well, just to be sure that everything stayed "close to the heart," as were **Ricky Skaggs**, **Marty Stuart** and other pickers. I think Richards should be thrilled to work with Jones, don't you?

HONORING GREATS WAS GREAT

The black tie event held at Opryland Hotel's Tennessee Ballroom was tearfully wonderful. Called "An Evening of Country Greats," and honoring members of the Country Music Hall of Fame, it featured today's stars recalling those of yesterday. Participating were **Carlene Carter**, **Tanya Tucker**, **Marty Stuart**, **Mary-Chapin Carpenter**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Joe Diffie**, **Trisha Yearwood**, **Shelby Lynne** and **Randy Scruggs**. Hall of Famers present included greats like **Pee Wee King**, **Loretta Lynn**, **Chet Atkins**, **Earl Scruggs**, **Owen Bradley**, **Jimmy Dickens** and **Grandpa Jones**. The program will be aired on TNN soon and promises to be an annual event. Thanks to **Joe Diffie**, his companion **Liz Allison**, his manager **Danny Morrison**, and the rest of our table for a wonderful evening.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BRENDA!



On tour with **The Oak Ridge Boys**, **Brenda Lee** was surprised onstage at their show in Bismarck, North Dakota, when the boys wheeled out a birthday cake for her. The cake weighed in at 135 pounds, so there was enough to go around for all the fans. Just think, the cake must've outweighed Brenda herself!

HOLLYWOOD MEETS HILLYWOOD

Who would get **Waylon Jennings**, **Reba McEntire**, **Clint Black**, **Amy Grant**, **Tracy Lawrence**, **Ricky Van Shelton**, **John Michael Montgomery**, **Suzy Bogguss**, **Confederate Railroad's Danny Shirley** and **Tammy Wynette** singing "Amazing Grace" at the same time? **James Garner** and **Mel Gibson**, that's who. Yep, the two journeyed to Hillbillydom to record the song for the movie, *Maverick*. Others out for the sing-along were **Hal Ketchum**, **Radney Foster**, **Faith Hill**, **Larry Stewart**, **Joy White**, **Eddie Rabbitt**, **John Anderson**, **Billy Dean**, **Kathy Mattea** and **Restless Heart**. Several singers have cameos in the movie. The same night, **Gibson**, **Joy White** and **Radney Foster** went to the Station Inn for bluegrass by **The Sitemen**—**Terry Eldredge**, **Mike Bub**, **Ed Dye**, **Ronnie McCoury**, **Jimmy Campbell** and **Larry Perkins**. They play with **The Osborne Brothers**, **Jim & Jesse** and **Del McCoury**.

HAPPY OCCASION

"Better'n a prayer meeting" is how my wonderful friend, *Billboard's* **Ed Morris**, described **Neal McCoy's** Number One

party held on Music Row at **Sammy B's**. After three and a half years and two albums, **Neal** topped the charts with his wonderful single on Atlantic, "No Doubt About It." With tears in his eyes the real **McCoy**, **Neal**, accepted accolades from labelhead **Rick Blackburn**, whom he thanked for sticking by him until he scored. So many aren't given the chance **Rick** and Atlantic gave **Neal**. Such a fine, deserving artist.

NUMBER ONE

The wonderful song, "Grandpa's Mandolin," penned by my own **Billy & Terry Smith** along with **Mark Irwin**—all three EMI writers—reached Number One on the bluegrass music charts by **IIIrd Tyme Out**. *Grandpa's Mandolin* is also the title of their current CD. I am so proud of this.

T. TOMMY

DJ Hall of Famer **T. Tommy Cutrer** is hospitalized in Hendersonville, Tennessee, with a serious back ailment. A former Opry announcer and well-known country music DJ, "T" is probably best remembered as the announcer on the **Lester Flatt** and **Earl Scruggs** syndicated television show which was sponsored by **Martha White Flour**.

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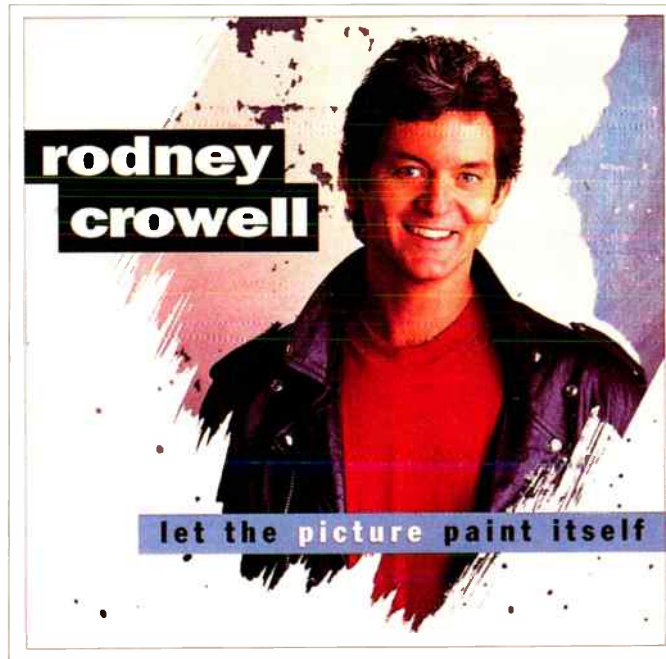
Rodney Crowell
Let the Picture Paint Itself
MCA 11042

Rodney Crowell is a man of many talents, but his greatest may be a gift for melody. It's not just that his melodies are catchy and pleasurable—though they certainly are—it's that they also rise and fall in perfect sync with the mood of each song. Moreover, his vocal lines have a knack for linking up so perfectly with the rhythm section that each reinforces the other.

There's no better showcase for Crowell's melodic flair than his wonderful new album, *Let the Picture Paint Itself*, his first for MCA following stints at Columbia and Warner Bros. Reuniting with Tony Brown, his co-producer on 1988's Gold-plated *Diamonds & Dirt*, Crowell has recaptured the easy-going country charm of that earlier album, which yielded four Number One singles.

The new album boasts a fistful of songs with similar hit potential. "Big Heart" is a valentine to a woman with "them long legs and that soft skin...a big heart and her own mind," but far more expressive than the predictable lyrics is the music. The song opens with a giddy guitar lick and follows with a chorus melody that holds notes against the crisp swing as if overcome by infatuation. Even the verse delivers a tune worth remembering.

Many of the uptempo numbers recall nothing so much as those early-60's Buck Owens singles which married pop hooks to a Bakersfield beat and a Telecaster guitar figure. The best example is "Give My Heart a Rest," which combines



a strong chorus melody with a seductive verse plus a catchy guitar hook. As Crowell complains with comic exaggeration about a woman who's putting his heart through a wringer, the tongue-in-cheek, wise-guy attitude is reinforced by the melodies and the beat.

Crowell's new labelmate Trisha Yearwood, and former labelmate Patty Loveless, join him for some sweet vocal harmonies. Loveless adds the high end to the delightful chorus on "The Best Years of Our Lives," a two-step Bakersfield-like tribute to adulthood, which Crowell insists is far better than a youth spent "half-way stoned and half-way out of my mind." Crowell wrote "I Don't Fall in Love So Easy," the best song on Yearwood's new album, and sang harmonies on her version. "I Don't Fall in Love So Easy" is also the best song on Crowell's album, and this time Yearwood sings harmony behind Crowell's lead vocal.

The song is overflowing

with memorable melodies; the verse is as strong as the contagious chorus, and the bridge and guitar tag are nearly as compelling. The music radiates joy through its major chords and wariness through its minor chords, a perfect match for the mixed feelings of the lyrics. The singer, falling in love at first sight, takes great pains to explain that he doesn't make a habit of being swept off his feet.

Guy Clark, who co-wrote Crowell's hit, "She's Crazy for Leavin'," co-wrote two more with Crowell for *Let the Picture Paint Itself*. "Stuff That Works" aims for the cracker-barrel wisdom of Clark classics like "Old Friends" or "The Carpenter" but strains too hard for the effect and falls short. Much better is "The Rose of Memphis," a rocking recollection of a road trip "from Bourbon Street to Beale Street" to meet the finest woman along the Mississippi. Although he's starting in New Orleans rather than Nashville,

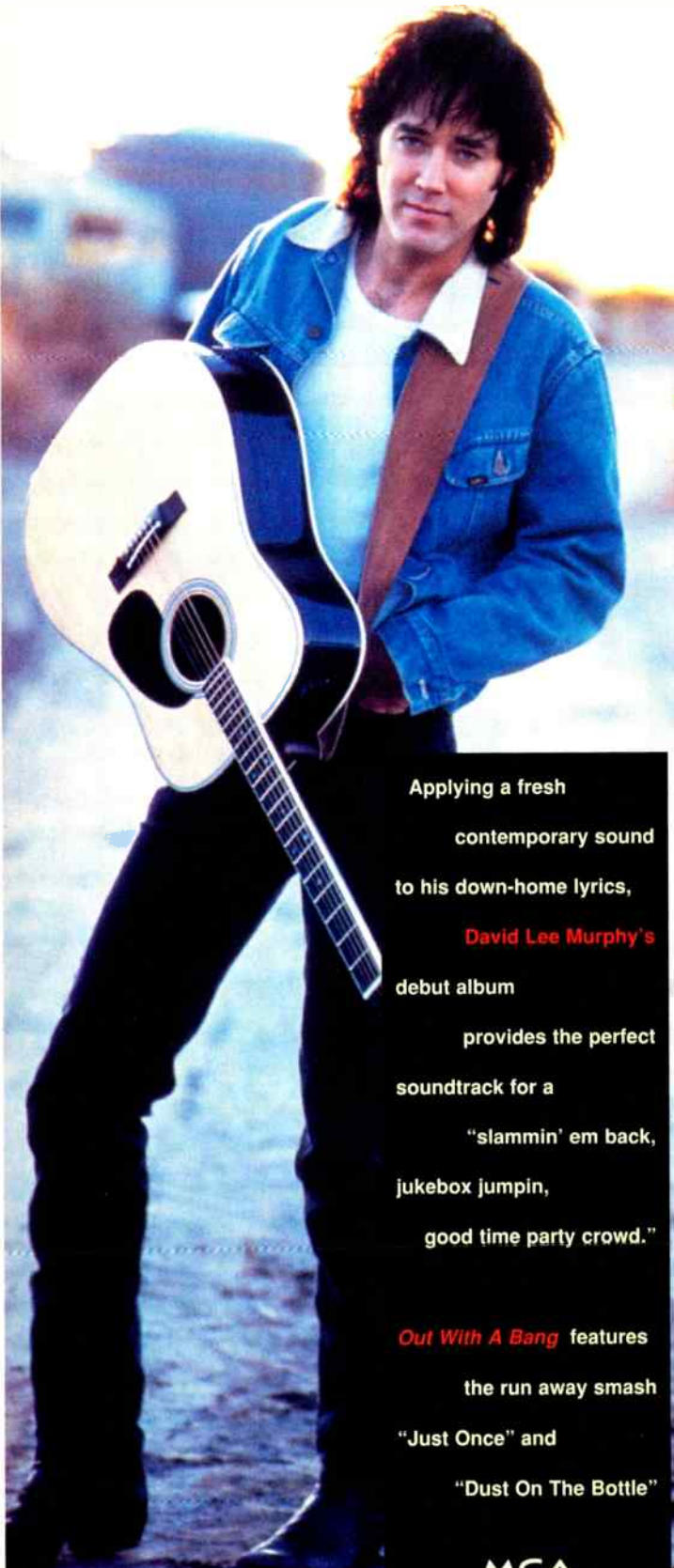
Crowell is making a trip very much like the one John Hiatt made in "Memphis in the Meantime," escaping to the city of bluesy music, juicy ribs and friendly women.

The album is not devoted entirely to happy-go-lucky dance numbers and heart-on-a-sleeve love songs. The most ambitious song is "That Ol' Door," a transparently autobiographical tale about Crowell's efforts to raise a family in Tennessee with Rosanne Cash. The verses tell the story with a folkish feel, but the sing-along chorus serves up the striking image of a big oak front door, which symbolizes both the welcome and the protection a real home provides.

The song describes how full of life the world "behind that ol' piece of wood" once was and how much the singer misses it, but wisely leaves the intervening divorce to our imaginations. Instead the song ends with this superb passage, perhaps the finest lyrics Crowell has ever written: *Sometimes when the leaves blow down the track!...that door comes round to haunt me/with those chiseled marks that show/just how much a kid can grow/in a world still moving slow.*

The album's title song strives for a similar poetic philosophy but is too awkwardly contrived to be convincing. Instead the worthy companion piece to "That Ol' Door" is "Once in a While," a song Crowell co-wrote with John Leventhal, Cash's current producer and music director. When Crowell sings of walking down the beach at night where he can drop the mask of indifference and admit that he still loves his ex, the Roy Orbison-style melody swells with emotional grandeur. It's a triumphant climax to a terrific album. —GEOFFREY HIMES

david lee murphy



Applying a fresh contemporary sound to his down-home lyrics, **David Lee Murphy's** debut album provides the perfect soundtrack for a "slammin' em back, jukebox jumpin, good time party crowd."

Out With A Bang features the run away smash "Just Once" and "Dust On The Bottle"

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World Radio History

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various ways with a consistency and quality never less than impressive. She and her group, Union Station, have made strides in broadening bluegrass, but without repudiating its traditions (not that traditional bluegrass is in any danger, anyway). As for those who compare her to Emmylou, I see the obvious vocal similarities, but Krauss' talents go farther. Here, she shows herself a formidable and creative producer of others as well.



She teams with her friends, Cotton Valley, Louisiana's Cox Family (Willard Cox, his son Sidney and daughters Suzanne, Lynn and Evelyn). Together, they create a warm, captivating album of traditional and modern gospel, brimming with exquisite harmonies and a few surprises. Though undeniably gospel, the music itself is neither completely traditional nor totally modern, and says much for Krauss' ability to fuse it into one cohesive package, as artist, arranger and producer. For the most part, she stands back and lets The Coxes shine.

The very way the album opens, with walking bass fiddle and jazzy piano ala Lyle Lovett, you know you're venturing into different territory. This blossoms into a compelling, blues-laden version of legendary black gospel composer Thomas A. Dorsey's "Walk Over God's Heaven," sung by Suzanne. That sets the tone. Her beautiful, clear and graceful voice also graces George Beverly Shea's "I'd Rather Have Jesus" and "Will There Be Any Stars?" as well as the title song. The old Statesmen

number, "Where No One Stands Alone," is Lynn's moment, and she handles this old favorite beautifully; likewise on Dottie Rambo's "Remind Me, Dear Lord." Evelyn revives one of Loretta Lynn's gospel efforts, "Everybody Wants To Go to Heaven." Krauss steps forward vocally three times: on "Never Will Give Up," "In the Palm of Your Hand" and the traditional "Jewels." Willard captures the perfect feel of resignation and hope on "Far Side Rank of Jordan." Even more extraordinary is Sidney's vocal on the rocking arrangement of Paul Simon's modern gospel number, "Loves Me Like a Rock," with some terrific backing by Union Station.

Under Krauss' guidance, The Coxes soar, retaining their traditional feel but with an added drive and vitality that should expand their audience. If Krauss' skills in the producer's chair earn her a third Grammy for this one, it would be fine by me.

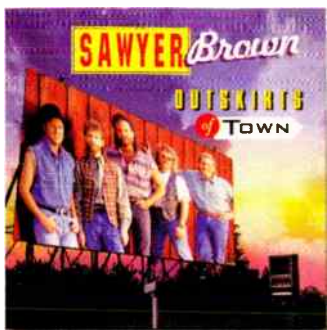
—RICH KIENZLE

Sawyer Brown *Outskirts of Town* Curb 77626

For years, Sawyer Brown was sort of The Archies of country-rock bands. Critics did nothing but chuck spears at their sophomoric, good-timey music. (Hell, I probably chucked one or two myself.) Country radio sort of pretended like they weren't there. About the only people who did take them seriously were the youthful hordes who flocked to their shows on the animal house fraternity circuit, and their accountants.

But ever so slowly, Sawyer Brown has been shedding its chronically lightweight reputation. I know my own thinking began to change the day I was riding down the road and first heard "The Walk," a powerful ballad about the inevitable passing of generations that eventually became the first in

Record Reviews



Sawyer's now impressive string of Number One hits. I remember thinking that day, "Damn! What a great song! Who the hell is this?" I remember how floored I was to discover it was Sawyer Brown.

Outskirts of Town, Sawyer's 10th and newest album, is bound to raise the band's credibility factor another notch. It's chock full of real songs about real grown-up people facing real grown-up dilemmas. *Outskirts of Town* was co-produced by Sawyer's lead singer/principal songwriter/resident dynamo Mark Miller and Mac McAnally. McAnally is a gifted singer and songwriter in his own right. He wrote "All These Years," which Sawyer took to the top of the charts a couple of years ago. And as co-producer he proves an adept counter-balance to the band's over-the-top exuberance. He brings the best out of Miller as a vocalist, and he coaxes restrained, effective, guitar-driven accompaniments out of this band which, in its early days, was known for anything but restraint.

"The Boys and Me" (co-written by Miller and McAnally) is both the opening and closing track. (We're treated to the standard mix, and also a five-minute dance mix.) The song says a lot about Sawyer's evolution from critical whipping boy to working class heroes. On the surface, it's just another rowdy paean to the band's reliable party-time constituency. Yet it's really about a bunch of 30-ish good ol' guys who realize that the only way to hold on to their youth is to hold on to their memories.

"Farmer Tan" (written by Miller and bandmate Gregg Hubbard) is a moving, Mellen-camp-style ode to those who till the soil against all economic odds. "Drive Away" (by Miller and Bill LaBounty) features a scorching Miller duet with Dana McVicker, one of Nashville's unsung and unsigned heroines. It's a song of yearning, about escaping the stifling gravity of a small town and following your dreams. The title tune (written by bandmembers Hubbard and Duncan Cameron) flips the thematic coin and explores the not so different yearning of those who don't escape that same gravity.

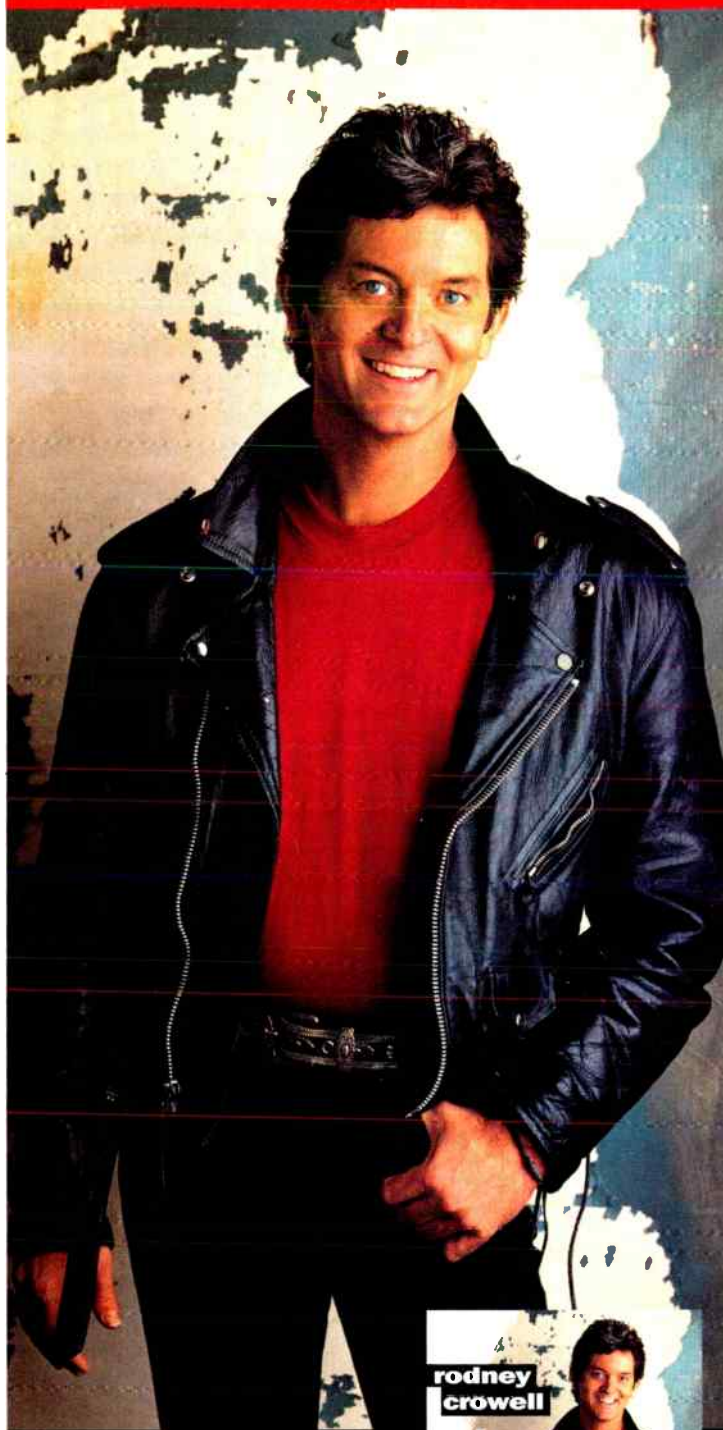
Mind you, Sawyer Brown does have its limitations. Miller's husky voice (vaguely reminiscent of Russell Smith or John Prine) works a lot better on some songs than others. And though persuasive, the band's original material is marred by some unevenness in the quality of the lyrics. Yet when all is said and done, *Outskirts of Town* is another major step in Sawyer Brown's inspiring triumph of substance over style. —BOB ALLEN

Mike Henderson
Country Music Made Me Do It
RCA 66324

Mike Henderson's debut solo album opens with a twangy, resonant reprisal of the unmistakably catchy guitar riff from "Honky Tonk Man," and it serves as the perfect calling card for this multi-talented performer who, more than anything, wants you to enjoy yourself. With *Country Music Made Me Do It*, he gives you plenty of encouragement to let it loose.

From the first guitar note to the last drum beat, *Country Music Made Me Do It* counteracts nearly every major trend-of-the-moment in Nashville: Instead of lushly produced pop, this is raw, get-on-the-floor, guitar-driven, fiddle-fu-

rodney crowell



Rodney Crowell is one of the most literate performers in country music. *Let The Picture Paint Itself* is his debut album on MCA Records, where he is re-united with producer Tony Brown, who co-produced his 1988 gold-selling, *Diamonds and Dirt*.

In Stores May 10

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Trisha Yearwood—The Song Remembers When. Title cut. *Mr. Radio*; etc. (MCA Nashville) 469-924



George Strait—Easy Come Easy Go. *Stay Out Of My Arms*; *Lovebug*; more. (MCA) 467-308



Reba McEntire—Grt. Hits, Vol. 2. *Does He Love You*; plus others. (MCA) 467-316



Garth Brooks—In Pieces. *Ain't Going Down (Til The Sun Comes Up)*; more. (Liberty) 463-745



Alan Jackson—A Lot About Livin'. *She's Got The Rhythm (And I Got The Blues)*; etc. (Arista) 447-458

Kix Brooks (Liberty) 471-649
Lee Roy Parnell—On The Road (Arista) 470-450

Asleep At The Wheel—Tribute To The Music Of Bob Willis (Liberty) 469-650

Rodney Crowell—Greatest Hits (Columbia) 467-720

Charlie Chase—My Wife...My Life (Epic) 467-530

Conway Twitty—Final Touches (MCA Nashville) 466-607

Darryl & Don Ellis—Day In The Sun (Epic) 465-609

Steve Wariner—Drive (Arista) 464-255

Matthews, Wright & King—Dream Seekers (Columbia) 463-455

Evangeline—French Quarter Moon (MCA) 473-090

Collin Raye—Extremes (Epic) 473-025

Waylon Jennings—The Eagle (Epic) 408-229

Ronnie Milsap—True Believer (Liberty) 461-889

The Gatlin Brothers—Larry, Steve, Rudy—Moments To Remember (Branson Entertainment) 461-210

Roy Clark—Great Picks & New Tricks (Branson Entertainment) 461-202

Ricky Lynn Gregg (Liberty) 458-869

Charlie Daniels Band—America, I Believe In You (Liberty) 458-851

McBride & The Ride—Hurry Sundown (MCA) 458-240

George Strait—Pure Country (MCA) 448-753

Skip Ewing—Homegrown Love (Liberty) 457-804

Hank Williams, Jr.—Out Of Left Field (Curb Capricorn) 457-259

Essential Steve Earle (MCA Nashville) 456-723

Charlie Daniels Band—All-Time Greatest Hits (Epic) 456-608

Palomino Road (Liberty) 455-584

Patty Loveless—Only What I Feel (Epic) 454-637

Vern Goadin—Nickels And Dimes And Love (Columbia) 454-603

Rosanne Cash—The Wheel (Columbia) 453-886

Willie Nelson—Across The Borderline (Columbia) 453-837

Emmylou Harris—Duets (Reprise) 407-130

George Jones—High-Tech Redneck (MCA Nashville) 473-082

T.G. Sheppard—Biggest Hits (Columbia) 370-825

Jimmy Dean's Grt. Hits (Columbia) 335-836

Texas Tornados—Hangin' On By A Thread (Reprise) 453-449

George Jones—Walls Can Fall (MCA) 450-296

Suzy Bogguss—Voices In The Wind (Liberty) 449-736

Tanya Tucker—Can't Run From Yourself (Liberty) 449-728

Pirates Of The Mississippi—A Street Man Named Desire (Liberty) 449-702

The Chipmunks—Chipmunks In Low Places (Epic/Chipmunks) 448-779

Columbia House. The Face of Country.

Brooks & Dunn—Hard Workin' Man (Arista) 454-025

Roy Acuff—The Essential Roy Acuff (Columbia/Legacy) 449-413

Radney Foster—Del Rio, TX 1959 (Arista) 448-852

Randy Travis—Greatest Hits, Volume 2 (Wamer Bros.) 448-662

Randy Travis—Greatest Hits, Volume 1 (Wamer Bros.) 448-654

Collin Raye—In This Life (Epic) 447-268

Tracy Byrd (MCA) 446-468

Smoky Mountain Players—Smoky Mountain Hits (Brentwood) 446-310

Tim Mensy—This Ol' Heart (Giant) 445-817

Lester Flatt And Earl Scruggs—The Complete Mercury Sessions (Mercury/Nashville) 445-163

Charlie Rich—Complete Smash Sessions (Mercury) 445-155

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band—Not Fade Away (Liberty) 444-976

Kenny Rogers—20 Grt. Hits (Reprise) 444-885

Travis Tritt—T-R-O-U-B-L-E (Wamer Bros.) 445-767

Chris Ledoux—Whatcha Gonna Do With A Cowboy (Liberty) 444-562

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Little Texas—Big Time (Wamer Bros.) 460-204

Marty Stuart—This One's Gonna Hurt You (MCA) 442-418

Michelle Wright—Now & Then (Arista) 441-147

Mark Chesnut—Longnecks And Short Stories (MCA) 440-487

Sammy Kershaw—Haunted Heart (Mercury/Nashville) 456-541

George Strait—Ten Strait Hits (MCA) 432-617

Tracy Lawrence—Sticks & Stones (Atlantic) 432-211

Tanya Tucker—Greatest Hits 1990-1992 (Liberty) 458-935

George Jones & Tammy Wynette—Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 (Epic) 432-179

Oak Ridge Boys—Collection (MCA) 440-412

Collin Raye—All I Can Be (Epic) 431-445

Sammy Kershaw—Don't Go Near The Water (Mercury/Nashville) 431-437

Ray Stevens—#1 With A Bullet (Liberty) 425-504

Freddy Fender Collection (Reprise) 430-934

Kris Kristofferson—Singer/Songwriter (SMSP) 430-165/390-161

Reba McEntire—For My Broken Heart (MCA) 430-090

Brooks & Dunn—Brand New Man (Arista) 429-969

Gary Morris—Full Moon, Empty Heart (Liberty) 429-019

Billy Dean (SBK/Liberty) 428-987

Garth Brooks—Ropin' The Wind (Liberty) 428-862

Boxcar Willie—Best Loved Favorites (Ranwood) 428-060

Sweethearts Of The Rodeo—Sisters (Columbia) 427-583

Ricky Skaggs—My Father's Son (Epic) 426-932

Toby Keith—(Mercury/Nashville) 458-315

Tracy Lawrence—Alibis (Atlantic) 456-558

Trisha Yearwood (MCA) 426-148

Joe Diffie—Regular Joe (Epic) 431-262

The Statler Brothers—Greatest Hits, Vol. 3 (Mercury/Nashville) 425-108

Diamond Rio (Arista) 424-739

Kathy Mattea—A Collection Of Hits (Mercury) 424-622



Common Thread: Songs Of The Eagles—Various country artists. (Giant/Wamer Bros.) 469-999



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Clay Walker—Dreaming With My Eyes Open; plus more. (Giant) 467-449

Garth Brooks—The Chase (Liberty) 448-746

Rodney Crowell—Life Is Messy (Columbia) 439-471

Diamond Rio—Close To The Edge (Arista) 448-290

Little Texas—First Time For Everything (Wamer Bros.) 435-438

Pam Tillis—Homeward Looking Angel (Arista) 446-963

Hank Williams, Jr.—Maverick (Curb/Capricorn) 434-472

Billy Ray Cyrus—Some Gave Us (Mercury/Nashville) 441-451

Sawyer Brown—The Dirt Road (Capitol/Curb) 433-656

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The Beavis & Butthead Experience (Geffen) 472-852

Elton John—Duets (MCA) 472-845

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"Wayne's World 2"—Orig. Sntrk (Reprise) 471-573

Michael Bolton—The One Thing (Columbia) 470-005

Xscape—Hummin Comin At Cha' (So So Def/Columbia) 469-981

10,000 Maniacs—MTV Unplugged (Elektra) 469-775

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The Cranberries—Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We? (Island) 465-559

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Nirvana—In Utero (DGC) 467-159

Prince—The Hits 1 (Paisley Park) 466-623

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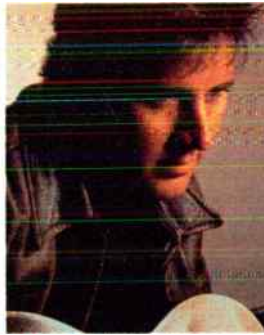
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Tex Ritter—Country Music Hall Of Fame Series (MCA) 422•436

Travis Tritt—It's All About To Change (Warner Bros.) 422•113

Anne Murray—Croonin' (SBK) 471•557

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Sawyer Brown—Buck (Liberty) 415•166

Doug Stone—More Love (Epic) 470•013

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Vince Gill—Pocket Full Of Gold (MCA) 418•859

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Ricky Van Shelton—Don't Overlook Salvation (Columbia) 436•360

Country Gospel Classics (Capitol) 433•391

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Record Reviews

eled honky tonk; instead of melodramatic lyrics of high consequence, these street-level songs are about raising a smile and a toast while riding out the speed bumps of everyday life; and instead of a baby-faced, smooth-skinned youngster staring out in mock seriousness from under a new and expensive cowboy hat, this is a real guy in a cheap Resistol who has callouses on his fingers, dirt under his nails and a been-there, done-that look that's somewhere between a scowl and a smirk.

In other words, he ain't no one-dimensional pretty boy doing a John Travolta impression. Henderson plays dance music for places that *Club Dance* and The Nashville Network would never dare venture. It's not that he isn't familiar with the kingpins of Music Row. A Nashville star-of-all-trades for nearly a decade, Henderson has done everything but put out his own album. He's been an in-demand session guitarist and mandolinist, a hit songwriter, a road musician and the leader of a few of the toughest, most popular bar bands on the Nashville club circuit (The Bluebloods, The Snakes, The Roosters). He's the kind of guy Bonnie Raitt or Delbert McClinton have asked to sit in with.

His tunes have bolstered the repertoires of The Fabulous Thunderbirds (remember the hit "Powerful Stuff?"), Kevin Welch ("Restless Kind"), Randy Travis, Joy White and Highway 101. His instrumental work has been heard on albums by Emmylou Harris, John Hiatt, Hank Williams Jr., Suzy Bogguss, McClinton, Guy Clark and The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

Now, finally, he gets to do what he does best, which is fronting a sharp, working-man's band, all of them kicking and laughing and snarling their way through 10 songs, all of which Henderson wrote or co-wrote and all of which he and his band recorded without much fuss but with a ton of passion.



The songs all stay stripped to the muscular core, with Henderson's keening, bluegrass-influenced vocals darting angularly over rugged-but-right arrangements. His guitar work isn't flashy, unless you listen closely; like Jimmie Vaughan of The Thunderbirds, Henderson twists his talent deep into the grooves, bending low notes, flying through some fast chicken pickin', or adding an emotional accent with his slide. An incredible six-string display is going down, but he's playing within the song, not over it.

Henderson recently said he chooses his song titles by imagining how they'd look typed on a strip of paper on the inside of a jukebox. Indeed, titles like "Hillbilly Jitters," "That Train Don't Stop Here Anymore," "Country Music Made Me Do It" and "If the Jukebox Had Teardrops" do beg to be punched up. Go ahead, take the chance: Henderson makes each song worthy of several run-throughs.

—MICHAEL McCALL

John Michael Montgomery *Kickin' It Up* Atlantic 82559

After the overwhelming success of his debut last year, John Michael Montgomery isn't taking any chances, not really. Though this new set is markedly different in sound, it places itself squarely in the radio mainstream just the same. I'm still not sure a real John Michael emerges from all this—there's quite a bit of Ge-



neric Star going on here—but he has definitely beaten the sophomore jinx as far as creating a modern country album that touches all the bases properly.

Which is also to say that John Michael, following up the straight-ahead country format of his first album, goes a little bit country, a little bit rock 'n' roll, this time out. The results are mixed, but things do get to jumpin' now and then. Just run down the titles and you've got a good enough idea. The set opens with the gimmicky rocker, "Be My Baby Tonight," fueled by bassman Glenn Worf. "Full-Time Love" has the big beat, but Paul Franklin's great steel helps keep it country. "I Swear" is your basic contempo-country power ballad, a reassuring love song complete with over-amped guitar solo. And so forth. "Friday at Five" joins "Kick It Up" as your basic bar-room rocker, but it's kind of telling the way rough edges get buffed out of songs like these that could really use 'em. "If You've Got Love" is the kind of inspirational bromide that country has never abandoned, no matter what other changes the music goes through at any given time, while "Oh How She Shines" does the same though it's the only song here even remotely ironic. "Rope the Moon" is quintessential, textbook young-country in every way—the sound, the lyric, John Michael's voice and phrasing, the way it builds: it's simultaneously uncriticizable and unremarkable.

And that, I think, is a problem Montgomery's going to

run into more and more often in the future. I'd like to see him beat that kind of jinx by taking a few more chances now and again. Meanwhile, in this installment of John Michael-meets-the-marketplace, the two accommodate each other quite cleanly and harmoniously.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

The Dave & Deke Combo

Moonshine Melodies
No Hit Hit-CD9

Ronnie Dawson

Monkey Beat!
No Hit Hit-CD8

Rockabilly—one of the most misunderstood and easily used words in all of popular music. This raw, in-your-face mix of hillbilly, bluegrass and blues swirled through America like an afternoon thunderstorm in the mid-50's. Elvis, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee, Gene Vincent and scores of lesser-knowns briefly turned things upside down with it before music business types tamed it into a slicker package called rock 'n' roll.

These days, too much 1950's rock winds up under the so-called rockabilly umbrella. This state of affairs wasn't helped when, 14 years ago, young "rockabilly revival" bands here and in Europe mixed enthusiastic but phony music with flashy fashions and teen-idol attitudes. Most of the time they sounded as if they had listened to a bunch of Sun Records reissues and taken notes.

Forget that nonsense. A new rockabilly scene is emerging, this one mixing younger performers and older vets who play it the way it was meant to be. Though still in its infancy, these current acts tour America and Europe. San Francisco seems to be the focal point for them, particularly Bimbo's 365 Club on Columbus Avenue. Now, two of the best

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Record Reviews

of this new breed have their first CD's out on a small British label.

L.A.'s Dave & Deke Combo walks on the "billy" side of rockabilly. Led by vocalist and rhythm guitarist Dave Stuckey and lead guitarist Deke Dickerson, the group mixes oldies with originals in the same style. Stuckey, who shares the vocal chores with Dickerson, makes no effort to imitate anyone. Nevertheless, the two singers continue the spirited hillbilly harmony of The Carlises, Bakersfield's Farmer Boys and the great 50's teen rockabilly band, The Sparkletones.

Make no mistake: the four members play as a band. Dickerson, who uses a double-neck electric like Joe Maphis did, doesn't make the mistake of playing everything he knows in 30 seconds. Still, the energy is everywhere on his muscular instrumental duet with Stuckey (who picks acoustic guitar) on "Two Guitars, No Waiting." Other revival bands suffer from stiff rhythm sections, but bass slapper (that's bass fiddle) Lucky Martin and drummer Lance Soliday have the same easy feel of the best country rhythm sections of the 50's.

Their sense of humor runs through every number old and new. They have plenty of fun with The Farmer Boys' "I'm Just Too Lazy," The Sparkletones' "Tally Ho" and "Maybe Baby" and Little Jimmy Dickens' "Salty Boogie." Just as good are originals like "You Ain't as Dumb as You Look" and "Flipped!" Any song with a line like "Hey good lookin' wunta be my queen/She says 'you draw the map and I'll make the scene'" has it on the ball. And sticking a photo of the Opry's famous toothless comic Cousin Jody on the CD wasn't all. Dedicating the set to the late Western swing band-leader Hank Penny and the late Fred Maddox (of The Maddox Brothers and Rose) likewise says much about where the band's at.



Rockabilly favorite Ronnie Dawson is also the genuine article. Known to his fans for his blonde flattop haircut and the song, "Action Packed," which he recorded in 1958 while still a teenager, Dawson (known back then as Ronnie Dee) never became a superstar. He did, however, play drums on Bruce Channel's rock hit, "Hey Baby" (Delbert McClinton played harmonica). Over the years, "Action Packed" became a rockabilly classic. Ronnie's cool, bopping teen enthusiasm flying off the grooves. Many such singers of the time wound up fixing cars. Not Dawson, who's made a living for years doing commercial jingles, including the deep vocal on the Hungry Jack pancake commercials. He also played gutwrenching rockabilly here and in Europe. Still sporting his blonde flattop, Dawson is someone to behold. Today the teen enthusiasm is replaced not by stoic maturity, but by a rip-roaring intensity that guys in their 20's could barely keep up with.

This 23-song CD actually mixes two Dawson albums. The first 11 songs are new. The last 12 made up his 1988 album, *Still a Lot of Rhythm*. The time difference doesn't matter. You haven't lived until you've heard "Crazy Shoes," "Wham Bam Jam" and the even more primal "Up Jumped the Devil." He mixes some Sun-era Elvis rhythms into The Coasters' R&B favorite, "Down in Mexico." You also haven't lived until you hear Dawson turn the oldie, "Mule Train," into a 250-mile-an-hour bullet train and send "Ghost Riders in the Sky" into the



stratosphere.

Listening to both discs, I had a perverse thought. It'd certainly be fun to sneak these records onto the sound system at some dance club, and watch a floor full of cowboy-clad trendies try line dancing to Dawson's "Monkey Beat." I suspect they'd have trouble with music that makes a person move naturally, not like some rodeo robot. That'll never happen, of course, but hearing the power of both Dawson and Dave & Deke's band makes it something to ponder. —RICH KIENZLE

Ian Tyson

Eighteen Inches of Rain
Vanguard 79475

I recently heard of a string band that figured 'country music' had become far too vague a term to accurately describe what they created. So these clever upstarts called what they did 'rural music.'

In much the same way, applying the term 'Western music' to what Ian Tyson sings doesn't sound precise. 'Range music' might come closer, for Tyson doesn't write romantic tales about the beauty of the West or dramatic epics about six-gun heroes or outlaws. Instead, he writes with pungent detail about the daily lives and concerns of the real-life cowboy. His working ranch hands aren't weathered models in suede-and-fringe who smoke name-brand cigarettes on top of freshly groomed stallions in advertisements; they're the kind of guys with dirt on their well-worn boots and a tin of

Copenhagen in their back pockets, and they have hands-on knowledge of how to buff a saddle, tie barbed wire, break a wild steed and brew coffee in the middle of a prairie.

Tyson is no novice at songwriting or ranching, and he combines his dual experiences with a relaxed professionalism on *Eighteen Inches of Rain*, the latest in a series of albums based on what the singer calls "cowboy culture." Some fans might remember him as the male half of Ian & Sylvia, a Canadian autoharp-and-guitar folk duo who moved to New York City in the early 1960's and became pillars of the Greenwich Village folk scene. Tyson's "Four Strong Winds" is an enduring folk classic.

By the 1960's, Tyson and then-wife Sylvia Fricker had turned to country: The duo titled one album after the city in which it was recorded, Nashville, and they named their backing band after a Roy Acuff classic, *Great Speckled Bird*. In the early 1970's, they returned to their native Canada to host a television program, *Nashville North*, which became the *Ian Tyson Show* after the couple split.

By the mid-1970's, Tyson retreated from showbiz to seek solace and meaning in the real-world of ranching, buying a 160-acre ranch in the scenic, desolate foothills of southern Alberta and sharpening his skills at cutting horses and working his own spread. It's there that Tyson's cowboy albums, notably *Cowboyography*, *I Outgrew the Wagon*, and *And Stood There Amazed* and the new *Eighteen Inches of Rain*, gathered their seeds. Tyson returned to music-making in the 1980's, focusing on accounts of the concerns of working cowboys. Of one of his previous collections, Tyson's press release notes, "This album is a collection of songs about bad men, good horses, lonely women, independent magpies and views from his back porch." It couldn't have been better put.

Vanguard Records, for

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Artist's Edition

She will be a princess among her people...

BUFFALO CHILD

by Carol Theroux

Her mother leads the Buffalo Clan, as her grandmother did before her. Now she will receive their wisdom and lore. And one day, she will take their place as the chosen one of her people.

Buffalo Child is the newest doll in the "Children of the Great Spirit"™ collection. She was created by artist Carol Theroux, who celebrates in her work her own American Indian ancestry.

As an *Artist's Edition* from Georgetown, your *Buffalo Child* will be crafted under Carol Theroux's strict control. Your doll will be richly detailed, with only the finest materials. The edition is also hand-numbered and limited to just 100 firing days ensuring its heirloom status.

Come share in the traditions faithfully handed down from mother to daughter. Send for your *Buffalo Child* today!



Reservation Form

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Please return promptly

BUFFALO CHILD

Please accept my reservation for *Buffalo Child*, a limited edition porcelain collector doll by Carol Theroux. **I need send no money now.** I will pay for my doll in five monthly installments of \$27* each, the first to be billed just prior to shipment.

My satisfaction is completely guaranteed.
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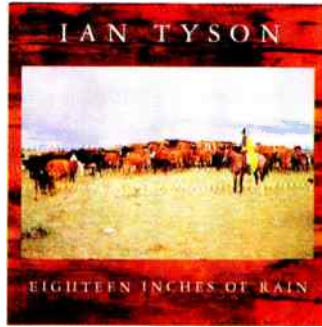
Record Reviews

which Ian & Sylvia originally recorded in the early 1960's, began making Tyson's cowboy albums available in America in the last year or so. *Eighteen Inches of Rain* is the first to be released simultaneously on both sides of the border; it's also the first to be recorded in Nashville, with production assistance from Tyson's old friend, Jim Rooney (who's also produced Hal Ketchum and Nanci Griffith).

Now 60 years old, Tyson sings with the natural ease of a gentle westerly wind wafting through grass, with the rhythms taking on the slow sureness of a horse's hooves as it ambles along a dirt trail. His voice is smooth and resonant and almost too sleepy at times: On the lesser songs included here, the lack of dynamism in his voice underscores how his minute observations sometimes drift without specific direction or purpose.

But, at their best, Tyson's songs are as warm as a good campfire, as true and illuminating as the dawn's first light. On "Rodeo Road," a cowboy's gal refuses to cut her man any slack as he packs to hit the road again, and when he asks her to take a romantic walk with him along the river, she balks, saying she doesn't want to make it easy for him. But they take the walk, coming to a bridge where they've tossed pennies and wished upon stars, and the man chucks his gear—spurs, saddle, chaps and all—into the river. He then takes her out to celebrate, and the sad songs of the jukebox remind him that he's said goodbye for good to his first loves, the rodeo and the road.

Other songs take a similarly honest look at people's lives. "Nobody Thought It Would" finds an older man expressing amazement at how well his relationship with a younger woman has turned out, while "Horsethief Moon" is a charming tale about how a rough-edged cowboy learns to dance in his attempt to steal the heart of a young, wealthy barrel-racer whose father doesn't



like her new suitor. "Old House" is a haunting ode to a dilapidated, abandoned wood building that once stood tall on a sage-covered hill.

Tyson doesn't fret much about radio, the music charts or other overriding concerns of today's country singers. He knows there are lots better, more important aspects to life—and he sings about more than a few of them on *Eighteen Inches of Rain*.

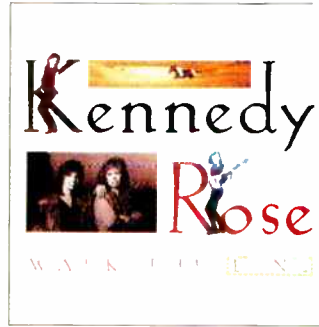
—MICHAEL McCALL

Kennedy Rose

Walk the Line
Pangaea 7777-13202

Mary Ann Kennedy and Pamela Rose are mainstream Nashville songwriters who have written hits for Lee Greenwood ("Ring on Her Finger, Time on Her Hands") and Restless Heart ("I'll Still Be Loving You") and album cuts for Reba McEntire, Vince Gill, Tammy Wynette and Anne Murray. After forming two-thirds of the pop-country trio, Calamity Jane, they regrouped as Kennedy Rose, a duo that favors an arty, folkish take on country, not unlike the approach of Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith and the 1990's Rosanne Cash.

So it makes sense that Kennedy Rose is the only country act signed to Sting's Pangaea label. The duo's 1990 debut album, *Haiku*, was notable for its exquisite vocals; its songwriting was a bit unfocused. The follow-up, *Walk the Line*, shows a marked improvement in songcraft, but the dazzling intricacy of the



vocal arrangements is still what grabs one's attention.

In fact, the vocals are so rich that the songs often need no more than a couple of instruments—an acoustic guitar and a cello here, a mandolin and a fiddle there—to work. Carefully pre-planned and then precisely executed, the two lead voices move this way and that, coming in close for tight parallels, criss-crossing in counterpoint and setting skipping high trills against low drones. With Rose's soaring Stevie Nicks-like soprano set against Kennedy's Christine McVie-like alto, *Walk the Line* sounds like a Nashville twist on Fleetwood Mac's *Tusk*.

Most of the new album consists of fairly conventional country songs given a peculiar twist via the art-rock arrangements. The title song, for example, is a straightforward honky-tonk dance number about a former wallflower who has finally decided to take her chances in the bars, but it's transformed by the carefully controlled vocal harmonies and the multi-layered electric guitars into something that owes as much to Deborah Harry as to Dolly Parton.

With its finger-picked acoustic guitar and its theme of finding oneself through memories of a grandmother who rode horses in Mississippi, "White Horse" is a quintessential country song. Yet the arrangement, with its fretless bass slides, soprano sax fills and note-bending vocals, gives the song a jazzy feel. Similarly, "Without Your Love" is a typical Nashville love ballad, but the piano-cello-violin arrangement gives it a chamber-music

ambience.

All three of these songs could easily be recorded by the likes of Patty Loveless or Reba McEntire in mainstream Nashville settings and fit quite comfortably on country radio. Some listeners would no doubt wish Kennedy Rose had taken the same approach, but that would have spoiled the album's main asset: its ability to make us hear country ingredients in a new way by putting them in unusual contexts. To hear a honky-tonk-angel song as a New-Wave rave-up or a grandma song as a pop-jazz tune is a genuine kick, because each sounds so different.

Some other songs on the album wouldn't fit on country radio, no matter how you arranged them. "Island Home," featuring Sting himself on bass, serves up vague, New-Age spiritualism on a Caribbean platter, while "The Sins of Our Fathers" is a breathy, prayer-like hymn about not repeating the mistakes of our parents. Neither song is very good, and both epitomize a humorlessness that afflicts the whole project.

On the other hand, "Iron Horse," a song about the betrayal of the American Indians, is the album's powerful centerpiece. Accompanied by native American flutist Bill Miller and the chants and tribal drums of Wisconsin's Menominee Tribe, the song is a successful blend of the duo's country-folk vocals and authentic American Indian motifs. Far from taking a holier-than-thou attitude about the way trains brought ecological and cultural catastrophe to the Great Plains, the song confesses, "There's an iron horse in all of us."

Toward the end of the album, Kennedy Rose pull back from the experimental edge a bit and deliver a few songs in commercial country arrangements. For example, "Love Makes No Promises," a simple ballad lament about the transience of romance, sounds like a Trisha Yearwood single. And "Safe in the Arms," with its

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catchy hook and simple tale of a young woman yearning for the security of true love, sounds like an old Judds single with the two voices singing breezily atop the chugging country-rock beat. Hearing Kennedy Rose work the Nashville mainstream with such authority only makes you appreciate their left-field excursions all the more.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

Hank Flamingo

Hank Flamingo
Giant 24513

Maybe you could call this a mixed message review, because, to be honest, I've held a grudge against this new band, Hank Flamingo, from the first time I gave their debut album a spin. It hit me right off that, more than anything else, they sound like a watered-down, play-it-safe version of The Kentucky HeadHunters. And the more I listened, the more it struck me that the resemblance between Hank Flamingo's gleeful, party-time brand of high-energy, hillbilly low camp and early vintage HeadHunters (right down to the way drummer Roy A. Watts cops the frisky drum sound of The Heads' Fred Young) is just too distinct to be total coincidence.

And the more I thought about this, the more I began sharpening my critical ax into yet another mean-spirited, self-righteous theory about how the contemporary country music industry and country radio seem to be conspiring to suppress good country music. I mean, Nashville had one of the most original country-rock bands of the last decade, the two-time Country Music Association Group of the Year award winners, The Kentucky HeadHunters, and they let them slip away. The HeadHunters not only can't get played on country radio anymore; they don't even have a contract with a major Nashville label. So what does Music



Row do after they've trashed The HeadHunters? They sign up a band that sounds like little more than a pale HeadHunters knock-off (less rowdy and unkempt, and a lot more musically play-it-safe) and hope that it will fly. I mean, why give the public the real thing when you can sell them an over-priced generic?

Yet the more I listened to Hank Flamingo's self-titled debut album, the more I felt my original grudge melting away. I'm still not about to abandon my original theory entirely, but after about three or four spins of Hank Flamingo, it dawned on me that this six-piece neo-hillbilly band has a lot more going for it than just its catchy name.

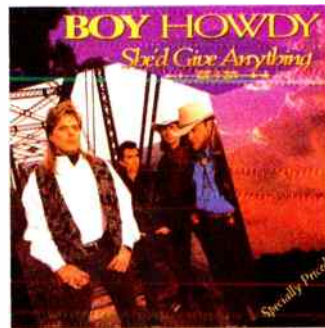
Like The Heads, these guys specialize in retro-revving old and not-so-old country favorites into semi-recognizable, quasi-rocking hillbilly rave-ups. They wreak delightful havoc with Steve Goodhue's "Little Miss Fire Prevention" and John Hiatt's "Tennessee Plates." They also turn in one of the goofiest versions of the old J.P. "Big Bopper" Richardson/George Jones novelty, "White Lightnin'" that I've ever heard.

They also (like The Heads) manage to mix these remakes up with some solid original material that runs the gamut from the comic absurd ("Redneck Martians Stole My Baby") to the near-profound ("Grandaddy's Place," co-written by drummer Watts, is a moving lament about a country boy who watches the family farm being slowly carved up into one-acre building lots.) Songwriter Alan McDonald,

who obviously co-writes a lot with the band, almost deserves special billing as a seventh Hank for his worthy contributions.

So, please, forgive me if I've used my review of this worthy new band to grind my ax about what a black mark on the interlocking monopolistic forces of the country record and radio industries I consider the demise of The Kentucky HeadHunters to be. On the bright side, Hank Flamingo's worst sin in my book is sounding too much like The Kentucky HeadHunters. But the truth is, as far as influences go, you could sure do a lot worse.

—BOB ALLEN



Boy Howdy

She'd Give Anything
Curb 77656

When Boy Howdy's single, "She'd Give Anything," became an unexpected hit over the winter, Curb Records wanted to back it up with an album as quickly as possible. Rather than wait for the quartet to finish recording a full dozen songs, the company rush-released the tracks already in the can as a specially discounted six-song mini-album and named it after the hit. The ploy served two purposes: It allowed the company to capitalize on a hot single, and it allowed fans to check out the band with less money down.

The title track—a slow and syrupy tearjerker about a foolish girl wallowing in pity locked up in her bedroom—is the least interesting cut on the

album. More interesting are the songs that draw on the self-contained band's dancehall experience to pump some rhythm into the music. With its Beatlesque two-guitars-bass-and-drums line-up, Boy Howdy is capable of taking the two-step, honky-tonk Bakersfield Sound of its native California and blending it with the Southern rock of Travis Tritt and Hank Jr. on songs like "Come On, Come On" and "Homegrown Love."

Another California influence—the laid-back folk-rock harmonies of The Eagles and Crosby, Stills & Nash—is obvious on the mid-tempo songs like "The One That Got Away," "A Cowboy's Born with a Broken Heart" and "They Don't Make Them Like That Anymore." These three songs, like the hit single, were co-written by lead singer Jeffrey Steele and producer Chris Farren. The melodies aren't all that original, but they're pleasant enough and set up the pretty, three-part harmonies on each final chorus.

The overall songwriting isn't especially fresh. Skip Ewing and Don Sampson's "Homegrown Love," the one non-Steele composition, "borrows" much of its music and message from Guy Clark's "Homegrown Tomatoes." The closest the album comes to clever wordplay is having a father advise his son to "hang on to her, boy," whether it's a vintage car or loving woman, because "They Don't Make Them Like That Anymore." If you believe romance is more complicated than shopping for a used car, you better look elsewhere for insights.

Nonetheless this is a real band that can pick its own solos and sing its own harmonies; the list of guest musicians in the CD booklet is surprisingly short. Boy Howdy obviously knows how to kick up a honky-tonk beat and overlay it with sweet vocals. If they would only record some real Guy Clark songs instead of fake ones, they'd be in business.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

Even though he's a superstar, Alan Jackson is still an everyday guy. He shies away from gossip and tries to keep his family life as down to earth as possible. Here is one Jackson who is not likely to give the tabloids anything racy to write about.

Alan Jackson Lives In The Real World

by Michael McCall

Alan Jackson is modern country music's quiet, reluctant superstar. Watch him onstage, or hear him struggle to explain why attention makes him uneasy, and it's clear that he's not among those performers who crave the spotlight and strive to stay in its narcissistic glow as much as possible. However, watch him onstage again, or hear him laugh as he talks about writing his songs or creating his albums, and it's just as clear that he loves music and enjoys his work.

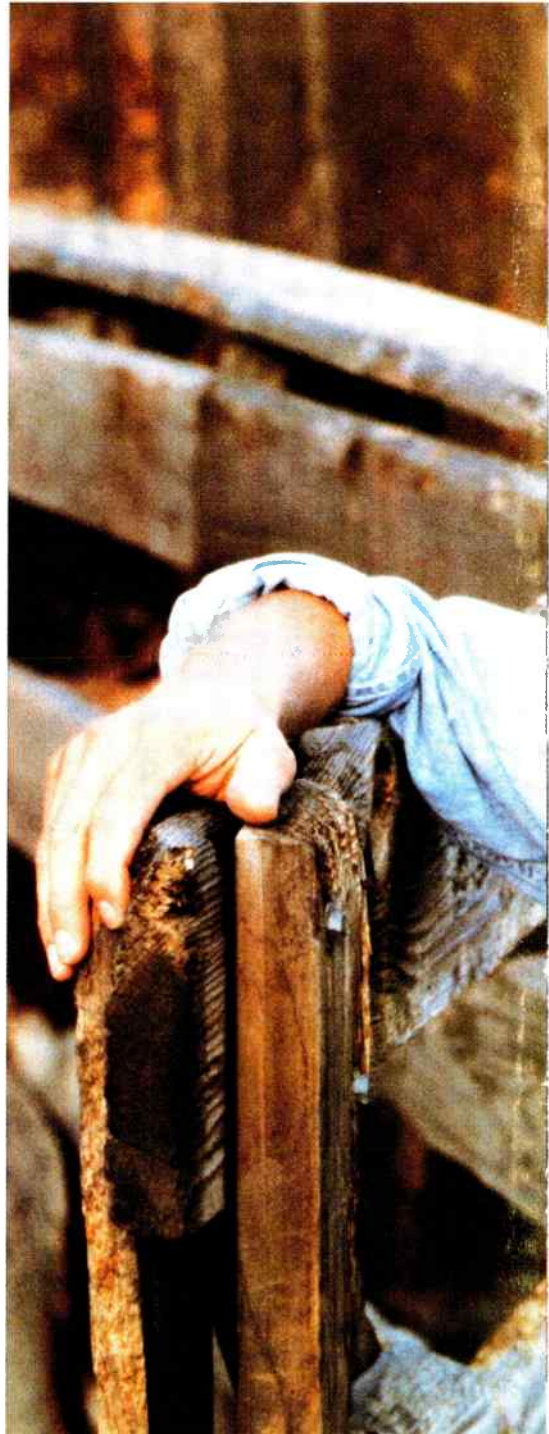
More than that, he doesn't set himself apart from his audience—probably because he doesn't see any difference between himself and those who enjoy him. "I hate the whole star part of the business," he says, relaxing backstage in Auburn, Alabama. "I like the singing and the writing and all that goes with that. I just wish that when I got off this bus, I could be more normal and go down to K-Mart and buy me a fishing lure. Not that I mind talking to people or signing autographs. I just don't like for people to treat me as something special. I'd rather just be a guy people treat like they normally would treat anybody else."

Unfortunately, amid the tabloid fever of the 90's, performers are treated as anything but normal. But, of all the top-echelon, million-selling country stars, Jackson does the best at managing to

stay out of the screaming headlines and away from the gossip columns. That may be because, of all of country music's current leaders, Jackson best represents this kind of music's age-old virtues. He's a soft-spoken, humble family man from a rural Southern town who sees no reason to trumpet his values, change the world, go Hollywood or adjust his style, musical or personal, to fit the trends of the times.

Instead, he sings about what matters to him: lasting relationships, salt-of-the-earth people and the kind of natural, homespun fun that involves nothing risky or risqué—unless gliding across a lake on one ski or revving through the curves of resplendent rolling hills is considered hazardous to his health.

While other stars constantly boast about how unpredictable they are or how much bigger and better they want their careers to become or how much more outrageous and up-to-date they want their shows to be, Jackson is the opposite: He constantly underscores how unlikely he is to change and how things have grown just about as fancy as they are going to get. "I don't think I'll ever venture too far from what I've always done," he says about his music. "It's just what I do. I always try to mix it up as far as the content of the songs, as far as what they're about. But, style-wise, I'm not going to be doing anything drastically different."



In concert at Auburn's Baird-Eaves Memorial Coliseum, it's obvious how entertaining and emotionally steady Jackson's songs are. Playing to a packed auditorium of mostly college-age fans, he and his expert band make the place explode whenever they kick into an up-tempo honky tonker, whether it's a big hit like "Don't Rock the Jukebox" or a solid album cut like "I Don't Need the Booze (To Get a Buzz On)." The attention level remains strong for Jackson's ballads, too. The lighters wave in the air during "Wanted" and "Tonight I Climbed the Wall," while dates clutch during "I'd Love You All Over Again" and "Somebody."

Jackson fuses hard-hitting, rollicking honky tonk with tender ballads and



waltzes without crossing over into smooth pop-country or borrowing crunching guitar chords from 1970's rock. To his thinking, his popularity proves he doesn't need to incorporate such familiar pop tricks to pander to larger audiences.

"You hear an awful lot of slide guitar and Hammond organs and stuff like that these days," he says. "It's like the old country sound is kind of disappearing. I hate to see that. Not everybody needs to sound like a George Jones record. But that's what I've always done, and I'm going to keep it that way, or try to, as long as it's working."

He only needs to look into his crowd to realize he can attract new throngs of fans without having to alter his hard-country foundation. "This is what I've found out

about the new fans," he continues. "They don't know the difference between traditional country music or country rock or whatever. They don't sit down and analyze it like we all do. They like the song, or they like the artist. That's the main ingredient for them. They don't care if it's got a steel guitar intro or whatever. The radio people might, but the fans don't."

His veteran band—The Strayhorns—enlivens the music with a spirit that's catchier and more spirited than the recorded versions. Steel guitarist Robbie Flint is a standout who's been with Jackson since before the recording contract, back when they used to ride from club to club in a beat-up old van. Flint takes more leads than the band's guitarist, Danny Groah, and he makes the most of

every shot he takes. Fiddler Mark McClurg dances his bow across the strings with rambunctious rowdiness or mournful sweetness, depending on the song. Meanwhile, keyboardist Monty Parkey, the only recent addition to the band, is much more likely to pound out some honky tonk piano licks—as he does with great glee on "Chattahoochee"—than lay down a bed of ambient sound with a synthesizer. Bassist Roger Wills is another pre-"Real World" member of The Strayhorns, and drummer Bruce Rutherford joined shortly after the release of the first album. This band knows each other; they know the singer, they know the songs—and it shows. They perform with fluid grace, but they also add energy and grit to the grooves.



These days, country stars often show up on stage in a grand puff of smoke, atop a special rising platform or on top of a bored-out motorcycle. Jackson settles for a simple, non-extravagant introduction (in Auburn, it was delivered by a pair of nervous local disc jockeys). The lack of theatricality doesn't lower the enthusiasm; when his name is called, the arena erupts in deafening screams and a non-stop din of verbal noise and thundering, stomping feet. Some people don't need a flashy buildup.

Nor does Jackson come out beating his chest, grinding his hips or dashing from one side of the stage to the other as if getting ready for a 100-meter sprint. He walks up some back steps and out onto the stage rather meekly, his smile showing his embarrassment at being treated to such a rousing greeting. Instead of a rowdy crowd pleaser, he looks more like a baseball player who's called from the dugout after a dramatic home run; he appreciates the recognition, but he doesn't know exactly how he's supposed to respond. It's just not in his nature to throw

his hands in the air or to make a big deal about himself.

Instead, he waves modestly and rather clumsily walks from one side of the stage to the other, shaking a few hands, accepting a few roses, smiling his aw-shucks grin the entire time. "I'm probably more comfortable now than I've ever been on stage," he allows. "I've always been a little bit tense about it. I was always a little nervous going out there; I still am as far as things like awards shows. But we've had such good crowds, which makes it easier for me to relax with it. I feed off the crowd's energy. As long as the crowds are enthusiastic, it keeps me going. If the crowd is one of those sit-there-and-stare-at-you crowds, I get a little uncomfortable. But I make it through, I'm better than I used to be."

Still, don't expect to see him doing the moonwalk or smashing guitars or joining his band for a few intricately choreographed dance steps. "I can't see myself doing more than I do," he says with a smile and a shrug. "I walk from one side of the stage to the other, you know, and

wave to people, shake a few hands down front. I can't imagine myself doing any kind of dancing or such. I've seen other acts, new acts and big acts, who do a lot of moving around. I'm just not real wild about it. I guess I kind of lean toward the singer-songwriter kind of artist rather than a high energy kind of thing. The dramatic part of it, I don't really get off on that. There ain't nothing wrong with it, I don't guess. It works for a lot of people. But not me."

He mentions how several of his idols—George Jones, Merle Haggard, George Strait—always managed to entertain crowds and maintain careers without learning any fancy steps. He beams as he talks about the joy of sharing a concert bill with Haggard a few times recently. "He's just cool as ice, you know," he touts. "He walks out there and stands in his place, and he doesn't know what he's going to be playing. He just starts banging on that ol' Telecaster and singing whatever comes to mind. He's a classic."

It's that kind of longevity and steady predictability to which Jackson aspires.

"I'm not the kind of artist where somebody can come in and change my image and tell me what I'm going to do or what I'm going to sound like or what I'm going to look like."

If the songs are there, he figures, it won't be boring. After three albums (plus one Christmas collection) and more than nine million in record sales, this laid-back, small-town Georgia fellow figures he's onto something. He has sold more than twice the amount of records in the last year than during any previous 12-month period. Last spring, after the release of "Chattahoochee," his weekly album sales jumped from 9,000 a week to more than 40,000, and they remained that high for several months. By the fall, after his national performance of the song on the Country Music Association Awards telecast and his personable acceptance speech, the sales shot above 50,000 a week. Recent figures put Alan among the top three concert grossers in country music, running neck and neck with Reba, topped by Garth Brooks.

Those kinds of numbers shore up his self-assurance, he says, so he doesn't feel any great need to change his direction or add new tricks to his concerts. "I'm not the kind of artist where somebody can come in and change my image and tell me what I'm going to do or what I'm going to sound like or what I'm going to look like," he contends. "I'm always the last word on my stuff, so I only got myself to blame."

Jackson's always maintained steady relationships, personally and professionally. His band members tend to stay, his record company contacts are the same, and he's worked with producer Keith Stegall since cutting the songs that got him his recording deal. That's why his announcement in March that he was severing ties with longtime manager Barry Coburn sent shockwaves throughout the country music community.

In our interview, Jackson grows visibly uncomfortable when talking about his management split. He's not so much evasive as uneasy; he's clearly afraid of saying the wrong thing, of making a difficult situation worse. "It's not an easy thing to talk about for me, really," he says hesitantly, carefully. "Barry is a really nice man, honest as they come, and I think he's a really good manager, was for me for years. I think we accomplished a lot of things together. That manager-artist relationship is really weird, it's like a marriage almost. And just like a marriage, sometimes people change; I'm sure I have too to some degree. I think we were just sort of growing apart. Personally, although we're friends, we didn't re-

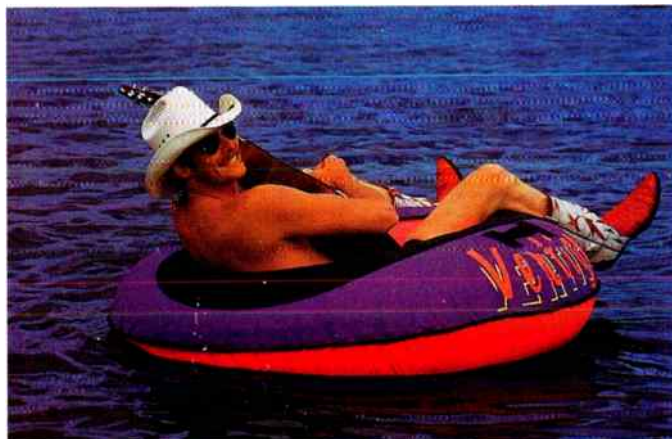
ally have a lot in common. We're from different backgrounds"—Coburn is from New Zealand—"and philosophies. That didn't really affect the decision, though."

He pauses, looking down the bus aisle, as if he wished he could escape at the moment. He then gazes out the window before returning to the question. "I don't really know how to talk about it. I don't want to get into the details. It wasn't no one terrible thing, he wasn't stealing money from me. It was just personalities. I think we got to a point where things weren't going the way I wanted to be represented anymore. I don't want to say the things I didn't like, because he's a good man and a good manager, like I said.

It was just a real personal thing. We just reached that point, or I did anyway, and I felt like it was something I needed to do to keep me happy about how things were being handled."

He made the decision so quickly, he admits, that he didn't have anyone lined up to continue to run his business affairs. "It was like, well, who in the world am I going to hire?" he says, laughing as the tension eases and he moves on. "I didn't know any other manager, really. I just know faces. I'd met them, but I don't know much about them. I wanted someone I was comfortable with personally, someone who I trusted and who I felt was the kind of personality I wanted to

Jackson afloat on the Chattahoochee, in a shot from the video, which went to Number One on both CMT and TNN. "Chattahoochee," the single, was Alan's 12th consecutive Number One hit. Below, Alan and wife Denise with co-writer Jim McBride and his wife Vicki.



"If I took every offer that came in, my life would be gone. I'd be working all the time, non-stop. If I had to take any more time away from my family, I don't think I could do it. I'd just quit altogether."

represent me out there all over the country. That's why I hired Gary."

Gary Overton is a veteran Music Row mover-and-shaker who logged time as a road manager before moving into music publishing. He's worked as a talent scout for BNA Records, and most recently as a representative of Warner/Chappell Music. Overton first met Jackson prior to his recording deal; in fact, he used to pitch Jackson's songs to record companies and told him as someone they might want to check out as an artist.

Jackson and Overton have been friends a long time. Recently, Overton contacted Jackson about song publishing, to see if they could talk business. "So when Alan calls and says, 'We need to talk about something important,' I was like, 'Great! Yes!'" Overton recalls with a chuckle. "Then he said it wasn't about his publishing, and my heart fell. I was like, 'What kind of durn riddle is he talking about now?' Then, when he told me what it was, I tell you what, I couldn't say anything. I just sat there. We were in his truck going to lunch. I just sat there with my mouth open and thought, 'He's got to be kidding.'"

He wasn't, of course. Jackson says he's not worried about Overton's lack of managerial experience. He knows him, he trusts him, he believes he can do the job. Besides, Jackson adds, it's part of his desire to keep his life and his career within a certain comfort range.

"I'm more at ease at everything now than I've ever been," he says. "I guess you reach a level where you've accomplished more than you ever thought you would, and it's all gravy now. That's the way I look at it. It gives you more of a chance to enjoy it more and not be worried about everything. If I want to do a song, I don't want to worry about if it's going to be commercial enough."

He then alludes to his new album. He's putting 13 songs on it, instead of the 10 songs that's become customary in Nashville. Going over that industry-imposed limit means that Jackson will get a smaller percentage of royalties for his songwriting. The more songs on a record, the less money goes to

those who write one of them. Since Jackson didn't want to penalize his co-writers or those who penned songs he chose, the money is all coming out of his pocket.

"I felt like every one of them said something I wanted to say," Jackson explains. "They were all pieces of a puzzle, and I didn't want to leave one of them off. It's going to cost me money, but I'm doing it anyway."

The new songs, due for release this summer, include one titled "Job Description," written for his daughter Mattie, "because it's hard for her to understand why I have to leave to do my work," Jackson says. He performed another in concert called "I'm in Love with You Baby (And I Don't Even Know Your Name)." Although the title was likely inspired during the time his wife Denise was pregnant with his second daughter—Jackson now knows the baby he loves is named Alexandra and nicknamed Ali—he's turned it into a bawdy rabble-rouser about a guy who meets an enchantress amid a night of over-indulgence.

Other than talking about his excitement over the upcoming album, Jackson kind of goes blank when asked about future ambitions. He's probably the only major country star who has yet to walk onto a television sitcom for a smiling cameo or read a script for a Hollywood movie producer. Not because he's not received plenty of offers, but because he's not interested. Not at this point anyway.

"I just don't think it's time," he says. "I still have to put a lot of energy into maintaining my music right now, if I want to keep on doing this. I think there's plenty of time for other things later. This is just my personal opinion, but I think it's getting over-saturated. Every TV sitcom you turn on, there's a weekly country artist on there. Why? You look at those people, and it doesn't seem to affect their record sales any. It doesn't seem like it's doing them any good. It's just overkill."

He then restates his focus. "I mean, I want to make the most of what I can be, but I don't want to burn myself out," he says. "If I took every offer that came in,

with the number of dates I already work on the road, my life would be gone. I'd be working all the time, non-stop. If I had to take any more time away from my family, I don't think I could do it. I'd just quit altogether. But if I can keep myself comfortable, then I'll keep writing. What happens is, with a lot of people, they forget what made them. They forget about coming up with those songs. You don't want to get so completely worn out that you don't want to pick up a guitar and write. If I worked any harder, I wouldn't feel like writing, then my next album would be awful, and then the record sales would die."

He laughs heartily. "Then I'd have to be out there doing a movie-of-the-week or something just to try to rejuvenate myself," he says. "I think I'd better stick at doing what I'm already trained to do. I figure my job is to have good songs, and that will keep everything else rolling. I just want to keep that up, then go home and enjoy being with my family. Doing that makes me really happy." ■



CANDACE WEST

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Dig Out Your Old Books...

Back in the 1970's, *Country Music Magazine* had a very active book publishing wing. Among the items offered were the *Country Music Encyclopedia* in 1974 and *The Illustrated History of Country Music* in 1979. Now we're about to get back into the book publishing business in a big way. We've just inked a deal with Random House, and, by the end of this year, brand-new, revised and updated versions of both books will be in print. Our writers are hard at work on the manuscripts right now—after all, a lot has happened in country music in the past 20 years! These long-awaited new volumes will cover country music from its beginnings right up to the present—everyone from The Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers right up to Garth Brooks, Billy Ray Cyrus and all the rest.

And as a special offer to you longtime readers, Publisher Russ

Barnard has decided that anyone who sends us a copy of the the original *Country Music Encyclopedia* or original *Illustrated History of Country Music*, will receive a free copy of the new edition as soon as it's published. Why are we doing this?, you might ask. The fact is, we need some copies of the original books for office use. So, while you're doing your spring cleaning, keep your eyes peeled. If you find either or both volumes and would like to take advantage of our special offer, send them to: *Country Music Magazine*, Book Offer, 329 Riverside Ave., Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include your name and address.

As for the contents of this issue, variety abounds with a mixed bag of fun and interesting features from you members, including a new memorial for Patsy Cline, more international news, travel tips and a lot more.

CMSA Travel Section

With spring here and summer travel on the way, here are some places and events you might want to keep in mind.

COUNTRY LEGENDS THEATRE

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, is home to the Country Music Legends Theater, now in its second year of operation. The 500-seat, indoor theater is air-conditioned, handicapped accessible and includes a gift shop/Western wear outlet. This year's lineup of performers includes Kitty Wells and Johnny Wright, Del Reeves, Johnny Paycheck, Ronnie Prophet, Ray Price, Earl Thomas Conley, The Bellamy Brothers, Jack Greene, Connie Smith, Mickey Gilley, Janie Fricke and many more. Ticket prices range from \$11.50 to \$16.75. For more information, write the Country Music Legends Theater at P.O. Box 71, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin 53965. Or call 608-253-5357.

DETROIT'S "HOEDOWN"

For the twelfth year in a row, the City of Detroit, Michigan, will host the "Downtown Hoedown," a three-day country music festival. This year the event, sponsored by Budweiser, Coca-Cola and Detroit's country radio station WWWW, takes place May 20-22, and will feature performances by Sammy Kershaw, Tracy Lawrence, Mark Collie and many others. Call 313-259-9659 for more details.



Plan your country music vacation with the help of travel brochures. Nashville's On Stage series features 700 concerts!

NASHVILLE ON STAGE

A new attraction to Music City this year is the Nashville On Stage series of concerts. Some 700 shows will be going on at three different theaters in the Opryland complex from May 6th through October 2nd. Among the headliners booked for multiple dates are George Jones, Alabama, The Oak Ridge Boys, Tammy Wynette and Tanya Tucker. Many other stars—such as Marty Stuart, Pam Tillis, Sammy Kershaw, Hal Ketchum, John Anderson and Patty Loveless—will be doing selected dates. In addition to the concert series, a tribute to *Hee Haw* will

In This Issue

- A Patsy Cline Memorial
- CMSA Travel Section
- Floyd Tillman in Legends
- Collections and Readers Create

Editor: George Fletcher

Executive Editor: Helen Barnard

Art Director: Katheryn Gray

be held six days a week. Called *Hee Haw Live*, the show will feature many of the original cast members (George "Goober" Lindsey, Grandpa Jones, Lulu Roman and Gunilla Hutton among them), along with Opryland singers and dancers and special guest stars. The format will be similar to the television show, with both comedy and music. For further information on Nashville On Stage, call 800-535-0200. Some shows are already sold out.

In a related note, the refurbished Ryman Auditorium reopens in downtown Nashville in June. A two-act theatrical performance called *Always...Patsy Cline* is the anchor show of the entertainment line-up at the beloved old home of the Opry. There's a museum in the building, and concerts will also be held. Call the number above for further information.



Tiana and Mary met through Pen Pals.

More Pen Pal Pals

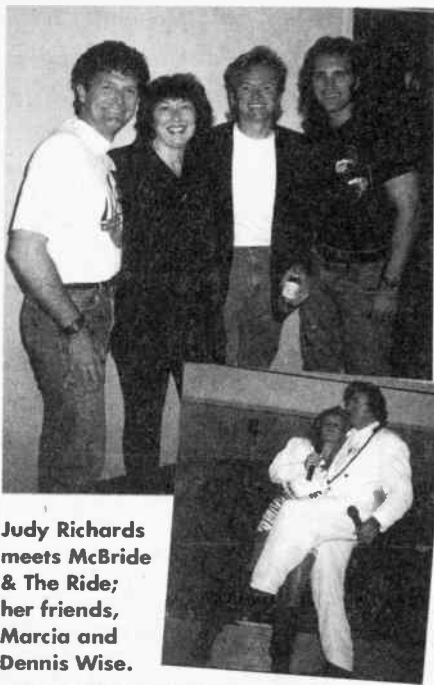
Mary Casa House and Tiana Dreyfmore began writing each other after Mary spotted Tiana's Pen Pal request. Mary tells how they became good friends.

In your September/October 1993 issue, I ran across the pen pal ad of Tiana Dreyfmore, the "Queen of Hearts." She was looking for moral support as she tried to make it in Music City. Something about this ad made me write to her, and I'm glad I did. After several letters and phone calls, I finally got to meet this talented lady.

She may be a Northern transplant, but she is country through and through. My family had the pleasure of her spending her Christmas break with us. In the enclosed photo you can see I even got her in a Kentucky T-shirt. The oil painting of Dwight was done by Tiana and given to me as a Christmas present.

Thanks to your Pen Pal section, I have made a dear new friend, and was chosen by Tiana to be her new fan club president.

Mary Casa House
Morgantown, Kentucky



Judy Richards meets McBride & The Ride; her friends, Marcia and Dennis Wise.

Friends in High Places

Judy Richards is good friends with Marcia and Dennis Wise, who have their own country music band. Judy was with the Wises when they opened for McBride & The Ride.

I got to visit with my friends, Marcia and Dennis Wise, on the first stop of their

summer 1993 tour in Wisconsin. They were opening for McBride & The Ride. Marcia sings with a band called Enterprise, and Dennis does an Elvis tribute, called Forever Elvis, along with singing contemporary country songs. They do a really good, enjoyable show, and tour every year from May through October. They've played many places all over the country—including Las Vegas! If you have the opportunity to see Marcia and Dennis, do it! To top it all off, I got to meet with McBride & The Ride. They put on a good show too. **Judy L. Richards**
South Arlington, Virginia

International Spotlight

From August 22-28, the city of Trnava in Slovakia is hosting its third Dobro Festival in honor of John Dopyera Sr., the inventor of the dobro. Dopyera, an American, was of Slovak descent.

In 1992, the Slovak Association of Country Music established the dobro festival to pay tribute to John Dopyera Sr., who invented the dobro and had it patented under his name in 1928. He originates from a small Slovak village near Trnava. The 1994 festival is special in that it marks the centennial of Dopyera's birth.



A dobro festival is planned in Slovakia.

He died in 1988, and his son John Jr. has been involved in the festival. The scheduled events include a country music festival with a series of concerts, a blues festival, a dobro-playing festival covering all styles of popular music, an awards ceremony for the best players in Slovakia and internationally, and a series of shows representing local talent. For information, write the Slovak Association of Country Music, P.O. Box 52, 814 99 Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

Peter Gaspar
Slovak Association of Country Music

March 1994 Poll Results

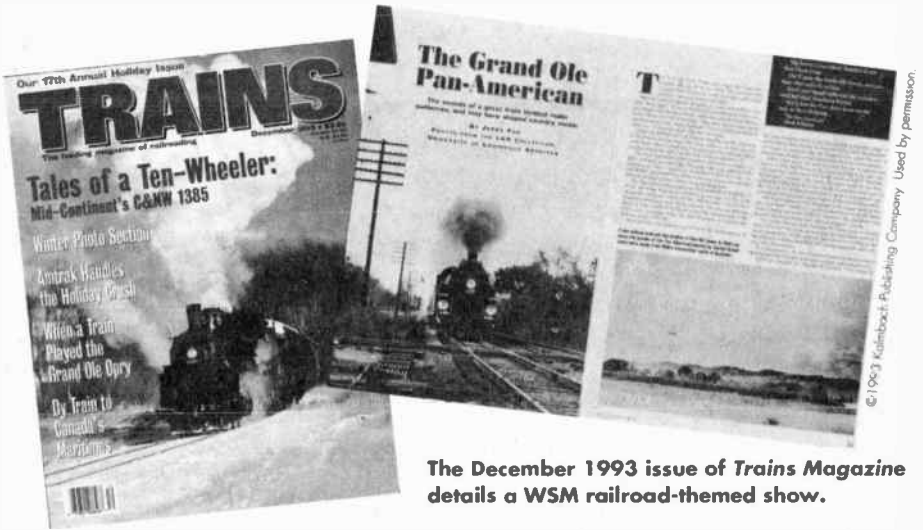
Alan Jackson	<i>A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)</i>
George Strait	"I'd Like to Have That One Back"

It's now five in a row for Alan's *A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)* at the top of your album picks. And like last time, George Strait follows him twice—his *Easy Come, Easy Go* remains in second, and *Pure Country* again nabs third. Only fourth and fifth place are different this time around: John Michael Montgomery's hot new album, *Kickin' It Up*, is your Number Four pick, and Mark Chesnutt's *Almost Goodbye* rounds out the Top Five.

In singles, another George Strait release takes the top spot: "I'd Like to Have That One Back." Mary-Chapin Carpenter follows in second place with her commentary on gender roles, "He Thinks He'll Keep Her." Centerfold stars Brooks & Dunn have the Number Three position with "Rock My World (Little Country Girl)." And John Michael Montgomery's "I Swear" is planted in fourth. Your fifth place single pick is Doug Stone's "I Never Knew Love." Be sure to get your vote in for the May poll. See For Members Only page for details on voting.

Music Business Scholarship

Students who aspire to careers in the music industry may want to take note of a new scholarship fund set up by several executives in the business, the Commercial Music Educational Foundation. Founded by Eddie Ray, Mike Curb (chairman of Curb Records) and Armstrong Williams, the scholarship is open to high school seniors and graduates who seek college music business training and who exhibit financial need and above average academic achievement. Applicants must be accepted by colleges or universities with an accredited commercial music business curriculum. For further details and applications, write: CMEF, 2029 P Street NW, Suite 301, Washington, DC 20036.



The December 1993 issue of *Trains Magazine* details a WSM railroad-themed show.



Perla displays her George Strait quilt.

Stitching for Strait

Perla Bautista of San Jose, California, had a chance to show off her crocheting talents at the recent George Strait Fan Club meeting. She explains below.

Last December I attended my third George Strait Fan Club meeting at the Mirage in Las Vegas, and I was overwhelmed to see many fans from all over the United States gather together for the breakfast and meeting. There were over 800 fans! This compared to 400 just two years ago. This was by far the best get-together. On the show-and-tell part of the program, we had a chance to talk about everything that pertains to our idol. I showed my crocheted/embroidered blanket that shows the titles of George's albums. That night, most of us went to see George's concert. We were like one great family, exchanging concert stories. Everyone told me how much they liked the blanket. I've never had a dull moment with another fan!

Perla Bautista
 San Jose, California

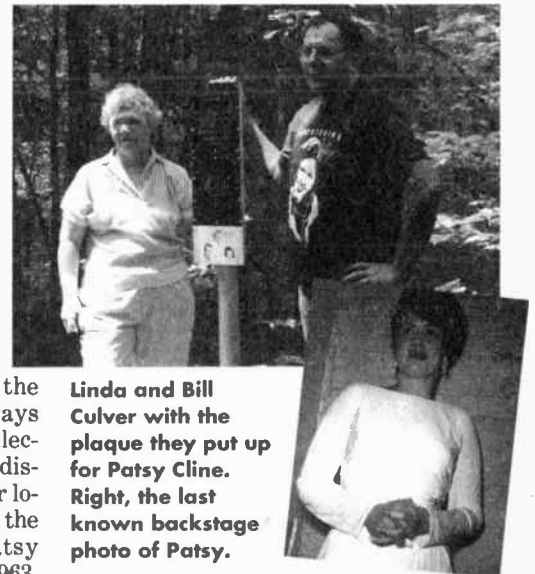
Trains and Country Music, Part III

The link between railroads and country music, going back all the way to Jimmie Rodgers (and earlier), continues. In the March/April 1992 issue there was a look at Dennis Devine's work at restoring the Rock Island Railroad's Council Bluffs depot (he got Johnny Cash involved in the project). Then, in the May/June 1992 issue we told you about the National Railway Historical Society's *Bulletin*, which featured a cover story on trains in country song. Now *Trains Magazine*, the largest railroad magazine in the country, chimes in with a feature on WSM's old

radio show that starred the Louisville & Nashville Railroad's *Pan-American*. The *Pan-American*, which Hank Williams immortalized in his song of the same name, ran from Cincinnati to New Orleans. Each day, from 1933 to 1945, as the train passed the WSM transmitter south of Nashville, the sound was picked up by a trackside microphone and broadcast over WSM. The feature, which appeared in the December 1993 issue of *Trains*, was written by Jerry Fox, who was a member of the 1980's country band, Bandana. Back issues are available from Kalmbach Publishing Company by calling 800-533-6644.

A Memorial for Patsy

Bill and Linda Culver of Battle Creek, Michigan, are big fans of Patsy Cline. They are the Midwest Representatives of her fan club, Always Patsy Cline (also the title of the new Patsy tribute show at the Ryman—see travel section in this issue), and were responsible for erecting a memorial plaque in Camden, Tennessee, at the site of the plane crash that took the lives of Patsy, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Cowboy Copas and pilot Randy Hughes. The Culvers have been country music fans since the early 60's, and Patsy Cline has always been their favorite. They are avid collectors of Patsy memorabilia, and have displayed some of their collection in their local library. One of their prized items is the last known backstage photo of Patsy taken in Kansas City on March 3rd, 1963, at Patsy's final performance. The photo was taken by Mildred Jean Keith. The Culvers have also hosted a Patsy Cline tribute program on a local radio station and have visited Patsy's hometown of Winchester, Virginia, and met members of her family. In fact, the fan club holds an



Linda and Bill Culver with the plaque they put up for Patsy Cline. Right, the last known backstage photo of Patsy.

annual meeting each Labor Day in Winchester, and Patsy's family is involved in the club: her daughter, Julie, is president and husband Charlie Dick and son Randy are advisors. The fan club can be reached at: Always Patsy Cline, P.O. Box 2236, Winchester, Virginia 22604.

CMSA COLLECTIONS

Collecting the Magazine

Members help each other complete their magazine collections.

*Magazines for sale: *Country Music, Music City News, Country Fever*, etc. Past and present. Send two stamps for list. **Rick J. Cunningham, Box 661-C, Somersworth, NH 03878-0661**

*Huge collection of *Country Music, Country America, Country Song Roundup* and *Music City News* magazines for sale. Will sell one or all. Send want list and SASE. **Jamie Wigley, 50 Cashtown Loop, Aragon, CA 30104**

*For sale: 149 issues of *Country Music Magazine*—1984-'93 complete; 1977-'80 complete; 1981 Oct, Nov, Dec missing; 1982 only Jan/Feb; 1983 only Oct, Nov/Dec; 1976 Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul missing; 1975 Sep missing; 1974 Oct, Nov missing; 1973 Feb, Mar are missing. Asking \$170 including shipping. **Wilfred Lannoy, 1211 Trunbulls Crs. Rd., Newfield, NY 14867**

Information, Please

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

*For sale: Ten years worth of Dolly collecting, a 15-page list. Also Garth, Elvis, RVS, Pam Tillis, Judds and Alan Jackson collectibles. Send \$2.00 for extensive list. Refundable with first order. **Leyla Lively, 5772 Silvercreek Dr. #10, Memphis, TN 38134**

*For sale: Various kinds of country music collector trading cards, sets and singles. Send SASE for list. Older and current stars included (George Jones, Sawyer Brown, Tracy Lawrence and many more.) **Kris Mayeda, 5708 Fresno Ave., Richmond, CA 94804**

*Wanted: Copy of the book, *In Search of My Father*, by Merle Travis' daughter, Pat Travis Eatherly. Published 1987 by Broadman Press in Nashville. **Donald E. Brown, 108 Orchard Dr., Boonsboro, MD 21713-1121**

*Wanted: A video copy of the *Vicki* show from 12/6/93 with John Michael Montgomery, A. Tippin and D. Stone. Will pay reasonable price or trade other shows. **L. Judy, 8221 Goodman Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105-5851**

*Wanted: Anything concerning Larry Boone—memorabilia, photos, newsletters, fan club merchandise prior to 1990. Also interested in corresponding with other fans. **Terry vonLinden, 498 Martha Ln., Smyrna, TN 37167-5452**

*Wanted: VHS tape of 1990 CMA awards show with Mary-Chapin Carpenter singing "Opening Act." Will supply tape and/or pay reasonable price. Thanks. **Joanne Sniegowski, 53 Claire St., Chicopee, MA 01020**

*Wanted: Anything and everything on Tanya Tucker—pictures, articles, TV appearances, albums, newsletters, etc. Especially interested in early Columbia albums and performance of "If It Don't Come Easy" on 1988 ACM awards show. Please send list, condition and prices. **Mr. Oak M. Steffey, 3337 Brogan Rd., Stockbridge, MI 49285**

*For sale: Glen Campbell LP's—*Country Shindig, By the Time I Get to Phoenix, Wichita Lineman, Galveston, Try a Little Kindness, Goodtime Album, Glen*

Campbell Live (2 records), *Christmas with Glen Campbell*. **Wanda Wright, 622 Hydepark Rd., Balto, MD 21221**

*I have an MCA promotional, full-sized, stand-up cardboard cutout of Vince Gill and an unopened 3-CD boxed set of *Tammy Wynette's 25th Anniversary Collection*. Will trade for anything of George Strait. Must be in SoCal area and willing to pick items up (too expensive to mail). If interested, let me know what you have to trade. Best item gets Vince or Tammy. **Kathleen Chaney, 4623 E. 14th St., Apt. D, Long Beach, CA 90804**

*3000+ country albums for sale. Loretta, Reeves, Atkins, Snow, more graded collectibles. Catalog \$3.00 (\$5.00 overseas) or send specific want list with reply stamp. Dolly or Reba set sale lists 2 stamps each. **Rick J. Cunningham, Box 661-C, Somersworth, NH 03878-0661**

*Wanted: anything on Dwight Yoakam. Magazines, records, cassettes, newsletters, articles, videos, photos at concerts, Fan Fair and parties. Will pay reasonable price. Serious fan. **Betty Bisailon, 7121 W. LaVerne Ln. Apt. 2B, Tenely Park, IL 60477**

*Wanted: Conway Twitty memorabilia. Cassettes of rare interviews, candid photos, videos, etc. Also, if you are a huge Conway fan and want to be pals, write me. I'm 39. Only Twitty fans. **Leslie Gardner, 7533 Madora Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91306**

*Wanted: Magazine/newspaper articles, concert photos, VHS tapes on Matthews, Wright and King and Reba. Will pay reasonable price. **Melissa Dodge, 2274 Forest Hills Dr., Harrisburg, PA 17112-1004**

*Wanted: Dolly Parton albums—*Great Balls of Fire* and *9 to 5 and Odd Jobs* on CD, LP or cassette. Also, any Dolly videos. Please send price. **Lyle Grezaffi, 706 East Main, New Roads, LA 70760**

*Back in 1988-1991, or thereabouts, we were getting great Country & Western LP's that spanned 1950-1972. Somehow we missed out on the years of 1952 and '66. Anyone have them, or know where I could find them? **James Huttel, 422 W. Maple Grove Rd., Duluth, MN 55811**

*Anyone know where Ernest Tubbs' band members are? (Pete Mitchell, Buddy Charlton, Hoot Borden, Leon Bolinger, J.R. Pernada.) **Laura Levescy, P.O. Box 812, Madison, TN 37115**

*Has anybody heard of an artist named Al Morgan? What is Tompall Glaser doing these days? **George Rout, 839 Roselawn Ave., Apt. 306, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6B1B5**

*Looking for a copy of, or address where I can get, Johnny Lee's book, *Looking for Love*. **P. Plencner, 115 Courthouse Ave., Petersburg, VA 23803**

*For sale: Onstage photos of country artists Billy Ray, Vince Gill, Tanya Tucker, Travis Tritt and Marty Stuart etc. For list send stamp to **Roger Garza, P.O. Box 164, Nashville, IL 62263**

*Wanted: Photos of RVS and Sammy Kershaw (close-ups if possible). **Sonya Pyle, Rt. 1, Box 1258, Seymour, MO 65746**

*For sale: onstage/offstage photos of all your favorite country artists, 1970-1994. Also magazines, posters, LP's and other memorabilia. Send SASE. **Galen**

Duncan, 3517 Grier Nursery Rd., Street, MD 21154

*Wanted: *Dukes of Hazzard* stuff—pictures, toys, trading cards, TV shows, movies, etc. Will pay reasonable price or trade. **Tammy Kendrick, Rt. 3, Box 584, Crockett, TX 75835**

*For sale: Close-up concert photos of country artists and complete sets of Elvis and Beatles collection cards. Send SASE for list and photocopies of your favorite artist. **Richard D. Moore, 20 Maple St., Hopedale, MA 01747**

*Wanted: *Music City News* issues Feb 1986, Dec 1986 and Jan 1991. Also a copy of the CMA awards for 1985 and anything that has to do with Sawyer Brown, especially photos. Will pay reasonable price. **Heather R. Burgett, 85484 Jasper Park Rd., Pleasant Hill, OR 97455**

*Live, original on/offstage close-up photos for sale. Country stars 1970's to 1990. **Nancy Barr-Brandon, 506 Windermere, Interlaken, NJ 07712**

*Hank Williams Sr. memorabilia wanted: 78 RPM Records, MGM #12332 or higher. What have you? **Bob Vogel, 80 Beaver Grade Rd., McKees Rocks, PA 15136**

*Selling items on The Judds, Reba, Garth, Billy Ray, etc.: newsletters, photos, articles, etc. **Torry Hansen, P.O. Box 594, Hayfork, CA 96041**

*For sale: Hundreds of my own LP and 45 collection, 1960's-80's. Wide assortment of types of country music and artists: Robbins, Cash, Arnold, Haggard, Tubb, Atkins, Jennings, Reeves, Pride, Price, Cramer, etc. Western and cowboy music. **Monty Powell, Star Route, Box 29, Bastrop, TX 78602**

*Wanted: Dolly Parton LP's (some with Porter Wagoner), old and new, for reasonable prices. Also, promotional items from her albums, copies of the *Dolly* show from 1987-88 and anything else on Dolly that you would sell for reasonable prices. Have some albums of Dolly for sale. If you have anything for sale and/or would like a list of what I have for sale, please write. **Solomon Willis, 120 Solomon Ln., Cherryville, NC 28021**

*For sale: Billy Ray Cyrus decals. "Decal Magic" \$3.00. Concert photos, okay trade for other concert/candid photos. Need CMA "Gold" Cards. I have a few of the 1992 autograph sets, sealed, and ACM trading cards sealed. Interested in any BRC memorabilia; willing to trade. **Debi L. Fowler, P.O. Box 1044, Tucker, GA 30085-1044**

*Looking for David Allan Coe's X-rated tapes or any CD's for reasonable price. Must be in good condition. Please send information on what you have and price. **Michael E. Denson, 10455 N. Central Expy., Suite 109, Box 105, Dallas, TX 75231-2211**

Pen Pals

Make new friends by mail. *Pen Pals* is a means of introducing CMSA members who wish to correspond. It is not a "personals" column. Physical descriptions and requests for romance will not be printed. We also reserve the right to edit for space and style. Parent's permission required for those 18 and under.

*Hi! I'm 33 years old, looking for pen pals of all ages. Love country music. Fa-

vorites are George Jones, Alan Jackson, Hank Williams Jr. Love horseback riding and NASCAR. Will answer all. **Jimmy Long, NECC Annex, Tennessee Dept. of Correction, P.O. 5000, Mtn. City, TN 37683**

*I know I've put my name in the Pen Pal section. For those who have written, I won't be writing back. I'm sorry. **Liz Hopkins, Hollis, NH**

*Hi, I'm 60 years old, happily married, and would love to correspond with anyone who loves country music. Enjoy all the music, but my favorite is RVS. I am originally from TN but spent the past 40 years in the suburbs of Chicago. Would love to receive letters from all over the U.S. **Betty Gedman, 3501 N. Scott St., Franklin Park, IL 60131**

*Hi! I'm 27, happily married with one child, a girl. I'm looking for sincere female pals who really enjoy writing letters. I love animals and country music. Billy Ray is my very favorite. So please fill my box. Females only. Please, no inmates. **Marsha Taylor, P.O. Box 57, Sandersville, MS 39477**

*Hi, I'm 28 years old and married. Love country music and would love some new pals, 25-35 years old. I like to read, write letters, fish and play softball. No inmates or chain letters. **Becky Harless, P.O. Box 135, Culloden, WV 25510**

*Hi from KY! I'm 18 and love country music: Garth Brooks, Reba, George Strait, the list goes on. Interests include horseback riding, swimming and writing letters. Looking for people to write, male or female, ages 18-20. Please, no inmates. **Melissa Quigley, 2332 Ralder Hollow Rd., Munfordville, KY 42765**

*Hi. I am a 43-year-old gal who loves country music. Favorites are Dwight Yoakam, Marty Stuart, Reba, Mark Chesnut. I like many others. Looking for country guys and gals 35-45 to correspond with. Hobbies are horses, camping, fishing, hiking, cooking and just being outside. Love country living. No inmates, please. **Jean Caporrella, P.O. Box 1194, Mansfield, MA 02048**

*Hi, I'm 32 years old, single, and looking for pen pals of all ages. Favorites are Clint, Dwight, Tanya, Wy, but especially Reba. Will answer all. Go ahead, make a new friend! **Scott Higgins, 4293 A. Brynewood Village Cr., Hixson, TN 37343**

*Hi, from AK. 18-year-old gal seeking some good friends, especially musicians and cowboys (17-25). I like George Strait, Tanya, Vince, Garth, Reba and many more. Hobbies include singing, horseback riding, camping and cooking. Will answer all. **Freya Peterson, Box 168, Anchor Point, AK 99556**

*Hello, I'm a 31-year-old single female. Favorites include Sawyer Brown, Doug Stone, George Strait, Alabama, Alan Jackson, Garth and Clint. Hobbies are horseback riding, traveling, fishing and camping. Will answer all. Photo gets mine. **Connie Dachtler, RR 2, Box 186, Whitewood, SD 57793**

*Hi. I am a married mother of four, 32 years young. Conway Twitty is my all-time favorite. Alabama, Restless Heart, Lorrie, George, Reba, and RVS rate high, too! Hobbies include my kids' activities, ceramics, camping, reading, cross-stitch and collecting frogs. Enjoy



PULL-OUT
CENTERFOLD
OF THE MONTH

BROOKS & DUNN

Facts of Life

Personal Data

LEON ERIC "KIX" BROOKS

Birthdate: May 12, 1955
Height: 6'2"
Color of Hair: Brown
Color of Eyes: Blue
Hometown: Shreveport, Louisiana
Family: Wife Barbara, children Molly and Eric
Current Residence: Nashville
Leisure Activities: Fishing, golf, shooting pool

RONNIE GENE DUNN

Birthdate: June 1, 1953
Height: 6'4"
Color of Hair: Brown
Color of Eyes: Blue
Hometown: Tulsa, Oklahoma
Family: Wife Janine, children Whitney and Jesse
Current Residence: Nashville
Leisure Activities: Water skiing, tennis, collecting Southwestern art

Musical Background

KIX BROOKS

Staff writer at Tree Publishing for six years. While there had songs recorded by numerous artists, including John Conlee, Highway 101, Sawyer Brown, The Oak Ridge Boys, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Ricky Van Shelton.
Instruments: Guitar, piano
First Performance: First "paying gig" with Johnny Horton's daughter at age 12.
Early Influences: Hank Williams Sr., Johnny Horton

RONNIE DUNN

After years of playing in clubs in Texas and Oklahoma, won Marlboro Talent Search, which led to a recording session with producers Barry Beckett and Scott Hendricks. Scott brought Ronnie to the attention of Arista president, Tim DuBois.
Instrument: Guitar
First Performance: Grew up performing in his dad's band in West Texas.
Early Influences: His dad



Recording Career

Record Label: Arista Records, 1 Music Circle North, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Albums:

Brand New Man 1991**
Hard Workin' Man 1993**
***Brand New Man* is triple platinum/*Hard Workin' Man* is double platinum.

Singles:

"Brand New Man"*
"Next Broken Heart"*
"Neon Moon"*
"Boot Scootin' Boogie"*
"Lost and Found"
"Hard Workin' Man"*
"Burn That Bridge"*
"She Used to Be Mine"*
"Rock My World (Little Country Girl)"
"Ain't No Way to Go" (Current Release)
**Number One single*

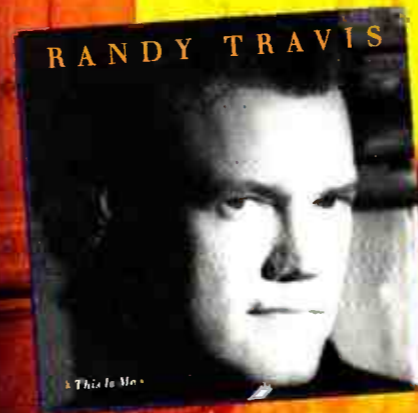
Awards

ACM: Top Vocal Duet, 1991/Top New Vocal Duet or Group, 1991/Top Vocal Duet, 1992/Album of the Year, 1992/Single of the

Year, 1992, "Boot Scootin' Boogie"
Radio & Records Reader's Poll: Duo of the Year, 1991
CMA: Vocal Duo of the Year, 1992/Vocal Duo of the Year, 1993
Billboard Awards: Country Duo/Group of the Year, 1992
American Songwriter Awards: Songwriter of the Year, Ronnie Dunn, 1992
Music City News Country Songwriters Awards: "Boot Scootin' Boogie," Top Ten Songs of 1992, songwriter Ronnie Dunn
TNN/*Music City News* Awards: Vocal Duo of the Year, 1993
Grammy: Best Country Vocal Duo or Group, 1993

Fan Club

Membership in the Brooks & Dunn Fan Club includes a color photo, membership card, biography, quarterly newsletter, backstage pass, preferred seating at concerts, merchandise ordering information and current tour schedule. To become a member, send \$12.00 to Brooks & Dunn Fan Club, P. O. Box 120669, Nashville, Tennessee 37212.



This is the album you've been hearing about.
This is country music.
This is Randy Travis.
This Is Me

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hearing is believing.

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meeting new friends, so drop a note and tell me about you! Photo appreciated. Please, no inmates. **Cindy Kuehler, Rt. 2, Box 364, Nowata, OK 74048.**

*My name is Pat, age 40. My love for country music widens with every new artist. Some favorites are Reba, George Strait, Jim Reeves, Conway and Tracy Lawrence. I'd love to hear from pure country cowboys, who enjoy the music as much as the simple things in life. **Ms. Pat Brady, 120 Woodside Dr., Mastic Beach, NY 11951.**

*Hi, I'm a 24-year-old country music DJ from IN. I love Vince Gill and would like to hear from other fans. Also love Garth, Reba, Travis and others. I enjoy horses, cats, reading and writing letters. Will answer all, but please, no inmates. **Dianna Vickery, RR#1, Box 6A, Oaktown, IN 47561.**

*Hi. I'm a single country gal who likes the older country music best. I'm hoping to relocate someday to the KS/MO/AR/OK area and would especially like pen pals from that area. Please, no inmates. **Barbara Rowley, P.O. Box 190383, Mobile, AL 36619.**

*Hi! I love country music. Some favorites are George Jones, Garth, Wynonna, Tritt, Tanya and many more. I'll write to anyone who writes me. No inmates, please. I would especially like to hear from 18-25-year-old guys and gals. I have many hobbies, and love to party! Love to hear from you! **Suzie Overbey, P.O. Box 443, Marked Tree, AR 72365.**

*Hi from VA. I am a 38-year-old divorced female. Love country music, especially Trisha Yearwood, Garth and Vince. Enjoy camping, hiking, movies, reading and animals. Would like to hear from guys 28-48 who share same interests. Send photo; I'll do the same. No inmates, please. **Vicky Windham, P.O. Box 885, Front Royal, VA 22630-0885.**

*Hello to everyone. I'm 27 years old, presently doing time for some mistakes. Country music helps keep me sane. Favorites are Tracy Lawrence, Mark Chesnutt, George Strait and Reba, to name a few. Love anything to do with the outdoors. Brighten up this lost country boy's day! Plenty of time to answer all. **Floyd Breeden N-82659, P.O. Box 300, Vienna, IL 62995.**

*Hi, I am a single country boy, 32 years old. I like anything country. My favorites are Billy Ray, Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, Hank Jr., Conway Twitty, Tanya, Patty Loveless and so on. I would like to hear from single females 16 and up. Will answer all. **Bob Swank, P.O. Box 230, Beach City, OH 44608-0230.**

*Howdy from PA! I'm a single, 24-year-old gal who loves country music—too many favorites to list. Love NASCAR racing, rodeos, dancing, outdoors, animals, photography, computers and more. Would enjoy hearing from guys and gals around my age with similar interests. Photo gets mine. No inmates, please. **Jean Bucko, 188 Main St., Jeanesville, PA 18201.**

*I'm a 34-year-old, single, Christian male who enjoys country music and writing and singing my own material. I would like to hear from others who write their own songs. Maybe we can exchange tapes. Send photo so I know who I'm writing. **Jesus Villalobos, 12418 S.**

Painter Ave., Whittier, CA 90605.

*Hey, I'm a 19-year-old college student. Favorites are Garth, Alan, Hal and Mary-Chapin. Would like to hear from young ladies around my age, but will enthusiastically answer all. Photo gets mine. **Brian Cook, P.O. Box 9314, Clemson Univ., Clemson, SC 29632-9314.**

*Hi, I'm 41 and single. I play guitar and sing. Would like to hear from all who like Hank Jr., Waylon, Reba and more. Photo gets mine. **Bobby Howell, 170 S.W. #311, Box 21A, Galesburg, IL 61401.**

*Hi, I'm 27 and I like country and rockabilly. Some favorites are Patsy Cline, Hank Sr., Faron Young, Stray Cats, Blasters and Eddie Cochran. I also like nostalgia, animals, classic cars and rodeos. I would like to hear from guys, 21-34. Send photo if possible. No inmates, please. **Kelley Najera, P.O. Box 99635, San Diego, CA 92169.**

*Hi, I am 59 years old, a widow of three years. Would like to have a friend who loves country music. Have many favorites—Number One is Waylon. **Frances Scott, P.O. Box 32403, Laughlin, NV 89028.**

*Hi. This 28-year-old, single mother of one loves all country music. Current favorites include Mark Collie, Rodney Crowell, Vince, Tanya and, always, Patsy Cline. I also enjoy camping, traveling, especially TN, and dancing. I'd love to hear from single men 25-35. Similar interests preferred but sometimes opposites attract. **Tammy Epperson, 112 Oklahoma Ave., Gahanna, OH 43230-3017.**

*Hi, I'm 30 and married. I love country music. Favorites are Dwight, Billy Ray, Vince, Alan Jackson, Reba and many more. I enjoy writing letters, roller-skating, bicycling and camping. Would like to hear from other ladies, ages 20 and up. No inmates, please. **Sheri Hockenberry, 7320 25th Ave. #A, Sacramento, CA 95820.**

*Help—I'm looking for new friends and would love the chance to write to others with similar (or even different) interests. I'm a 31-year-old single mom who loves country music (especially Randy Travis, Clinton Gregory, Kenny Rogers and The Statlers, to name a few), old movies, *Star Trek*, books and crocheting. I do volunteer work to fill my time until I find a new job (one of the many unemployed during the "Great Flood of '93"). Will try to answer all who write. No offense, but no inmates, please. **Amber Haertling, 271 Munger Ln. #62, Hannibal, MO 63401.**

*Hi, I am 35 years old, divorced and love country music. My favorites are Travis Tritt, Aaron Tippin, RVS and Reba. I am interested in hearing from guys, 35 to 45, who love country music, also for friendship. I enjoy reading, long walks in the country and the quieter side of life. Will answer all. **Cynthia Clary, 211B Park St., Dallas, GA 30132.**

*Hi, I'm a 19-year-old country music-crazed gal. Love all, but some of my favorites are: Conway, The Possum, Patsy, Reba, Hank Jr., Tritt, Garth, Sammy Kershaw, Tracy Lawrence, Brooks & Dunn, and Confederate RR, to name a few. Hobbies include slow dancing, horseback riding, going out and *Jamboree in the Hills*. Would like to

hear from country gals and guys around my age. No inmates, please. Photos welcomed. **Renea Brady, 42466 Mattox Rd., Albany, OH 45710.**

*Hi, I'm a 20-year-old single woman. I enjoy all country music, dancing, horseback riding, old sappy movies and the outdoors. I would like to find a cowboy between 20-30 with same interests. Please send photo. **Merisa Beach, 2882 Orchard Ave. #B, Grand Jct., CO 81501.**

*I am 19. My favorite hobbies are walking, swimming and shopping. Favorite country singers are The Judds, Clint, Randy Travis. Will answer all. **Shawna Eufert, 1619 Hanover Dr., Apt. N4, Murfreesboro, TN 37130.**

*Nice, middle-aged lady looking for same in my area who enjoys going to concerts, meeting for lunch and just general friendship. My ultimate favorite is George Strait, but I also like Kathy Mattea, Alabama, Clay Walker, Suzy Bogguss, plus many others, along with all Texas swing and honky tonk. I want to go to Fanfest '94 in Pomona and looking for someone who'd like to go, too. Warning: I'm not fond of Garth. **Kathy Chaney, 4623 E. 14th St., Apt. D, Long Beach, CA 90804.**

*Hello from European state of Slovenia! My name is Domen, or Dayve for you. I'm 19 years old, male, single country fanatic! My number one singer is Loretta Lynn. Also like Dolly, Alan Jackson, Patsy Cline, Garth and many more. My other interests are: bicycling, traveling, camping, nature, animals, gardening, golf, tennis, fishing, cooking and many more. I like to have male and female pen pals who are 19 to 30 years old. However, I'll write to all. Please send photo. **Domen Mujdrica, P.O. Box 6, 61235 Radomlje, Slovenia.**

*Hi. I'm 38 years old and single. I enjoy country music and NASCAR racing. Would love to hear from all. **Jane Hartan, P.O. Box 38, East Windsor Hill, CT 06028.**

*Howdy! My name is Oak, and I'm a 20-year-old country boy. I love country music! All-time favorite is Tanya! Also enjoy riding horses, hunting, fishing and spending time in the wilderness. I spend my summers and falls in the remote mountains of northern British Columbia. Would love to hear from 17-35-year-old country girls, especially cowgirls. **Mr. Oak Steffey, 3337 Brogan Rd., Stockbridge, MI 49285.**

*Hi, you all! My name is Gloria. I am a 28-year-old, single, old fashioned country girl who adores country music and anything country. Favorites are Reba, Garth, Alan Jackson, John Michael Montgomery and more. Also enjoy freelance writing and photography, poetry, dancing, sports, cooking and animals. Would love to hear from any cowboys or cowgirls. If you've written before, please give me another holler. A lot of addresses were unfortunately destroyed. **Gloria Abrahamson, 201 W. Richmond St., Shawano, WI 54166.**

*Hi, I'm 17 years old, and I love country music. I have my own band, and we are going to Nashville to record. Favorites are Collin Raye, Mark Chesnutt, Mark Collie. Have two real heroes, George Strait and Tim McGraw. Favorite group is Shenandoah. Favorite females are Joy

White and Kelly Willis. Love playing tennis, touring and getting involved with new people. I'd love to hear from Tim McGraw fans and girls, age 16-30. No inmates. **Norman Stevenson Jr., 171 Mynatt Rd., Thomson, GA 30824.**

*Hi. My name is Jerry Conway, and I'm in prison. I took life for granted and made mistakes. I'm 44, play guitar, write and sing country music. Love writing poetry, and would love to have a friend. **Jerry Conway, GMCF, P.O. Box 51, Comstock, NY 12821.**

*Hi, I'm 47, divorced and doing time in Texas. I love country music, animals and the ocean. Looking for new friends. Will answer all. **William Walker, P.O. Box 1010, Unit 3, Bastrop, TX 78602-1010.**

*I love Lorrie Morgan, George Jones, Reba, Brooks & Dunn, Dolly, John Anderson and more. Hobbies include reading, writing letters, cross-stitch and more. Would love to hear from anyone, 24-45. No prisoners, please. Will answer all. Picture gets mine. **Anita McNeill, Black Creek Postal Outlet, 605 Rogers Rd., P.O. Box 31584, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6M 5G4.**

*Hello, I like country music, especially Aaron Tippin, Dwight Yoakam and RVS. I'm 47 years old, divorced, and would like to hear from men and women with same interests. **Reba Boone, Box 1266, Old Fort, NC 28762.**

*I'm 22 and a lover of all country music in the US and Canada. Some faves are Reba, Michelle Wright, Patricia Conroy, Cassandra Vasic, Trisha Yearwood, Patty, Kathy Mattea. Hobbies include working out, writing, cool motorcycles and collecting stuff on Reba and Michelle Wright. Will answer all. Pictures get mine. **Randolph Demmitt, 344 Lexington St., York, PA 17403.**

*Hi! I'm 43 years old, a divorced female and love country music. Favorites are Reba, Trisha, Alan Jackson, Randy Travis, George Strait and many others. Enjoy soap operas, cats, movies, concerts, animals, writing letters. Would like to hear from guys with similar interests. Photo gets mine. No inmates, please. **Cindy Sanders, 13756 State Rt. 7 S., Gallipolis, OH 45631-8362.**

*Howdy! I'm a 21-year-old single girl who loves country music. I enjoy reading, motorcycle races, bicycling and the country. Favorites are Reba, Vince Gill, Little Texas, Trisha Yearwood and Clay Walker. Hope to hear from country boys and girls. **Renee Delner, 3 East Prospect, Crafton, PA 15205.**

*Hi, I'm 17 and I love country music. My favorites are Reba, Clint Black, Vince Gill, Wynonna, Little Texas, Sammy Kershaw and many more. Will try to answer all. No prisoners, please. **Jennifer Durham, 1801 Pintail, Kirksville, MO 63501.**

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Floyd Tillman

A singer's singer and a songwriter with amazingly wide appeal, Floyd Tillman was one of the creative geniuses of honky tonk and a groundbreaking vocalist who influenced later giants.

By Rich Kienzle

Though most of the artists you normally read about here had a number of big hit records over a sustained period of time, hits aren't the only thing that qualifies a singer as a legend. Great songwriters, producers, promoters and other music business types can qualify (some also wind up inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame). Some legends had only a few hits, but their influence went beyond recordings. Floyd Tillman certainly qualifies on all those counts.

Along with Ernest Tubb, Al Dexter, Rex Griffin, Lefty Frizzell and Webb Pierce, Tillman helped define the style of music known as honky tonk. A number of his compositions have become honky tonk standards, and a few have become bonafide American standards regardless of category. Vocally, Tillman is a "singer's singer." His unorthodox phrasing influenced a number of Texas singers, most notably Lefty Frizzell and Willie Nelson. Last but not least, fans today take for granted seeing Travis Tritt or Hank Jr. playing electric guitar onstage—Floyd Tillman started that as well. He played electric, and played his own lead guitar, at a time when few country musicians played electric and no singer ever used one that way.

Born in Ryan, Oklahoma, December 8, 1914, he was the youngest of eleven kids. The Tillmans moved south to Post, Texas, where he grew up. Even in his youth, he had interests that set him apart, among them amateur radio. He started playing mandolin in a group with older brothers, at a local skating emporium. That led him to learn guitar. Captivated by jazz, he started working out the idea of playing single-string solos on guitar. At the time, except for blues and country fingerpickers, the guitar was generally

considered a rhythm instrument. In the 1930's a handful of jazz guitar innovators and pop guitarists like Nick Lucas began recording guitar solos, and Lucas' records influenced Tillman as well. At the same time, he became fascinated with country and pop songs; among the first songs he ever sang was the old Vernon Dalhart hit, "The Death of Floyd Collins."



Hall-of-Famer
Floyd Tillman.

As Floyd improved his skills, he spent a brief time playing with Adolph Hofner's band in Houston in the early 1930's, then spent two years with a pop dance group called The Mark Clark Orchestra. This exposure to pop music influenced Tillman's approach to country. When he joined Western swing fiddler Leon "Pappy" Selph's Blue Ridge Playboys around 1936 as guitarist, he started sing-

ing. He also wrote his first song, "Rhythm in the Air." It became the first Tillman song ever recorded when he sang it during the group's first recording session that year. (The song got little notice.)

Tillman also wrote his first classic: the ballad "It Makes No Difference Now." Singer Jimmie Davis wanted to buy it, and Floyd sold him the song for \$300. It wasn't a wise decision. Texas Western swing fiddler Cliff Bruner and his group had a huge national hit with it in 1938, and three years later, Bing Crosby made it a pop hit. Selph's group recorded again for Decca in 1939. On this session they cut another well-known Tillman ballad, "A Precious Memory." His unique vocal style began to stand out. Influenced by pop crooners, he sang behind the beat, much as Willie does today. He also stretched out certain lyrics, a technique later perfected by Lefty Frizzell.

In August 1939, Tillman did his first solo session for Decca and delved even deeper into pop-flavored singing and songs more complex than much of the country fare of the day. His recordings featured top-notch backup musicians from the Houston area, among them steel guitar innovator Bob Dunn, pianist Moon Mullican and pioneer electric mandolinist Leo Raley. An April 1940 Decca session with another Houston band, singer Dickie McBride's group, The Village Boys, featured Floyd. This was the first recording of his uptempo favorite, "Daisy Mae." Still working around bars and dancehalls the Southwest, he'd already begun using electric guitar.

His next Decca solo session, in April 1941, yielded his first hit record. By the time Decca released "They Took the Stars Out of Heaven," Tillman wasn't able to tour. He'd been drafted. With

World War II raging, Decca released "Stars," which captured the mood of the day. Meanwhile Floyd was still in Houston, stationed at Ellington Field as an Army radio operator (an extension of his early interest in ham radio). He was still able to perform locally. By 1944, "Stars" reached Number One. That year he recorded again, this time in New York City, with a band that included a clarinet, which wouldn't have worked for many other country singers but did for him. Decca obviously wanted more sentimental, war-related songs, and he came up with two that became classics: one "G.I. Blues," the other the compelling "Each Night at Nine." Late in 1944, the two, issued on one 78 rpm disc, became his second big hit.

After his discharge, he picked up where he'd left off, but with a new record company: Columbia. He signed with them in February 1946. His first big postwar hit was one he *didn't* write: a cover version of Texas singer Jerry Irby's "Drivin' Nails in My Coffin," but he had a new song when he did his first recording in Nashville late in 1947. The pending nationwide Musicians' Union strike, set to begin in 1948, had record companies working overtime to stockpile recordings, and Floyd was ready with the ballad "I Love You So Much It Hurts."

Columbia's Art Satherley, normally an astute producer, wasn't interested in the number, dismissing it as a pop song. Then, at the end of the session, Satherley asked him what else he had. Tillman reminded him of the "pop" number. Satherley agreed, and in 1948 it went into the Top Five. "Please Don't Pass Me By" became a minor hit in 1949, but by then, Tillman had the song that would establish him forever: "Slippin' Around," a ballad about the then-taboo subject of adultery. He'd been appearing in San Antonio and was heading back home when he overheard a woman talking on a public phone. Inspired by the situation, he wrote the song and recorded it early in 1949. That summer Floyd's version made it to Number Five.

In 1994, such a song seems fairly mild. At the time it was anything but that. That fall, pop singer Margaret Whiting and Western vocalist Jimmy Wakely covered Tillman's version, complete with roller-rink organ accompaniment, for Capitol. It topped the country charts (17 weeks) and the pop charts (three weeks). Still, the squeamish folks on TV's popular

Your Hit Parade insisted one verse be toned down to make the adultery less obvious. In August 1949, Tillman recorded an "answer" to his song, "I'll Never Slip Around Again," a Number Six hit.

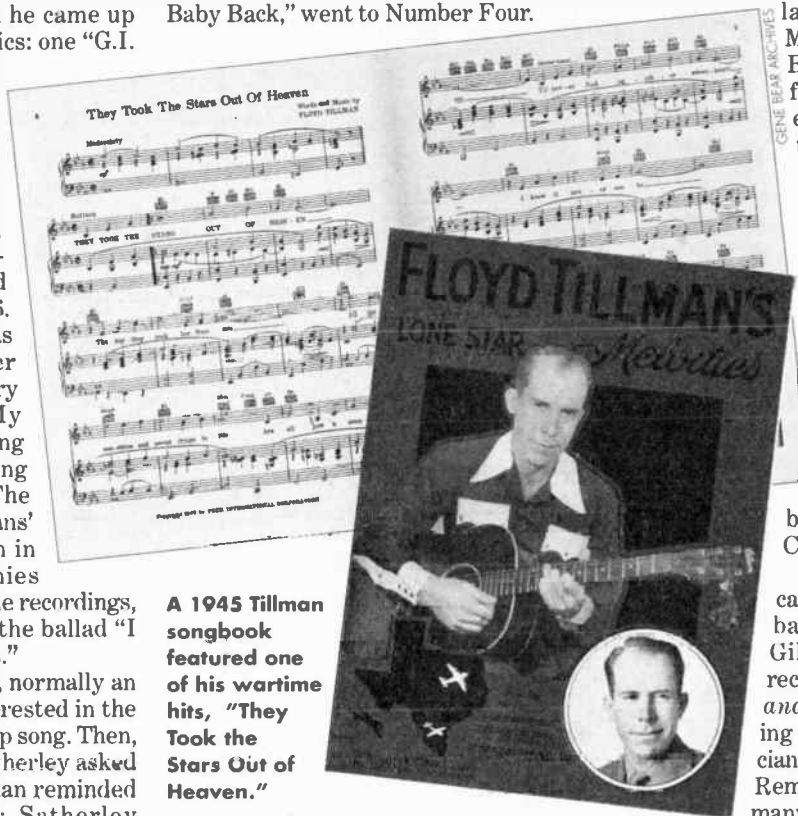
At the same session he recorded another honky tonk standard: "This Cold War With You." Inspired by the political Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Tillman shrewdly applied the same escalating tensions to a faltering male-female relationship. Later that year another standard, "I Gotta Have My Baby Back," went to Number Four.

on various small Texas labels. He re-recorded his best known hits in 1957 for an RCA album.

Unlike many honky tonkers, Tillman continued to grow intellectually, becoming engrossed in philosophy, and that complex thinking began showing up in his songs. His 1960 Liberty single, "It Just Tears Me Up," broke into the Top 30; its flipside, "The Song of Music," was an insightful, complex hymn to the essence of music. In 1962 he recorded an explosive album of his old favorites for the Cimarron label, backed by Leon McAuliffe's Cimarron Boys. It remains one of the finest honky tonk albums ever recorded. During the 60's he bought back the rights to "It Makes No Difference Now" from Jimmie Davis when the copyright came up for renewal. He again re-recorded old hits and some new songs for Musicor and the British Allegro label. In the late 60's he recorded two albums for Musicor, and in the 1970's recorded for small labels including Huey Meaux's Crazy Cajun Records.

Tillman's last major effort came in 1981, amid the Urban Cowboy boom, when Gilley's nightclub ran a record label. *Floyd Tillman and Friends* featured backing by first-rate Texas musicians like steel guitarist Herb Remington (who'd worked on many of his Columbia recordings), Johnny Gimble and others. Among those singing with him were Mickey Gilley, Johnny Lee, Ernest Tubb (one of his last recordings), Merle Haggard and on two numbers, the man most influenced by Floyd's music: Willie Nelson. In 1984 Tillman was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

This coming December, Floyd Tillman turns 80. His public appearances are rare, though one on TNN's old show, *Texas Connection*, showed his voice still strong and the spirit undaunted. It is safe to say that without him, we'd be short a number of great songs and one of the most instantly identifiable voices in American music, country, rock or pop.



A 1945 Tillman songbook featured one of his wartime hits, "They Took the Stars Out of Heaven."

Meanwhile, "I Love You So Much It Hurts" caught on with pop singers. In 1949 The Mills Brothers and two other pop acts had hit recordings of it. Pop singers would cover other Tillman numbers in the future.

Tillman continued to record for Columbia until 1954. In 1950 he recorded a fine, if unnoticed version of Ivory Joe Hunter's rhythm and blues hit, "I Almost Lost My Mind," showing his versatility as a singer. From the late 40's on, he also recorded duets with his wife Marge. Some of his recordings were remakes of Decca hits; other newer songs, like "A Small Little Town," weren't hits but their quality was undeniable. Financially well off from songwriting royalties, he cut down his personal appearances in 1953 and stuck to writing, recording and selective performing jobs. Floyd Tillman singles appeared

Albums Available
See For CMSA Members Only page.

Readers Create

Love and Family

With both Mother's Day and Father's Day upon us in the next few months, it seems fitting to make this edition of Readers Create a tribute to family—moms, dads, kids and even grandparents. Each of the poems here is a loving tribute to members of the family, a theme that has run through country songs for as long as there have been country songs.

Great-Grandma's Smile

Liz Sherrard of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, writes this about her great-grandmother, whom she lost four years ago. Says Liz, "In her last years we became extremely close. Writing this was my way of expressing how much I miss her and will always have her in my heart."

The Smile Never Faded

My Grandma had a special way of always making things seem right.

When you could only see a cloud of darkness
she would always show you the light.

Her body became fragile as the years
went by
I couldn't bear to see her that way.
I knew in my heart time was getting shorter
and there was so much I needed to say.

Chorus

But the smile never faded from Grandma's
eyes
you could always find it there.
Filled with the laughter, love and joy
she was always so willing to share.

Each day just got harder
Wondering if this could be her last.
When she'd no longer be in my future
and become a memory of my past.

Chorus

But the smile never faded from Grandma's
eyes
you could always find it there.
Filled with the laughter, love and joy
she was always so willing to share.

—Liz Sherrard

Love for a Daughter

Next up is Cynthia Zearing of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, with this heartfelt poem about her baby daughter.

My Little Girl

In your eyes I see the joy that life gives you.
In your hands you hold the key to the future.
When I look at you, I wonder why it is
God blessed me with you.
You are the most precious gift
I could ever receive.

Your laughter fills the air,
the sound of your voice is like a song.
In my eyes you are the reason for living
the promise of a better life to come.
And no matter what else happens to me,
as long as you are here
I know life is worth living.

—Cynthia Zearing

Remembering Dad

Trish Franklin of Vienna, Virginia, has many fond memories of her late father. Trish says that this poem "is my way of saying what I didn't say when he was around. Maybe he'll know my true feeling now."

I Wish I Could Tell You

I wish you and I had been closer
Today I long to know the kind of man you
were
I wish I could tell you how I feel
Now I realize your love for me was real.



Thanks, Randy!

26-year-old Benson Hadley of Waterflow, New Mexico, says he's a big fan of Randy Travis and he drew this "as a way of saying thanks to him for all the wonderful music." Benson says he never misses an issue of *Country Music Magazine*.

Do you know
how much I miss you
how much I want you
back in my life?
I'm sure you know
how much I love you.

Now I can't tell you what's in my heart
It seems it's just too late to start
They say all good things must end someday
If only I'd known it was going to be this way.

Do you know
how much I miss you
how much I want you
back in my life?
I'm sure you know
how much I love you.

I always wanted to be with you
Yet when you came to our house
I pushed you away
I knew you were hurt
but you never did say.

Do you know
how much I miss you
how much I want you
back in my life?
I'm sure you know
how much I love you.

As a daughter I now know
what my life lacks.
God, could you please
send my Dad back?

—Trish Franklin



A Proud Mom

Continuing with the theme of this edition of Readers Create, this sketch was submitted by Teresa Lechner, who signs herself, "A Proud Mom." You see, the drawing was done by her 13-year-old daughter, Amanda, who is a big fan of Reba. Mother and daughter are country music fans in Pompeys Pillar, Montana.



John Michael Montgomery Kicks Back

By Michael McCall

Anyone would envy John Michael Montgomery's whirlwind success of the past year. The singer himself is pleased and ready to enjoy some of good fortune's rewards.

John Michael Montgomery keeps half an eye on a championship basketball game unfolding on a television set in an upper corner of his tour bus as he talks about the funny bounces a career as a music performer is apt to take. "I'm just hoping I can stick around for five or ten years," he says, glancing upward as a rundown of the day's scores flash across the bottom of the screen. "But it's not something I'm going to sit around and lose sleep over worrying about when it might end."

As the final numbers of the University of Kentucky victory over the University of Florida are shown, Montgomery pauses, and his smile broadens. "Man, I'm sorry," he says in his home-grown Kentucky twang, apologizing for the delay and his wandering attention. "But my 'Cats won, and, man, that just feels good."

Much like the Wildcat basketball team, Montgomery seems to be setting himself up for a lengthy run as one of country music's top-ranked, fresh-faced stars of the 1990's. In 1993, his

freshman year, he became the only fast-breaking newcomer to sell more than a million copies of a debut album. As 1994 started, he slam-dunked his status as country's hottest new male star when his second album, *Kickin' It Up*, simultaneously reached Number One on both the pop and country charts. Of country's current stars, only Garth Brooks and Billy Ray Cyrus have achieved that across-the-board accomplishment.

Ironically, Montgomery's bus is sitting in the loading dock of Connell Center, a 15,000-seat arena situated on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville, which had been all but shut down for the previous couple of hours as the college town gathered in homes, dorm lounges, bars, pizza hangouts and even specially set-up hotel ballrooms to watch the hometown team get soundly defeated in the Southeastern Conference basketball championship game.

Montgomery flashes a slightly wicked smile as he says, "I don't think I'll be mentioning the game tonight when I'm on stage. We probably wouldn't get out of here alive." The singer

grew up in the suburbs around Lexington, where Kentucky basketball is as much a part of the local turf as blue grass. "I've been a fanatic for 'Cat basketball since I was a kid," he says.

As he speaks, the bus door flies open and a tanned, athletically trim man and an equally well-toned young woman burst in carrying several plastic sacks filled with a variety of six-packs. John Michael tells them, "Just sit 'em down on the floor, I'm doing an interview here."

The woman does as she's told and backs out of the bus. The guy halts for a second, sets his bags down, peers down the aisle, and then picks up the sacks and lifts them over our legs. "Can I go ahead and put these in the cooler?" he says, flashing a devilish grin toward Montgomery as he opens the top of a large, metal refrigerator that's part of the bus' custom-fit appliances.

John Michael laughs an agreeable response and says, "Well, I suppose we'll live through it." The singer starts talking about how happy he is to be playing more lead guitar this year while featuring his new, original, Southern-rock influenced songs ("Kick It Up," "Friday at 5," "Be My Baby Tonight") in place of the 1970's redneck rockers he performed as part of his set last year.

As he speaks, the clanging of bottles grows increasingly louder as the cooler fills. The clamor gets loud enough to drown Montgomery's words, and the singer can't stifle a laugh. "Son," he says to his friend, who looks back and laughs too. The guy hustles to load the cooler faster, which makes even more racket, and by now John Michael is laughing so hard he's nearly rolling on the cushioned bench seat. "Don't let me interrupt you," his friend blurts, and their laughs soar hysterically.

"This here's Richie Farmer," Montgomery announces through his chuckles, referring to the 1992 University of Kentucky basketball star who has joined the singer for a couple of days of his road trip and who is now crinkling up empty plastic bags. "I grew up watching him play basketball. In Kentucky, he's more famous than I am. He's a helluva guy, too, and a friend of mine."

Farmer stretches out his hand. "You see, we just beat Florida, and we're trying to get some beer cold," he says, excusing his actions as he gets the bus ready for the post-concert victory celebration that will take place on the road back to Nashville. "You know how it is. Somebody's gotta do it."

The cooler is packed to its metal lid; a lone six-pack still rests on the floor. It might get warm sitting there like that, I mention. Farmer smiles and hands me a bottle and twists a cap himself.

"Yea, we get tore up," Montgomery admits. "We're just a bunch of good ol' boys on here. And that's the way I try to present myself. I go out there and let the people know I'm just a good ol' country guy; I'm not trying to pull no tricks or nothing. My attitude is, 'I've got some songs I want to sing that I feel good about, and apparently y'all do too because you're buying them.' I can't change my personality or anything like



Onstage in Miami— afterwards he signed autographs for the fans. A CNN crew was on hand filming for a network segment.



PHOTOS: CANDACE WEST

that when I go onstage."

The scene underscores several of Montgomery's prevailing traits. After busting his tail for more than 10 years as a three-sets-a-night honky tonk singer in Lexington and another year of hitting the highway hard and fast while promoting his first album in every way possible, he set a few objectives for 1994.

First and foremost, he's determined to take time to enjoy his success. "Time off to me is worth a bucket of gold," he notes. Life would no longer consist of an endless series of concerts, interviews, radio stops and business meetings. Instead, he planned to follow the advice of his hit, "Life's a Dance."

This year, he would play more golf and spend more time relaxing with friends. He also would flaunt his Southern rock influences more, something that can be heard on *Kickin' It Up*, where rowdy blue-collar rockers and bawdy honky tonk tunes wrap their brawny arms around

the romantic ballads and mid-tempo waltzes that initially put Montgomery on the charts.

In other words, he wanted to have more fun, both off stage and on. "It's good on a man's mind when he gets to go home from time to time," he says, spitting a stream of pungent juice into a paper cup as he rolls a thick

wad of tobacco around in his jaw. "I'm a pretty simplistic person. I've got to have time to get away and relax and think. If I got people around me all the time, constantly, then I can't get away and do that. And if I can't get away, then I go crazy."

His first year as an up-and-coming country star was indeed crazy. "I was so busy, it was hard to appreciate everything that was happening to me," he says. "It was boom, do a gig, boom, do a gig, boom, do a gig. It was non-stop. It was like, 'We got to do that, we got to do this, and we got to do it right now.' Most of the time I said, 'Yes, OK, let's do it.' But if I'm away from home too long, I get homesick. I get in the worst mood in the world, and don't even get in my way. I'm just not used to that. So, this year, it's totally different. I was able to set up my schedule to fit me a little better."

His newly determined priorities were on view all day and night in Gainesville. After arriving by bus from Miami, where he'd played the previous night, he and Farmer headed out to the nearest golf course and shot a leisurely nine holes. They then skedaddled back to the bus to catch the Kentucky-Florida championship game. When 5 P.M. snuck up on him and Montgomery was informed by his road manager that it was time for a scheduled interview, the crew member was told it would have to wait until the game was over. "I don't care if President Clinton was trying to get on this bus," Montgomery later told me. "If the ballgame was on, he'd just have to wait. That's how strong me and my people feel about Kentucky basketball."

Montgomery and his family feel the same way about music. His father and mother both were country music performers,

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“We’re just a bunch of good ol’ boys on here. And that’s the way I try to present myself. I go out there and let the people know I’m just a good ol’ country guy; I’m not trying to pull no tricks or nothing.”

and John Michael joined their band as rhythm guitarist at age 15. Two years later, his parents divorced, and John Michael took a larger role in his father’s band. His older brother, Eddie, took over the drum seat from his mother. The band’s bass player, Tim Williams, remains a member of John Michael’s band today, and brother Eddie travels as a business assistant.

His father, Harold Montgomery, put out a single, “Lord Let Me Be Young Again,” on Boll Weevil Records that climbed into the bottom quarter of the country radio chart, and he performed on Ernest Tubb’s *Midnight Jamboree* radio program one Saturday night in Nashville after the Grand Ole Opry. His father eventually burned out on the nightly schedule; Eddie, Tim and John Michael went out on their own as Erli Tymz, with John singing and playing lead guitar. A few years later, the singer decided to perform under his own name. John Montgomery sounded a little bland to him, so he included his middle name to lend it a more distinctive ring. Before long, John Michael Montgomery was headlining at Lexington’s primary country music nightspot, the Austin City Saloon.

Onstage in Gainesville, the experience shows. Montgomery is poised and comfortable. He’s sure of his movements, relaxed yet focused when he talks with the crowd. His band is honky tonk modern: fiddle, steel, and a keyboard player who alternates between a Kurzweil synthesizer and a bright red, hand-held Yamaha keyboard he carries strapped around his neck. The fiddle player, Jim Hargrave, prances around like a dervish, and he and the steel guitarist take most of the leads.

Montgomery’s lone cover song says a lot about him: He doesn’t sit down on a stool with an acoustic guitar to play James Taylor or “Please Come to Boston,” nor does he reach back to croon an old soul song or strut through some R&B chestnut. His choice is a rowdy take on Merle Haggard’s “I Think I’ll Just Sit Here and Drink,” which Montgomery translates with the kind of gusto that Hank Williams Jr. might lend the song. It’s the part of the show where the band stretches out, with everyone taking a short, colorful solo turn. Montgomery grabs a chance to prove that the Fender Telecaster strapped around his shoulders isn’t there for show, as he leads the band through a string-bending, dynamic solo of his own.

The rest of the program probably surprises those who only know Montgomery from his radio hits. He opens with a swaggering version of “Be My Baby Tonight” and turns up the heat with a boisterous version of “Beer and Bones.” Such hits as “I Love the Way You Love Me,” “I Swear” and “Rope the Moon” gain strength when surrounded by the muscle Montgomery and his band flex around them. By the time he encores with a spirited version of “Kick It Up,” the auditorium is joining with him in throw-

ing their fists in their air on the chorus.

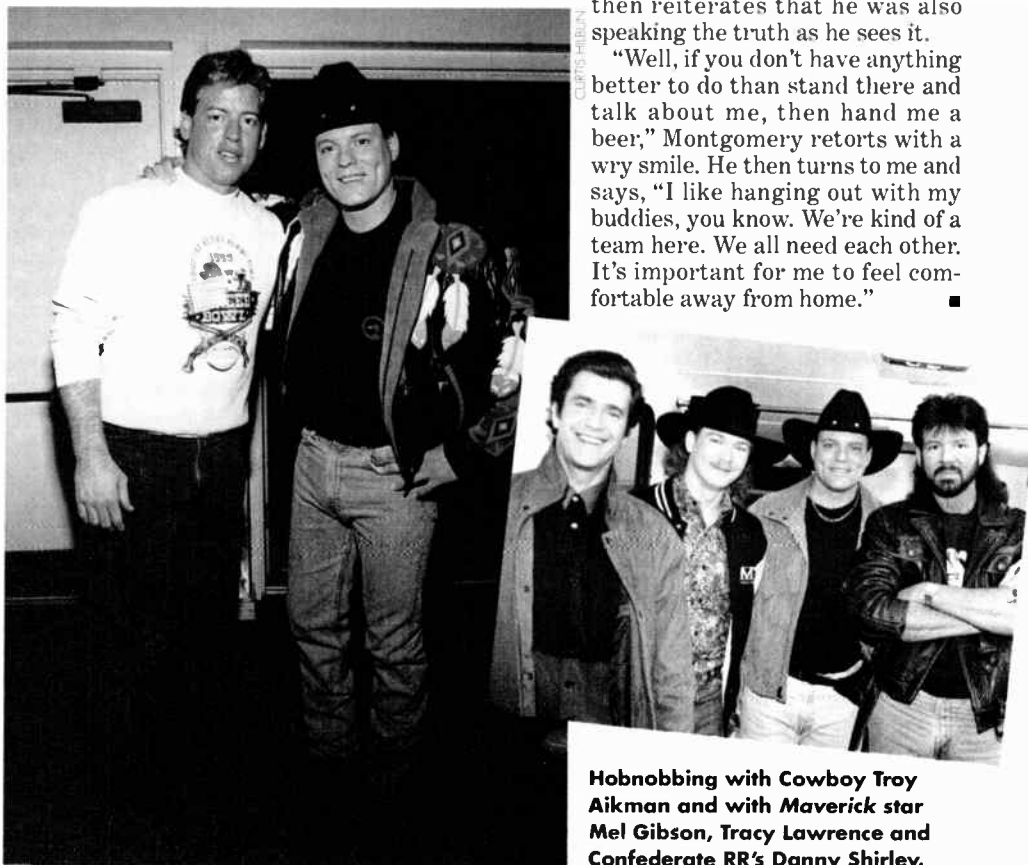
“I think this second album shows people a little bigger piece of me,” the singer explains before the show. “The first album didn’t cover all of my influences. The second album doesn’t cover them all either, as far as the versatility that I feel like I have to give to the people. But *Kickin’ It Up* certainly comes a lot closer to showing my sides. I’ve always liked to rock it up a little bit.”

His love for romantic ballads is sincere, too, he emphasizes. He considers Lionel Richie a primary influence, someone whose music he has performed and listened to since taking slow-dance requests in honky tonks. He also cites Haggard, George Strait, Bob Seger, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Kenny Rogers as performers who helped shape different parts of his style.

Back on the bus, Richie Farmer is stressing, over and over, that success has not ruined his friend John Michael. “I consider him one of my best buddies,” Farmer discloses, saying that he used to go see Montgomery perform at the Austin City Saloon in Lexington. “I’ve always loved his music. But the thing I want you to understand is, well, you see so many people, once they make it big, they change. A lot of my friends are in the NBA making millions and millions of dollars. Some change, some don’t. The good ones, according to me, are the ones who stay the same. If John had 10 zillion or if he had a dollar, he’d be the same John. I think that’s what’s special about him.”

Montgomery, a little embarrassed to be sitting there as his friend testifies on his behalf, interrupts by jokingly asking if Farmer realizes a tape recorder is picking up his words. “Oh, man, I thought we was just shooting the bull,” Farmer laughs, then reiterates that he was also speaking the truth as he sees it.

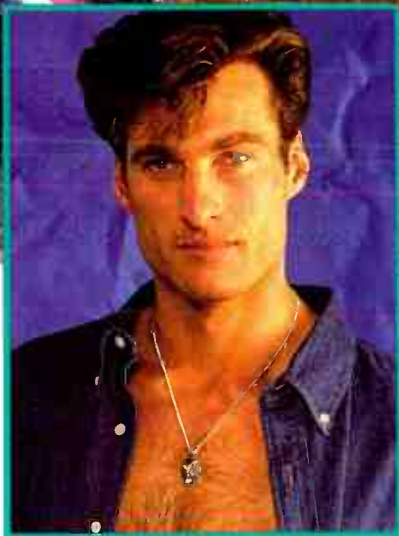
“Well, if you don’t have anything better to do than stand there and talk about me, then hand me a beer,” Montgomery retorts with a wry smile. He then turns to me and says, “I like hanging out with my buddies, you know. We’re kind of a team here. We all need each other. It’s important for me to feel comfortable away from home.” ■



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ALISON KRAUSS

Music That's Timeless



When Alison Krauss joined the Grand Ole Opry last July, she became the first new bluegrass member since The Osborne Brothers and Jim & Jesse McReynolds joined the cast in 1964. That was 29 years earlier, long before Krauss herself was born in 1971. And yet, if there's any one performer who can make bluegrass a music of the future as well as a music of the past, it's this fiddler and singer, who celebrated her 22nd birthday just three weeks after her induction.

"It was pretty heavy," Krauss admits now. "You think of everyone who's been a member—Bill Monroe, Hank Williams, Loretta Lynn—and you can't help but think how cool it would be to join. But when the day itself came, I got all wiggled out. I've been playing in public since I was a little kid, but I've never been as nervous as I was that night."

It didn't help matters that no one had told her or the audience about the surprise guest who would introduce her at the induction ceremony. "When Garth Brooks walked out," Krauss says, "the crowd went psycho. It was wild. He said some nice things, and then we were expected to play. I said to myself, 'No way we can top that.'"

As usual, though, Krauss was fine. As soon as she opened her mouth and that soprano voice—pure as a bell and pretty as a Sierra Club calendar—emerged, the crowd was hers. Krauss and her band, Union Station, appear on the Opry whenever they're home in Nashville, and the thrill still hasn't worn off. "Hank Snow is on before you," Krauss says in lingering astonishment, "and Bill Monroe is on after you. You go, 'Whoa! I'm a part of this?'"

Krauss is an important part of the Opry, for she is proving that bluegrass is not just a historical era but a vital, living music. She first attracted attention as a 12-year-old prodigy who won every fiddle contest she entered. It's her singing, though, that has taken her last two albums to the top of "The National Bluegrass Survey," has earned her two Grammy Awards for "Best Bluegrass Recording" and has won her the admiration of everyone from Michael McDonald to Ricky Skaggs.

She has accomplished so much so fast, in fact, that it's hard to remember she's only 22. You're forced to admit it, however, when you see her backstage at the Birchmere nightclub in Virginia, dressed in tassel loafers, blue sweat pants and a white "Hoffman Strings" T-shirt. She sticks red and yellow butterfly clamps into her unruly red hair and clowns around with her bandmates as if they were a sister and four brothers romping in a motel room while mom and dad are checking in at the office.

Krauss apologizes for postponing the interview two hours, but she and bass player Barry Bales wanted to tour the nearby Civil War battlefield in Manassas. "It was just like a school field trip," she giggles. And when she talks about making a video with Alan Jackson (for their vocal duet, "The Angels Cried," from his recent Christmas album), she sounds just like a fan. "I've always liked his singing," she gushes, adding with a heavenward roll of her eyes, "plus he looks great."

She has undergone quite a transformation by the time

she appears on stage three hours later. The clamps are gone, leaving a crown of red curls. She wears a brown silk jacket over a dark mini-dress and black leotards, and she's all business as she stomps her black-and-white cowgirl boots to kick off the show with "Two Highways," the title song from her 1989 second album. All the high jinks are forgotten as her high soprano aches with the hard decision of choosing between the two roads in life.

"I still love playing the fiddle," she claims, "but it's amazing what a song lyric can do. I never realized how they can make a difference to people until this woman whose baby had died came up to me after a show once and said our song 'Jesus Help Me to Stand' had helped her get through it. When someone tells you 'that song is my life,' you understand how important vocals are."

In the long run, Krauss' most important contribution may be her championing of bluegrass songwriting. The

bluegrass field has never been lacking for virtuoso pickers, but in recent years it has often seemed that bluegrass acts have recorded either old standards or new arrangements of borrowed country and pop songs. Inasmuch as a music has to keep producing new material to stay alive, this represented a crisis of sorts, and Krauss has helped solve it by assembling a pool of obscure but superb bluegrass songwriters: John Pennell, Nelson Mandrell, Sidney Cox, Ron Block, Todd Rakestraw and Mark Simos.

Pennell, for example, wrote "Too Late to Cry," the title cut of the debut album Krauss recorded at age 15 in 1986. The song takes the familiar country theme of a broken-hearted lover sitting in a tavern and realizing too late what she has lost. Pennell's lyrics, however, boast a sharp eye for detail (an empty whiskey glass, a raven crying in the night) and a taste

for bittersweet irony that reflect the modern-folk writing of Joni Mitchell and Nanci Griffith. But the pretty melody and skipping rhythm bear an indelible Appalachian stamp that mark them as bluegrass.

This formula of country-music subject matter, modern-folk lyrics and bluegrass music pretty much defines Krauss' distinctive body of work. "The kind of songs I sing are not traditional bluegrass," she confesses, "and they're not commercial country. They're in this weird folkie/string-band category where we want to be."

"It's not that I don't like traditional bluegrass or commercial country," Krauss adds, "because I do. The guys in the band sing those old Stanley Brothers songs every night we play, and we listen to country radio on the bus all the time. I've sung on records by Vince Gill and Patty Loveless, and I love them. Someone like Lynn Morris can sing the stuff out of any bluegrass tune ever written and still sound really feminine. I wish I could do that, but I can't. It's not where I'd feel comfortable; I'd feel like I was walking down the street in the wrong clothes."

Tony Brown, the guru of MCA Records in Nashville, has expressed an interest in working with Krauss, and other big labels have pursued her as well. The singer has no immediate plans, however, for leaving Rounder; the small

by *Geoffrey Himes*



*It's the timelessness
of bluegrass that
appeals to Krauss,
but hers is a
bluegrass that's
different, one that
combines elements
of the past,
the present and
the future.*



The Cox Family and Alison Krauss first hit it off musically in 1986.

Boston label she's been with from the start. This may sound perverse to Music Row wannabes who'd saw off their right leg for a big-label contract, but Krauss insists she's happy with Rounder and is willing to wait for the right time to move to a bigger company.

"I think people are realizing I don't want to change just for the sake of money or popularity," Krauss explains. "All you have at the end of the day when you go home and go to bed is the music—those 45 minutes on stage that you've been waiting your whole life for.

"My philosophy is you play whatever fits the song," she elaborates, "and the kind of songs I like call for the kind of music we've done on our albums so far. Maybe some day I'll fall in love with a song that needs to be done in a commercial country way, and then I'll do it that way. In the meantime, I have to come up with the arrangements that are best for the songs I like."

Krauss didn't grow up in some isolated hollow in eastern Tennessee like her hero Dolly Parton; instead she was raised in one of the biggest college towns in the Midwest, Champaign, Illinois. Her dad was a realtor, and her mom was a commercial illustrator; they met at the University of Illinois and decided to stay near the campus. Their folks made sure Alison and her older brother Victor (now a bassist in Shelby Lynne's band) went to swimming and gymnastic lessons and to the opera and jazz concerts.

"As a result," Alison now says, "we grew up with a real open attitude about art. Instead of thinking none of it was cool, we thought all of it was cool. Bluegrass was just what kicked my butt. I think it was the timelessness. These songs could have been sung 500 years ago or 500 years from now, and it wouldn't make any difference."

By the time she was 12, the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music in America had voted Krauss the most promising fiddler in the Midwest. She was winning every junior fiddle contest she entered and needed new challenges. When her parents heard that Pennell, one of Champaign's most respected singer-songwriters, was forming a new band, they called him up and asked if

their young daughter could join. Also in the band was Nelson Mandrell, who has contributed three songs to Krauss' albums so far.

"When I think back on it now," she says, "it's amazing that I grew up in this band with two incredible songwriters. John and Nelson are still back in Champaign, teaching and playing around town. It makes you wonder if there aren't overlooked songwriters like them in towns all over America."

Krauss met Sidney Cox, another of her favorite songwriters, at a bluegrass festival in Perrin, Texas, when she was 16. The Cox Family, a gospel group from Louisiana, was singing "I've Got That Old Feeling" backstage, and "their voices sounded just like angels," Krauss remembers. "I found out Sidney had written that song, and I said, 'Oh, Sidney, will you send me a tape of everything you've ever written?' He sent me a tape of six songs, and I cut four on the next album."

"I've Got That Old Feeling" became the title song of her third album in 1990, and Cox contributed two more tunes to her fourth album in 1992, named after a Pennell composition, "Every Time You Say Goodbye."

Last year Krauss produced The Cox Family's debut CD, *Everybody's Reaching Out for Someone*, and invited Sidney Cox, sisters Evelyn and Suzanne and Lynn and dad Willard to join her on stage at the Grand Ole Opry.

"I don't really think of myself as a producer," Krauss says, "but I figured, 'How can I go wrong with those voices?' I knew The Coxes so well that I felt they would tell me if I did something they didn't like. Plus I had thought about their songs for so long that I swear I had dreamed about how I would arrange them if I ever got the chance. I love arranging songs. I sit in my apartment and write out where the fiddle breaks should occur and where the backing vocals should come in. It's so neat to hear it come together just like you wrote it down."

Suzanne and Alison sang a duet, "When God Dips His Pen of Love in My Heart," on The Cox Family album, and that inspired Rounder to commission a whole album of duets between Krauss and various Coxes. The resulting recording, *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow*, has just been released. Due later this year is a compilation album, which will include the most popular cuts from Krauss' first four releases; samples of her collaborations with

Tony Furtado, Jerry Douglas and The Cox Family, plus four brand new songs from her personal pool of writers.

"There are a lot of songs I won't sing, because they're so predictable," she explains. "You know what the next line is before the singer sings it, or you know what the whole song is about after the first line. Or there's a word that sticks out, and you say, I can't sing that. When you come across a songwriter like John or Sidney, who's so fresh and believable, it's like finding a gold mine.

"If the primary goal is to have a Number One hit, these aren't the guys to use, because they're not that obvious. You can tell their songs were written out of a feeling and not out of sitting down and saying, 'I'm going to write a song today.' With John's songs, I know every girl every song was written about. It's the same with Sidney and Nelson; the songs come out of something that really happened to them. People always ask me why I don't write songs myself, but when I come across guys like these who are so talented, I don't feel any need to write my own." ■



Alison was honored to join the Opry.

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In 1992, after years on the road with daughter Wynonna, Naomi Judd retired to fight life-threatening hepatitis. As if that weren't enough to contend with, she soon found herself writing her autobiography. The book came out in November 1993, and immediately landed on the New York Times bestseller list. Amidst a flurry of book tours and book signings, *20 Questions* caught up with Mama Judd. Here with her characteristically candid responses to life's current challenges.

1 Tell me about the Super Bowl. I saw your pre-show interview, and I thought you were great. Was I being characteristically goofy?

2 Yeah, but you're supposed to be. Well, I am the goofiest woman in country music, a title I wear proudly. That's what Wynonna and Ashley dubbed me years ago.

3 That's good because country music has gotten kind of bland lately. Well, I've gotta make up for it then. I was doing the big butt dance in the backyard one time. We were having a "Make Wynonna Laugh" evening barbecue, and I put pillows in the seat of my pants and did the big butt dance for her. (Laughs.) It was a side-splitter, and that was the night I was dubbed the goofiest woman in country music.

4 So what's up with you now, now that you've added best-selling author to your list of accomplishments? I remember when the book came out the day after Thanksgiving: About a week later my editor at Random House called me—her voice was up about two octaves from normal—and she said, "Your book debuted on the New York Times bestseller list! You don't even have to go out and do a book tour." And I said, "You don't get it. My whole motivation in life has always been people. That's what I'm all about." One time



20 Questions with NAOMI JUDD

by Michael Bane

someone introduced me as an entertainer. It kind of made me squirm, and I said, "I just feel like a communicator"—whether it's singing a song, or writing a song, or writing a book, or doing the big butt dance, or doing my nurse thing.

5 I know how hard it is for people to sit down and bare their souls. How long did it take you to write? Over two years. I went into severe isolation to write it, and I learned one thing the hard way: Solitude is desirable. I've always felt like it's creativity's best friend. But, after December 4, 1992, after

Wy and I sang our last song together...

Well, first thing I did was throw a big Glory Party, because I believe in patting people on the back. We had the crew and everybody out here at the farm and had a big bonfire. But then, Michael, it got kind of like after a funeral or something. It was pretty weird. All the out-of-town guests went home, and everybody else went back to their normal life, and I had the most drastic life change hitting me square in the face that anyone could have. Wynonna of course was back out on Dream Chaser II—our bus—singing up and down life's highway.

and Ashley was out on location with Oliver Stone doing his new movie—she'd become this hot actress—and my husband Larry, who works with Narvel Blackstock—Reba's husband—was out on the road with his new country group. He's a manager and a producer now. And the Queen of Everything was home alone. It was really bizarre.

6 And then you started on the book?

Our manager came to me and said, "Remember back in '89 after you were diagnosed and I talked you into writing your autobiography when you weren't thinking clearly?" (Laughs.) And I said to him, "Hepatitis affects your liver, not your brain. I'm not crazy." And I remember sitting on my couch in the kitchen downstairs looking at this big legal pad and my sharpened pencil and going, "Oh my God, I don't know how to do this." I thought, "Hasn't it dawned on anybody that I've never read a book on how to write a book?" And I got really overwhelmed with the prospect.

7 What were the first words you wrote?

Actually, what I did that first day, I didn't write anything. I just went screaming into the woods. I threw the pad down on the floor and let out this primal scream and ran into the woods for the day. I thought, "I don't want to tell all the stupid things I've done." But, the only thing I know is being mercilessly candid. So, anyway, the first thing that I wrote the next day, when I finally sat down and took a deep breathe, was, "Wynonna Judd entered this world screaming on key and searching for harmony." It just came out. I looked at this blank page and thought, "I don't have the foggiest notion of where to begin," and that just flowed immediately. It was like a knee-jerk reaction.

8 Did it get easier from that point on?

You know what I did? I pulled up a chair at my kitchen table downstairs. I was home alone,

and I imagined that there was a fan sitting there at my kitchen table, and I literally wrote the whole book in long-hand as if I was talking to a fan. That's the only way that I could do it. I had never touched a word processor. I have trouble with ball-point pens....I'm so non-mechanical.

9 *Is there anything you want to change about the book?*

I haven't thought about it. Do you know that I haven't looked at it since I wrote it? And it is probably the most unedited book in literary history. Well, I don't know that it could be called literature, but, whatever....publication history. I wrote it, and then I sent it, and bless them for their courage, they printed it, and then it was in the bookstores for the world to see. I didn't consult with anyone, because I knew that if I did, Wynonna and Ashley would flip out. And I knew that if I asked the Judd aunts, and my mom or any family members, that they would try to dissuade me from my frankness.

10 *How did the family react when it was finally released?*

I remember the week it came out. I was in the grocery store and the cover of one of the tabloids had my picture on the cover, and it said, "One of the Most Explosive Biographies Ever Written by a Celebrity." Wynonna was on the road, and before I could even get home, she called me and said, "Mommy, I think for the first time in history, they're right." (Laughs.)

11 *What was the hardest thing for you to write?*

Every chapter. I'm serious! Well, the first chapter was enjoyable because before my senior year of high school, my life was really idyllic. But after that first chapter, it hits the fan.

12 *Did you feel a letting go once you put these things on paper?*

I guess in a way. I said at the very end of the book that writ-

ing it almost drove me over the edge. Because of extreme isolation, because I was really grieving over the loss of the career during the period that I was writing the book. Reality—grim reality—had set in, and, finally, I understood that I'd become a detective in my own mind, and I'd assembled all the pieces of this emotional jigsaw puzzle. And I said at the very end of the book that writing it had become a voyage of self-discovery on a journey to wholeness.



Naomi's book, written at the kitchen table, is, she says, mercilessly candid.

13 *So you cut yourself off from everything while writing?*

Basically, I wrote the book, and nature became my entertainment. I felt like I was living in the middle of a *National Geographic* special. I didn't wear make-up, I hung out with folks who only ride in limosines if someone in their family has died....

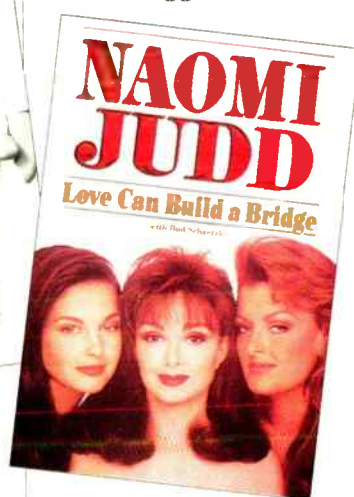
14 *What's next?*

I don't know what I'm gonna do next....And this is the first time that's ever happened in my life. I've always got some grand scheme. I'm adventurous. I'm like a moth drawn to the flame of adventure. But, when we get done, I'm gonna go out to the barn and get in the bus—Wynonna gave me Dream Chaser II for Christmas. She says it's haunted, because she feels my presence on it. She wouldn't

let anybody go back into my room at the back of the bus, and my little rhinestone tiara and sceptre are still poised on the pillow. So she gave me the bus for Christmas, so I could do the book tour in it. And, she's getting herself Dream Chaser III. My husband's gassing it up right now, and we're going out on the road 'cause that's what I love to do, and shake people's hands and have them tell me their stories.

15 *Sounds like it'll be fun.*

Oh, it is. I've been doing it since the week after Thanksgiving, and we're setting records at all the bookstores—biggest crowds



they've ever had. And it just turns into a wonderful visit. And the stories I'm hearing are just incredible.

16 *Ever think you'll find yourself writing someone else's stories?*

Well, I think I'd written the third chapter, and my editor called me from New York and said, "My dear, you are a writer." And she's really been on my case to write a book about the mind/body connection. The mind/body is the oldest form of healing and it's real, and it's not hocus-pocus. It's scriptural.

17 *There've been many books written on the topic...*

I was out in Houston, Texas, visiting with Dr. Blair Justice—he's professor of psychology there at the University of Texas, and he wrote a fabulous book called *Who Gets*

Sick. He wrote it years ago, and it's the first one I read when I got my diagnosis and I knew that I had to appreciate that these doctors I was talking to were not God and that their medical books were not bibles. And this book just changed my life, and I began investigating all this stuff and finding out how feelings are really chemicals in a human body—they can kill you or cure you—and that there are biochemical equivalents to thoughts. Your body hears everything your mind says.

18 *I think that makes all the difference in the world.*

I get so fed up and irritated that people think the mind/body connection is New Age or has to do with hocus-pocus or some cult. That's rubbish!

19 *It's been around a lot longer than New Age.*

And I don't believe in spiritual exclusivity. I tried to teach Wynonna and Ashley while they were growing up, that anytime you start to get into self-righteousness and say, "This is it and everybody else is stupid or wrong," you've lost the essence of your spirituality. There are many paths, but only one journey. We have to acknowledge each other's quest. I believe in Jesus. I believe that God is the divine, supreme intelligence behind our universe. But, when you become a fanatic...it was fanatics that put Jesus on the cross, why not just leave it at that. Only the ignorant become fanatics. I think ignorance is the saddest thing in the world. I saw *Schindler's List* the other night with Wynonna and Ashley and—there you go—ignorance.

20 *I better let you get out to the bus. I love the way you ended the book, "Ashley is the picture, Wynonna is the voice, I am the silence." I don't think you're very silent.*

Well, I've learned so much the last three years, and I just have this insatiable curiosity about life, and I continue to go where my questions lead me. And I don't know what's going to happen next.

Why pay more?
 Directly comparable replicas
 of these two models are being
 offered by others at a much higher price.



The 1948 Chrysler Town & Country



*Shown smaller than actual size.
 Replica measures 8 1/2" in length.*

Photos depict our incredibly detailed replica—not the actual car!

A Meticulously Engineered Die-Cast Metal Replica of One of America's Greatest Cars.

Everything about the 1948 Chrysler Town & Country Convertible was grand! It cost \$3,420, a princely sum in 1948. It tipped the scales at over two tons, and it featured Chrysler's powerful 323.5 cubic inch "Spitfire" 8 cylinder engine putting out 135 hp. It's no wonder this magnificent car became a favorite of Hollywood stars!

From its huge chromed "harmonica" grille, to its genuine American ash wood accents, the 1948 Chrysler Town & Country made an unforgettable impression. Only a small number of convertibles were ever made, and today they are among the rarest and most coveted of all collectible cars. Now, you can acquire a remarkably detailed replica of the fabulous classic.

engine block are crafted in metal and polished by hand before painting. The side and trunk panels are accented with genuine wood. Every component is inspected before this replica is assembled by hand.

A Danbury Mint exclusive.

Only the Danbury Mint has been authorized by Chrysler Corporation to bring you this extraordinary replica. You need send no money now. Simply return the Reservation Application. The price of \$94.50 is payable in three monthly installments of \$31.50. Mail your reservation today!

RESERVATION APPLICATION

The 1948 Chrysler Town & Country

The Danbury Mint
 47 Richards Avenue
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Send
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Please accept my Reservation Application for the 1948 Chrysler Town & Country. I will pay for my replica in three monthly installments of \$31.50*. My satisfaction is guaranteed. If I am not completely satisfied with my replica, I may return it within 30 days for replacement or refund.

*Plus any applicable sales tax and \$1.50 shipping and handling per installment

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Allow 4 to 8 weeks after initial payment for shipment.

1 6 7 2 1 M 1

Genuine wood accents; hand-assembled!

Over 140 scale parts go into this authentic replica in the large 1:24 scale. The body, chassis, drivetrain and

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*Both doors open smoothly, as do the hood
 and trunk. The front wheels turn with the steering wheel.*

The Chrysler Town & Country trademarks are used under license from Chrysler Corporation.

© 1994 MBI



The 1955 Ford Crown Victoria

The Danbury Mint gives you the best for less!



Shown smaller than actual size. Replica measures 8 1/4" in length.

Photos depict our incredibly detailed replica — not the actual car!

An Authentic, Exquisitely Detailed Replica of the Queen of the American Road.

The Ford Crown Victoria burst upon the automotive scene in 1955 with all the glamour and elegance of a great movie star. Customers loved the Crown Victoria's stylish front end which boasted chrome "brows" over the headlights, a sporty "egg crate" grille and a glistening, wrap-around chrome bumper. Even more sensational was the broad band of chrome that rakishly wrapped itself around the roof — supporting a unique optional Plexiglas top.

This beautiful car had the power to match its good looks. Under the hood was a 292 cubic inch V-8 engine that produced 198 hp. Inside, the uphol-

stery and fittings coordinated perfectly with the two-tone exterior colors. The 1955 Ford Crown Victoria is among the most coveted of all Ford cars from the 1950's. Now, you can acquire a remarkably detailed replica of this Fifties classic.

Meticulously crafted; hand-assembled!

Over 150 scale parts go into making this authentic replica in the large 1:24 scale. All the important components — the body, chassis, drivetrain and engine block — are crafted in metal and polished by hand before painting. Every single component is inspected before this replica is assembled by hand.

Attractively priced.

To order this extraordinary replica, send no money now. Simply return the Reservation Application. The price of \$94.50 is payable in three monthly installments of \$31.50, with satisfaction guaranteed. Mail your reservation today!

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RESERVATION APPLICATION

The 1955 Ford Crown Victoria

The Danbury Mint
47 Richards Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06857



Send
no money
now.

Please accept my Reservation Application for the 1955 Ford Crown Victoria. I will pay for my replica in three monthly installments of \$31.50*. My satisfaction is guaranteed. If I am not completely satisfied with my replica, I may return it within 30 days for replacement or refund.

*Plus any applicable sales tax and \$1.50 shipping and handling per installment

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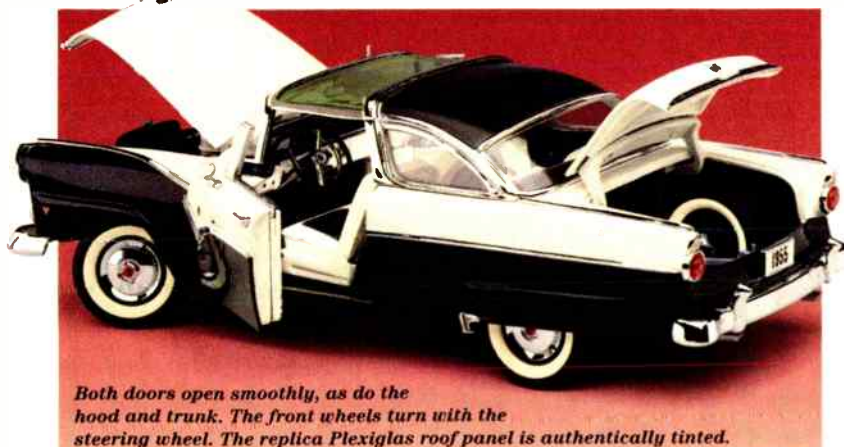
State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____
Orders subject to acceptance

Name to print on certificate of ownership
(if different from above).

Allow 4 to 8 weeks after initial payment for shipment.

1 5 6 2 1 1 1



Both doors open smoothly, as do the hood and trunk. The front wheels turn with the steering wheel. The replica Plexiglas roof panel is authentically tinted.

The Ford Crown Victoria trademarks are used under license from Ford Motor Company.

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Country Music VIDEOS



MINNIE PEARL (NEW)

The Life And Legend - 60 mins.

This is the only authorized life story video of Sarah Ophelia Cannon, one of America's best loved and most admired entertainers. Never before has her story been told in such remarkable detail with hilarious excerpts from her best performances. The story of her childhood and her harrowing experiences on the road are truly astounding. This is more than an accurate accounting of Minnie's career. It is the story of a great American. Item No. V20 - \$19.95

HIGHWAYMEN LIVE

On The Road Again - 60 mins.

Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson and Waylon Jennings are together again, in concert, on their first European Tour. You'll meet them backstage, talking candidly about their lives and their music. Then you'll see them on stage, firing up the audience and never letting go, from the opening bars of their theme song "Highwaymen" through "Folsom Prison Blues" and "Crazy," until the final chord of "On the Road Again." Item No. V25 - \$14.95

KARAOKE

Top Country Hits - 48 mins.

Now you can have lots of foot-stompin', honky tonk parties in your own home whenever you want. You don't need special equipment, just your TV and VCR. All instrumentation and back-up vocals are provided as music videos and lyrics appear on your TV screen. Just follow the easy-to-read, on-screen words as they change color from phrase to phrase. It includes "Boot Scootin' Boogie," "All My Rowdy Friends" and other favorites. Item No. V9L - \$9.95

COUNTRY VIDEO HITS OF THE 90'S

15 Great Performances - 56 mins.

Here are the best of the best, including "A Better Man" by Clint Black, "Simple Man" by The Charlie Daniels Band, "Give a Little Love" by The Judds, "Out of Your Shoes" by Lorrie Morgan, "Crazy for Love" by Conway Twitty, "It Ain't Nothin'" by Keith Whitley, "Don't Toss Us Away" by Patty Loveless, "Cry, Cry, Cry" by Marty Stuart, "When I Call Your Name" by Vince Gill AND MANY MORE! Item No. V6E - \$19.95

MARK CHESNUTT (NEW)

Almost Goodbye - 25 mins.

Here is your chance to be entertained by one of country music's fastest rising young stars. This is Mark Chesnutt's first entertainment video, and if you have not had the chance to catch his act, we highly recommend it. Featured on this new release are "Too Cold at Home," "Brother Jukebox," "Your Love Is a Miracle," "I'll Think of Something," "Ol' Country," "It Sure Is Monday" and the title song "Almost Goodbye." Item No. V3N - \$14.95

HALL OF FAME COLLECTION

4 Full Tapes - 120 mins. -

Special LOW Price - SAVE \$5.00!

Here is a real treat. Four complete shows from the early days of the Opry, each one hosted by one of country music's biggest names. There's Ernest Tubb with guests Webb Pierce, George Morgan and Marty Robbins, just to mention a few. Carl Smith with Jim Reeves, The Carter Family and others. Faron Young with June Carter, Ernest Tubb and Marty Robbins again. And Little Jimmy Dickens with Cowboy Copas and a whole bunch of other great stars. The best part is, you see them in their prime doing such fabulous songs as: Ernest Tubb - "Two Glasses, Joe," "Dear Judge"; Marty Robbins - "Poor Unlucky Me," "Pretty Mama," "Tennessee Toddy"/Faron Young - "If That's the Fashion," "A Place for Girls Like You"/Jim Reeves - "My Lips Are Sealed," "Bimbo," "Down in the Caribbean"/Carl Smith - "Satisfaction Guaranteed" AND MUCH MORE! Item No. V5W - If Ordered Separately - \$39.96. - NOW Get All Four For ONLY \$34.95!

PATTY LOVELESS

Greatest Hits - 25 mins.

She started out singing five years with The Wilburn Brothers, then ten with a traveling country-rock club band before she emerged as one of the top female stars in country music. Here's your chance to enjoy her early hits with MCA. Included are "If My Heart Had Windows," "Don't Toss Us Away," "Chains," "The Night's Too Long," "I'm That Kind of Girl," "Hurt Me Bad (In a Real Good Way)" and "Jealous Bone." Item No. V1Q - \$19.95

VINCE GILL

I Still Believe In You - 24 mins.

Since the early 1980's when he first arrived in Nashville, Vince has contributed vocals and guitar licks to the studio sessions of some of country music's biggest stars. Now he has joined their ranks as one of country music's premier entertainers. Here's your chance to enjoy this popular star performing "When I Call Your Name," "Never Knew Lonely," "Pocket Full of Gold," "Liza Jane," "Look At Us" and "I Still Believe In You." Item No. V1M - \$19.95

AARON TIPPIN (NEW)

Call Of The Wild - 25 mins.

Here is another bright, rising star on today's country music circuit. His 1992 album "Read Between the Lines" went Platinum, selling over 1,000,000 copies. This new video features "You've Got to Stand for Something," "I Wonder How Far It Is Over You," "She Made a Memory Out of Me," "There Ain't Nothin' Wrong With the Radio," "I Wouldn't Have It Any Other Way," "My Blue Angel" and "Workin' Man's Ph.D." Item No. V3R - \$14.95

FREE! COLLECTOR'S VIDEO

Winner of Best Video at the 11th Annual Telly Awards, *Inside Country Music* is a rare on-stage and behind-the-curtains look at country music, featuring Randy Travis and Tammy Wynette on the American Music Tour, the Oak Ridge Boys in the recording studio, Roy Clark on tour, AND MORE! It's 100 MINUTES...a \$19.95 value...YOURS FREE when you order just two items from these pages!

CONWAY TWITTY

King Of Hits - 45 mins.

This video celebrates the basis for Conway's claim to greatness by taking a long look at his illustrious career. You'll see him as he performs early hits like "To See My Angel Cry" and "She Started to Stop Loving You." You'll hear classic Conway hits like "Linda on My Mind" and "The Games Daddies Play" and come full circle with his more recent ballads like "Somebody's Needin' Somebody." It's a fitting tribute to a legendary star. Item No. V2C - \$24.95

CONWAY TWITTY

#1 Hits - 45 mins.

On this video, Willie Nelson takes a nostalgic look back at Conway's meteoric rise in rock and roll and then ultimate triumph in country music. You'll listen to Conway tell the story of "Hello Darlin'." You'll hear him compare his early songs and performances with those later on in his career. It's all in this home video from Willie's personal library of country stars. Plus you'll be treated to twelve of Conway's #1 hit songs. Item No. V1K - \$24.95

ROY ACUFF

Open House Vol 1 & 2 - 60 mins. each

Despite the cheesy backdrops and minimal production value, these two videos give a good accounting of Roy's sound in the late 50's when they were recorded. They feature Roy along with the Smoky Mountain Boys and Girls, singer June Webb and The Wilburn Brothers. Roy sings a real variety of music: "Wabash Cannonball," "The Sinking of the Titanic" and "There is a Tavern in the Town" among them. Vol. 1 - No. V9E/Vol. 2 - V8H - \$24.95 each

MARTY ROBBINS

Super Legend - 120 mins.

This memorable video features 18 performances: "El Paso," "White Sport Coat," "Devil Woman," "Ribbon of Darkness," "Singing the Blues," "I Can't Keep From Cryin'," "Don't Worry 'Bout Me," "This Time You Gave Me a Mountain" AND MANY MORE, including Marty's Grammy winning song, "My Woman, My Woman, My Wife." It also includes rare appearances from early television shows and the big screen. Item No. G2A - \$39.95

MARTY ROBBINS

Best Of His TV Show Vol 1 - 55 mins.

Take a return visit to Marty's first syndicated TV show, (1968-1969). Thirty-nine shows have been edited into this classic collection of back-to-back performances. There are 21 songs along with a bunch of humorous excerpts: "I Can't Help It," "Take These Chains," "Lovesick Blues," "Low and Lonely," "Are You Sincere?," "Long Gone Lonesome Blues," "Tumbling Tumbleweeds," "El Paso," "Running Gun" AND MORE! Item No. V8E - \$29.95

MARTY ROBBINS

Best Of His TV Show Vol 2 - 55 mins.

Here is the volume two of Marty's popular TV show. It contains more of the great standards of country music, including "Take Me Back To Tulsa," "Mississippi River Blues," "Anytime," "Streets of Laredo," "Deep Water," "Candy Kisses," "Never Tie Me Down," "Old Red," "Devil Woman," "El Paso," "Time Changes Everything" and "Kalua." 22 SONGS IN ALL, with various excerpts of the humor Marty was famous for. Item No. V9I - \$29.95

MARTY ROBBINS

Best Of His TV Show Vol 3 - 55 mins.

Here is the latest video release of Marty's popular TV show. It contains even more of the great standards of country music, including "Room Full of Roses," "Red River Valley," "Beyond the Reef," "Oh How I Miss You," "Now Is the Hour," "Way Out There," "Chant of the Wanderer," "One Kiss Too Many," "I Walk Alone," "Mr. Shorty," "Rainbows," "Lonely Old Bunkhouse" and "People's Valley." 22 SONGS IN ALL. Item No. V2E - \$29.95

RAY STEVENS

Comedy Video Classics - 30 mins.

You have probably seen this popular video advertised on TV. Now you can enjoy the outrageous musical/comedy talent of the legendary Grammy winning Ray Stevens at his hilarious best. Included are "Everything Is Beautiful," "It's Me Again Margaret," "Santa Claus Is Watching You," "Sittin' Up With the Dead," "Surfin' U.S.S.R.," "Mississippi Squirrel Revival," "The Streak" and "Help Me Make It Through the Night." Item No. HJ90 - \$19.95

WEBB PIERCE (NEW)

Greatest Hits - 52 mins.

No country artist but Webb Pierce can claim 69 hit songs in a row. Shortly before his death he personally created, from rare filmed performances, a compilation of his greatest hits, narrating and providing background on the songs, their writers and their origins. This program contains seventeen of Webb's greatest hits including "Wondering," "More and More," "There Stands the Glass," "In the Jailhouse Now" AND MORE! Item No. V2R - \$19.95

Country Music VIDEOS



BILLY RAY CYRUS (NEW!)

The Video Collection - 26 mins.

Few will contest that Billy Ray Cyrus is a hot country music commodity—probably the hottest star on the country music circuit today. If you enjoyed his *On Tour* video, you don't want to miss his new *Video Collection*. It features "Achy Breaky Heart," "Could've Been Me," "Where'm I Gonna Live?," "She's Walkin' Not Cryin' Anymore," "Some Gave All" and "In The Heart of a Woman." Item No. V3C - \$19.95

CHARLEY PRIDE (NEW!)

In Concert - 26 mins.

Listen to the rich baritone sounds of Charley Pride, the Country Music Association's 1971 Performer of the Year. Included in this noteworthy live performance are "Kiss An Angel Good Morning," "A Whole Lotta Things To Sing About," "Oklahoma Morning," "I Ain't All Bad," "Crystal Chandelier," "I Don't Think She's In Love Anymore," "Someone Loves You Honey" and "Mountain of Love." **10 SONGS IN ALL!** Item No. V2V - \$19.95

MERLE HAGGARD

The Best Of - 60 mins.

"I have selected some of my favorite songs for this video...and I hope they will be your favorites too."—Merle Haggard. You be the judge: "My Favorite Memory," "Stay Here and Drink," "Mama's Hungry Eyes," "Today I Started Loving You Again," "Old Man From the Mountains," "Kern River," "When Times Were Good," "Honky Tonk Night Time Man," "Big City," "Okie from Muskogee" **AND 9 MORE!** Item No. G3F - \$19.95

MERLE HAGGARD

Live In Concert - 45 mins.

Merle's fans are treated to a very special upbeat performance with this great video. He's joined by Willie Nelson and Johnny Paycheck. You'll enjoy such hits as "Misery and Gin," "Back to the Barrooms," "Our Paths May Never Cross," "Tennessee Hustler," "The Runnin' Kind," "Workin' Man Blues," "Always Late," "Little Liza Jane," "Faded Love," "Okie from Muskogee," "Just Stay Here" **AND MORE!** Item No. V1T - \$19.95

REBA MCENTIRE

For My Broken Heart - 22:41 mins.

Reba fans, this is your lucky day. We have another video ready to send out to you by return mail. Here is your chance to bring country music's current reigning queen home for a private screening. Featured on this popular chartbuster are "Rumor Has It," "You Lie," "Fancy," "For My Broken Heart" and "Is There Life Out There." Whether or not you have ordered any of Reba's other videos, don't miss this one. Item No. V5M - \$19.95

REBA McENTIRE

In Concert - 71 mins.

Now you can also enjoy all the excitement and charisma of Reba McEntire on stage. Included are "Love Will Find Its Way To You," "Can't Even Get the Blues," "Somebody Should Leave," "One Promise Too Late," "Let the Music Lift You Up," "Whoever's in New England," "Sweet Dreams," "You Lie," "Cathy's Clown," "Oklahoma Swing," "Rumor Has It," "What Am I Gonna Do About You?" **AND MORE!** Item No. V3E - \$19.95

DON WILLIAMS

Live - 30 mins.

Here is your chance to enjoy one of country music's most solid performers on stage. This is Don Williams' only home video to date. Don's songs include "Good Ole Boys Like Me," "Tulsa Time," "One Good Well," "I've Been Loved By the Best," "Just as Long as I Have You," "I Believe in You," "Amanda" and "Lord I Hope This Day Is Good." We have only a few of this number still in stock, so hurry your order. Item No. V5C - \$19.95

GEORGE JONES

Live In Tennessee - 54 mins.

This memorable video is pure music with an introduction by superstar Alan Jackson. Live from the Knoxville Civic Coliseum, you'll see George thrill the audience with 15 of his biggest hits including "I Don't Need Your Rockin' Chair" and the #1 country song of all time, "He Stopped Loving Her Today." There's also "The Raze Is On," "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?," "Bartender's Blues" **AND 10 MORE!** Item No. V1X - \$19.95

BILL MONROE

Father Of Bluegrass Music - 90 mins.

With the cooperation of Bill Monroe, ex-Blue Grass Boys and other performers he influenced, this documentary clearly defines Bill Monroe's unique role in American music. It covers his early years in Kentucky with great video footage. The era of The Monroe Brothers, his early years on the Opry, the classic Platt-Scruggs-Wise version of The Bluegrass Boys—all are covered. Even smaller details of his career aren't overlooked. Item No. V2K - \$19.95

COUNTRY LINE DANCING

Featuring Achy Breaky - 35 mins.

Unlike other dance instruction videos that "break away" for you to practice alone, this one will practice each basic step with you until it's automatic. After learning the basic country line dance steps—vine, stomp, pivot hitch, strut, reggae—you will dance your way through the less complicated Electric Slide to the more demanding Achy Breaky. As new line dances appear, you will know the basics and be able to learn them quickly. Item No. V9B - \$9.95

MORE COUNTRY LINE DANCING

Featuring Achy Breaky II - 35 mins.

Now that you can do the basic country steps (see Country Line Dancing above), you are ready to move on to increase your dance repertoire. You'll practice each step before learning the pattern. Audio cues will help you remember the pattern of basic steps unique to each line dance. Dances include: T.C. Electric Slide, Country Strut, Southside Shuffle, Cowboy Cha Cha, Achy Breaky II, plus the special bonus...Sixteen Step. Item No. V9X - \$9.95

DWIGHT YOAKAM

Just Lookin' For A Hit - 30 mins.

Few can dispute the impact that this star has had on the country music scene. And what better way to enjoy Yoakam Country than with his first Warner video featuring "Honky Tonk Man," "Guitars, Cadillacs," "Little Sister," "Always Late with Your Kisses," "Streets of Bakersfield" and "Long White Cadillac." There's even a Yoakam interview as well as performance footage from the I.R.S. label hit "The Cutting Edge." Item No. G1E - \$19.95

PORTER WAGNER (NEW!)

The Life And Legend - 60 mins.

This video scrapbook opens Porter's life to you on a personal level seldom seen in documentaries. He talks about his ups and downs, his struggles and triumphs, his laughter and tears. He talks frankly about his relationship with Dolly Parton. And he shares anecdotes from his life on the road that will make you laugh as you watch. Even if you haven't read his biography, this video will be a treasured addition to your collection. Item No. V2Q - \$19.95

COUNTRY MUSIC ON BROADWAY

Filmed New York City - 96 mins.

Here is the first full-length country music movie ever filmed. See Hank Williams in his only filmed appearance. Uncut and crystal clear. Enjoy 30 full musical numbers by Hank and headliners like George Jones, Hank Snow, Porter Wagoner, Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper. Including: Hank Sr. - "Hey Good Looking"/George Jones - "White Lightning"/Hank Snow - "Moving On"/Porter Wagoner - "Satisfied Mind" **AND MORE!** Item No. G8F - \$39.95

GENTLEMAN JIM REEVES

The Story Of A Legend - 50 mins.

This is the story of the greatest country music ballad singer of all time, from his deep rural roots in East Texas and his years as an aspiring baseball player, to his years as one of the most universally popular singers of the late 50's and early 60's. This program also features Jim singing many of his hit songs, including "Four Walls," "Am I Losing You?," "He'll Have To Go," "I Love You Because" and "Welcome To My World." Item No. V2P - \$19.95

PATSY CLINE

Remembering Patsy - 60 mins.

Now Patsy's musical legacy lives on in this recently released video from Hallway Productions. This heartfelt celebration features 17 great Patsy Cline songs and 10 rare television appearances, recently discovered and never before seen on home video. You'll meet Patsy through her intimate home movies, personal letters and fond reminiscences of Loretta Lynn, George Jones, Eddy Arnold, Patsy's husband and others. Item No. V1E - \$19.95

WAYLON JENNINGS

Lost Outlaw Performance - 60 mins.

The master recording of this memorable concert was never released and had been forgotten in the vaults of RCA since 1978. Now we bring it to you for the first time, in its entirety, exactly as it was recorded on August 12th at the Opry. Here is the "Outlaw" period in all its glory, with eight #1 singles including "Good Hearted Woman," "Luckenbach, Texas," "Amanda," "This Time," "I've Always Been Crazy" **AND MORE!** Item No. V4D - \$19.95

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least 2 videos (V3F)

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Canadian Add \$3.00. U.S. Currency Only.

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Enclosed	

TOP 25

Singles

1. Little Texas *My Love*
2. Neal McCoy *No Doubt About It*
3. Garth Brooks *Standing Outside the Fire*
4. Alan Jackson *(Who Says) You Can't Have It All*
5. Mary-Chapin Carpenter... *He Thinks He'll Keep Her*
6. Lee Roy Parnell *I'm Holding My Own*
7. Tracy Lawrence *If the Good Die Young*
8. Martina McBride *Life #9*
9. Vince Gill *Trying to Get Over You*
10. Tim McGraw *Indian Outlaw*
11. Sammy Kershaw *I Can't Reach Her Anymore*
12. Wynonna *Rock Bottom*
13. Faith Hill *Piece of My Heart*
14. Tanya Tucker *We Don't Have to Do This*
15. John Anderson *I've Got It Made*
16. Collin Raye *That's My Story*
17. Billy Ray Cyrus *Words by Heart*
18. Shenandoah *If Bubba Can Dance*
(I Can Too)
19. Doug Stone *Addicted to a Dollar*
20. Clint Black *A Good Run of Bad Luck*
21. Ricky Van Shelton *Where Was I*
22. Trisha Yearwood *Better Your Heart Than Mine*
23. Brooks & Dunn *Rock My World (Little*
Country Girl)
24. Mark Chesnutt *I Just Wanted You to Know*
25. Dwight Yoakam *Try Not to Look So Pretty*

Albums

1. Various Artists *Rhythm Country & Blues*
2. John Michael Montgomery . *I Swear*
3. Various Artists *8 Seconds (Soundtrack)*
4. Various Artists *Common Thread: The Songs*
of The Eagles
5. Reba McEntire *Greatest Hits Volume Two*
6. Garth Brooks *In Pieces*
7. Alan Jackson *A Lot About Livin' (And a*
Little 'Bout Love)
8. Mary-Chapin Carpenter... *Come On Come On*
9. Little Texas *Big Time*
10. Brooks & Dunn *Hard Workin' Man*
11. Vince Gill *I Still Believe in You*
12. Faith Hill *Take Me As I Am*
13. George Strait *Pure Country (Soundtrack)*
14. Neal McCoy *No Doubt About It*
15. Dwight Yoakam *This Time*
16. Clay Walker *Clay Walker*
17. George Strait *Easy Come, Easy Go*
18. Blackhawk *Blackhawk*
19. Collin Raye *Extremes*
20. Confederate Railroad *Confederate Railroad*
21. Wynonna *Tell Me Why*
22. Clint Black *No Time to Kill*
23. Rick Trevino *Rick Trevino*
24. Joe Diffie *Honky Tonk Attitude*
25. Garth Brooks *No Fences*

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Floyd Tillman Special

Though Floyd Tillman's Columbia recordings have been reissued in the past on LP, the only thing currently available is one CD in MCA's Country Music Hall of Fame series, *Floyd Tillman* (MCAD 10189). This nicely covers his early Decca material, including some he recorded with Pappy Selph and The Village Boys. Included on the package are "A Precious Memory" and "Why Do I Love You" with The Blue Ridge Playboys. From his own first Decca session comes "I'm Always Dreaming of You," "Don't Be Blue," "Maybe I'll Get By Without You" and "I'd Settle Down for You." "Daisy May" comes from his session with The Village Boys. "It's Been a Long, Long Time," "I've Learned My Lesson Now," the instrumental "Rio Grande," "They Took the Stars out of Heaven" and "Why Do You Treat Me This Way" come from Tillman's second solo session while the previously unissued "There's No Use to Try It Anymore," and another unreleased number, the tremendous "Dreams Won't Let Me Forget You," plus the hit, "Each Night at Nine," come from his final Decca session. Hopefully, Columbia's Country Classics will consider a much-needed Tillman CD reissue of his material from that label, and someone will be able to reissue the 1962 Cimarron LP with Leon McAuliffe's band. Available on cassette or CD. Regular price \$14.95 cassette, \$21.95 CD. Members' discount price \$12.95 cassette, \$19.95 CD.

New Books in the Works

Be on the lookout for two new books from *Country Music Magazine*. In a venture with Random House, we will be updating two classic books we first published in the 1970's—*The Country Music Encyclopedia* and *The Illustrated History of Country Music*. A lot has happened in the past 20 years, and these books will fill you in on all of it. CMM Editor-at-Large Patrick

Carr is bringing the *Illustrated History* up to date in his own inimitable style; while fellow Editors-at-Large Michael Bane and Bob Allen, Contributing Editor Rich Kienzle and other, equally authoritative figures are at work on the *Encyclopedia*. Want to get a free copy of either or both of these books? See the CMSA Newsletter to find out how.

Buried Treasures Special

The items Rich Kienzle has rounded up in this issue's Buried Treasures are available to CMSA members at a discount. Take \$2.00 off the prices of the following items: Moon Mullican, *Moonshine Jamboree*; *The Sullivan Years*; Willie Nelson, *The Early Years*; *The Greatest Hits of Hickory Records, Volume II*; The Collins Kids, *Rockin' on TV* and Marty Robbins, *Lost and Found*. On the Bear Family boxed sets, members may deduct \$10.00 off the prices shown. Included this time are boxes on Billy Walker, The Browns and Bobby Bare. All are fine items to add to your collection. Remember to include your membership number if taking discount. See complete ordering instructions in Buried Treasures.

Essential Collector Special

Essential Collector is chock full of books, recordings and videos for country fans. This issue, check out the line of instructional guitar videos—there are a total of four, each one detailing the art of country, rockabilly and bluegrass guitar picking. Instruction is provided by leaders in each of these fields. Members get a discount of \$5.00 off the price of each of these videos. Also up this time around are books on Charley Pride, Ralph Stanley, Gibson Guitars, Missouri's *Ozark Jubilee* and a guide to country CD's. Plus, there's a special recording that pairs Carl Perkins and Scotty Moore. And all of these items are available to CMSA members at \$2.00 off the prices listed. Be sure to include your membership number with your order. Ordering details are included on the Essential Collector page.

How to Order

To order items listed on this page, send check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 050694N, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional. Canadian orders, add \$3.00 additional postage.

VOTE

MEMBERS POLL/MAY 1994

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

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? _____ CD's? _____

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

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

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

4. List numbers of your five favorites from Top 25 in this issue.

Singles (list 5 numbers)

Albums (list 5 numbers)

Do You Own These Things?

5. Check any of the following owned by you or anyone in your household.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car Stereo Cassette | <input type="checkbox"/> Home CD Player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car Stereo CD Player | <input type="checkbox"/> Cowboy Boots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video Cassette Recorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Cowboy Hat(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Stereo Cassette | <input type="checkbox"/> Cowboy Shirt(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music video (pre-recorded) | |

Do You Do These Things?

6. How many times did you or anyone in your household do the any of the following in the last 12 months?

- Attend country music concerts, shows or fairs. _____
Go to country music dance clubs. _____
Take line dance lessons. _____
Visit Nashville, Tennessee. _____
Visit Branson, Missouri. _____

Who Can Vote

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

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

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

Letters

Waylon for President

Thank you for doing the story on Waylon Jennings in the March/April issue. He's a great guy as well as being a great musician and songwriter. I just wish he could have been in Washington, D.C., as long as he has been in music. He's so wise and knowledgeable, our country wouldn't be in such a big mess as it is now, perhaps.

Bernice Yust Dack
Joplin, Missouri

Riding with Waylon

Country Music, your cover (March/April) a masterpiece. What a guy! I've been a Waylon fan since the early 70's. Our radio station kept playing this "Long Ago and Far Away" song ("You Asked Me To"), and I knew that I had to have that record. Here we are some 96 records and tapes later (Waylon collection size). He's still tops in my book. I say this softly, John Cash, move over a bit.

I wish I could have said it first, being very appreciative of the joys he has given me through the years, "Thank you, I've had a good ride." Love ya, Waylon.

Donna Church
Duluth, Minnesota

Don't Even Have to Read It

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Just received March/April issue. Cover: Waylon. Haven't read the article yet, but—it's Waylon. Nuff said.

F. Rogers
Birmingham, Alabama

The Ears Have It

I would like to let Waylon Jennings know that although his songs are not played on the radio, they are played on my record player, cassette player and CD player every day. I have just about every album he put out, and the songs are super great. Also, he is a super great-looking man. The only thing that came as a surprise was that he has been married 24 years and has seven children and a number of grandkids.

Gertrude E. Holsey
East Orange, New Jersey

The 24 years and one child are with Jessi. Waylon was married twice before.—Ed.

Collector's Item

Oh, what a great interview in the March/April issue with Waylon. I've been a Waylon Jennings fan, a big fan, for 17 years, and in my mind, Waylon's the best.



I think Waylon has great views on a lot of subjects. I've just recently purchased Waylon's *The RCA Years*. It's a mint collection for any Waylon fan. I'd also like to thank Rich Kienzle of Buried Treasures for his input on Waylon's return to RCA and how RCA should reissue all Waylon's seminal 1970's LP's starting with *Honky Tonk Heroes* on CD's.

Curtis Cox
Rainelle, West Virginia

Kudos for Waylon Interview

What a fabulously insightful interview with Waylon in your March/April issue. It was so great to hear what he really thinks and likes and dislikes, instead of the usual non-personal interviews so often done. It's too bad when many artists feel they might be misquoted (and they often are misquoted). So they don't give an in-depth interview. We, who really want to know more, are the ones who miss out. Many thanks to Waylon from a longtime fan for daring to be brave and telling about yourself, and special thanks to Dori Wilson for showing respect for the artist (and I hope *not* misquoting him).

Mrs. David Richardson
Buckfield, Maine

100% Behind Tritt

I just want to thank you for the January/February issue of *Country Music*. My heart skipped three beats when I saw the cover. I've been a country music fan all my life. I could never tell you who sang

what, that is until Travis came along. I like his bad boy image. Country music needs that. Tritt has my 100% support.

Setee Ochoa
Marietta, Georgia

One Step Beyond

Your February article on Travis Tritt was truly one of the most well-rounded insights into a very intriguing musician. Most articles only dwell on his comments about Billy Ray, and you went beyond that to show us lighter shades of a talented performer. I, for one, think that he should have every right to say what is on his mind. Michael McCall did a brilliant job. Hats off to him!

Rebecca K. Wolder
San Diego, California

In 'n' Out of the Mainstream

Thank you so much for the article and wonderful pictures of Travis Tritt in the January/February issue. Recognition of his versatile talent is long overdue. Not many entertainers can perform his wide range of music—from the rebellious Southern rock, reminiscent of the Ronnie Van Zandt/Lynyrd Skynyrd era, to the works of the legendary Buddy Guy and other blues greats. Travis' tender, touching love songs, as well as the good old-fashioned honky tonk are what have made me a true, everlasting fan.

If the country music establishment doesn't want to recognize his talent because he tells it like he sees it, then so be it. As long as Travis keeps being the straightforward talent he is, I'll keep listening and buying, even if I have to do so in some obscure market outside of the establishment's mainstream.

Angie Kidwell
Augusta, West Virginia

Another Side of Tritt

After reading your story about Travis Tritt, I feel I must respond. You write of the independent rebel and his feuds with other country stars, but I would like to comment on the very real, loving, personable young man who came to Ft. Walton Beach, Florida, in 1990 for a benefit concert for the American Cancer Society.

I took a cancer patient with me to the reception, a lady who had a rough life and was now faced with death. She had no elegant clothes or makeup to wear, but she had a heart of gold. Travis Tritt spent 20

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minutes or so hugging her, listening and talking to her. He even sent his assistant back to his hotel to get a photo for her. It didn't bring him any glory or make him any money—but it will always make him the Number One star in this nurse's heart.

Susy Murphy
Niceville, Florida

M-O-U-T-H Is His T-R-O-U-B-L-E

We are country music fans, so we like a lot of country music singers. Travis Tritt used to be among them. But we finally have to admit that if he would just keep his mouth shut and sing he would be a lot better off. Tritt's "poor me," "Nashville doesn't love me" won't win an award. The Cyrus feud is just an excuse. And so is his lamenting about the powers that be in country music. His music is down because his m-o-u-t-h keeps running.

The rest of the issue was great. Lorrie Morgan is always pure pleasure to the eyes as well as the ears. Such a great talent. And Hal Ketchum and Mark Collie are both great newcomers making their mark. Keep up the good work.

George Jossey, Carl Brown, Luke Stein
Chicago, Illinois

Getting Down with Dwight

Thank you, thank you, *thank you!* for the pull-out on Dwight Yoakam in your March/April issue. It was great—except for two omissions. First—in the Recording Career section—*This Is Dwight Yoakam* (Japan, 1990) was omitted from the listing. Includes a great little Christmas ditty in which DY introduces us to some of The Babylonian Cowboys. His "Merry Christmas, y'all" is to die for! Second—an answer to the burning question—"When is DY going to skip the fluffs and duffs and find a real woman?" Here's a fan who would happily debate Nietzsche with the guy.

Darlene J. Miller
Baltimore, Maryland

Yo, Dwight and CMM

I just received the March/April issue, and I'm very pleased to see Dwight Yoakam featured as the pull-out poster! I'm anxiously awaiting to see him at Fan Fest in Los Angeles this May. The fact that two of his greatest influences will be there also (Buck Owens and Ralph Stanley) just makes the whole picture complete. Thank you for a first class magazine that never fails to acknowledge the truly talented.

Marcia Taylor
El Cajon, California

Shoppin' in the Stores

Thank you for the March/April centerfold on Dwight Yoakam, our favorite country singer. We have all his albums.

We appreciate your well-written record reviews. The local chain stores carry stacks of the big names and whatever

new names the record companies are pushing. We order from a small local store. What have we ordered? All of Lyle Lovett, *Best of* and also *Greatest Hits* of T. Graham Brown, K.T. Oslin, Bobbie Cryner, *Best of Texas Tornados*, Ricky Lynn Gregg, Mark Collie, and two Mavericks. Jamie O'Hara's *Rise Above It* is on order, as we think his video, "Cold, Hard Truth," is special. We can't even find Pam Tillis and Suzy Bogguss locally! They were "ordered" and others, too.

Keep writing good *critical* reviews.

Joyce M. Schultz
Grants Pass, Oregon

Dwight, Carr and Hazel

What can I say? "I Love Your Magazine." Yep, that's a good start. I had been watching for a centerfold of Dwight, I thought it was about time for you to do an update, and there it was in the March/April issue. Loved it, however there was one error. According to *Billboard Magazine*, *Just Looking for a Hit* went Gold about the same time *If There Was a Way* did. Wasn't it nice he won the Grammy for Best Male Country Performance? I do wish he had mentioned James House along with Kostas for writing "Ain't That Lonely Yet." He was most likely so surprised it was an oversight.

I would like to express the enjoyment Hazel Smith and Paddy Carr give me. No one writes to my liking like Mr. Carr: Tell Hazel to check out *Country Fever* "Hot Hunks" Magazine. She will like looking at the last few pages in the issue.

Mollie Reiner
Yuba City, California
Gold on Just Looking is correct.—Ed.

Hard-Working Lorrie

I just wanted to say, fantastic move on the pull-out centerfold (January/February issue) of Lorrie Morgan, who I think is the greatest singer (male or female) in music. It always seems that the men get all the attention, but the women work just as hard. So keep up the good work and maybe somewhere down the road there will be cover story on Lorrie.

Linda Wall
Winder, Georgia

Another Fine-Toothed Eye Reader

In the November/December 1993 issue, you had a centerfold on Aaron Tippin. In the March/April 1994 issue, you had an article. The two stories are not alike. First one, Aaron was 35, daughter's name was Charla, Daisy I've heard was not a '75 Toyota but a Corolla. March/April's article Aaron is 34, daughter's name is Charlotte, and Daisy is a '75 Toyota. Something is wrong somewhere.

Lois Best
Pawnee, Illinois
A Corolla is a Toyota, Charla is correct, and 34's a typo.—Ed.

Lifestyle Issues with Aaron

Thank you for your article on Aaron Tippin in your March/April 1994 issue. I think it's high time we got away from the "booze and drugs stars." It's great to find one who promotes a healthier lifestyle to our young people today. Keep up the good work.

Brenda Dickson
Doniphan, Missouri

Hammer and Nails with Tippin

Hey, Bob Allen, looks like you're 2-and-0. You hit the nail on the head—again. Loved the short story on Aaron Tippin, "Aaron Tippin Still Stands for Something," in the March/April issue. Aaron truly is a man that stands for something. The airlines may have lost a pilot but country music gained an entertainer who'll *long* be remembered for his appreciation and dedication to the music he loves so much. If not by the industry (ACM/CMA) then most definitely by his fans who have enjoyed his music and personality from the beginning.

Connie A. Miller
East Bend, North Carolina

Those Talented "Texans"

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for a few years now. And I've finally written to say "Thanks" for all your great articles. Especially your story in the March/April issue on Little Texas! George Fletcher did a terrific job. I've been waiting forever to read more about Little Texas. Just like Alabama was the group of the 80's, in my opinion Little Texas is the group of the 90's.

They are so talented, and that Brady Seals, what a hunk! I only have two requests. One, a longer interview next time (which I hope will be very soon). And second, a pull-out poster. Give the group a chance.

Bonnie Pelland
Easthampton, Massachusetts
We told George's family members not to write in.—Ed.

Still Waiting...

When I received your March/April issue, I went straight to the article on Little Texas, which I've been waiting for ever since I subscribed to your magazine a year and a half ago. Although I was really hoping to see my favorite performers on the cover, I do thank ya for doing the article. (But I'm still going to be expecting a pull-out poster on the guys!) I can't wait to see them in concert again.

Tammy McLaughlin
Springfield, Maine
All together now: "Never satisfied."—Ed.

Older Generation Heard From

Thank you for the feature on the country group, Little Texas, in your March/April issue. True they probably have great younger generation appeal, but as a mem-

ber of the over-50 crowd (albeit by only one year). I find their songwriting wonderful ("What Might Have Been" is a beautiful song) and their singing and playing great. They are a very unique and entertaining group, and I am looking forward to seeing them perform live one of these days.

Barbara Beach
Tucson, Arizona

P.S.—Just because Collin Raye went to *Extremes* on his newest release doesn't mean the reviewer has to go to extremes. Raye's slow ballads are absolutely wonderful.

Catching Up with Ketchum

Finally! I had all but given up on your magazine when, much to my amazement, you finally featured an article on the wonderful Hal Ketchum in your January/February issue. I was beginning to think you people couldn't recognize talent if it stood up and slapped you in the face! A thousand thank-you's for the wonderful article on a remarkable man. What took you so long?

Shelley Maes
Tucson, Arizona

Talkin' with Tanya

Your 20 Questions with Tanya Tucker in the March/April issue captures the essence of a remarkable entertainer. Although it is rarely reported in the tabloids, her fans know that Tanya devotes a lot of time and energy to charitable causes. Whether it be a children's hospital or a camp for special children, she is there to lend a helping hand. The lady's heart is just as large as her talent.

Richard Kellogg
Alfred, New York

Harlan Who?

I ordered *Country Music Magazine* from my nephew. He was selling them for school. My first issue was November/December. Great story on Billy Ray Cyrus, but the poster on Aaron Tippin was a lot better. Then I receive January/February. Only two words can describe the Travis Tritt and Lorrin Morgan stories—gag me! Mark Collie is okay. Hal Ketchum—no thank you! And who is Harlan Howard?

Carol Huffer
Chillicothe, Ohio

Hazel Smith, Songwriter?

As a fan of all kinds of music along with country, I have many old albums—among these, one of my favorites is by Ray Sawyer of Dr. Hook. This album has a number of good songs on it, at least three written by a Hazel Smith. So my question is: Is this Hazel Smith and your magazine's Hazel one and the same?

Kathy Farr
Lincoln, Missouri

You bet! Our own Hazel has had songs cut by Dr. Hook, Tammy Wynette, Bill Monroe, The Whites and others.—Ed.

Wishing for Wheeler

I appreciate your magazine's dedication to the hottest names in country music, but how about a few pieces on the "unsung heroes" of the industry? I refer to people like Cheryl Wheeler. She wrote the song "Aces," which was recorded by Suzy Bogguss (and did a much better job on it) and "Addicted," which was a hit for Dan Seals. Please, keep up what you're doing, but also keep us in touch with those who have really made country a serious force in the music world.

Tricia Barnes
Canfield, Ohio

Check Record Reviews this time.—Ed.

Guys for Chapin

I've been a big fan of Mary-Chapin Carpenter for some three and a half years. In all that time, I don't recall ever having seen (in this column or anywhere else) a male fan write in support of this incredible woman. Now, I know you guys are out there; I've seen you at her shows. Some men may feel that Mary-Chapin is a "woman's artist": Malarkey! While her music is presented from a female viewpoint, I believe the emotions she addresses are experienced by both men and women. So there! I've stuck my neck out, but "I Take My Chances"!

Scott M. Hart
Clyde, North Carolina

Neal McCoy

Please, please, please! I want to know more about Neal McCoy. I've been reading your magazine for two years—please publish some pictures of Neal McCoy. I love his latest song, "No Doubt About It," also "Now I Pray for Rain." Does he have any more songs? Will he be having any concerts near Tennessee anytime soon? He would look real good on your yearly calendars. Like I said...Please let us know more about him and add some pictures.

Mary K. Gill
Carthage, Tennessee

Pretty please?—Ed.

Lee Roy Parnell

Received the March/April issue of *Country Music* in today's mail. Hurriedly I scanned the cover looking for any sign of an article on my favorite artist...not there. So, I checked inside...not there either. Patiently I have been waiting for an article on Lee Roy Parnell, so please, please, please give us a feature story on Lee Roy. Better yet, how about treating us all with a cover with Lee Roy! Please...

Shirley Bare
North East, Maryland
Must be the season.—Ed.

Sammy's Bag

When I first started seeing Sammy Kershaw on television, he always had a saddle bag slung over his shoulder. In an



CHEVROLET presents the COUNTRY MUSIC QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the July/August 1994 issue.

1. What is the name of Alan Jackson's band?
2. How high did John Michael Montgomery's new album get on *Billboard's* pop chart?
3. Who introduced Alan Krauss at her Grand Ole Opry induction?
4. What title did daughters Wynonna and Ashley bestow on Naomi Judd?
5. To date, how many Number One singles have Brooks & Dunn racked up?
6. Chevy's new S-Series truck has already won numerous awards. Who named it the Pickup Truck of the Year?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:

1. RCA
2. Grand Cayman, BWI
3. "There Ain't Nothing Wrong with the Radio"
4. Pikeville, Kentucky
5. *Tear Me Apart*
6. Ron Kane's 1969 Chevy C-10 truck has over 420,000 miles on it.

Chevy Trucks LIKE A ROCK



VOTE

See For CMSA
Members Only
Page 61

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interview he said that he would reveal the contents sometime. I notice that he doesn't have it anymore, but I have not heard what was in it, and I am curious.

Adelia Biggs
Willows, California
We'll put Hazel on this right away.—Ed.

In the Dog House Now

In the March/April issue, in Letters, Mark Collie's fan club address is incorrect. The new address is Mark Collie Fan Club, P.O. Box 120311, Nashville, Tennessee 37212-0311.

Debra Cribbs
Memphis, Tennessee

Jones: The Greatest Ever

George, you have always been a favorite of mine. I have been a country music lover for years. You always print letters but never enough about George Jones. I want him to know I love him and his music. George, I never see enough of you on TV. I would like to see a cover story on George Jones, the greatest ever.

Inez Gurganas
Snow Hill, North Carolina

Dear Loretta

I'm very disappointed not to see more articles in your magazine about Loretta Lynn and other legends. Your magazine needs a real staff writer the readers can communicate with. Your staff writers

just make the readers mad by insulting their favorite country stars. Loretta could do an advice column, kinda like Dear Abby, but more down to earth. Maybe that's far out, but you could at least do a 20 Questions with Loretta.

William Starnes
Holly Springs, Mississippi

Ms. Anne Murray

Anne Murray just celebrated her silver anniversary in show business with four Grammy Awards, 18 Gold records and induction into Canada's Juno Hall of Fame last March. Any chance you could do a profile of this talented and classy lady? I'm currently forming a Collectors Club for Anne, and would appreciate if you could print my address.

Rita Rose
Anne Murray Collectors Club
8366 East Michigan St.
Indianapolis, Indiana 46219

Re profile, we're working on it.—Ed.

Chafin' for Chesnutt

I'd like to see an article, centerfold and Facts of Life feature on Mark Chesnutt. He is truly one of the best, and one of the few who sing true country music. Chesnutt is the next best thing to George Strait.

Melanie Cantrell
Carriere, Mississippi
Working on that, too.—Ed.

More Merle Haggard

I'd like to say that Merle Haggard is still the greatest. I recently saw him and The Strangers in Warwick, Rhode Island. I'd like to read more about him in *Country Music Magazine*. Can't wait for his newest album to be released. I find today's programming by the powers at "country radio" to be quite tasteless. They play everything from The Beach Boys to Olivia Newton-John for what they call "Solid Gold," rather than play Hag. And I'm sick of trying to get them to play my requests.

Stanton Lipson
Newington, Connecticut

Mighty Ms. Morgan Beats George

I just wanted to write and say I told you so. Back in January/February 1993 when George Fletcher reviewed Lorrie Morgan's *Watch Me*, I told you he needed a raise so he could buy a hearing aid and some Q-Tips so he could hear the music. Well, all us Lorrie Morgan fans are right. The lady is great. Did you and George see the 90-minute Crook and Chase special? Three platinum albums from a wishy-washy singer, yeah right. Despite your tone deaf reviewers, you publish a great magazine. Keep up the good work.

Connie G. Frye
Cameron, West Virginia

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Real Happy with Rodriguez

I am a big fan of your magazine. I can hardly wait for every issue. A lot of my friends get your magazine, and as soon as we all get it, we can't wait to get together and talk about everything in it.

I'd love to see an article about Johnny Rodriguez. He has an incredible talent, but doesn't get the recognition he really deserves. On January 15, my mother and I travelled to Wheeling, West Virginia, to see Johnny at the Wheeling Jamboree. He put on an excellent show, and after the show, we got a chance to say hello and take a picture. My mother was spell-bound—he's her all-time favorite. Hope to see a pull-out poster on Johnny soon!

Gina Canova
Dravosburg, Pennsylvania

When Was That West Tribute?

I was wondering if you printed a tribute article on one of my favorite country singers when she passed away—Dottie West. I ask because I saw your tribute to Conway Twitty in the September/October 1993 issue, but I didn't see one on Dottie. Also, do you have her daughter, Shelly's address?

Cullen Russert
Cambridge, New York
Tribute to Dottie appeared in November/December 1991. Back issues \$3.00 from the Westport office. For Shelly, writing try c/o Bobby Roberts Management, P.O. Box 2977, Hendersonville, Tennessee 37077.—Ed.

What's Up With Stonewall Jackson?

I would like to know whatever happened to a singer by the name of Stonewall Jackson. He was quite popular in the early 60's and 70's. He had a raft of songs, some in the Top 10 and maybe a Number One in "Don't Be Angry." He appeared on the Grand Ole Opry and had several recordings, but suddenly he disappeared.

Robert Carder
Acworth, Georgia
Jackson doesn't do much road work these days, but he's an Opry regular.—Ed.

Advice to the Editors

I just counted the Letters in the March/April issue trying to tell you we've had enough of Billy Ray, Garth, Reba among others. There were five letters. And there were over 20 asking about other stars. Does that tell you that there are fans out here that like a lot of the other performers and would like to see something about them? I subscribe to 11 or 12 magazines, and each issue has Garth, BRC or Reba pictures or articles or both. There must be a hundred others out there you could produce pictures and stories about. How about it? Let *Country Music* lead the way in praising the other artists—new and old.

Dolly Sayre
Eager, Arizona

Country Greats in CMM

Great article on Waylon! I was wondering when you'd do an article on a "country great," and Waylon is one of the greatest. Now, do an article like that on Charlie Daniels or The Marshall Tucker Band, and my subscription renewal is in the mail. One last thing, how about a "What Are They Doing Now" article? You can keep us informed on country stars that are no longer in the spotlight, like David Alan Coe, Johnny Paycheck, Jerry Reed and others. Thanks for taking the time to read this and keep up the good work.

Chuck Windmoller
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Fan Fumes

Go a little slower on the new faces, please! I can't keep up! Only Waylon's familiar, or am I getting old? I know Dwight Yoakam, Marty Stuart and Alabama, but I can't match face and voice to Collin, Aaron, Hal, Clint, Faith, Martina, Trisha and Tracy. Let's see, there's Mary-Chapin Carpenter, late of The Airplane; the Elvis stripper who can't sing; Travis and The Silver Bullet Band; George RVS Michael complaining about the cost of fame; and Garth, who owes his act to The Who. How about something for those of us over 25?

Kevin O. Allen
Reno, Nevada

More Suggestions

As for country singers, there has never been but two. Repeat, two. One, you never read or hear anything about. The puzzle of the century—Connie Smith. The other, no longer with us, Marty Robbins. A close second, no longer with us, Leon Huff of The Light Crust Doughboys and W. Lee O'Daniels' Hillbilly Boys. He could curl your hair. See the names Dayna Wills and Boyd Magers in Letters in the March/April issue? Do you really know who these people are?

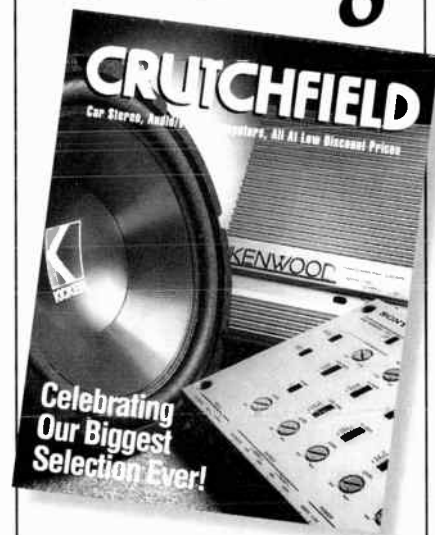
W.R. Jones
Wharton, Texas
Dayna is Bob Wills' niece, the only second-generation female descendant to earn her living as a performer. Magers is a Western music/movie authority.—Ed.

Babs 'n' Connie

I like where country music is today. It's the best it's ever been. My only beef is sometimes we seem to forget the older people that helped pave the way. One of the greatest artists ever is Barbara Mandrell. I never see anything at all in your magazine about her. She has one of the best voices in the business. Barbara has overcome personal tragedies, yet she is always willing to help others. Another person I'd enjoy seeing an article on is the beautiful and talented Connie Smith.

Carma Lee Peters
Mt. Hope, West Virginia

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From Twitty to Tucker

Just finished reading the March/April issue. Really enjoyed the Legends feature in the *CMSA Newsletter* on Conway He'll really be missed in country music circles.

Also enjoyed 20 Questions with Tanya Tucker. She just keeps getting better and prettier. She seems to have learned to pick and choose songs that fit her style. I hope she keeps going for another 20 years.

Vern LaCross
Louisville, Kentucky

Cash Still Out There

Congratulations to Rich Kienzle for his wonderful tribute to Johnny Cash in the January/February *CMSA Newsletter*. I've been a Cash fan since the beginning. Bought the singles and albums, attended and still attend the concerts and try like hell to get his new material played by disc jockeys. He could still be in the Top Ten if people could hear "The Night Hank Williams Came to Town," "Backstage Pass" and others.

Thomas Gaizick
Forest City, North Carolina

Fine Tuning The Man in Black

Thank you for the Legends feature on Johnny Cash in the January/February *Newsletter*. Just to set the record straight, W.S. "Fluke" Holland is Cash's drummer, and he joined Cash in 1958. Guitarist Luther Perkins was with Cash until Perkins' death in 1968, being replaced by Bob Wooten. Cash's other band members are David Jones, rhythm guitar and harmony vocals; Dave Roe, bass and harmony vocals; and Earl Poole Ball, piano. By the way, Jones is Mother Maybelle Carter's grandson.

Vicki Langdon
Denison, Texas

Moonshine again, except Fluke Holland confirms 1960.—Ed.

Ravin' on Raye

Two things become quite clear upon reading Geoffrey Himes' "review" of Collin Raye's newest album in the March/April issue: The man is not a Collin Raye fan, and he's obviously incapable of recognizing and experiencing real emotion. *Extremes* is a masterpiece, and the cassette accompanies me each and every time I get into my car. And lest Mr. Himes chalk this letter up to the hormone-driven emotions of a googly-eyed female fan, let me just add that my husband, a professional musician/composer, is equally knocked out. We both say, "Thank you, Collin; keep up the good work."

Rae Pica
Center Barnstead, New Hampshire

Buzzing on Buskirk

Your review of *Nacogdoches Waltz* by Paul Buskirk in the March/April issue was great. A most deserving musician. Perhaps the readers would like to know

that Shot Jackson, David Musgrave and Paul Buskirk recorded an instrumental album (12 songs) in 1974 on Stoneway Records, (Sty 180), titled *Dobro, Shobro and Steel*. Jackson built the shobro he plays on the album, the steel that David plays and the four-string fretted Sho-Bro Paul plays. A perfect record from a garage sale in '87. Price 25 cents. Other Stoneway albums are listed on the cover.

Recalling Paul's (mostly guitar) work with Curly Fox in Houston (KPRE?) along with Ozzie Middleton (or Mittleton) great steel. Good memories from the early 50's.

Frank Blue
Columbus, Texas

Record Reviews a Boon

I'd like to say thanks for the wonderful record reviews that you do, particularly on some of the lesser-known groups and artists. I bought albums from Junior Brown and Jimmie Dale Gilmore strictly on positive reviews from *Country Music Magazine*, and they turned out to be among my most favorite albums. These are two artists whose music is never heard on radio stations in Connecticut, so without these reviews, I never would have discovered them.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Victor Sundén Jr.
West Haven, Connecticut

Woo, Woo, Wheel & Wills

Like the magazine. Have been taking it quite awhile. Sometimes give the pull-out posters to people at work. First I want to thank Asleep at the Wheel for making tribute to the music of Bob Wills. Didn't like all the women's voices on it but rest was good. I have all of Asleep at the Wheel's music. Also Bob Wills. First I bought them in records, then 8-track tapes, now I'm trying to get them put on cassettes. When I was a lot younger, I danced to Bob Wills' band in Kansas and Oklahoma. Also Leon McAuliffe. Which brings me to the second thing. I want to go to Tyler, Texas, where Bob Wills was raised. But I notice that there are two Tylers in Texas. Do you know which Tyler and if there is a museum of Bob Wills?

Connie DeWeese
Garden City, Kansas

Forget Tyler, it's Turkey, Texas, 110 miles southeast of Amarillo. Annual Bob Wills Day in late April. For Bob Wills Museum, call 806-423-1033.—Ed.

Eagles Fan Bites Back

In response to John Morthland's review of *Common Thread: Songs of The Eagles* in the March/April issue, John, what's not to get? Great Eagles' songs just the way we like them by the "Whos' Who" in country music today! You don't do a "tribute" to someone and then change all their songs. Besides, Travis Tritt could do an album of "Hog Calls and Burps,"

and I would buy it. I'm sure the fans of the other artists on the album feel the same way. Thanks, CMM, for another great issue.

Jane Waddell
Spartanburg, South Carolina

Grateful Producer

I'd like to thank Rich Kienzle for the generous review of our new compilation of jukebox singles, *Rig Rock Truckstop*, in the March/April issue. We are doing our best to uphold the tradition of great independent labels like Starday, King and Sun. Our singles-only label's name is Diesel Only, not First Warning. May the (vinyl) record stand corrected!

Jeremy Tepper
Diesel Only Records
Brooklyn, New York

Fan Goes for Faith Hill

I was thrilled to see John Morthland do a review of Faith Hill's *Take Me As I Am* in the March/April issue, although he did get a bit wishy-washy toward the end. Even before the "Wild One," I knew this girl had something special, and this album proves beyond any doubt she's more than a one-hit wonder.

Patty Held
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

High-Tech Jones

I'd like to respond to your record review on George Jones' *High Tech Redneck* in the January/February issue. I think the third time is a charm for George with MCA. You also said that George didn't seem familiar with a lot of the electronics he talks about in the title song. Well, he must be. Just take a look at his tour bus—satellite dish, CB, radio, etc.

I also disagree with your comments about the songs "Tear Me Out of the Picture," "A Thousand Times a Day" and "Never Bit a Bullet Like This." These are all great, especially the duet with Sammy Kershaw. I just hope that "the narrow minds who program country radio" (that I do agree with) will give this song a chance.

Billy D. Stokes
Elkton, Kentucky

Get Jones Back on Track

I just finished reading Rich Kienzle's critique of George Jones' new album, *High Tech Redneck* in the January/February issue. In some respects, I do agree with you. I enjoy anything George does, but he has done better, and Billy Sherrill's influence is missed. I disagree, partially, with your assessment of the best songs on the album. In my opinion, the best songs are "Forever Is Here to Stay" and "Hello Darlin'." As you can see, I'm a lover of traditional country music, and I think George Jones is the greatest country singer alive. I hope George will get back to doing what has made him country's Living Legend.

Glenn M. Taylor
Lomita, California

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World Radio History

Reviews Too Positive

My one complaint with *Country Music* has been with the music reviews. Usually, they come out several months after an album has been released. This gives the reader no sense of guidance since we've probably purchased it already. However, my main complaint is that 90% of the reviews are positive. Whereas other magazines will unanimously pan a record, *Country Music* loves it. It seems that if I were to go by the reviews, I would own more recordings than the Library of Congress has books. Not everyone is good.

Joanne Must
Sugarland, Texas

Now we've heard everything.—Ed.

Crank Writers

Would you please show us some pictures of the people that do the record reviews. I want to know if they look as cranky as they sometimes sound. I noticed Patrick Carr's picture on the back page, and he doesn't look like he is mad at the world.

P.J. Van Cleave
Waukegan, Illinois

Back to normal.—Ed.

Loves That Calendar

I would like to tell you how much I appreciate my calendar for 1994. You did a great job. You could not have started the year off any better than with Dwight Yoakam. I had the pleasure of seeing him in person last year. I cried all the way through. I had a front row seat. He is so great. I don't know how you will do for 1995, but you will have to get up mighty early to top this. But please, no George Jones or Randy Travis.

Veronica Jackson
Dunn, North Carolina

You can please some of the people some of the time...

Doesn't Love Calendar

From 1990 to 1994—pictures of Reba McEntire three times, George Strait three, Randy Travis five, Clint Black four, Judds three, Dwight Yoakam three, not stating the ones who have two. Where's Sammy Kershaw, Tracy Lawrence, Billy Dean, Mark Chesnutt, Charley Pride, Rodney Foster, Ricky Lynn Gregg, just to name a few. Come on, it's bad enough to see the same faces in every *Country Music Magazine*.

Mary C. Pipitone
Bridgeton, New Jersey

...but you can't please all of the people all of the time.—Ed.

For Tex Ritter Fans

The Tex Ritter Fan Club, Sharon L. Sweeting, President, 15326 73rd Avenue S.E., Snohomish, Washington 98290 is still active 20 years after Tex's passing away. It would be appreciated if all fans will please write the Citizens Stamp Ad-

visory Committee, United States Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza S.W., Washington, D.C. 20260 telling them Tex Ritter warrants being honored with a commemorative stamp.

John Morrow
Poplar Bluff, Missouri

Prizewinner Responds

Thank you for the \$1000 sweepstakes prize. I am sure I will enjoy my new camcorder which I have bought with the money.

Greg Eschler
Roy, Utah

Prizewinner Announced

The winner of our December 1993/January 1994 Renewal Sweepstakes is Harlan Kiemele of Cavalier, North Dakota. Mr. Kiemele will receive \$1000. More winners to come, including the lucky person who'll take home a Chevrolet Blazer!

Signs of Spring

CMM announces the return of the patio ducks. Our resident pair of mallards are back after a long, hard winter. One editor keeps asking if they have babies yet. You see where our thoughts are tending.

Send Letters to the Editor to Country Music Magazine, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Mark your envelope. Attention: Letters. We reserve the right to edit for space and style.

Bring your jeans, your party attitude and join us during one of our 1994

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105 Alabama	125 Chris Isaak	226 Travis Tritt
285 John Anderson	248 Alan Jackson	283 Tanya Tucker
185 Badle & The Boys	174 Waylon Jennings	256 Ricky Van Shelton
247 Bellamy Brothers	113 George Jones	151 Clay Walker
288 Clint Black	317 Wynonna Judd	219 Steve Wariner
109 Suzy Bogguss	180 Toby Keith	190 Gene Watson
165 Larry Boone	253 KY Headhunters	112 Kevin Welch
257 Garth Brooks	777 Sammy Kershaw	356 Hank Williams Jr
407 Brooks & Dunn	118 Hal Ketchum	306 Michelle Wright
267 Marty Brown	234 K.D. Lang	259 Tammy Wynette
158 Tracy Byrd	841 Tracy Lawrence	294 Trisha Yearwood
205 Shawn Camp	180 Chris LeDoux	153 Dwight Yoakam
245 Glen Campbell	842 Little Texas	
241 Carlene Carter	194 Patty Loveless	
279 Lionel Cartwright	154 Lyle Lovett	
252 Johnny Cash	252 Barbara Mandrell	
141 Rosanne Cash	824 Louise Mandrell	
822 Mary Ch. Carpenter	301 Kathy Mattea	
248 Charlie Daniels Band	319 Matthews Wright Kung	
243 Mark Chesnutt	320 Martina McBride	
278 Mark Collie	300 McBride & The Ride	
318 Confederate Railroad	201 Delbert McClintock	
296 Earl Thomas Conley	302 Neal McCoy	
292 Rodney Crowell	254 Reba McEntire	
297 Billy Ray Cyrus	169 JM Montgomery	
310 Davis Daniel	170 Lorie Morgan	
304 Billy Dean	251 Anne Murray	
126 Desert Rose Band	126 Willie Nelson	
212 Diamond Rio	249 Wayne Newton	
150 Joe Diffie	188 Nitty Gritty Dirt Band	
845 Dean Dillon		
238 Holly Dunn		
173 Ellis Brothers		
272 Rodney Foster		
135 Crystal Gayle		
163 Gibson/Miller		
250 Vince Gill		
290 Lee Greenwood		
162 Ricky L. Gregg		
207 Nanci Griffith		
238 Merle Haggard		
143 Highway 101		
118 Faith Hill		
		291 Mark O'Connor
		389 Oak Ridge Boys
		115 KT Olin
		106 Martie Omond
		315 Lee Roy Parnell
		261 Dolly Parton
		309 Sandi Patti
		195 Pirates of Miss.
		828 Collin Raye
		255 Jerry Reed
		306 Ronnie Reeves
		242 Sawyer Brown
		307 Dan Seals
		206 Shenandoah
		257 Ricky Skaggs
		846 Statler Brothers
		218 Cary Stewart
		134 Larry Stewart
		324 Doug Stone
		258 George Strait
		147 Marty Stuart
		214 Doug Supernaw
		269 James Taylor
		843 Texas Tornados
		844 Pam Tillis
		282 Aaron Tippin
		801 Tennessee/KY
		802 Illinois/Indiana
		803 So. California
		804 Texas
		805 Colorado
		806 Pennsylvania
		807 New York
		808 New England
		290 Maryland/VA/WV
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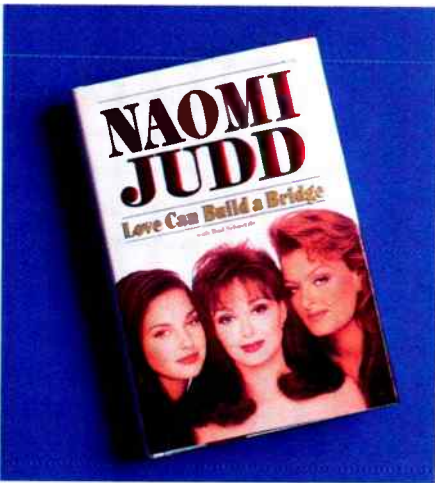
EDITOR'S CHOICE

NEW! NAOMI JUDD AUTOBIOGRAPHY & FAREWELL TOUR VIDEO

Here, at last, is the exquisitely personal story of a mother and daughter who sang like angels and fought like the devil—but loved each other through struggle, triumph and tragedy.

For eight glorious years, Naomi Judd and daughter Wynonna lived the American dream. They were signed on the spot to RCA in 1983 in a rare live audition and went on to set the music world on its ear. Their pristine harmonies, unique personalities and stunning presence captured mainstream America's heart.

The Judds were country music's most honored and top-selling women. They were undefeated as Duo of the Year for eight years.



They picked up six Grammys, and won themselves a vast array of other awards. In the U.S. alone, they sold over 15 million albums and were the Number One touring act in their industry for the year 1991.

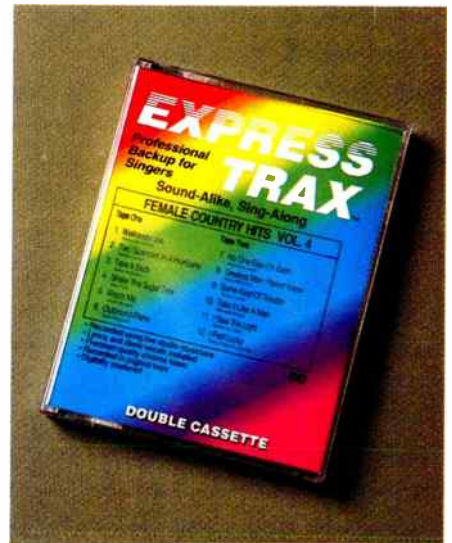
They were on top of the world when Naomi made the shocking announcement that she was being forced to retire because of a life-threatening liver disease. Their farewell concert, televised on cable, was the most successful musical show in pay-per-view history. Their last song together broke America's heart and ended one of the most beloved acts of all time in country music.

Naomi spent the next two years in isolation, reliving her extraordinary life and career for the pages of this fascinating new autobiography. *Love Can Build a Bridge* is written with the same raw emotion and candor that made The Judds such electrifying performers. Funny, shocking, wise and inspiring, this behind-the-scenes look into The Judds' private lives spares no one and nothing. This 546-page, illustrated, hardcover edition sells for \$24, #B3M.

If you missed their fabulous *Farewell Tour*, be sure to order the 60-minute video now for \$19.98, V2T. Or get both for \$40.98, #B3M/V2T—YOU SAVE \$3.00!

NEW COUNTRY MUSIC SING-A-LONG TAPES— EXPRESS TRAX SERIES TWO

Step into the country spotlight anew with the newest sets of *Express Trax Sing-a-Long* tapes—more recent hits by your favorite country artists. Again these high quality, chrome tapes are recorded by top studio musicians in the songs' original keys. The back-up band plays real instruments—no synthesizers! One side of the tape is all instrumental so that you can be the lead singer; the other side includes both instruments and vocals. These tapes are great for parties, talent competitions, or just having fun. Both amateurs and professionals will enjoy singing with the background tracks—each song is a big hit in country music. Package #101 (female country hits) includes: "He Thinks He'll Keep Her," "Going Out Tonight," "Quittin' Time"/Mary Chapin Carpenter, "Hey Cinderella"/Suzy Bogguss, "Better Your Heart Than Mine"/Trisha Yearwood, "We Don't Have to Do This"/Tanya Tucker, "Let's Make a Baby King"/Wynonna Judd, "I Love You Cause I Want To"/Carlene Carter, "Life #9," "Where I Used to Have a Heart"/Martina McBride, "What a Woman Wants"/Lari White, "Piece of My Heart"/Faith Hill. Package #102 (male country hits) includes: "John Deere Green"/Joe Diffie, "Sawmill Road"/Diamond Rio, "State of Mind"/Clint Black, "I Just Wanted You to Know"/Mark Chesnutt, "I Swear"/John



Michael Montgomery, "T-R-O-U-B-L-E"/ Travis Tritt, "Rock My World (Little Country Girl)"/Brooks & Dunn, "Don't Let Our Love Start Slipping Away," "I Still Believe in You"/Vince Gill, "I'd Like to Have That One Back"/George Strait, "That's My Story"/Collin Raye, and more. Each package gives you 12 hit songs, not offered before, on two cassettes. Each package is \$19.95, #PKG101 or #PKG102. Order both for only \$37.90—SAVE \$2.00! Please specify your choice(s) by package number.

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Here are our all-time bestselling custom belt buckles PLUS two new additions that we know will be a hit. All four buckles are forged in genuine pewter. You will see that three of them also include striking

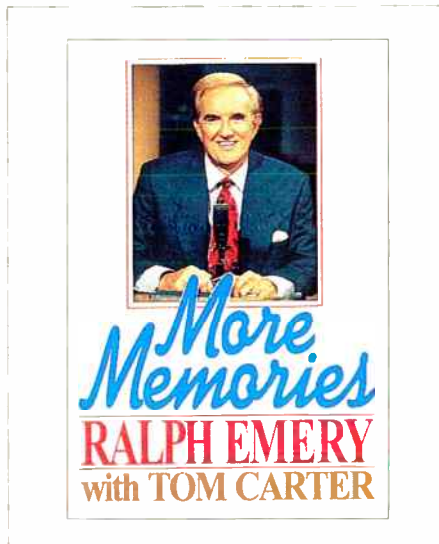
enamel coloring to make the designs as colorful and full of life as the unique brand of music they represent. The pure pewter "Country Music" buckle boasts a very handsome, elaborate design that is too detailed for enamel coloring, but something you are sure to love. Each buckle sells for \$9.95. Or you can order any combination of two for \$17.90 and you SAVE \$2.00! When you order, specify the enamel "I Love Country Music" buckle as #G6J, the enamel "Country Music" buckle as #G7L and the new "Two Step" enamel buckle as #G7M. Identify the new "Country Music" pewter buckle (no enamel) as item #G7P. Specify each product number when ordering more than one.



RALPH EMERY: MORE MEMORIES

His first book, *Memories*, sold more than 330,000 and climbed to Number Two on *The New York Times* bestseller list. Now the popular talk show host brings country fans *More Memories*, a new collection of down-home anecdotes and interviews with some of country music's brightest stars—past and present. *More Memories* is also a chronicle of the growing pains of country music, an insider's look at how it has changed from a business where everybody knew everybody into an impersonal, multi-billion dollar industry. This 288-page, illustrated, hardcover edition sells for \$21.95, #B34A.

If you missed the original *Memories* edition, order it now too. Specify item #B35S for \$19.95.



GREAT GUIDES TO SONGWRITING

The Beginning Songwriter's Answer Book gives the new songwriter the essential tools for the craft. Over 200 most often asked questions are addressed, from lyrics and structure to publishing and the music industry itself. Straightforward and easy-to-read, this new book is a must for new songwriters. Item #B2C, \$16.95.

Veteran Tom T. Hall's long-esteemed *Songwriter's Handbook* is a practical guide that Johnny Cash says is "The most helpful book I know for . . . songwriters. Here are the names, places, facts and forms to help you be a success." Tom T. tells it like it is, with all the wisdom and wit of a legendary songwriter and storyteller. Contents include Rules and Tools, Hang-ups, Ideas, Do's and Don'ts and much more. Item #B9H, \$14.95.

Order both for \$29.90—**SAVE \$2.00!**



NEW! REBA MCENTIRE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Her talent and songs have made her today's bestselling female country music recording artist, as well as one of the top performers on the concert circuit, and one of the world's most awarded show business performers. Now, at last, Reba McEntire presents the most moving story of all—her own. Here is the full autobiography of one of today's most beloved and successful entertainers told with all the winning style, heartwrenching honesty, delightful humor and unbounded energy that have earned her the love of her millions of fans. From her Oklahoma ances-



NEW! HANK WILLIAMS BIOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS

We are now offering the upcoming, new *Hank Williams: The Biography* (June release). This is the definitive biography of this country music legend. Based on years of research and interviews, it discards the myths created by heirs (who claim they never saw him drunk) and fellow performers (who never saw him so-

ber). Hank Williams emerges as a "pure product of America"—driven, unsophisticated, intelligent, weak. Order your copy early and pay \$20.95—**\$2.00 OFF**—#B2A.

You'll also want the new video, *In the Hank Williams Tradition* (not shown), which traces Hank's incredible life story through rare film clips, music and revealing interviews. Featured are such favorites as "Your Cheatin' Heart" and "I'm So Lonesome, I Could Cry." There's also Hank singing "Hey, Good Lookin'" and four others. This video is a country music collectible. Select #V2M, \$19.95.

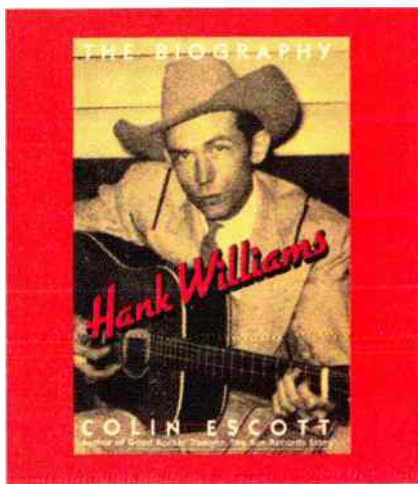
And here is another fascinating new video, *Hank Williams: The Show He Never Gave* (not shown). Using Hank's last ride as its dramatic content, this movie permits the haunted singer to play one final show in the mythical roadhouse, during which all his fears and passions—all his genius—tumble out for us to see. "Sneezzy" Waters plays the self-destructive superstar and performs 23 songs. Ask for #V2L, \$24.95.

When you order any two Hank Williams items, **DEDUCT \$2.00 MORE!**

tors who rode with outlaws through her experiences as a daughter, sister, wife and mother, Reba shares the touching memories which have shaped her life and career. With her much admired candor she also presents many of the feelings and perspectives that have won her praise as one of the foremost chroniclers in song of the emotional ups and downs of modern women. There have been other books about Reba. Now it is time to read her story in her words, told with the help of Tom Carter, co-author of numerous nonfiction books including Ralph Emery's two *New York Times* bestsellers, *Memories* and *More Memories*. Ask for #B2F. Reserve this illustrated, hardcover edition early (it has a June release date) and **SAVE \$2.00**. You pay \$19.95.

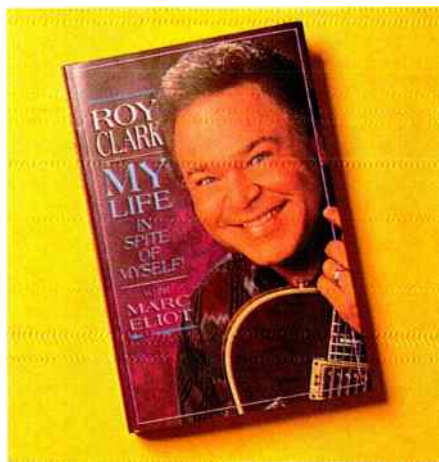
Don't miss Reba's newly released video either. *Greatest Hits* (not shown) features the making of "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia" plus "Take It Back," "The Heart Won't Lie," "It's Your Call" and more. This new video is #V3D, \$29.95. (Don't miss the two additional Reba videos we are offering for sale on page 59 of this issue.)

When you order both the book and video, **DEDUCT \$1.00 MORE**—pay just \$48.90.



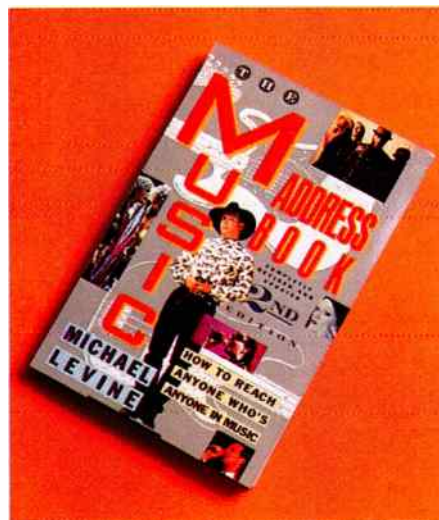
NEW AUTOBIOGRAPHY! ROY CLARK: MY LIFE IN SPIE OF MYSELF!

Now Roy tells his story for the first time, providing a behind-the-scenes look at his own life and the lives of countless others who have influenced him, helped him, and sometimes gotten in his way. He's known to millions as the affable, happy, occasionally corny host of Hee Haw. What they didn't know, until now, is the man behind the jokester: the serious, dedicated musician who created a style of playing that made him unique. *In My Life—In Spite of Myself*, Roy recounts his journey from boyhood in a small town in Virginia to his eventual emergence as one of the premier performers in country music. Hardcover, 224 pages, illustrated. Item #B4G, \$22.



THE MUSIC ADDRESS BOOK—NEW 1994 EDITION!

Here is the new, revised edition of Michael Levine's acclaimed 1992 bestseller. He is regarded as the world's foremost address expert. This new, updated edition contains current addresses of over 3,000 singers, groups, musicians, managers, record companies, agents, radio personalities and more. It's the ultimate sourcebook for anyone who wants to send a letter, tape or song to the right person. Order #B1C, \$12.

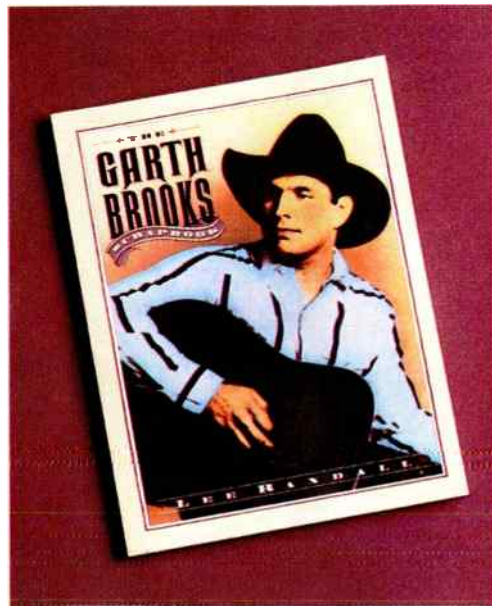


THE GARTH BROOKS SCRAPBOOK AND VIDEO

Garth Brooks is country music's hottest star. In addition to having a loyal following of country listeners, Brooks has won over millions of non-country fans. His third album, *Ropin' the Wind*, hit Number One on both the country and pop music charts. Since he exploded onto the scene in 1989, his albums have sold millions of copies and charted scores of Number One singles. He has hosted his own top-rated TV special—a rare feat for a country music star today.

How did this 31-year-old Oklahoman become America's most popular entertainer, seemingly overnight? In this profusely illustrated, immensely readable book, fans will discover Garth's surprising route to Nashville—via Billy Joel, Dan Fogelberg and James Taylor...his amazing decision to quit touring for six months at the height of his popularity and concentrate on his marriage...how Garth met his wife Sandy in a barroom brawl—she was the one fighting...why one of Garth's videos was banned from The Nashville Network (TNN) and Country Music Television (CMT)...Garth's ceaseless devotion to family and friends...and much more!

Brimming with anecdotes and quotes,



and loaded with great photographs, *The Garth Brooks Scrapbook* is the definitive book on the singer who is redefining country music. This 8 1/2" x 11" edition contains 108 pages. Order #B3N for \$16.95. If you would like to get Garth's celebrated 90-minute *Live TV Special* video (not shown), ask for item #V3H for \$29.95. Or order both (#B3N/V3H) for \$43.90—YOU SAVE \$3.00!

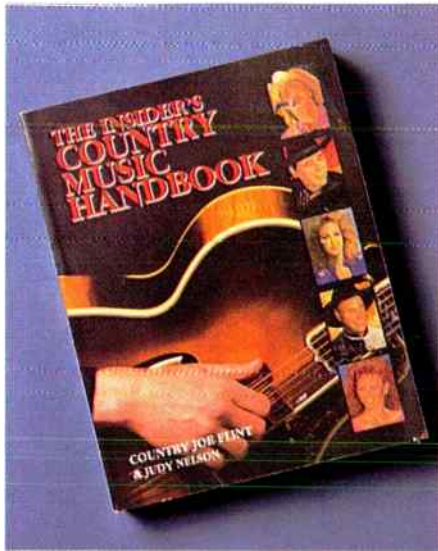
CHET ATKINS VIDEO INSTRUCTION COURSE: GET STARTED ON GUITAR

Here is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn to play the guitar (or sharpen your existing skills) with one of the grandmasters of guitar pickin'. With the *Chet Atkins: Get Started on Guitar* video course, beginners can have fun learning the basics, and advanced players will discover a true goldmine of helpful hints and ideas. *Chet Atkins: Get Started on Guitar* includes a one-hour video cassette, a 112-page instruction book and a 40-minute audio cassette—all three components cross-referenced to each other and packaged in a sturdy plastic case for convenient carrying and access.

The instruction book will guide you through the music Chet plays in the video. Each tune has its own chapter complete with advanced tips and basic information. There are also special reference sections on



"Playing Chords," "Finger-picking Chords," "Playing Melodies" and "Playing by Ear." The video shows split-screen close-ups so you can see exactly how the techniques are done. Also included are on-screen chord symbols that let you play along as you watch...plus an on-screen clock to help you instantly go to specific spots on the video. You receive the video, audio cassette, instruction booklet and the binder case all for \$69.95. Specify item #B2G.

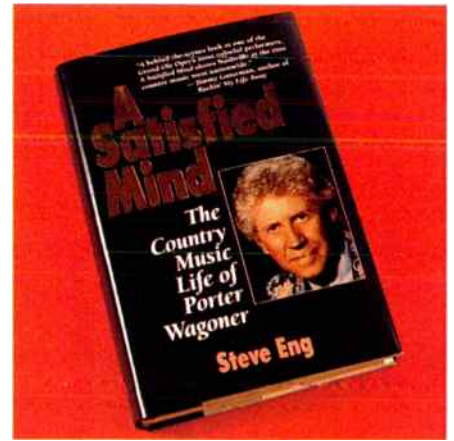


NEW! THE INSIDER'S COUNTRY MUSIC HANDBOOK

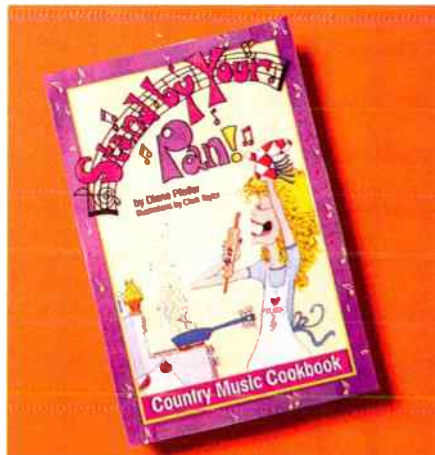
Here is the ultimate, up-to-date reference book for serious country music fans. Award-winning disk jockey, Country Joe Flint, has collaborated with author Judy Nelson to provide hours of entertainment through this recently released edition. It brings you 275 biographies, everyone from Hank Williams, Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash and Jimmie Rodgers to Garth Brooks, Billy Ray Cyrus, Reba McEntire, Randy Travis, George Strait and Dwight Yoakam—all in one place. But you get more than that! There are also 800 trivia questions (and answers). There is a 100-page Calendar of Country Music History. You'll find fan clubs with addresses, performance hot spots, members of the Grand Ole Opry, even illustrated instructions for some of the most popular country dance steps. This unique country music handbook has it all—plus a very special low price. Softcover, 552 pages, illustrated. Ask for #B3L, \$12.95.

A SATISFIED MIND: THE COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE OF PORTER WAGONER

Porter Wagoner. With the name comes a blur of images, facts and snatches of gossip, like a kaleidoscope filled with sequins. Behind Porter's glitter and showman's big grin lies a complex personality whose life story—until now—has never been told in detail. Country music fans are somewhat familiar with his rise to prominence on the Grand Ole Opry. Many know that for seven years he gave Dolly Parton immense opportunity on his television show and through live performances, and for nine years he produced her hit records. But the facts of his early life have remained obscure—until now. *A Satisfied Mind* cuts through the tabloid gossip to show the complex, adventurous and methodical man behind the image. However, this is no standard country music biography. Reflecting more than three years' research and writing, it is rich in detail and historical perspective. The pages come alive with authentic dialogue from more than 160 interviews, with Porter himself, with Chet At-



kins, Dolly Parton and even his school teachers and members of his first bluegrass band. Porter's relationship with RCA, his financial entanglement with Dolly Parton and his behind-the-scenes leadership at the Grand Ole Opry have been brought to light with painstaking care. Hardcover, 464 pages, illustrated. Item #B1K, \$19.95.



NEW COOKBOOK! STAND BY YOUR PAN

Diane Pfeiffer sang back-up for Tammy Wynette and has been exposed to country in every way. She's combined her experience with country cuisine, and the result is priceless. Chapter titles like "You Kneaded Me" (Breads) and "Who's Cheatin' Who" (Side Dishes) give a sense of what's inside. There's steamy hot "Livin' on Salsa Time," "Take This Squash and Stuff It" and, to top off any meal, "Caky, Flaky Tart." It's complete with illustrations and photos of Pfeiffer with stars she made friends with while touring. Laugh your way to fantastic meals. Index of stars and hundreds of great recipes. 160 pages, Item #B1M, \$9.95.

NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE

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Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

Moon Mullican: Before Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley, there was Moon Mullican, the beer-drinking Texas piano player who gave new meaning to the term hillbilly boogie. Known for his schmaltzy late 1940's and early 50's hits on King Records like "I'll Sail My Ship Alone," "Jole Blon" and "Sweeter Than the Flowers," Moon's best material remains



his blues and boogie recordings, also done for King. Most of them don't appear on the U.S.-produced Mullican CD reissue of King recordings, *All Time Greatest Hits*, reviewed in our sister publication, *The Journal* in February 1994, but England's Ace Records has compiled some of the best of it for *Moonshine Jamboree* (Ace CDCH 458).

This 23-selection CD dips back to 1946 for "Lonesome Hearted Blues"; a few obvious hits like "Cherokee Boogie," "I'll Sail My Ship Alone" and "Pipeliners Blues" make it through as well. Yet it's the lesser known, but equally hot, tunes that make this set special, particularly "Hey! Mr. Cotton Picker" (co-authored by actor Robert Mitchum), "Triffin' Woman Blues," "Good Deal Lucille" and "I Done It." The whirlwind intensity that Moon added to songs like "Don't Ever Take My Picture Down" and "Well Oh Well" give a good indication of the excitement he could stir up.

Billy Walker: Texan Billy Walker hasn't been well represented on reissues though he had an impressive run on the charts. (Walker oldies like

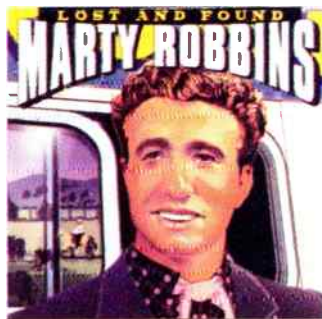
"Cross the Brazos at Waco" and the honky tonk number, "Charlie's Shoes," remain favorites today.) Hank Thompson got him onto Capitol in 1949, and he signed with Columbia in 1951. Three years passed before "Thank You for Calling" propelled him into the Top Ten. Bear Family's *Cross the Brazos at Waco* (BCD 15657) takes a look at the first 15 years of Walker's career through 157 songs on six CD's, from the first Capitol session in Fort Worth until his last Columbia session in 1965.

Walker stayed close to the standard Texas honky tonk sound on virtually all these records. The Capitol contract might have gone somewhere but abruptly ended when he fell out with Capitol executive Deo Kilpatrick (Walker describes the juicy circumstances in the notes). At that point, Dallas studio owner Jim Beck brought him to Columbia's attention. The material speaks for itself, but among the curiosities are a 1952 session backed by Leon McAuliffe's Western swing band and a 1957 date at producer Norman Petty's New Mexico studios. Walker shared his session time with Buddy Holly, and members of Holly's band, The Crickets, even backed Billy. Along with Claude Gray, Walker was among the first to record Willie Nelson songs; he covered Nelson's "The Storm Within My Heart" in 1959, and in 1961 was the first to record "Funny How Time Slips Away," both included on this set. The booklet is typical Bear Family: notes based on new interviews with Walker, and rare photos, advertisements and posters covering the same period as the music.

The Collins Kids: Today, Larry and Lorrie Collins, the irrepressible brother-sister team who tore it up on the old *Town Hall Party* show in Compton, California, as The Collins Kids, are back performing together and reportedly sounding as hot

as ever. *Rockin' on TV* (Krazy Kat CD 14) consists of 31 Collins Kids performances from *Town Hall Party* from 1957 to 1971.

Occasionally bantering with announcer Jay Stewart and Tex Ritter, they tackle a variety of songs, including Ernie Ford's "Catfish Boogie" and "You Are My Sunshine." At times Larry, a great guitarist but a weak singer, waxes a bit too enthusiastic (occasionally you'd like to throttle him), but Lorrie's sultry voice is fine (it got better and better as she got older). They do plenty of rock, from Buddy Holly's "Oh Boy!" to Gene Vincent's "Dance to the Bop," along with "Walking the Floor Over You" and a great version of "Just Because." Larry performs the furious "Hurricane" with fellow *Town Hall Party* performer Joe Maphis, his musical mentor. The sound quality is quite acceptable, and it's easy to see why The Collinses stirred up so much excitement back then.



Marty Robbins: Marty Robbins' recordings haven't been tapped much lately by anyone. His son Ronnie has unearthed 11 "lost" recordings of Marty's (eight of them Marty originals) done from 1972 to 1982, the year Marty died. Ronnie's intentions may be noble, but Sony Nashville, releasing them on one CD as *Lost and Found* (CK 57695), provides a classic example of how not to handle historic material.

The songs aren't that great, aside from a duet on Robbins' Western classic, "Big Iron,"

with Michael Martin Murphey. On most numbers Marty's voice is the sole saving grace. What's most offensive here, however, is not the music, but the cheesy packaging. A tacky cover painting of Marty and garish graphics make the record look like those cheapo budget packages sold in truckstops or at flea markets. Standards for packaging reissues are far higher today.

Sullivan Years: I annotated this one, so, just the facts: From 1948 to 1971 *The Ed Sullivan Show* was a Sunday night TV institution. Early on, the show was hesitant to book country acts—with the exception of singing cowboys. Country wasn't yet considered respectable enough for network TV. *The Sullivan Years: Country Classics* (TVT 9448) runs the gamut of stars who appeared, from the early 50's until the music entered the mainstream. A 1951 Jimmy Wakely performance of "New San Antonio Rose" (featuring poor sound quality) is followed by Gene Autry singing "Your Cheatin' Heart" in 1953. Johnny Cash's first major network TV appearance came in the wake of his 1959 hit recording of "Don't Take Your Guns to Town." The accompanying photo of Cash onstage reveals a man not yet in black.

Things changed considerably by the late 60's. The success of *Hec Haw* undoubtedly helped bring Buck Owens onto the show in 1969 to sing "Tall Dark Stranger," "Big in Vegas" and the bluegrass "Heartbreak Mountain" with The Buckaroos. Ed liked Sonny James enough to book him four times a season in 1969-1970. Bocephus, still a rising star, sang "All for the Love of Sunshine" on a 1970 show. *Hec Haw* co-star Roy Clark performed "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" with a full orchestra in 1970, while Loretta Lynn appeared near the end of the show's run in 1971 singing "Coal Miner's Daughter." "I

Wanna Be Free" and "You Ain't Woman Enough." By then, the barriers had fallen.

The Browns: Since Richard Weize is a huge Browns fan, it's not surprising that he gives them a definitive treatment on *The Three Bells* (BCD 15665). The set covers all available Browns recordings issued and unissued from 1954 to 1957 by Jim Ed and sisters Bonnie and Maxine. Some 257 songs from the Fabor and RCA labels appear on these eight CD's. For a casual fan this is a lot. The trio had only 21 *Billboard* chart entries through their entire career. After the first Fabor hits, the excellent 1954 "Looking Back to See" and "Here Today and Gone Tomorrow," the remainder of their recordings for the label were heavy on novelties. "Itsy Witsy Bitsy Me," "Set the Dawgs on 'Em," "Goo Goo Da Da" and others are every bit as bad as the titles imply. Relocated to RCA, Chet Atkins put them in a solid Nashville Sound formula, and they found their style there.

RCA hits like 1957's "I Take the Chance" and "I Heard the Bluebirds Sing" as well as their crossover smash, "The Three Bells" (a reworking of a French pop hit), are the high point of the record. They also had some pop success with sentimental versions of "Scarlet Ribbons" and "The Old Lamplighter." Though they continued recording, from then on the hits were few and far between. Jim Ed had been recording solo material for RCA (not included here) since 1962, and found greater success alone. The group wrapped things up in 1965. Such a pricey set is obviously geared to the hardcore Browns fan. Casual listeners might find the music repetitious and dull. Nonetheless, the packaging is outstanding, and the booklet, written by Country Music Foundation staffer Chris Skinker, a longtime friend of The Browns, is one of the finest sets of notes done for any Bear set. Adding to it are rare photos from the Brown scrapbooks. A 1950's photo of them performing in front of an old S&H Green Stamp store captures the era.

Willie Nelson: After Willie Nelson, a newcomer to Nashville in the early 60's, signed a contract to publish his songs through Pamper Music, he made a number of demo recordings to promote his compositions to others. The demos were surprisingly good, indicating how early Willie had developed his style. After he became hot in the late 1970's and early 80's, record companies large and small released LP's of various combinations of these demos. Many of the album covers featured 70's and 80's era photos of Willie, generating some confusion as to the age of the material. So far, very little of this material has appeared on CD, but now comes *Willie Nelson: The Early Years* (Scotti 72392 75437), bringing together 14 Pamper demos.

Even today, these performances are above average. "Will You Remember Mine," "Undo the Right" and "One Step Beyond" are particularly outstanding. Despite the program information to the contrary, "One Step" has been issued before. To Scotti Brothers' credit, they aren't marketing this as a new package: a mid-60's photo of Willie appears on the cover. The liner notes are another matter. The print is microscopic, and the text, written by a Brit named Barry McCloud, is hilarious. He says Willie planned to retire when he moved to Austin in 1970 (did he?). I also enjoyed his comment that Willie "dumped his clean-cut image

and opted for the more 'hippie' look." That's odd, since Willie wore beards and (British-influenced) "mod" clothing in Nashville years before.

Bobby Bare: Bobby Bare's a favorite of Bear Family's Richard Weize. The label previously reissued his late 60's-early 70's Mercury recordings and his RCA album *Lullabies, Legends and Lies*. Now the complete early Bare is avail-



able on *All American Boy* (BCD 15663), a 126-song, four-CD box that stands as the definitive collection of his first Capitol recordings through the late 50's-early 60's Jackpot and Fraternity tracks to the 1962-65 early RCA material that established him. A measure of how time flies is the fact that Bare, who moved to California in 1953, did his first Capitol session 38 years ago (in 1956). He got nowhere, and didn't do any better on Jackpot. He had one hit record with Fraternity, "All American Boy," a novelty inspired both by Elvis' 1958 induction into the Army and by the draft notice Bare himself received around the same time. (For various reasons, his

friend Bill Parsons wound up getting label credit.) All the Fraternity material is here, but nothing reveals Bare's maturity like the RCA material produced by Chet Atkins. Everything, save a couple of lost masters, is here. After "Shame On Me" charted in 1962, Bare wound up recording material by the hottest composers of the era including Roger Miller, Harlan Howard and Hank Cochran. Three numbers propelled him to stardom: "Detroit City" and "500 Miles Away from Home" in 1963 and "Miller's Cave" in 1964. His duet LP with Skeeter Davis, *Tunes for Two*, is included in its entirety as are several German language recordings.

Hickory Records: Scotti Brothers' *The Greatest Hits of Hickory Records, Volume II*, (Scotti 72392-75407) picks up where the first volume left off, but these songs are generally far less impressive. It opens well enough, with Roy Acuff's 1965 hit, "Freight Train Blues," among his better late recordings. Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper's hard-edged, traditional 1959 "Big Midnight Special" hasn't been available anywhere in years, though it didn't inspire the rock versions that annotator Dorrit Walsh believes it did. Just as good is The Coopers' 1956 hit, "Cheated Too." Two 1970's Don Gibson hits, "Is This the Best I'm Gonna Feel" from 1972 and 1974's "Bring Back Your Love to Me," return him to the late 50's RCA sound that made him a star.

The remainder of the album is a total waste of time. The Gibson-Sue Thompson duet, "The Two of Us Together," with its undulating, syrupy strings, wasn't very good when it charted in 1971. The remainder of the disc, minor hits by Ernie Ashworth, Bob Gallion and Glenn Barber, are wretched as are Jim Chesnut's "Show Me a Sign" and Gallion's "Ain't Got Time For Nothin'." Since the Scottis' bargain basement approach ignores more historically important Hickory material than it unearths, one wonders why they bothered.

How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: Moon Mullican, *Moonshine Jamboree* (Ace 458), CD only, \$24.95/Billy Walker, *Cross the Brazos at Waco* (BCD 15657), a 6-CD boxed set, \$189.95/Various Artists, *The Sullivan Years: Country Classics* (TVT 9448), CD or cassette, \$17.95 CD, \$11.95 cassette/Bobby Bare, *All American Boy* (BCD 15663), a 4-CD boxed set, \$129.95/The Browns, *The Three Bells* (BCD 15665), an 8-CD set, \$199.95/Willie Nelson, *The Early Years* (Scotti 75437), CD or cassette, \$24.95 CD, \$12.95 cassette/Various Artists, *Greatest Hits of Hickory Records, Volume II* (Scotti 75407), CD or cassette, \$17.95 CD, \$11.95 cassette/Marty Robbins, *Lost and Found* (CK 57695), CD or cassette, \$17.95 CD, \$8.95 cassette/The Collins Kids, *Rockin' on TV* (Krazy Kat CD 14), CD only, \$19.95. Send check or money order payable to *Country Music Magazine* to Dept. 050694, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item ordered, \$.95 for each additional item. Canadian orders, add an additional \$3.00 postage. **CMSA Members, see For Members Only page for discounts on products offered.**

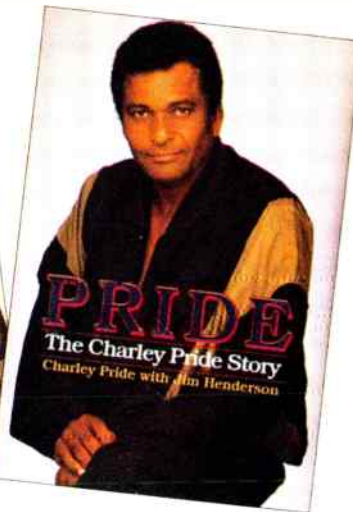
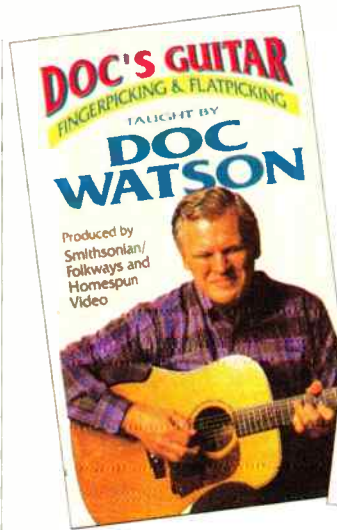
Essential Collector by Rich Kienzle

▪ Guitar Videos ▪

This column has dealt with guitar instruction material before, and four fascinating videos from Woodstock, New York's Homespun Tapes make it worth doing again. These four tapes aren't for beginners. Only intermediate to advanced players can take full advantage of this instruction, yet non-players and beginners can enjoy the music.

Doc Watson: As Smithsonian folklorist Ralph Rinzler says in this video's introduction, few will ever get the chance to study guitar with Doc Watson. The 90-minute *Doc's Guitar*, produced by Homespun and Smithsonian Folkways, comes close enough. Joined by Pete and Mike Seeger, Jack Lawrence and Kirk Sutphin, Watson demonstrates his style on 11 of his signature numbers. On The Delmore Brothers' "Deep River Blues" and their "Blue Railroad Train," the traditional "Goodbye My Blue Bell," "Windy and Warm" and three other songs, he explains his approach to Travis-Atkins fingerstyle playing. He covers his flawless flatpicking on "Southbound," "East Tennessee Rag," "Beaumont Rag," "Black Mountain Rag" and "Way Downtown." He explains what he's doing and how and plays it slow, then faster to make everything clear. An accompanying booklet features the lessons diagrammed in tablature.

Country Swing: Fans of the bluegrass group Hot Rize know the name Nick Forster as that group's guitarist. Fans of their Western swing alter egos, Red Knuckles and The Trailblazers, know Forster as Wendell Mercantile, where he picks that tasty, full-bodied backup guitar created by Bob Wills guitarist Eldon Shamblin. That style, combining jazz chords and moving bass runs, was the glue that held The Texas Playboys together. Shamblin hasn't done



an instruction video (he should), but Forster has given the first insights with *Country Swing Back-Up Guitar*. The technique takes practice, but it's not quite as hard as it sounds. And Forster's easygoing style and humor make the 60-minute tape downright enjoyable. His explanations of chord theory (which Shamblin insists is the heart of the style) are revealing. Old Hot Rize cohort Tim O'Brien plays fiddle to demonstrate how the backup works on "Sally Goodin," "Gray Eagle" and two Bob Wills numbers, "Brain Cloudy Blues" and "Deep Water." As with Watson's video, an enclosed booklet goes through the basics.

Rockabilly: Jim Weider, guitarist for the revised edition of The Band, is also a formidable rockabilly guitarist and proves it on *Rockabilly Guitar Volume 1* and *Volume 2*. On the two tapes (the first 90 minutes long, the second 85) Weider explores the styles of the greatest rockabilly players and explains their techniques, carefully demonstrating how they played those classic solos, and the tricks each used. To add flavor, he uses the same vintage guitar models each player used (such as a Gibson ES-325 in the Scotty Moore section) and explains how each guitar affected the players' sounds. *Volume 1* explores Scotty's

licks on Elvis' Sun and early RCA recordings. From there Weider goes to Duane Eddy and guitarist Paul Burlison of Johnny Burnette's Rock and Roll Trio. On *Volume 2* he tackles Chuck Berry (not a rockabilly, but imitated by countless country and rock players) and Eddie Cochran, whose picking, like Scotty's and Duane Eddy's, had ample country roots. My sole gripe is the omission of Carl Perkins, a rockabilly giant by anyone's estimate. If ever a *Volume 3* appears, Weider should open with Perkins.

▪ Books ▪

Charley Pride: During the height of Charley Frank Pride's career, he and his hired public relations folks gave him a non-threatening, bland image that was 180 degrees removed from his no-bull, plain-talking personality. Given the unusual situation of a black man singing country, the approach was understandable. His autobiography, *Pride: The Charley Pride Story*, co-authored by Pride and Jim Henderson, reveals a far more complicated man no longer afraid to talk straight to his fans. His Mississippi Delta upbringing had its ups and downs. He had to deal with racism, and the Prides weren't wealthy. Mack Pride, his dad, was overly strict, yet let no one tramp on him.

Charley, who loved the Opry as a child, showed promise in baseball and played pro for a time. Living and working a day job in Montana, he'd sung a bit in clubs before a disastrous attempt to land an impromptu tryout for the New York Mets convinced him to try Nashville. There, he found amusement and skepticism before supporters emerged in Jack Clement and Chet Atkins. Faron Young, not known as a liberal, became one of his biggest supporters. Charley is candid about his battles with brutal manic depression and anxiety which nearly destroyed him until he accepted using medication to control them. He's just as candid about the ups and downs of both business investments and stardom, making this among the better autobiographies around today.

Ralph Stanley: Honored as an elder statesman of traditional bluegrass, Ralph Stanley is rightly viewed as a legend. His work both with his brother Carter in The Stanley Brothers and on his own after Carter died stand as a magnificent life's work. Alumni from Ralph's Clinch Mountain Boys include both Ricky Skaggs and the late Keith Whitley. The facts of the Stanley saga have been written before, yet dry facts don't always capture the immediacy and drama of a musical career. In *Traveling the High Way Home: Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional Bluegrass Music*, John Wright chronicles Ralph's journey in the words of those who lived and watched it. From being the younger brother in a great bluegrass duo to being a legend on his own, he—together with friends, business associates and sidemen—tells the story.

Oral history makes the Stanley saga take on depth and movement. Ex-Stanley Brothers guitarist-bassist George Shuffler recounts, among other things, the 1966 decline and death of hard-drinking Carter

Stanley, always the motivator of The Stanley Brothers. In recalling his life, Ralph discusses his initial terror at going on alone. Vocalist Larry Sparks, who replaced Carter, tells how he joined Ralph and The Clinch Mountain Boys. Other tragedies, such as the late 60's murder of Stanley vocalist Roy Lee Centers, serve to remind us of the darker side of bluegrass and rural mountain living. Among the others discussing Ralph's career are former fiddler Curly Ray Cline and Ralph's gifted young 1980's vocalist, Charlie Sizemore. Fans of Peter Guralnick's work will find the same care and sensitivity in this remarkable chronicle of a truly well-spent, honorable life.

CD Guide: The Country Music Foundation and Grove Press' *Country on Compact Disc* is capably edited by Paul Kingsbury, who selected 26 critics, including himself and others, among them several of CMM's own. They evaluated 2000 CD's on 500 artists. I, personally, am skeptical about the value of any guide patterned on *Rolling Stone's* rock record guides, because, let's face it, if you readers bought what CMM's critics like, then Jimmie Dale Gilmore would outsell Garth. Nevertheless, for many, the guide will serve a useful purpose.

That's not to say it's without weaknesses. I would have omitted re-recorded greatest hits sets by certain artists when their originals aren't available, especially if the re-recordings are inferior. And omitting German Bear Family's comprehensive CD reissues because so few U.S. record stores carry them is simply wrong. Many major chains do carry Bear, and their quality is outstanding.

Most critics, including CMM's Bob Allen, Patrick Carr and John Morthland, and Ken Tucker, Nick Tosches and Chet Flippo, were well chosen. These guys wrote about country when country wasn't cool. Less reliable are the contributions of several more current rock critics, who, like so many listeners, are now trying to jump into country. Some may have been selected solely be-

cause they had *Rolling Stone* connections and were familiar with the format. In any case, some of their conclusions I find difficult to support. James Hunter, who waxes enthusiastic over The Eagles, for example, passes off Eddy Arnold's early work by saying it should be heard for "historical reasons and by people who don't appreciate his mature style." Many would disagree.

New York writer Holly George-Warren (who edited *Rolling Stone's* record guides) misses some important points. Reviewing a Bill Anderson hits package without realizing it's mostly remakes, she calls Anderson "schmaltzy." For better or for worse, extreme sentiment is the keystone of his style. Karen Schoemer's praise for the now-forgotten band Great Plains also seems misplaced. We don't all have to agree, but expertise in the music does count for something.

Gibson Guitars: Having survived some tough times, Gibson Guitars is now flourishing. A major book on their history is due out soon. *Gibson's Fabulous Flat-Top Guitars*, by Eldon Whitford, David Vinopal and Dan Erlewine, is a fine survey of the company's acoustic flat-top (not archtop) instruments from the beginning to the present. Until 1920, the company built archtops, but over the next eight decades, created some landmark flat-tops as well, and continues to do so today.

For country fans, the sections on the SJ-200 will have the most value. Co-designed in 1937 by Gibson and cowboy singer Ray Whitley, the model

became a favorite with Gene Autry, Porter Wagoner, Jimmy Dickens, Ranger Doug Green and Emmylou Harris. The Everly Brothers Gibsons, modeled on the J-200, are profiled, and Don Everly sings the praises of the Gibson Southern Jumbo model, which he used to record "Bye Bye Love" and other Everly standards. The authors follow through the entire spectrum of flat-top models up to the present, examining the models (new designs and reissues of classics) built at Gibson's Bozeman, Montana, facility. Two sections of color photos show pristine examples of vintage acoustics and breathtaking new custom models from Bozeman.

Ozark Jubilee: Springfield, Missouri's legendary *Ozark Jubilee* was that state's biggest pre-Branson contribution, and deserves a definitive history. A number of legends—Red Foley, Brenda Lee and Porter Wagoner, among others, were regulars. The show was on network TV in the 1950's when country TV was mostly local programming. Reta Spears-Stewart's *Remembering The Ozark Jubilee* is the first attempt to tell its story. This beautiful book is full of rare photos from the show's past. Stewart interviewed the right people (including founder Si Siman). The information on Siman and on singer Shirley Caddell, Willie Nelson's second wife, is fascinating if too brief.

Unfortunately, the book's weaknesses can't be dismissed. There are far too many typos and misspellings. Spears-Stewart, who has written

children's books, is too in awe of the performers (including the late Red Foley) to be objective. And simple fact-checking could have prevented the appalling number of factual errors, among them her reference to Brenda Lee as "Brenda Lee Tarpley" (she's Brenda Mae Tarpley). A photo of a Dixieland band is identified as Danny Davis and The Nashville Brass (the *Jubilee* ended in 1960—Davis didn't form The Brass until 1968). After speaking with Chet Atkins and Eddy Arnold, she prints more of Eddy discussing his 1990 heart surgery than about his performances in Springfield. Her mistake-ridden section on Chet, among other things, confuses one of Chet's WNOX radio bosses, Lowell Blanchard, with Chet's brother Lowell and wrongly states that WNOX fired Chet. The author's heart was undoubtedly in the right place. *Jubilee* fans will treasure the book, but don't trust it as a reference work.

■ Recordings ■

Carl Perkins and Scotty Moore: Much has happened since Scotty Moore's and Carl Perkins' rockabilly days. Carl has enjoyed continued fame after successfully battling cancer, and his singing voice here is surprisingly strong. Scotty, who hasn't played for 20 years and works in Nashville's recording industry, is picking again. *706 ReUnion* (Belle Meade BM-192), recorded at the old Sun studio in Memphis, is, if nothing else, a collector's item. With backup from old Elvis hands The Jordanaires, D.J. Fontana and Memphis rockabilly vets Paul Burlison, Johnny Black and Marcus Van Story, Perkins and Moore pay tribute to the past but don't recreate it. A bit of Sun atmosphere does get into Perkins' tribute to Sam Phillips, "Damn Sam." Though both are now in their 60's, their pride in the past is obvious. One criticism: The spoken dialogue is so rehearsed that it's annoying. Better to have let them reminisce about the old days between each song. By the way, Carl can still tear up "Blue Suede Shoes."

How to Get These Collectibles

Videos: Doc Watson, *Doc's Guitar* (V3J) \$49.95/Nick Forster, *Country Swing Back-Up Guitar* (V3K) \$49.95/Various Artists, *Rockabilly Guitar, Volume 1* (V3O) and *Volume 2* (V3P) each volume, \$49.95. **Recordings:** Carl Perkins and Scotty Moore, *706 ReUnion* (Belle Meade BM 192), \$13.00 CD, \$10.00 cassette. **Books:** Charley Pride, *The Charley Pride Story* (B2B) \$20.00/John Wright, *Traveling the High Way Home: Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional Bluegrass Music* (B2M) \$29.95/Eldon Whitford, David Vinopal and Dan Erlewine, *Gibson's Fabulous Flat-Top Guitars* (B2Q) \$19.95/Paul Kingsbury, *Country on Compact Disc* (B2S) \$16.00/Reta Spears-Stewart, *Remembering the Ozark Jubilee* (B4D) \$19.95. Send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 050694EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, TN 37229. Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional. Canadian orders, add \$3.00 extra for postage. CMSA members, see For Members Only page for discounts.



Good Men, Great Women

People have been asking me about the closing paragraph of my last Final Note, which summarized the history of country music since 1975: "Kenny Rogers and John Travolta caused Lee Greenwood and Alabama; Outlawism was stamped out; everybody got real polite and serious, and said they loved George Jones; then video happened and all the boys had to be pretty, but they made so much money that there was room for the occasional good man and some great women."

The item of interest is that last bit, "the occasional good man and some great women," and the question people have been asking is, of course, "What good men? What great women?"

Here I am, then, with a pretty pleasant opportunity. On this one little piece of paper I can concentrate the names of all the country and more-or-less country artists I love, all the people currently recording great work—not the stuff I rate from "Who let the skunk in the kitchen?" up to "pretty good" or even "pretty damn good," but music for the time capsule, music as good as it gets. And that, friends and neighbors, is as fine a tonic as I can serve myself, particularly during those contemporary-country mornings when the lite rock fever and the booty-scooty 'flu are getting me down, and I'm pretty sure that a bunch more twentysomething George Jones imitators aren't going to help. I don't know if you ever have that kind of problem, but if you do, I hope the following helps.

A few good men: John Anderson, Joe Ely, John Prine, Billy Joe Shaver, Marty Stuart, Kevin Welch and Dwight Yoakam. I'll latch onto anything those guys do.

Some great women: Jann Browne, Carlene Carter, Rosanne Cash, Bobbie Cryner, Iris DeMent, Rosie Flores, Tish Hinojosa, Alison Krauss, Laurie Lewis, Patty Loveless, Shelby Lynne, Heather Myles, Maura O'Connell, Pam Tillis, Lari White, Lucinda Williams, Kelly Willis and the women in the band Evangeline.

Why are there so many more women than men, do you think? Is it because, this being a man's world, women have to try harder? Male country singers have to be cute, but women have to be cute and smart too? Hmm. However that works, it certainly seems to me that in modern

Nashville, music made by women is carrying a very disproportionate share of the intellectual and emotional weight.

But back to my hit list. As well as the totally reliable artists named above, there are also some men and women clearly capable of great work and still in the running to deliver it, depending on how things go with their careers, their record companies and producers, and themselves. The women are Suzy Bogguss, Paulette Carlson, Marsha Thornton, Tanya Tucker, and of course Tammy



John Prine and Rosie Flores: If you don't know who these people are, Patrick thinks you should.



Wynette. The men are Marty Brown, Johnny Cash, Steve Earle, Merle Haggard, George Jones, Raul Malo of The Mavericks, Willie Nelson, Buck Owens, Charlie Rich, and (if he can ever shed the schlock transmitter stuck in his brain the last few years) Rodney Crowell. There's also that inimitable white rhythm & bluesman who has somehow ended up in the Nashville herd, Mr. Delbert McClinton, and last but not least there's James Blundell, an Australian country/folk/rocker with three Australian discs and one U.S. release (*Hand It On Down*, Capitol CDP 7 96247 2).

Again, there's a contrast: many more men than women in the could-be-great category. Do smart men have a harder time than smart women getting smart music through the Nashville system?

Maybe so, but let's move on. Now that I'm making lists, I'll continue. Here's my answer to the question, "If you could have only twenty country CD's, all of them in print in the U.S., what would they be?"

That's not easy, but it sure is fun. With a

double or triple CD squeezed in here and there, my top twenty goes like this: Hank Williams, *40 Greatest Hits* (Polydor 821 233-2); Johnny Cash, *The Essential Johnny Cash* (Columbia C3K 47991); Merle Haggard, *Rainbow Stew: Live at Anaheim Stadium* (MCA MCAD-31101); Bill Monroe, *Country Music Hall of Fame* (MCA MCAD-10082); Tammy Wynette, *Anniversary: Twenty Years of Hits* (Epic EGK 40625); George Jones, *Anniversary* (Epic EGK 38323); Dolly Parton, *The Best of Dolly Parton* (RCA 5146-2-R); Suzy Bogguss, *Somewhere Between* (Liberty CDP 7 90237-2); Willie Nelson, *Red*

Headed Stranger (Columbia CK 33482); Waylon Jennings, *Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line: The RCA Years* (RCA 66299-2); Billy Joe Shaver, *Tramp on Your Street* (Praxis 72445-11063-2); Gram Parsons, *GP/Grievous Angel* (Reprise 9 26108-2); Emmylou Harris, *Light of the Stable* (Warner Bros. 9 3484-2); Gary Stewart, *Out of Hand* (HighTone HCD 8026); Steve Earle, *Guitar Town* (MCA MCAD-5998); Joe Ely, *Honky Tonk Masquerade* (MCA MCAD-10220); Marty Stuart, *This One's Gonna Hurt You* (MCA MCAD-10596); Dwight Yoakam, *Just*

Lookin' For a Hit (Reprise 9 25989-2); and two compilations: Columbia Country Classics, *Volume 1: The Golden Age* (Columbia CK 46029); and *Best of Bluegrass, Volume 1: Standards* (Mercury 848 979-2).

And a final note. There are only four CD's by women in my top twenty because I had a hell of a time choosing between Suzy Bogguss' *Somewhere Between* and albums by no fewer than ten other contemporary women: Paulette Carlson and her ex-band's *Highway 101* (Warner Bros. 25608-2); Carlene Carter's *I Fell in Love* (Reprise 9 26139-2); *Bobbie Cryner* (Epic 53238); Shelby Lynne's *Tough All Over* (Epic 46066); *Lucinda Williams* (Chameleon 61387-2); Kelly Willis' *Well Travelled Love* (MCA MCAD-6390); and any discs by Jann Browne, Rosie Flores, Patty Loveless and Heather Myles. So twenty's good, but thirty's better.

Have fun, eat your grits, and keep the faith.

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

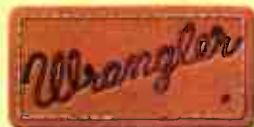


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