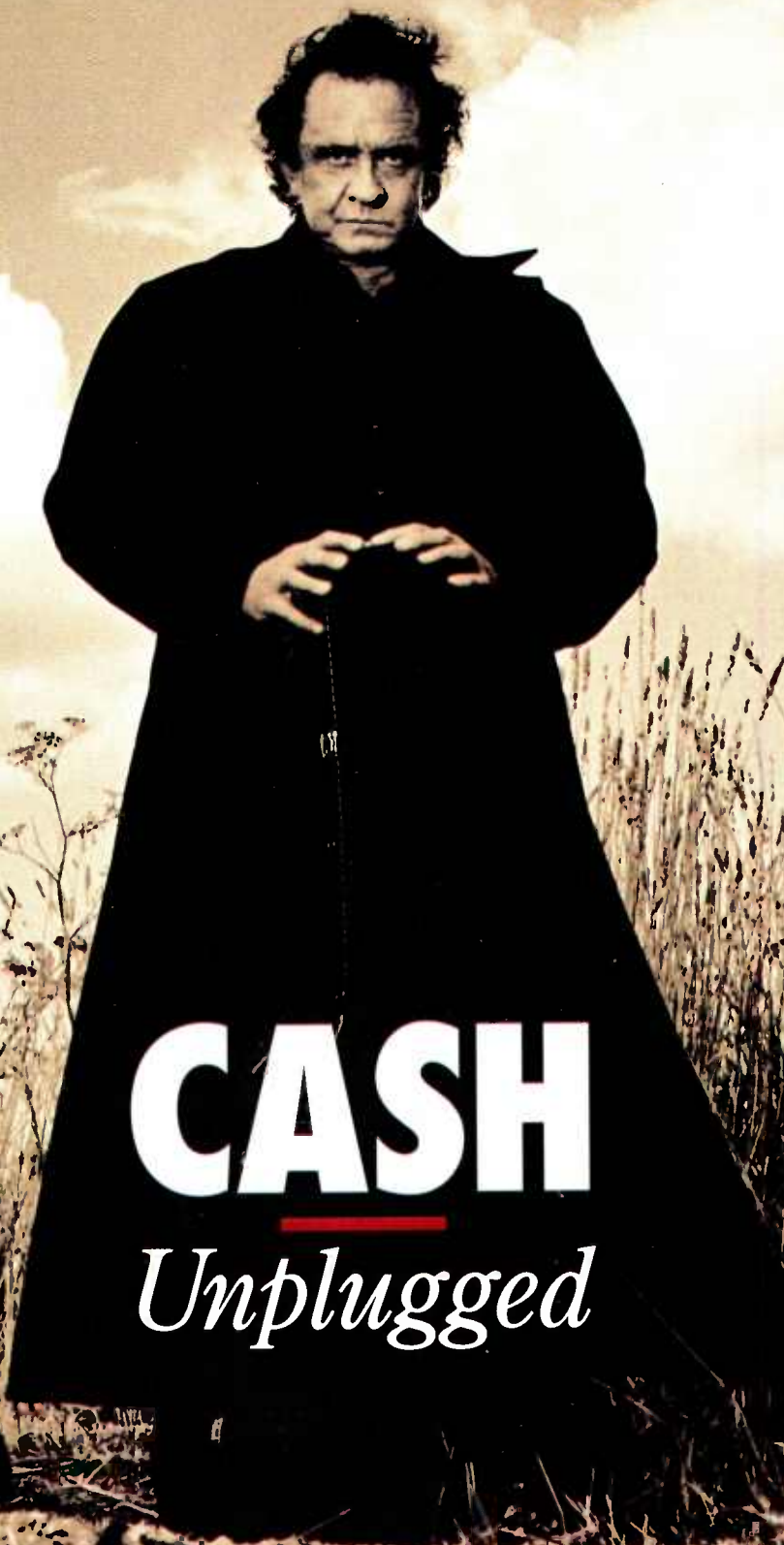


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Warner Brothers



Patty Loveless
"Only What I Feel"
Epic



Tim McGraw
"Not A Moment Too Soon"
Curb



Kathy Mattea
"Walking Away A Winner"
Mercury



Blackhawk
"Blackhawk"
Arista



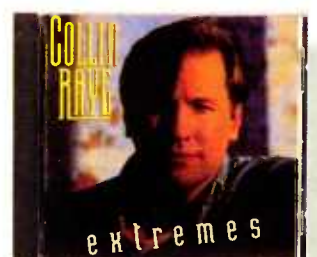
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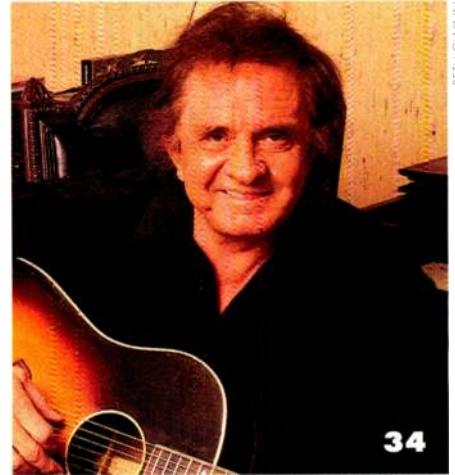


Collin Raye
"Extremes"
Epic

COUNTRY MUSIC

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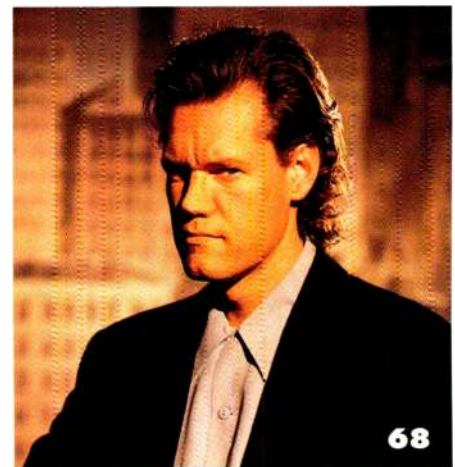
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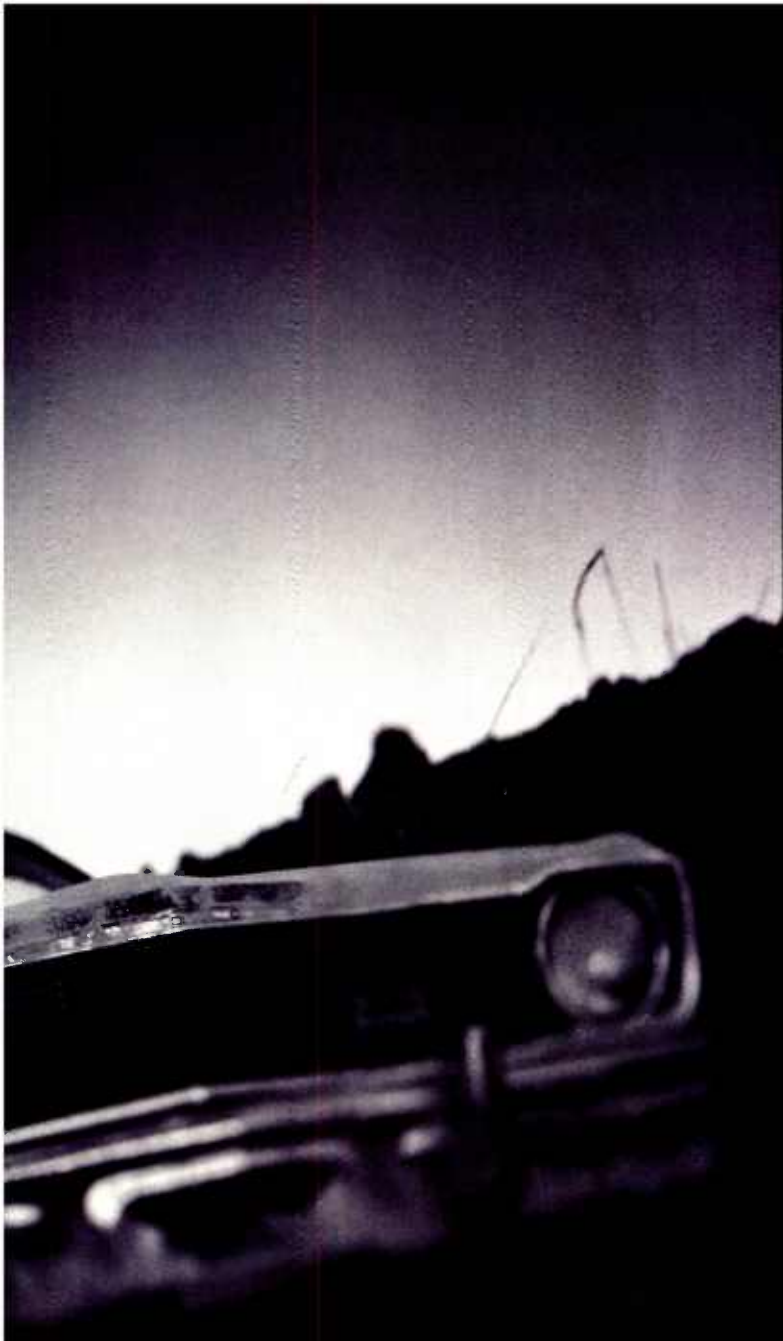


FRODOZ ZAHEDI

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People

STARS SPIN THE WHEEL

Popular syndicated game show *Wheel of Fortune* recently hosted Music Stars Week, with celebrity contestants playing to raise money for charities of their choice. The shows were taped at Disney World in Florida. Among the country stars spinning the wheel were **Tammy Wynette**, **Lee Greenwood** and **Tanya Tucker**.

WY EXPECTING

Clutching her Female Vocalist of the Year Award from the Academy of Country Music, **Wynonna Judd** entered the press conference for the invited few. After thanking us for coming, she announced that after August 31st she planned to take time off from the road to have a baby, which is due January 1, 1995. The father of the child is 39-year-old **Arch Kelley III**, a boat salesman from Nashville. She does not plan to marry the child's father at this point. "Abortion is not an option for me," continued Wynonna, adding that she'd always wanted a child. When I asked what her mother said about her being pregnant, she said **Naomi** told her to talk to the baby starting now, and to love the baby, and asked if she was going to marry the child's father. I asked what her father, **Michael Ciminella**, said. Wy allowed that she phoned and told him this morning, and he said, "Congratulations to you, my little media goddess." Wy is in the midst of recording a new album, which is due in May 1995, **Mama Naomi** is out on her book tour and sister **Ashley** is doing a Broadway show in New York to smash reviews.

MARLBORO COUNTRY

My friend, **Jose Fontanez**, Marlboro's music maven and friend of country music, came to town with plans a-plenty for 1994. Celebrating at the trendy Merchant's restaurant near the Ryman Auditorium, Jose made me aware of the Marlboro Country Nights Dance Show-down '94. Local competitions were set to be held through July 1st, with regionals taking place August through November.



On *Wheel of Fortune's* Music Stars Week, host **Pat Sajak** and letter turner **Vanna White** shared the stage with **Little Richard**, **David Sanborn**, **Mickey Mouse**, **Weird Al Yankovic**, **Tanya Tucker**, **Lee Greenwood**, **Gladys Knight**, **James Brown** and (right) **Tammy Wynette**.

A national championship will follow. First place winners will receive \$10,000; second place \$5,000; and third \$2,500. Check in at your local country music clubs to enter. Registration is free. And Marlboro continues to support country music on the road, as well. They'll be sponsoring shows at various state fairs throughout the summer and fall with some of your favorite performers.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR LEE ROY

When the legendary lover of country music, syndicated writer extraordinaire **Jack Hurst**, comes to town, you know something important is taking place. So, Jack came to town and showed up for the do at Iguana celebrating **Lee Roy Parnell's** chart-topping single, "Holding My Own," from his *On the Road* album on Arista. I've been attending parties for several blue moons, and I can tell you, I have never witnessed a more supportive turn-



out than this one for Lee Roy. All of the media was out in full force, and labelmates **Michelle Wright** and **Ronnie Dunn** of Brooks & Dunn dropped by. Leader of the Arista pack **Tim DuBois**, along with **Jack Weston** and other able-bodied labelites, cheered him on as did manager **Mike Robertson** and his assistant **Carole** (doer of many great things) **Harper**. Lee Roy dressed for the occasion with a brown silk shirt, tan pants that fit just right and a trendy jacket all mingled in colors matching everything else, including his classy "bit kickin'" boots (he's a Texan, and they know "bit kicking"). Right after the party Lee Roy had to rush back out on the road where he's performing with **Travis Tritt** and **Joe Diffie**.

Reporter: *Hazel Smith*

Editor: *Rochelle Friedman*

People

ALAN HANCOCK



Trisha Yearwood weds Robert Reynolds.

WEDDING BELLS

The newly rehabilitated Ryman Auditorium was the site for the wedding of **Trisha Yearwood** and **Robert Reynolds**, bassist for **The Mavericks**, on May 21st. The wedding party came down the aisle to the tune of "Tennessee Waltz." **Mavericks** drummer **Paul Deakin** was best man. Trisha's publicist, **Nancy Russell**, served as a bridesmaid. The two MCA artists honeymooned in Dublin, Ireland.

CLAPTON

My friend, Malaco Records' **Bill Isaacs**, tells me the attendees at the **T.J. Martell Jr. Foundation** benefit dinner in New York were treated to two-and-a-half hours of **Eric Clapton** blues. I know it ain't country, but, friends, even I would listen to Clapton for two-and-a-half hours.

OVATION FOR MIGHTY JOHN

Last year sometime I scolded Music Row because the great **Johnny Cash** had to go to Los Angeles for a record deal. That record, on American Recordings, is done, also called *American Recordings*. And as we read the *Rolling Stone Magazine* review with *five stars*—the most a CD can get, thank you very much—I ask this question: "Where were we?" Somebody on Music Row goofed big time on this one. *Billboard* comes in with a Spotlight re-

view on **The Man in Black**. Brilliance is how they described **Johnny's** performance. From my heart to yours, **Rick Rubin**, head of American Recordings, thank you, sir, for atoning for Nashville's sin of allowing the great **Johnny Cash** to be silenced. Shame, shame on us for failing miserably. We've got our heads so far up in the air we can't see what's right before us. Today's hatted penguins might make some quick bucks, but when the long run comes, we will be sucking hind teat once again if we don't wake up and take a stand where the heart meets the ear, musically. I'm glad **Rick Rubin** saw the light, and I hope someone on the *Streets of Music* will take heed as well.

STEVENS EXITS BRANSON

Ray Stevens quit Branson. Wanna know why?? Well, he sold over two million copies of *Ray Stevens Comedy Video Classics* on his own label, Clyde Records, at \$19.95 a pop. Anyway you figure it, **Ray** made more hay in the two years the video has been out than most of us could dream of in three lifetimes. Clyde's newest venture is **Yakov Smirnoff's** *What a Country* comedy video. **Smirnoff's** tales of a Russian, himself, in the USA promises to be another bestseller, and'll make **Stevens** even richer.

HATS OFF TO CROWN ROYAL

Hillbilly hats off to the people at **Crown Royal** (a House of Seagram brand) for their **Country Music Series** for 1994. On a spring and fall tour: **Confederate Railroad**, **John Anderson**, **Marty Stuart**, **Little Texas**, **Doug Supernaw**, **Chris LeDoux**, **Shawn Camp**, **Shenandoah**, **Steve Wariner**, **Gary Morris**, **Boy Howdy**, **Patty Loveless**, **Neal McCoy**, **Tracy Lawrence**, **Tim McGraw** and **Tracy Byrd** will all be singing for the "Crown." My advice: Go out and support live country music. I love a live performance better than anything.

WESTFEST NUMBER EIGHT

Michael Martin Murphey is taking his brand of music to the people with his eighth annual **Westfest**. There ain't nobody complaining, either: If you love Western music, artwork and other Western activities, meet **Michael** and his pals from July 2 to July 4 at the **Rodeo de Santa Fe** in Santa Fe, New Mexico. And, as usual, on Labor Day weekend, **Michael** and friends will headline at **Copper Mountain**, Colorado. On September 10 and 11 look for them in **Canyon** (near **Amarillo**), Texas, at **Palo Duro Canyon State Park**.

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Russell D. Barnard

Vice President/Managing Editor
Rochelle Friedman

Editors-at-Large
**Michael Bane, Patrick Carr,
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Art Director
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Contributing Editors
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**Moira Allaby
Joyce Brown**

Editorial, Executive and
Advertising Offices
329 Riverside Avenue
Westport, Connecticut 06880
Telephone (203) 221-4950
FAX (203) 221-4948

Subscription Service
Telephone (203) 221-4950

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

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People

AND THE PRESIDENT SAID...



When *Music City Tonight* honored the legendary Statler Brothers on their 30th Anniversary in show biz, there was a whole passel of famed and near-famed on hand for the live broadcast. Shown front and center holding Statler brand tissues are group members Don Reid, Jimmy Fortune, Harold Reid and Phil Balsley. Back row: Senator Charles Robb of Virginia (Virginia is The Statlers' home state), show co-host Lorianne Crook, her hubby Jim Owens (executive producer of the show), co-host Charlie Chase and Kevin Hale, VP/GM of TNN. Senator Robb read a personal note of congratulations from President Bill Clinton. Did you know Robb was the son-in-law of the late President Lyndon B. Johnson?

THOSE I-40 BLUES

Hi ho, Tracy, and away we go, down the highway on our 90's horse (pickup truck). Tracy is **Tracy Lawrence**, who was riding shotgun (good word choice) as his brother **Stewart** did the geeing and hawing. Apparently a quarrel erupted on the highway between the Lawrence Boys and three local teenagers. The Lawrence brothers followed the teenagers home, where the quarrel continued, then Tracy allegedly fired his .357 Magnum twice in the air as the two drove away. Shortly afterward, the Lawrence brothers were arrested and taken to the Wilson County jail, where they posted bond of \$5,500 each. Tracy was charged with two counts of aggravated assault, carrying a weapon without a license and impersonating an officer. The last charge because Tracy allegedly referred to having a badge when police pulled him over. It was a phony sheriff's badge from a nearby county which he'd received at a fundraiser.

ALARMING MOMENTS FOR JOHN BERRY

When Liberty Records' **John Berry** was in an Athens, Georgia, hospital visiting his wife, **Robin**, who'd given birth to their second child on April 28, he mentioned to the doctor that he'd been suffering from severe headaches. The doctors deemed a checkup necessary, and X-rays discovered a cyst in Berry's brain. He was scheduled for surgery at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta. The procedure, termed stereotactic endoscopic surgery,

BABY CYRUS

Braison Chance Cyrus was delivered at Nashville's Baptist Hospital on May 9. Superstar **Billy Ray Cyrus** was with wife **Leticia** during the delivery and called it an incredible experience for both of them. Billy Ray, Leticia and Braison are home with sister "Miley," and all is well and happy.

CERAMI UPPED

My friend, **Jimmy Bowen**, has appointed **Sam Cerami** to the VP of Promotion position at his newly formed Patroit Record label. Cerami's been part of Bowen's Liberty promotion team for five years.

HATS TO YOU

A National Treasure, The Pearl of Music City, beloved Cousin **Minnie Pearl**, who suffered a stroke some years ago, was inducted into the National Comedy Hall of Fame recently, the first woman to be so honored. During ceremonies televised on TNN's *Grand Ole Opry Live*, the ailing country comic's peers celebrated in her honor. Miss Minnie joins previous inductees **Abbott & Costello**, **Laurel & Hardy**,

Charlie Chaplin, **George Burns**, **Milton Berle** and **Red Skelton**. Among those gathered to say "howdee" were longtime friend and *Ho Ho Ho* co-star **George "Goober" Lindsey**; **Tony Belmont**, director of the Comedy Hall of Fame, who presented the award; Opry manager **Bob Whittaker** and Minnie's friend, **Ralph Emery**.



Honoring Minnie Pearl's induction into the National Comedy Hall of Fame were **George Lindsey**, **Tony Belmont**, **Bob Whittaker** and **Ralph Emery**.

People



The great Charley Pride was presented with the ACM's Pioneer Award.

involves boring a hole in the front of the skull, then guiding a small tube with a camera at the end to the location of the cyst. The cyst, located deep within Berry's brain, was punctured and drained of fluid in the five-and-a-half hour surgical procedure. After several days in critical condition, Berry was upgraded to satisfactory. Doctors said there were no complications and discharged him from the hospital in order to rest and recuperate at home. Also doing well is baby son **Sean Thomas Berry**. What's more, John's latest single, "Your Love Amazes Me," reached Number One. Here's hoping he'll be up and around soon to enjoy his family and his success.

SOAPBOXING AGAIN

His book, *Pride: The Charley Pride Story*, has received accolades a-plenty, and that's from every form of the media: TV, radio or print. However, I've been annoyed that every interviewer/reporter spends more time talking about **Charley Pride's** being black than about his music. It should be remembered that Charley has had a marvelous and successful career: His awards are many and so deserved, Gold and platinum records grace his walls. Hit after hit, his Number One records are legendary. Concert halls were filled with dotting fans. He is a member of the Grand Ole Opry. And this spring, he opened his very own theater in Branson (more on this next issue) with **Don Williams**. Charley has paid his dues as a human being. As a man. As an American. He is a major star who is loved and respected. His family, especially his wife, is

always nearby. There's not one blemish on his reputation. Enough already about his skin. Let's hear it for the man and his music. We lift our hats and say thanks to the voters at the Academy of Country Music for presenting the great Charley Pride with the Pioneer Award at this year's show.

TWO LEGENDS

When the brouhaha started about "two legends," I listened with raised eyebrows as you learn to do in the City of Music. See, as I reported they are reopening the Ryman Auditorium (thank God), and there'll be bluegrass every Tuesday. Then, on Wednesdays through the weekend, *The Patsy Cline Story* will be presented in song, which, of course, explains two legends: **Patsy Cline** is one, the Ryman is the other. "Cool," thought I.

The talented, 19-year-old **Mandy Barnett** has been chosen to star as Patsy, and she recently wowed the crowd during the televised portion of the Opry. Picture this: a full-faced girl with real dark, curly short hair, dressed in a blouse with tassels, denim skirt and white boots, singing "Blue Moon of Kentucky" with the same resonance as the great, late Patsy Cline. Chill bumps got chill bumps, hair stood on

arm and back of neck as the young lady from East Tennessee ended the song with a complete roar from the 4,000 plus attending the Grand Ole Opry. I cannot wait to see Mandy as Patsy. This is a show nobody should miss.

Another show I hope nobody missed is *The Roots of Country: Nashville Celebrates the Ryman*. A CBS-TV special that was scheduled to air June 25th, it paid tribute to the Ryman with appearances by artists like **Johnny Cash, John Anderson, Chet Atkins, Clint Black, Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, Alison Krauss, Patty Loveless, Loretta Lynn, Bill Monroe, Pam Tillis** and many others. It was produced by High Five Productions, the folks who filmed the fine *Women of Country* special for CBS last year, in association with **Quincy Jones/David Salzman Entertainment**.

EYE SAW

Eye saw hunka **Luke Lewis**, Mercury Records prez, at Faison's doing lunch with a classy broad. Just remembered, it was I dining with the first-class Mr. Lewis. You know, I like to hang out with presidents whenever possible. Folks like **Kathy Mattea, The Statlers, Billy Ray Cyrus** and **Sammy Kershaw** call L.L. their illustrious leader.

THOSE MEN OF MINE



Well, here they are in the same photo....two of the reasons God made me a woman. The first reason is to your left, **Tony (wow) Brown**, the Prez of MCA/Nashville; **Bruce Hinton**, Chairman MCA/Nashville; next is the second reason—**Mr. George Strait**; beside George is his manager, the man who owes me dinner, **Erv Woolsey**; **Aaron Barker**, who penned "Easy Come, Easy Go," a Number One song for George; and last, the lovely **Connie Woolsey**, President of Muy Bueno Music Group. Friends, there they are, those men of mine, in a photo together.

People

EUROPEAN LEARNING

Europe has learned what the U.S.A. has known for quite a spell. Yes, they are under the **Garth Brooks** spell now, according to reports floating across the Atlantic. Brooks spent a month overseas, on tour in eight different countries, playing to more than 140,000 fans—including Ireland's Prime Minister, **Albert Reynolds**, during one of eight sold-out shows in Dublin. In August, he plans to head back across the oceans, to tour Australia, New Zealand, Japan and some of the countries in Europe he didn't hit last time out. Garthing on, Brooks won the ACM Entertainer of the Year award for the fourth consecutive year, as well as Video of the Year for "We Shall Be Free." And, in an appearance on TNN's *Music City Tonight*, he denied allegations made in *TV Guide* that he planned to retire, though he did say he'd be off the road for most of 1995, working on a new stage show. And, last but not best, congratulations to Garth and **Sandy** on the birth of 9 lb., 3 oz. **August Anna**, born May 3rd at Baptist Hospital in Nashville.



Garth Brooks sang for Irish Prime Minister **Albert Reynolds** in Dublin.

CAMPBELL BOOK AND THEATER, TOO

Let's kill several birds with one arrow here. First off, **Glen Campbell** has a new autobiography on the market titled *Rhinestone Cowboy* (of course), written with **Tom Carter**, who assisted **Ralph Emery** with his two books and co-authored **Ronnie Milsap's** autobiography as well as

Reba McEntire's. Glen vows his book is honest, and I'm sure it is as honest as he remembers. For me, I'm a little tired of hearing about opposite ends of the spectrum...get sober; get saved and tell all the secrets of the sins between self and former lover. Let sleeping dogs lie is sometimes the best policy. Secondly, Glen is opening a theater in Branson following a successful season at the Palace there last year with **Lousie Mandrell**.

TANYA'S LINE

Tanya Tucker has launched a new line of Western clothes called the "Tanya Tucker Collection." Made in the USA, like me and **Bruce Springsteen**, the clothes range from casual (including shirts and jeans) to blazers and skirts, with lots of denim wear-with-all. Clothes for bull riders, calf ropers and churchgoers. That's about all of us, except those who shoot the bull.

ONLY IN NASHVILLE

Johnny Cash in stained glass. Where? Pargo's restaurant off Two Mile Parkway. And only in Nashville. See what you learn from my column.

AN OPRY SPECIAL

You've heard of specials? Well, the Grand Ole Opry didn't call it a "special," but special it was anyway when **Vince Gill**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Marty Stuart** and **Alison Krauss** combined their musical roots with the inventor of the three-finger style banjo picking, the great Mr. **Earl Scruggs**. The idea to do this was Gill's. The group was playing in the studio together for **George Jones'** upcoming album when Earl came in. Then and there they decided that the first weekend the foursome, all Opry members, were in town, they would do it. It was a musical collaboration that will be remembered as one of the great moments in music. Backstage, Alison said Earl had never heard her play, and that she was so nervous she could barely play. But the girl, pro that she is, did fine.

WYNONNA GOES TO SATURN

The Saturn folks who manufacture those cute cars in Spring Hill, Tennessee, are having a Homecoming for owners of said cars. There'll be entertainment from **Wynonna** and **BeBe** and **CeCe Winans**, and an appearance by Olympic Gold Medal skater **Dan Jansen**. All Saturn owners are invited—more than 700,000 of them. Isn't that a fab way to say thanks? And they can tour the plant if they wish.

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(★★★ 1/2 of four.)"
—USA Today

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People

REEVES IN ASIA

Ronna Reeves recently toured Hong Kong and other Far East hot spots. The tour was coordinated by Anders Nelsson and Judy Seale.

BENEFITS

Country stars have been lending their names to several good causes lately. Collin Raye, Clinton Gregory and Pearl River performed in Pensacola, Florida, for the Emily Harrison Foundation for Head Injured Children. Raye also served as host for three days of events that raised money for the medical needs of head injured children.

And for the 17th year in a row, Larry, Steve and Rudy Gatlin held their Golf & Gala benefiting the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The two-day event, also sponsored by Chili's Restaurants, included entertainment by The Gatlins and others, a golf tournament and auction.

Los Angeles' Fan Fest, a Fan Fair-styled country music event, was the destination for a convoy of trucks that left Nashville and picked up food collected by radio stations along the way. The food drive was coordinated by Feed the Children to help people in earthquake-damaged areas. Among the events at the four-day Fan Fest was an auction of donated celebrity items (from the likes of Billy Ray



Cyrus, Garth Brooks and Lynn Anderson) that also benefited Feed the Children's Earthquake Relief Fund.

DANIELS' NEW GIG

Charlie Daniels has been tapped to host a new series for TNN called *Charlie Daniels Talent Roundup*. Competitors in Male, Female and Group categories will be considered. Anyone who isn't signed to a record label contract or development deal is eligible. Aspiring country singers and/or groups who are interested should send a cassette tape with two songs along with a photo to: Charlie Daniels Talent

When Fan Fest, the West Coast version of Fan Fair, took place in LA, Dwight Yoakam and Ralph Stanley were among the dozens of country stars performing. The four-day event included concerts, exhibit halls, autograph signing sessions and more. Tyson Foods was the lead sponsor. Proceeds benefited various charities.

Roundup, 2806 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214. At the end of 13 weeks, winners in each category will receive \$25,000 cash. Comedy team Williams & Ree will also appear.

DOLLYTIME

As long as there is a Dolly Parton, it will be Dollytime. The endless talent of one little hillbilly girl absolutely amazes me. When you see "Sand Dollar" on a movie credit, that is Dolly's movie production company with manager Sandy Gallin. When you dine at the Dixie Stampede Dinner Theater in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, or Branson, Missouri, those are Dolly's restaurants. When you buy Dolly's forthcoming "unplugged" album on Blue I Records, keep in mind, Dolly owns the label. And that brings me to the subject at hand, her acoustic record, recorded live during a series of benefit concerts at Dollywood and produced by Steve Buckingham. Carl Jackson, who played acoustic Martin guitar and sang angelic harmonies, told me exclusively that this current Dolly project was the finest and most enjoyable music he'd ever worked on or been involved with. Carl told me that Dolly did a couple of old-timey gospel numbers that brought tears to his eyes a couple times onstage. I was ecstatic to learn that Dolly, at Carl's suggestion, used Ronnie and Robbie McCoury, sons of bluegrass great Del McCoury, on mandolin and banjo respectively. Some of the other musicians were Randy Scruggs on guitar, Harry Stinson on "light drums" according to Carl, "Pig" Robbins on a little razz-mah-tazz piano here and there, and traditional Irish band Altan. Background vocalists besides Carl included Alison Krauss, Suzanne Cox and Rhonda and Darren Vincent.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER DUO



Now here's a first: Loretta Lynn and daughter Cissie performed together on TV for the first time recently on TNN's *Music City Tonight*. The two duetted on a tune called "Love and Whiskey," which will appear on Cissie's soon-to-be-released debut album. Did you know Cissie calls herself "The Coal Miner's Daughter's Daughter"?



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STRAIT CONCERT

When promoter extraordinaire **Ben Farrell** told me that tickets for the **George Strait** concert at Murphy Center in Murfreesboro sold out in 26 minutes, I wasn't at all surprised. Country fans know. They aren't stupid. The man who made Wranglers a household word waltzed onstage to the strains of something hot as a pistol, "The Fireman." Now, tell me, how on God's earth can a young lady like me keep her hormones on an even keel with the Strait man prowling across the stage like a tom cat chasing a scent. And the Strait man doesn't howl, he sings. When he croons, well, move over **Frank Sinatra**. Western swing, country with an edge, traditional—for two hours the man did not let up. The stage, in the round, was perfect to see George's every side, all of them excellent. After 27 songs, he called it quits. I was totally sapped. I was impressed with the number of young people present. As long as there is a George Strait, country music is here to stay.

The opening act at Murphy Center was Giant Records' young **Clay Walker**, who held his own. At 23, the young man obviously hasn't broken the guitar strings that so many do before stardom. But he does have an excellent voice, hoochie coochie moves and is on the charts hot and heavy. Also, he seemed to be a fave with the youth, and that matters from anybody's stage. After seeing him perform, I like the boy a lot.

ANDERSON ACHIEVES

There's a sign on the marquee at the elementary school on Old Hickory Boulevard near my home that reads: "Education is not received, it is achieved." So, when the Academy of Country Music had the good sense and excellent taste to award **John Anderson** the Award of Achievement, I knew full well that the award was not "received," it was "achieved." Congratulations to the great John Anderson on an award well deserved.

MONROE BACK

Back for his first performance at the Grand Ole Opry after breaking his hip and having hip surgery, **Bill Monroe** was smiling largely and barely limping. Fan forever, **Marty Stuart**, showed up to watch one of his heroes resurrect himself for about the umpteenth time. Seated on a bench out of audience sight with his mother, Marty was eyeballing the goings on. I sneaked over for a hello to Marty,

CONGRATS, CHAPIN



Mary-Chapin Carpenter was triply honored for: her third consecutive Grammy for Best Country Vocal Performance, Female; her double platinum album, *Come On Come On*; and her Number One single, "He Thinks He'll Keep Her." Congrats to Chapin from all of us. And if the rumors be true, we will see more of her...if she moves to Nashville.

who was engrossed with **Connie Smith's** angelic voice. I encouraged Marty to go onstage and sing. He smiled and shook his head no. **The Whites** were hosting that segment of the show, and at the closing called Connie out to help them close with a gospel number. Connie then called Marty out

from behind the curtain. The crowd went ballistic when they saw that spiked, black hair and them tight britches. Needless to say, The Whites, Connie Smith and Marty Stuart brought the house down. Truly an awesome moment in the annals of country music.



Billy Dean and Randy Travis with ACM Achiever, John Anderson.

PARTY TIME

Songwriters cook 'em, singers serve 'em and ASCAP parties 'em. Since we last supped, you and I, I've been to get-togethers for the following writers/singers: **Craig Wiseman** and **Paul Nelson** for "If the Good Die Young" sung by **Tracy Lawrence**; **Steve Seskin** and **John Scott Sherrill** for "No Doubt About It" performed by **Neal McCoy**; **Tommy Barnes** and those cute boys from **Little Texas**, **Porter Howell** and **Brady Seals**, who wrote "My Love," recorded by **Little Texas**; **Tony Arata**, writer of "I'm Holding My Own," which turned out to be **Lee Roy Parnell's** first chart-topper; and co-writers **Alan Jackson** and **Jim McBride**, who gave us "(Who Says) You Can't Have It All," sung, of course, by Alan. **Connie Bradley**, **Eve Vaupel**, **Pat Rolfe**, **Shelby Kennedy**, **Chris DuBois**, **Merlin Littlefield** and the new ASCAP-er in the glass house, **Ralph Murphy**, were all on hand to see that the guests felt welcome. Ain't songwriters grand?

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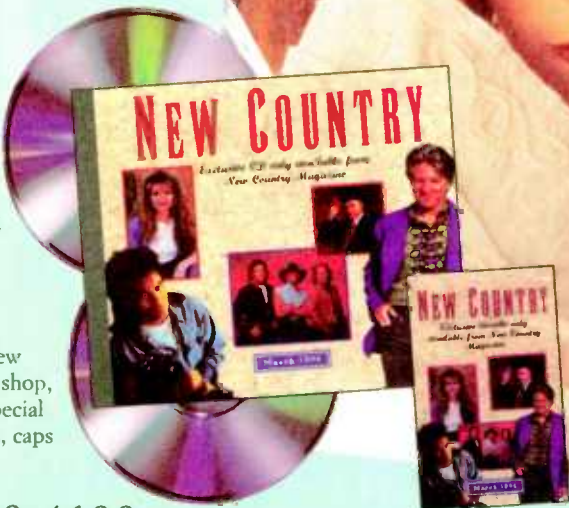
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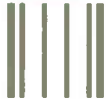
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BILLBOARD HONORS SONGWRITERS

According to *Billboard Magazine*, the Top 10 Country Songwriters of the Year in terms of cumulative airplay are 1. Dennis Linde, 2. Clint Black, 3. Ronnie Dunn, 4. Dwight Yoakam, 5. Bob McDill, 6. Kostas, 7. Toby Keith, 8. Vince Gill, 9. Alan Jackson, 10. Clay Walker. Congratulations to all the songwriters!

THE REDDOG RUNS

There's a big RedDog running around town and off to ports unknown. Over in Ireland the RedDogs (a video production firm) shot footage of Garth Brooks for the European market. While in the area, RedDog shot footage of both Asleep at the Wheel and John Berry for Europe. Also, here at home, the RedDog did a Victoria Shaw video profile, a new home video for Randy Travis' *This Is Me*, and finally, in Wilmington, North Carolina, filmed a behind-the-scenes piece on Sammy Kershaw. Sam has just completed his first feature film, entitled *Fall Time*, starring Stephen Baldwin and Mickey Rourke, which is scheduled for release later this year.

FANTIME IN TENNESSEE

It's "Fantime" every day in Tennessee, especially here in Nashville where there's more to do and more stars to see than

LEGENDS HOST LEGENDS



Legends of Country Music is a new TNN series debuting this fall. Tapped to co-host the show are superstars Tammy Wynette and Willie Nelson, who will host fellow legends and tradition-oriented newcomers. At a recent taping are producer Terry Lickona, Mark Gray, Randy Travis, Tammy Wynette, Gaylord Entertainment's Paul Corbin and Bobbie Cryner. Tammy personally invited Cryner to the show after seeing her perform.

ever before. When the Nashville Onstage concert series debuted for the season, I was, of course, on hand. Thanks to Opryland's Mike Hyland, I was taken care of royally, queen that I am. First off, we

were whisked to Riverbend Hollow inside Opryland, where we were served "heavy hors d'oeuvres," very tasty and quite filling. Next we marched like soldiers to the Theater by the Lake for the premiere performance of the great George Jones. George was outta sight. In great vocal form he sang "No Show Jones," "The Race Is On," "Picture of Me Without You," "The Corvette Song," "I Don't Need Your Rocking Chair" and all his hits. The song that brought the crowd to its feet was the award-winning "He Stopped Loving Her Today." I still get chills thinking about it.

After an hour-and-a-half of George, we marched over to the GEO Theater where Alabama premiered their brand new show. Randy Owen has always been so handsome, but the 1994 Owen has matinee idol looks. He's shaved his beard and cut his hair. For two hours those guys sang hit after hit. With newer numbers like "TLC ASAP" and old faves, like my fave, "Old Flames," and "Feels So Right," even "Tennessee River."

Randy has a way of including the audience in the show. Best of all he had every child in the audience come onstage where he sang a song especially for them. There wasn't a dry heart in the theater.

So far, I haven't witnessed the *Hee Haw Live* show at the Roy Acuff Theater, but I will, and I'll let you know about it.

BILLY AND THE BOYS



Billy Ray Cyrus was joined in the studio recently by The Mighty Oaks (who you can see a bunch of days this summer at Opryland). They were adding harmonies to a track for Cyrus' upcoming third album. By name The Oak Ridge Boys are Joe Bonsall, Duane Allen, Steve Sanders and Richard Sterban.

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Sammy Kershaw and his band
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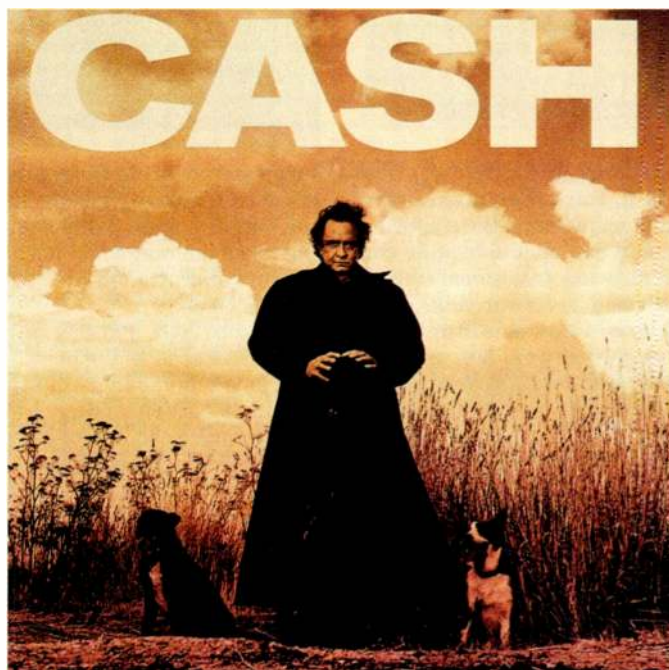
Record Reviews

Johnny Cash *American Recordings* American 45520

Remember the harrowing 1955 movie, *The Night of the Hunter*, starring Robert Mitchum as a psychotic Man of God roaming the Southern countryside, mumbling to himself, the word LOVE tattooed across the knuckles of one hand and HATE across the other, trying to find buried bank money? Johnny Cash's long-awaited and utterly unanticipated new album occupies that same world.

I don't mean by this that Cash has much in common with Mitchum's preacher, but rather that both music and movie take place in a landscape where everything seems to be governed by ancient, inexplicable forces that keep playing out, over and over, the big questions—life and worthiness, death and redemption.

There was a time when much American music was in this vein, and when it came across with the intimacy this set manages to achieve using 1994 technology. It was called folk music then, though I guess now it's called traditional music because folk refers to almost anything done on acoustic instruments. Folk music—real traditional music, that is—was timely, and it was timeless, and there were no barriers between the musician and the listener. It began ceasing to exist when Americans began writing contemporary songs instead of simply passing along the ones they'd gotten from their elders; you rarely even encounter it anymore, except as museum-pieces, and you most especially don't in one of its last strongholds, the world of modern country, where the



past is an embarrassment.

For Johnny Cash, that music never really ceased to exist, but it never wound up in the museum, either. That notion has informed all his best music, but never quite like here, on this album of vocals and rudimentary, yet perfect, acoustic guitar. The music on *American Recordings* binds disparate material from traditional to heavy metal together through the sheer force of his personality; it makes connections most of us would miss entirely—geez, that “Thirteen,” written by Slayer’s Glenn Danzig, really does have the lyric and melodic feel of the Depression-era South (as well as of Mitchum’s deranged preacher)—and it makes not a concession to radio, the industry, or anything else. It’s just Johnny Cash, telling you about the kinds of things he thinks about a lot today, in his autumn years.

You want intimate? Listen real close near the end of “The Beast in Me,” where you can

hear his gums smack just slightly before he repeats the title phrase. That song is the trembling confessions of a man whose monstrous side is at best barely contained, and often not contained at all, by his better instincts; was written by Cash’s former son-in-law, new waver Nick Lowe, who is an observant bloke. It’s the one that got me thinking about the Mitchum character, about frailties and powerlessness and the like. Listen also to the way Cash drags out the word “untrue” on “Bird on a Wire.” That one was written by Leonard Cohen, the poet-lyricist of modern urban anomie. Few people besides Cash could build a continuum out of people like Lowe and Cohen and the unknown composers of “Delia’s Gone” (which Cash has updated seamlessly) or “Oh Bury Me Not” (in which the young cowboy’s dying wish is ignored). And I don’t think Cash could have done so either had he used a band, as in previous recordings.

In the accompanying booklet about his childhood, Cash writes, “The most amazing thing to me about the songs on the radio was the numbers of them. They just kept coming, one after another...” Same here—this represents a little more than one-tenth of what he recorded for the CD. Except to quibble with a tune or two, there’s not much to say about each of the individual performances, but if you ever still puzzle about Vietnam, eternal life, the people on the fringes of our society, and all those other Big ‘Uns that everyone tries so hard to avoid these days, in music and elsewhere, you have come to the right place with *American Recordings*. And that is just the most recent of the many things for which we can thank John R. Cash. —JOHN MORTHLAND

Marty Brown *Cryin’ Lovin’ Leavin’* MCA 11054

While critics holler about radio refusing to play Marty Brown’s records, Brown himself seems less concerned. Few other artists have found success promoting their albums by touring Wal-Marts, but then Brown isn’t like many artists around today.

Still, it would be an opportune time for Brown to hit the radio since this, his third album, is his best album ever, packing greater power than even his debut or his second album, *Wild Kentucky Skies*. Recorded (mostly) live in the studio, Brown’s hillbilly fury roars and screams from every track. Credit is also due producer Richard Bennett, who has produced Marty from the first. This time he does some of his best work since his days producing Steve Earle nearly

Record Reviews

somewhere outside the songs, instead of inhabiting them. On these selections and others, he sings so effortlessly that at times he sounds as if he's phoning it in from Montana, holding back all the whole-hearted emotion that the music demands. I could be totally wrong, but if I had to guess, I'd say Travis and Lehning labored over the lead vocals, recutting them until they were perfect, and until all the first-take excitement was bled out of them.

Coming from Randy Travis, this seems strange, indeed. Strange that his masterfully great voice is present, technically on pitch and in gear, but that his heart, too often, seems not to be. Thus, ultimately, *This Is Me's* affirmative title makes a case that the music does not support. Again and again, Travis sounds like he held the best part of himself back.

—BOB ALLEN

Reba McEntire *Read My Mind* MCA 10994

Country music is marriage music, and when a husband and wife are on the verge of breaking up, the crisis can produce either the greatest drama or the corniest clichés country has to offer. Only Reba McEntire, though, can squeeze out both at the same time. Like a miner who knows the gold is usually mixed in with worthless rocks, McEntire digs up the most thrilling insights attached to the most hackneyed sentiments and language.

Few artists have sung about marital infidelity as often as McEntire, and she returns to the theme on her triumphant new album, *Read My Mind*. And no moment better illuminates what a marriage is really made of than the moment when a wife confronts a cheating husband. Sometimes McEntire plays the forgiving mother figure; sometimes she plays the angry independent



woman; more often she plays some weird combination of the two. Whatever the scenario, these are high-voltage situations that demand singing to match, and few vocalists in America today can match McEntire for sheer lungpower or for skill in harnessing it.

On "I Won't Stand in Line," McEntire addresses a husband who is quite nice to her when she's around but equally nice to lots of other women when she's not. Over a brisk, boisterous country-rock arrangement, she sings, "I'd do almost anything to make you mine/ But I won't stand in line." The remarkable thing about her robust vocal is the way she fills the first line with a genuine affection for the man and then turns on a dime to make the second line a take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum. Few singers can nail such different emotions on back-to-back lines.

On "I Wish That I Could Tell You," McEntire plays the wife in a lifeless marriage who wishes she could make it easy for her husband to go. It's a very conventional country-pop ballad, but the singer makes it special by communicating both the kindness of wanting to make it easy for him and the sadness of knowing it's over. On another ballad, "And Still," McEntire plays the other woman who accidentally bumps into her married ex-lover and his wife on the street. In a brilliant performance, she captures the tension between the woman's calm exterior and churning interior.

The album's most unusual song is Sandy Knox and Steve Rosen's "She Thinks His



Name Was John," the story of a woman who caught a disease during a one-night stand and now finds her future ruined. AIDS is never mentioned, but that's clearly the subject, and McEntire handles this sensitive topic with a nicely understated realism that still manages to get across a safe-sex message.

With T.W. Hale, Knox co-wrote the first single, "Why Haven't I Heard from You," a far lighter song that reviews the entire history of the telephone as a funny build-up to the title punchline. Both "Till You Love Me" and the album's title track are straightforward love songs with juicy melodies, and McEntire opens up her enormous, gospelish voice on them as if she were Nashville's Whitney Houston—another big-throated singer with an instinct for the emotional jugular.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

Pam Tillis *Sweetheart's Dance* Arista 18758

Hard as it is to believe, Pam Tillis has been recording for ten years, though she only came into her own four years ago. She's maintained a high level of quality since her breakthrough four years ago. That quality continues with *Sweetheart's Dance*, co-produced by Tillis and ex-Emmylou Harris Hot Band steel guitarist turned producer, Steve Fishell, whose work rarely fails to impress, regardless of the artist.

Her skill at writing catchy, ingratiating material is best

manifested by "Mi Vida Loca (My Crazy Life)." The song, co-written with Jess Leary, was inspired by a female gang member's tattoo Tillis saw while watching *Geraldo*. Her voice sails over a delightfully catchy Tex-Mex arrangement reminiscent of Carlene Carter's "I Fell in Love." A modern traditional arrangement frames Doug Gill's "Sweetheart's Dance," a song brimming with wit and irony.

Tillis' moody vocal puts across the nicely sketched female friendship of "Calico Plains." "When You Walk in the Room" was a minor 1964 pop hit for the British rock band, The Searchers. With an arrangement based on their version, Tillis lays it down with passion and power. She maintains that passion on the Tillis-Dean Dillon heartbreak ballad, "Spilled Perfume." In that context, the trivial "Blown Away" neither helps nor hurts.

Tillis has concentrated with considerable success on establishing her own identity. With "They Don't Break 'Em Like They Used To," she revisits the honky tonk shuffles daddy Mel excelled in for years. Vince Gill sings harmony, though he's barely audible. One comment: Unless an artist is recording an actual duet with another artist, these harmony guest shots don't mean much. The artists feature their friends, but any studio harmony singer would do in most cases. And Tillis doesn't need many duets, given her skill at conveying vulnerability on "In Between Dances" and toughness on "Better Off Blue."

The big production number is the final one: "Til All the Lonely's Gone," a churning gospel collaboration written by Pam, husband Bob DiPiero and John Scott Sherrill. With a family chorus behind her including her brother, sisters and Mel, who kicks in a bit of vocal punctuation as well, it's impressive. On top of all that, add Bill Monroe playing some sprightly mandolin licks.

This time, Pam Tillis has really gone and done it. She's

Record Reviews

gotten better all along, but this could be the album of her career. The combination of songs, arrangements and her laser-beam focus on each and every lyric is tough to beat, and could serve as a lesson to some of today's young hotshots, many of whom may not be recording in ten years.

—RICH KIENZLE

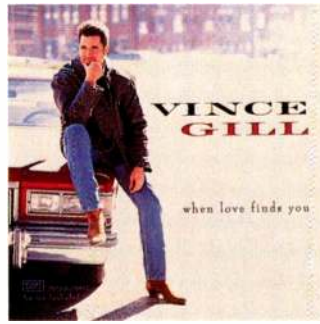
Vince Gill
When Love Finds You
 MCA 11047

Some years ago, the late Raymond Carver published a collection of short stories called *What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Love*. Carver's book proved a landmark in modern American fiction. Yet I remember for a long time I avoided buying it because its maudlin title made it sound like some bogus self-

help treatise off the Wal-Mart discount shelf. Truth was, though, that when Carver talked about love, he talked about all kinds of love: the kind that redeems you and sets you free, as well as the kind that drags you down into darkness and swallows you whole.

I bring Raymond Carver up here not because he has anything much to do with Vince Gill's new album, *When Love Finds You* (though Gill's best friend Rodney Crowell has cited Carver as an influence, and I wouldn't be surprised if Gill has read him, too); but because the title, *When Love Finds You*, is similarly misleading. Like Carver, Gill writes and sings about different kinds of love—romantic love and some of love's more rarefied and absolute manifestations.

Like all Gill's recent, best-selling albums, *When Love Finds You* is seamlessly con-



ceived and executed, even if it's not quite the tour de force that *Pocket Full of Gold* was, or *When I Call Your Name*. As usual, he wrote or co-wrote—along with such notables as his wife Janis Gill and Bill Anderson—all 11 selections. Gill has a flair for melody: This gift, along with his aching tenor (almost operatically pure in both technique and emotion) and Tony Brown's finely textured yet lean, compelling arrangements, helps obscure the un-

derlying triteness of puppy-love songs like "Whenever You Come Around" and the title song. On these, Gill nearly reverts back to the starry-eyed pop romanticism of his "Let Me Love You Tonight" days as Pure Prairie League's lead singer.

Yet even these lightweight new Gill originals prove serviceable vehicles for some downright lovely singing. Gill has called upon a host of friends for guest harmonies—Trisha Yearwood, Alison Krauss, Patty Loveless, Amy Grant, Ricky Skaggs, Michael McDonald and Dawn Sears—and the results are stunning.

Predictably, Gill shines as an instrumentalist as well. On good-timey selections like "South Side of Dixie" (co-written with Delbert McClinton) and "What the Cowgirls Do," he unleashes some great, choppy, staccato electric lead guitar solos that rattle your

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Record Reviews

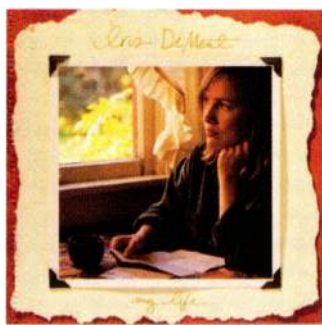
wisdom teeth. Again and again, he's shadowed by ace session man Stuart Smith, a former member of Rodney Crowell's crackerjack road band and a fiery guitar picker in his own right. Up until the very last tracks, though, *When Love Finds You* is informed by a prevailing pop-country lightness of both mood and theme. And well into side two, there's a shortage of future Gill show-stoppers along the lines of neo-classics like "When I Call Your Name" or "Look at Us."

But on the final two cuts, Gill turns away from romance toward love of a higher and more transcendent degree, and it's here that the music verges on greatness. "If I Had My Way" (co-written with Amy Grant, who contributes harmonies) captures the universal anguish of all of us who've at times felt overwhelmed and powerless in the face of the world's suffering and the constant bombardment of nightly news reports on abducted and murdered children and innocents slaughtered in faraway cities. The immense compassion and aching sincerity that Gill conveys here is something that simply can't be faked.

Even more powerful is "Go Rest High on a Mountain," the closer, which Gill wrote solo, and which features Ricky Skaggs and Patty Loveless on harmonies. This is a gospel song, a sweeping eulogy, seemingly inspired by Keith Whitley, and probably in some part by Gill's own older brother who passed away not long ago. Much like "If I Had My Way," it conveys a sense of redeeming hopefulness and faith in the face of loss.

When Gill cuts deepest, as he does on these last two songs on *When Love Finds You*, he moves into a whole other dimension. And that's when he reminds us that, at his best, he's not merely a great singer, he's a great communicator: a healer whose lovely music, if only for a while, loosens our shackles and lets us fly.

—BOB ALLEN



Iris DeMent

My Life

Warner Bros. 45493

When people reflect upon what's enduring and special about country music, they more than likely think about the kind of songs Iris DeMent writes and performs. As with the memorable work of Loretta Lynn, DeMent's songs draw on real-life experiences and emotions: She has a knack for tapping into universal sentiments and for transforming everyday occurrences into larger truths.

My Life is DeMent's second album, and it's just as powerful as her debut. She writes simply; she strings together a minimal amount of chords with such obvious care that her melodies seem timeless, much like folk songs passed down from generation to generation. Producer Jim Rooney, who also works with Hal Ketchum and Nanci Griffith, allows DeMent's songs to come to life in their own way, underscoring their melodic strength with sparse, yet evocative, musical support. When guys like "Cowboy" Jack Clement, Roy Huskey Jr. and Kenny Malone are on board as contributing musicians, it's a good bet that the music will not overwhelm the songs but will prop them up in a beautiful way.

DeMent's voice is as unique as her songs. She has a raw, plaintive twang that may take some getting used to in this age of powerhouse female roof-shakers. Her tender, creaky warble is part sob and part steel will, and it perfectly ex-



presses the combination of vulnerability and perseverance that fills her songs.

DeMent composed eight of the 10 songs by herself; the remaining two are revealing in where they come from and what they say. The Carter Family's "Troublesome Waters" is a gospel tune once performed by Johnny Cash (among others); it's about the sinful temptations that lurk just below the surface in all of us; the other cover, Lefty Frizzell's "Mom & Dad's Waltz," is a sentimental letter of love to good, devoted parents. These older songs delineate two underlying themes of DeMent's work: That she comes from a loving family and is eternally thankful for that blessing; and that goodness requires constant vigilance and inner resolve.

Her own songs render an indelible portrait of a balanced, compassionate woman with a strong moral underpinning who strives to maintain an honest, conscientious life—and who finds that being good doesn't always provide its own rewards. In sharply detailed lyrics, she relates just how troublesome and achingly difficult life can be, even for those who live by the rules, and how getting through a trying day can bend the resolve of even the strongest of us.

The central songs battle daily defeats. There's the working mother in "Easy's Getting Harder Every Day," whose life has wound down to an endless routine of work and care-giving; tedium has absorbed everything. She dreams of running away to someplace exotic, taking noth-

ing with her, "not even my name," but in the end, she knows she can't escape.

In "You've Done Nothing Wrong," a couple confronts a rift in their relationship that has grown until it is unbridgeable. This is where DeMent's humanity shines so clearly; neither spouse tries to injure the other by spewing spiteful remarks or laying blame. "Just because I'm hurting don't mean you've done something wrong," she intones, thanking her man for staying even after their love was gone. "You said that you were sorry and you'd take all the blame, but we both shared the gamble so let's both share the pain."

The ironic part of DeMent's growing success is that it is happening almost completely outside of today's country music establishment. Raised in rural northeastern Arkansas, and a Nashville resident now for several years, she was signed to Warner Bros. by a Los Angeles record executive and is being promoted primarily by the pop and rock departments. She won't be heard on most country radio stations, nor will she be invited to take part in all of the country music television specials and awards shows. Why? Because she's just too country for Nashville's tastes these days.

But that shouldn't keep her from getting to fans who would be moved by her music. Iris DeMent cares more about honest expression than commercial exploitation, and because of that, she is quickly shaping up as a true American treasure. —MICHAEL MCCALL

Kathy Mattea

Walking Away a Winner

Mercury 314-518 852

There's been a mild industry backlash against Kathy Mattea for the sort of artsy eclecticism and folksy introspection she delved into on recent albums like *Time Passes By* (1991) and *Willow in the*

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Wind, (1989). But to hell with 'em all: I not only loved those records, I think she deserves a medal for making them—particularly when mainstream country music seems more susceptible to corporate cynicism and artistic conformity than ever before. Who but Mattea would have touched a song as odd as “Where’ve You Been” (about old people, for God’s sake!) and made a hit out of it? It’s depressing to think that country radio might not even play it today.

Walking Away a Winner, Mattea’s latest, is largely designed to bounce back from the Berlin Wall that country radio threw up against her last couple of albums. And bounce back it does: *Walking Away a Winner* is nothing if not a busy record. Producer Josh Leo has stacked so many guitars on some tracks that at times it’s almost dizzying: they sizzle, they tremble, they moan. Now and then they even play backwards.

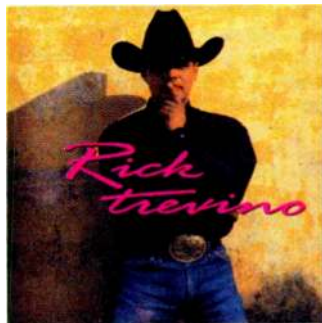
Mattea’s vocals don’t go backwards, but this is sure a far cry from the mellow Anne Murray sound-alike of her earliest records, or the laid-back newgrass chic of *Walk the Way the Wind Blows* or *Untasted Honey*. I’ve never heard Mattea get such power and diversity out of the upper reaches of her essentially mid-range voice. I’ve never heard her sing with such sharpness, urgency and crisp definition.

Most important, Mattea hasn’t “dumbed down” by turning her back on the sort of challenging, ironic message songs that made her last couple of albums so distinct—songs that most other artists would pass on today as being too wordy, obscure or avant-garde.

I’m sure Mattea and Josh Leo must have gone through piles of songs to come up with intriguing selections like Andrew Gold’s and Jenny Yates’ “The Streets of Your Town,” Chris Waters’ and Chuck Jones’ “Another Man,” Guy and Susanna Clark’s “The Cape,” Kent Robbins’ and Lang Martine’s “Maybe She’s

Human,” Wayne Kirkpatrick’s “Grand Canyon” and John Vezner’s “Who’s Gonna Know” (a worthy but somewhat more somber sequel to “Where’ve You Been,” which Vezner also co-wrote). These are songs which don’t necessarily reveal themselves on first, or even second, listen and which often resonate with a multiplicity of meanings. And these songs are the heart of *Walking Away a Winner*, an album on which Mattea has never sounded better, more vocally ambitious or more inspired. Oh, and by the way, guys, how did you get that guitar to play backwards?

—BOB ALLEN



Rick Trevino
Rick Trevino
Columbia 53560

It wasn't long ago—prior to Garth's ascension—that we spoke often of Hat Acts, the Stetson-lidded male hunks, inspired by George Strait, who literally poured out of the hopper. Many were pale Strait imitators. Others were photogenic no-talents never heard from after their debuts. A handful had something to say.

Which brings us to young Mr. Trevino of Texas. He's got the looks, driven home by plenty of beefcake photography in the album art (enjoy, Hazel Smith!). He wears a hat very nicely and sings in Spanish as well as English, though that's no big deal since Freddy Fender did it 20 years ago. Still, Trevino falls into that select group of young singers with substance and his own



Lari White
Wishes
RCA 66395

voice. Steve Buckingham, who gave us Ricky Van Shelton, gives him the same sort of straight-ahead production that made Ricky Van's work so potent in the mid-80's.

The album kicks butt from Note One with Trevino's spin on Marty Stuart's "Honky Tonk Crowd." He flies through "Doctor Time," "She Didn't Say I Didn't Cry" and Todd Snider's catchy honky tonk sing-along, "She Just Left Me Lounge." As with any Buckingham effort, even the oldies are the right ones. Trevino makes Bill Anderson's all-but-forgotten 1961 hit, "Walk Out Backwards," seem brand new. He makes the Larry Boone-Rick Bowles ballad, "What I'll Know Then," and "It Only Hurts When I Laugh," co-written by Marty Stuart and Kostas, fit him like a favorite pair of boots. The Karen Staley-Steve Dean number "Just Enough Rope" is an inoffensive if predictable tune clearly geared for (ecch!) line dancing. I'm not quite clear why Buckingham sequenced the two bilingual numbers at the end. In the case of the bilingual "Just Enough Rope," it makes sense. But "Un Momento Alla" could have gone anywhere.

Trevino and Buckingham have done their jobs with finesse and class, the result being a major new find who could wind up at the top if he continues in this direction. What's more, his voice is so distinctive that he runs very little risk of being mistaken for somebody else when you hear him on the radio. That alone makes him well worth watching.

—RICH KIENZLE

Lari White proved with last year's fine debut, *Lead Me Not*, that she's a talented singer who's determined to show off a wider range of musical styles than the average tightly directed Nashville country singer. On *Wishes*, the range remains; only this time she's led into creative waters that are a little more shallow and a little less satisfying than on her previous effort.

The range remains. The first hit, "That's My Baby," reconfirms that White has the spunk to energize a light-hearted ode to a simple country guy, though the song weakens when compared to last year's "What a Woman Wants." There's also a sweetly modest love song, "Wishes," the torchy heartbreak of "Now I Know" and "When It Rains," the slightly Spanish tint of "If I'm Not Already Crazy," the swamp rock of "Go On" and the old-fashioned parlor song, "If You Only Knew," a truly beautiful tune with such a sweet, uncomplicated melody that it's easy to imagine Jiminy Cricket or Kermit the Frog singing it from a lily pad.

Enough shining moments exist to suggest White still has the goods to become more than an attractive woman with a nicely developed voice. She continues to cultivate her own point of view, writing eight of the 10 songs here—almost always a good sign, even though the best song, "If I'm Not Already Crazy," comes from her pals Verlon Thompson and Suzi Ragsdale. The latter features the kind of detail and emotional nuance missing from some of White's co-writers (one of them her husband, successful songwriter Chuck Cannon).

If "Crazy" and "If You Only Knew" represent White's strengths, then "Go On" shows just how far she can fall. Sounding like a poor imitation

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of a weak Stevie Nicks song, "Go On" has the repetitive, shouted snarl of bad corporate pop-rock of the early 1980's—give this a blindfold test, and some overzealous music fan with too much time on his hands might mistake it for Quarterflash or some other forgotten pop group.

So here's my wish: That *Wishes* provides White a firm enough footing on the slippery shores of Music Row to allow her to go back to delving deeper into her own songwriting strengths. She is capable of creating memorable music, but she's not going to get there trying to rewrite current pop-country formulas.

—MICHAEL MCCALL

Deborah Allen

All That I Am

Giant Records

Something seems to happen to those who come of age in the Mississippi Delta. The thick summer heat seems to rise from the rich soil and seep into the soul in a way that transforms people, especially artists. So much of the Delta's best music—be it blues, soul, rock or country—features a natural, upfront, steamy sensuality that is as unmistakable and as searing as the mid-day Memphis sun in July.

Whatever it is, Deborah Allen absorbed more than her share. The best part of her wide-ranging music conveys a palpable, physical heat. In person, she's an uninhibited, charismatic performer whose sex-kitten image comes across as a genuine extension of an open-hearted personality. On record, however, she's had her problems communicating her talent. From her pop-country work in the mid-1980's to last year's notable comeback, *Delta Dreamland*, she has had a tendency to undercut herself with too much bland Nashville fodder.

Her new album almost overcomes that tradition. *All That I Am* offers songs that simmer



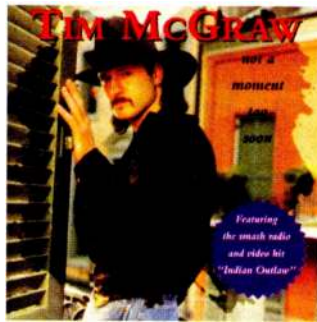
with personality, many of them ripe with a healthy sexuality that Allen puts across in her own unique fashion. But it also presents a few that are unremarkable and predictable. As the album title suggests, Allen tries to cover all of her musical interests. The most fully realized song, "My Baby," is a seething swamp rocker in which Allen testifies to the manifest pleasures her man offers her. In its way, it's as lustful as Little Walter's classic blues version of Willie Dixon's "My Babe." Allen touts her man's qualities—"My baby is rolling thunder/My baby is a southbound train/His love is like a long, hot summer/Calms me down like a cool, cool rain"—and then vows to stay on track and to earn his good love. The swaggering arrangement is powered by the vicious steel guitar playing by Dan Dugmore, who proves that the instrument can sear with passion as well as cry and moan.

Elsewhere, Allen flashes her feistiness on "Leave My Heart Alone" and "Give It to Me," both of which rank with Carlene Carter's best in their spirited display of tightly constructed, propulsive pop country. For the most part, she overcomes the occasional overly slick touches of James Stroud's radio-ready production, but there's not much she can do with the airless pop formula of "Wrong Side of Love" or the insubstantial lyrics of "Boys from the Wrong Side of Town." On the latter, it's too bad Allen (who wrote or cowrote all 11 songs) didn't delve deeper into writing from the woman's view about why some ladies love

outlaws. It's a subject on which she probably could have shed interesting insight.

Allen has come a long way over the years, and she has survived several personas. She's been an Opryland entertainer and a duet partner to a deceased legend (Jim Reeves) on an eerie series of duets; she's enjoyed crossover success (1983's "Baby I Lied") and weathered a dead-in-the-water dance-rock project that included assistance from no less a country boy than Prince. She keeps coming back because her talent is undeniable. Her last two albums rank as her best, which suggests that the closer her music gets to her Delta homeland, the better she sounds. Who says you can't go home again?

—MICHAEL MCCALL



Tim McGraw

Not a Moment Too Soon
Curb 77659

Tim McGraw is the latest male country singer to shoot to the top of the class on the debateable strengths of a catchy novelty song. "Indian Outlaw" may be another of those songs that, like it or not, come to represent the dilemma of modern country music: it's an undeniably infectious and cute song, the kind that makes some people choke over its contrivance while others embrace it as charming good fun. Some may say that Hank wouldn't have liked it this way, but remember "Kawliga"?

Like "Achy Breaky Heart," it's built upon absurd word-

play, and it's musical center is catchy, unorthodox and endlessly repeated. Unlike "Achy Breaky," the groove of "Indian Outlaw" is tough and propulsive, and it provides McGraw the opportunity to prove he owns a voice filled with personality.

The rest of *Not a Moment Too Soon* reflects McGraw's strengths and weaknesses. He's a singer with a colorful style, full of grit and hiccuping. He enjoys a good time and can be knocked dead in his tracks by a sentimental tug, should one hit him in the gut as it does in "Don't Take the Girl." He also enjoys humorous turns and ludicrous lyrics. "Give It to Me Strait" is a tribute to a current country star who deserves the honor—only it should be done more subtly than stringing together a bunch of his song titles. "It's going to take a fireman to put this old flame out," he sings, "So, come on, give it to me Strait, before I come unbound."

But that's not as bad as it gets. In "Refried Dreams," he's "shooting tequila and wanting to kill ya" while hiding out across the border and trying to forget his woman. And, oh yeah, he's also sick to his stomach—or, as he puts it, "I messed up in Mexico, living on refried dreams." Pass the Pepto—pronto, please.

Other times, his attraction for novelty songs allows for some entertaining moments. In "It Doesn't Get Any Countryer than This," he's trying to prepare his mother for his new love. She didn't exactly grow up on the farm, he tells her, but "she sure knows her way around out behind the barn." To further explain, he tells mom, "She likes to go skinny dipping in the heat of the day, and late at night she like to roll in the hay. She cranks my tractor with just one kiss. Mama, it didn't get any countryer than this!" There are others in this vein.

Before long, McGraw will likely face questions about whether he's a one-hit wonder.

TRACY BYRD

A full-page photograph of Tracy Byrd. He is standing on a rocky outcrop, looking off to the side. He is wearing a black cowboy hat, a bright red long-sleeved shirt, and dark jeans with a large, ornate silver belt buckle. The background is a sunset or sunrise over a hilly landscape, with the sun low on the horizon, casting a warm glow.

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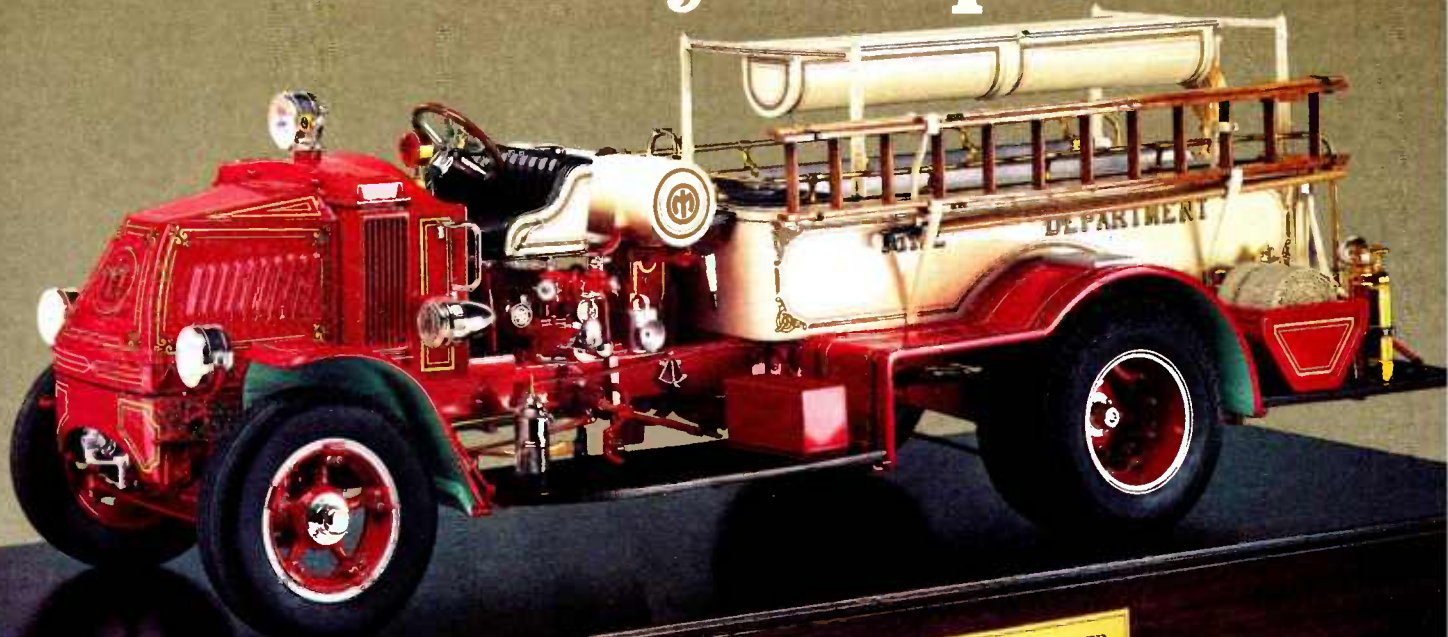
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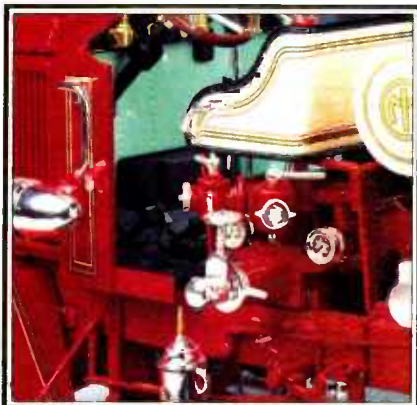
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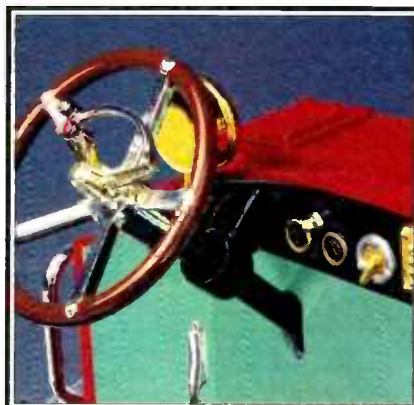
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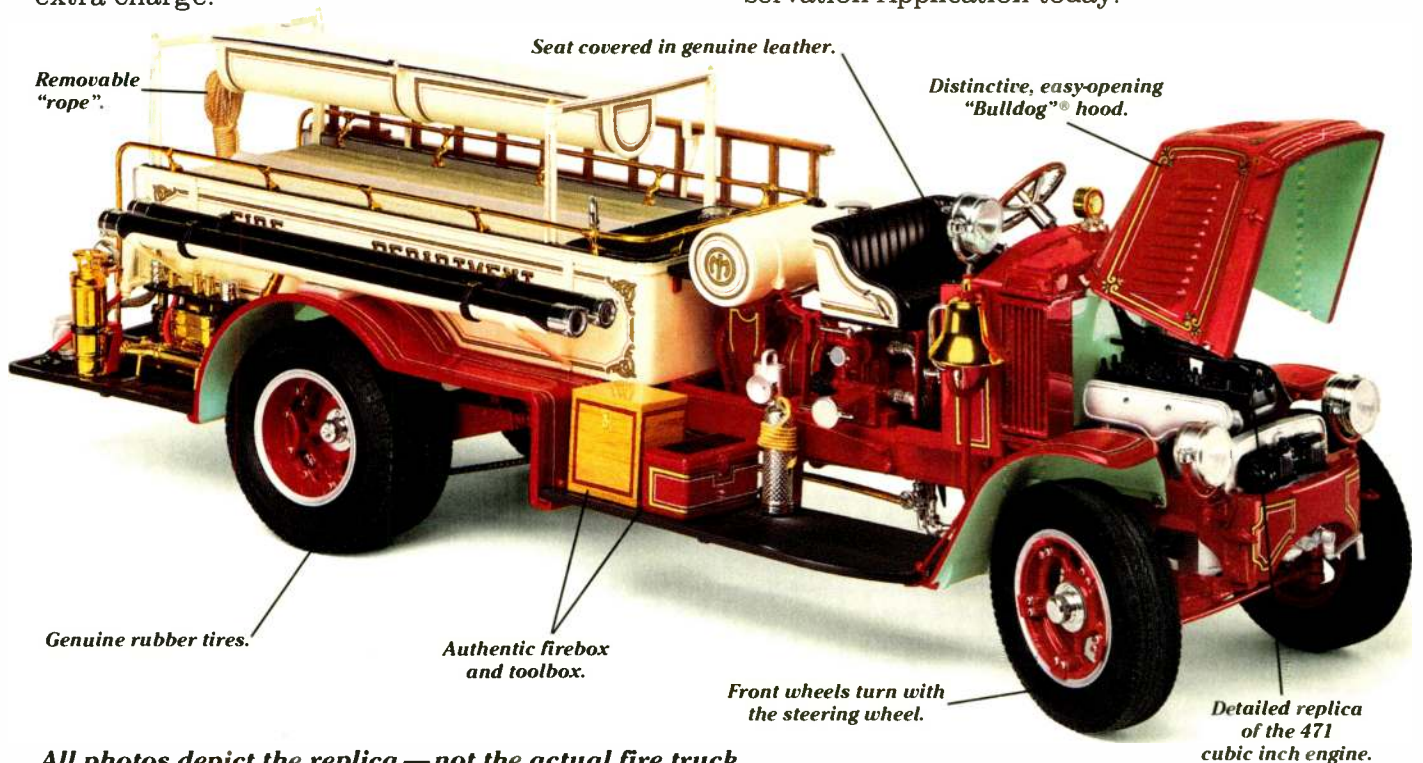
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Not a Moment Too Soon suggests it can go either way. However, one thing is for sure: He doesn't take himself too seriously. That should prove helpful to him, no matter which direction his career heads in from here.

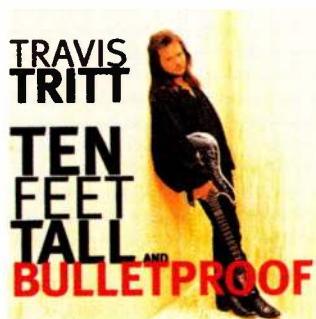
—MICHAEL MCCALL

Travis Tritt
Ten Feet Tall and Bulletproof
Warner Bros. 45603

Nashville goes on and on about how it values down-to-earth honesty, but Travis Tritt learned the hard way that the country music establishment really prefers polite white lies. For the minor crime of pointing out that Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart" was more of a pop dance number than a country song, Tritt found himself in a storm of controversy and on the wrong end of a lot of industry cold shoulders. The album that was released in the wake of this brouhaha, *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*, sold more than a million copies, but that was a step backward from its double-platinum predecessor, *It's All About to Change*.

Of course, there was another reason for the decline; the songwriting wasn't as strong on Tritt's third album as it had been on his second. To correct that problem, Tritt violated another of Nashville's unwritten commandments: "Thou shalt release a new album every year." The bearded Georgian released no albums last year and worked instead on refining his new batch of songs. The effort has paid off, for *Ten Feet Tall and Bulletproof* is Tritt's best yet. Divided between Hank Sr.-style honky tonk and Hank Jr.-style country-rock, the album is most notable for the improvement in Tritt's singing, which now mixes some understated subtlety into his boisterous bellowing.

The new set kicks off with the title tune, an uptempo tavern song with the same kind of



quoteable chorus and hummable melody that made "Here's a Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)" such a hit. This time the joke's not on the girlfriend but on the singer himself, who feels "Ten Feet Tall and Bulletproof" when he has a few beers under his belt. As Tritt's comic verses tell it, though, the beers actually turn him into a midget clown with two left feet, one of them usually in his mouth.

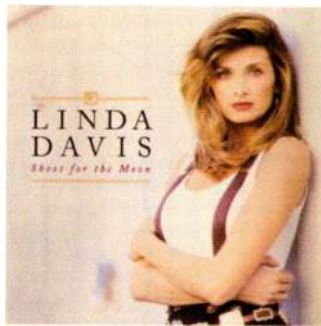
Also in the honky-tonk mode are a pair of fiddle-laced ballads about romantic troubles, Paul Overstreet and Al Gore's "Walkin' All Over My Heart" and Keith Stegall and Charlie Craig's "Between an Old Memory and Me." Tritt's growth as a singer is most obvious on these songs, as he balances the humor of the wordplay with the heartbreak of the stories.

Tritt joins Waylon Jennings and Hank Williams Jr. on "Outlaws Like Us," a name-dropping manifesto about loving both Charley Pride and Lynyrd Skynyrd (with a gratuitous dig at Billy Ray Cyrus for not being Merle Haggard). This sort of smug bragging about being outlaws is no less obnoxious when it's done by country singers in cowboy hats than when it's done by rappers in backwards baseball caps. How can these guys make fun of heavy-metal bands and then brag about jamming on "Freebird"? How can Tritt brag about being an "old outlaw" on one song and then request our sympathy for a policeman who dies battling outlaws on another?

Some day Tritt will have to confront these contradictions

in his persona, but for now no one can preserve country music's purring drawl within a rock arrangement better than he can. Marty Stuart wrote "Hard Times and Misery" around a speeded-up version of a lick from The Allman Brothers' "Midnight Rider," and Tritt digs into the down-and-out blues lyrics with impressive authority. In similar fashion, Tritt built the bluesy ballad, "Tell Me I Was Dreaming," around the guitar figure from Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Simple Man" and created the platform for a moving vocal and a terrific slide-guitar solo. Tritt also co-wrote two other songs with Skynyrd's Gary Rossington, the rollicking boogie-woogie of "Wishful Thinking" and the laid-back 12-bar blues of "No Vacation from the Blues."

—GEOFFREY HIMES



Linda Davis
Shoot for the Moon
Arista 18749

The trick for Linda Davis these past few years has been figuring out how to come out from underneath Reba McEntire's wing while still staying under it. You can start with the fact that Davis sounds amazingly like Queen Reba, when she's trying to, and even when she's not. That, in fact, was the single most persistent criticism of the two albums this lovely, saccharine-voiced Texas singer did for Liberty Records and Jimmy Bowen. Add to this the fact that Davis is managed by Reba's husband, Narvel

Blackstock, has been touring with Reba, and earned her first hit single with "Does He Love You," a duet with the Queen Bee.

So, naturally, the main objective on *Shoot for the Moon*, Davis' first album for Arista, is to give her a more perceptible musical identity. The title cut doesn't promise much in this regard. It's one of those annoyingly positive and peppy "reach for the sky" self-empowerment anthems which I thought went out of style when Babs Mandrell lost her last major label deal. Fortunately, things do get better—quite a bit better, really—as Davis buckles down and reaches deeper. "Company Time" (written by Mac McAnnally) is a haunting and disturbing song about sexual harassment in a not-so-good ol' boy-dominated corporate workplace. Davis, who has a tendency toward too much sweet sadness, growls and purrs this one with an enticing mix of irony and anger.

On the other hand, Davis' evocations of sorrow can make you reach for the Kleenex. "In Pictures," for instance is a lovely song (written by Joe Doyle and Bobby E. Boyd) which will rip your heart out if you've ever been separated from a child you love. Davis invests it with all the raw emotion it requires. "Family Ties" (by Hugh Prestwood), a song about all the things we're able to overlook in the name of love, has similar power.

Most of the rest of *Shoot for the Moon* is comprised of the sort of solid-but-safe love songs on which modern-day careers are built. All in all, there's nothing outstanding, though much that's delightful. I wish Davis and producer John Guess had gone out on a limb a little more often with more songs like "Company Time" and "In Pictures," but they have done a workmanlike job. From now on, when Linda Davis sings, I will be paying a lot more attention.

—BOB ALLEN

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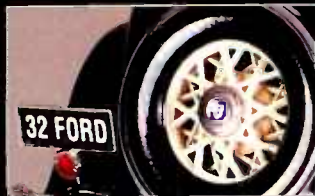


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CASH

Unplugged

By John Morthland

“You wanna just do the interview right here?” Johnny Cash asks, gesturing around the communal area where the donuts and coffee are, on the second floor of the House of Cash in Hendersonville, Tennessee. When I suggest it might be a little quieter if we did it in his office, he quickly replies, “Well, that’s okay with me, but I’m tired of sitting behind that desk; if we’re gonna do it there, you sit behind my desk.”

And that is indeed the way we do it, me behind the desk and John sunk down into the couch, where he can squirm and stretch all he wants. As we speak, Cash is awaiting the release of a brand new album—his first, astonishingly, in three years. Called *American Recordings*, it’s unlike anything else he’s ever done: 13 songs, one voice, one acoustic guitar. The essence of Johnny Cash, if you will. He wrote some new songs for it, revised an old one, and cut some favorites by other writers, such as Kris Kristofferson’s “Why Me Lord” and Leonard Cohen’s “Bird on a Wire” (which is a pluperfect example of Cash the Song Curator, with a lyric he probably couldn’t have written himself, but which says much the same things he says in the songs he does write himself).

The album was done for American Records—which began as the home of rappers like The Geto Boys, quickly took in heavy metal acts like Slayer, and has grown into an across-the-board label with additions like The Black Crowes. The producer is label boss Rick Rubin, making his and his label’s first foray into country music, and the album was recorded in his living room, Cash’s cabin on the lake in Hendersonville, and live at the Viper Room, Brat Packer Johnny Depp’s club in Hollywood. The week before I visited Cash, he had delivered the keynote address to the 4000 or so attendees at South By Southwest, the hippest of the music-biz conferences, in Austin. His “address” consisted of him playing a few songs and talking about what his music has meant to him over the years. That night, he played Emo’s, the town’s leading grunge palace, before about 200 lucky souls, most of them record-company guests, while the line outside snaked around the block. He did an hour solo, and then about 40 minutes more with his band. The response was ecstatic.

All of this has raised a few eyebrows around Nashville.

But some things never change, too, and that’s what I was thinking as I surveyed the walls of Cash’s office. I have been in many more stars’ offices than I could ever hope to remember, and the walls are invariably covered with plaques, certificates, photos of the star with other celebrities. Cash hangs no Gold record awards or the like; he discretely displays a photo of himself with Tex Ritter, and another with Hank Snow, and every other available inch of wall-space is covered by pictures of his family members. These, you can’t help thinking, are the people that really connect John R. Cash to his muse; these are the constants that have allowed him to endure and make sense of his turbulent life.

And so in the interview we touched on various periods of that life and career, as well as his always-acute observations on the rest of the country music world.

CMM: *Everybody’s talking about what a radical departure this is for you, but I can remember back to things like the Newport Folk Festival in Rhode Island in the early 60’s, when you were doing something pretty equivalent to this—do you feel like this is entirely new?*

CASH: Well, you know, to the generation today, I guess it looks to a lot of people like I’m doing something new. But this is the most comfortable way to do it for me, just me and my guitar. It’s an album I always wanted to do. Twenty-five years ago Marty Robbins and I were at a show, and we were talking about things we wanted to do, record-wise. And I told him that I always wanted to do an album called *Johnny Cash Alone*, with just my guitar, singing one on one, just me to you. He did an album like that, after that, and I always wanted to do mine, but I never had any record company until now interested in supporting a project like that. But with this new record company, Rick Rubin wanted to get the “real,” whatever that is, Johnny Cash.

This is a very personal album. I hear all kinds of rumors out of Nashville that Johnny Cash is trying to go rock ‘n’ roll. I’m the first one to know that I’m too old to rock ‘n’ roll. And I’m very proud of my country music following, and still the award that I’m most proud of is the Country Music Hall of Fame. This album, they’re having a hard time putting it in a category, as hard as they try. But it’s



“I’m the first one to know that I’m too old to rock ‘n’ roll. And I’m very proud of my country music following, and still the award that I’m most proud of is the Country Music Hall of Fame.”



just me and my guitar, and it’s the dream album I talked to Marty Robbins about doing 25 years ago.

CMM: *How did you ever get hooked up with Rick Rubin?*

CASH: Well, he heard that my contract was running out with Mercury. For some reason he wanted me on his label. He came down to see my show at San Juan Capistrano; he came to a fair in California to see me, he came to about three or four shows. Backstage at the first show, he said he wanted to sign me, and I said, “What would you like to do with me?” And he said, “I would like for you to do whatever feels right to you.” That sounded pretty good to me. I didn’t know his track record, the music he had recorded, until a little later. I asked who else he had on the label that he’d produced, and you know, it’s kinda like, I was on the same label with Mitch Miller, but I didn’t do what Mitch did. That is the silliest thing that’s going around now; people are talking about how Johnny Cash’s producer is the same producer who did Slayer and Red Hot Chili Peppers and all these people. But that’s got nothing to do with me. Rick made me know that I could maintain my musical integrity, that I could do what felt right, and we would take plenty of time and all the money it took to do the album we wanted to do, and that the promotion budget was unlimited. And all of this sounded really good to me, after coming off several dry years where the record company just did not put up what it took. Jack Clement did a great job on me with what he had to work with. Mercury/PolyGram Nashville did the best job they could do with what they had to work with, too. And I understand about demographics; I don’t have to be told about demographics anymore, but I’m happy to be doing what I do and I’m comfortable with it.

CMM: *I understand there’s lots more where this came from.*

CASH: I did something like 110 tracks in all. Every time I got a

good cut on a song, Rick would say, “Now what else do you want to do?” He always asked me what I wanted to do, and I appreciated that. But he had his own ideas too. He would lay songs before me, or mail songs to me. Some I liked and some I didn’t. I did some and some are on the album. We tried a few other things too. Tom Petty’s guitar player was on a couple sessions, but playing country acoustic. We also experimented with some other rhythm sections, but it didn’t work, and we never really expected it to; we just wanted to experiment. Now on the next album...I don’t know who might be on that. Some of the tracks are gonna be the guys I’ve been working with on the road all along. But I will probably use other musicians too, like I always do. I don’t know the concept of the next album yet, so I can’t say.

CMM: *Talk a little more about the individual songs.*

CASH: I wrote five of them, and I wrote four within the last year: “Let the Train Blow the Whistle”—“Drive On” was my Vietnam veterans song—“Redemption” is a gospel song about the plan of salvation through the blood. “Like a Soldier” is a love

song. The other is the new lyrics to “Delia’s Gone,” which is a really old traditional song. I cut it before, but this is a newer version. I couldn’t remember enough verses of the old one to sing it, so I wrote some new ones. I sing that one a lot in concert, and fans are always asking for it, so I thought I’d cut a new version and try to get it before a new audience. “Drive On” came from what I remembered about Vietnam, from being there in ‘69, plus a lot of books I read, and talking to a lot of veterans. “Drive on, it don’t mean nothin’” is an expression they used a lot in Vietnam. “Tennessee Stud” is a song I always wanted to record. A rock artist named Glenn Danzig wrote a song for me called “Thirteen.” My ex-son-in-law Nick Lowe wrote “The Beast in Me” in 1979, and I’ve just been able to record it. “The Man Who Couldn’t Cry” is an old novelty song by Loudon Wainwright III.

CMM: *With nearly 100 tracks in the can, is there any chance you’ll release another album just like this one?*

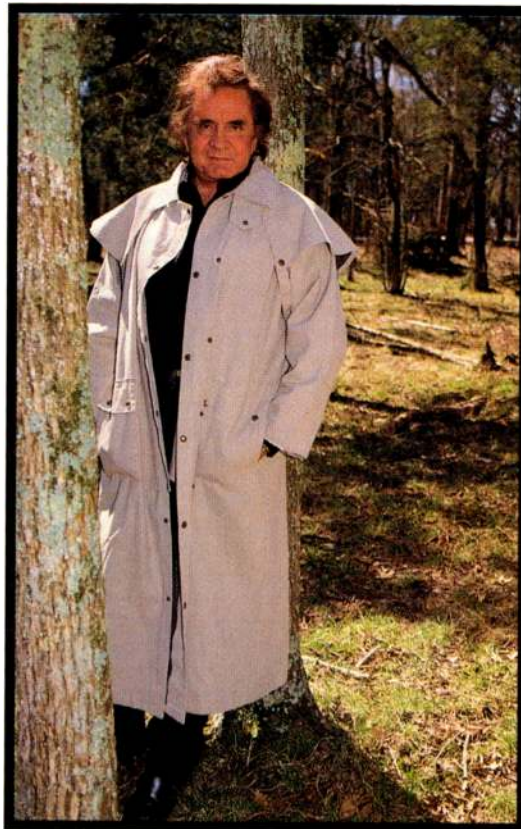
CASH: Yeah, I recorded a lot of gospel, and we’re probably going to do a gospel album soon. So if we decide on an acoustic gospel album, we’ve got one already. I cut spirituals and gospel—some of the country classics like “Where We’ll Never Grow Old,” “How Beautiful Heaven Must Be,” songs of that ilk, 30’s and 40’s radio gospel. A couple of church hymns, and some black gospel like “Strange Things Happenin’ Every Day,” a Bob Dylan song called “In My Time of Dyin’,” a mixture of everything I feel.

CMM: *Don’t you think it’s pretty ironic that a record of acoustic guitar and voice took longer and cost more than anything you’ve ever done?*

CASH: You’ve got to take into consideration travel, days in hotels...it was a lot of work, with a lot of people working on it. But when I say expensive, I mean time-wise as well, and studio

time costs. I’ve never spent this much time on an album—probably an average of two sessions a day for about 30 days, at least—I’d need a calculator. Good new songs kept coming in, and the old classics kept popping up from the different people saying why don’t you do this one and that one, and I’d run right out there and cut it. And then I’d do them over and over and over, until we got that right attitude, that right mood. I’ll be in a different mood tomorrow than I am right now, and it’s got nothing to do with drugs (*laughs*); it’s just that that’s the way we are. I’d get a cut on a song and say, “Maybe that sounds pretty good right now, but let’s try it again tomorrow night, later, see how a late-evening performance of that song might sound.” They may be subtle differences, but they are differences, and we kept going for that one final performance that was the one that had all the feeling and emotion that we wanted. That’s what took a lot of time. Whereas with a lot of musicians you’d take a lot of time to get everybody sounding right and doing the right licks, I had to get all the emotional licks right.

And it’s pretty scary to sit down in



front of a DAT recorder, just me and my guitar, cuz I'm not a musician, I just accompany myself on my guitar, just me and my thumb, no pick. There'd be little things I didn't like about my voice that we'd do over, and then there'd be this new one I wanted to try, and it's just a lot of work to get 110 songs right. But we did it because we were going for the best we could come up with in any field—we did blues, we did gospel, we did country, we did Appalachian, we did Carter Family, we did Jimmie Rodgers, we did Gene Autry. I did songs by people really active and hot on the music scene today.

CMM: *You claim that this is closer to the real Johnny Cash than anything you've ever recorded, so what do you think someone who listens to it will take away that they didn't already know about Johnny Cash?*

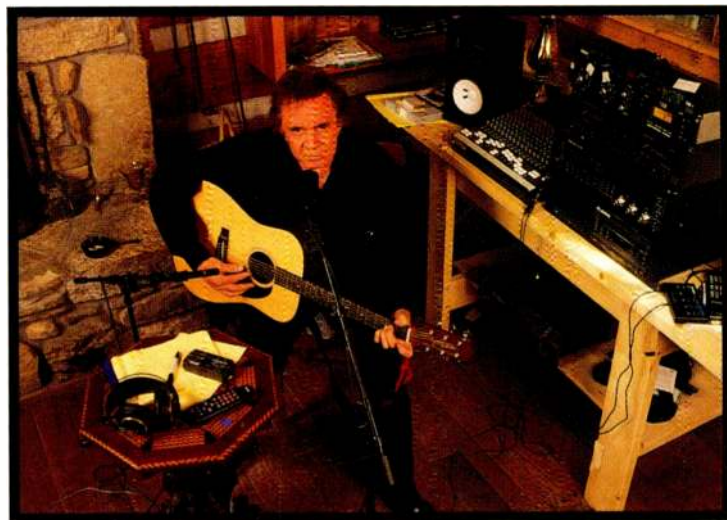
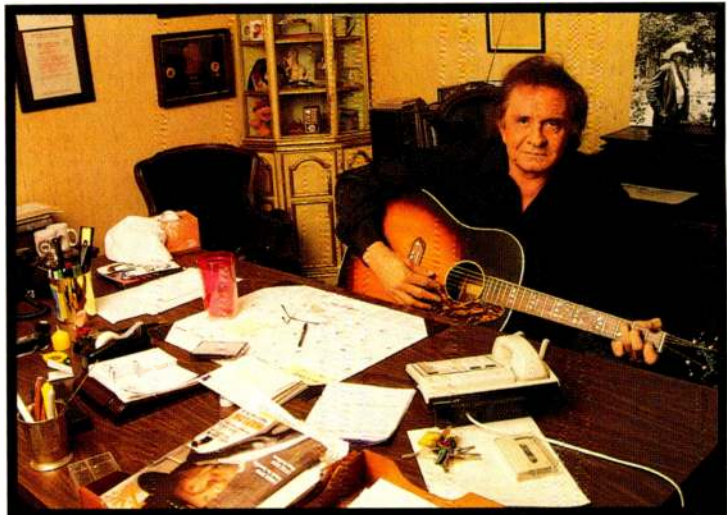
CASH: There's a line in "Let the Train Blow the Whistle" that goes, "On my old guitar sell tickets, so someone can finally pick it." The fans will finally hear just how little I can play the guitar. I can only strum it with my thumb, I can't pick it at all. What they will hear is 13 songs from the gut and from the heart, and they will feel, I think, the emotions I felt when I recorded it. I think fans by now who've known me primarily for lines like "I shot a man in Reno just to watch him die" won't take me too seriously in "Delia's Gone" when I say, "First time I shot her, I shot her in the side/Hard to watch her suffer, with the second shot she died." They know that's for fun, and I think with all the heavy stuff on the album they'll appreciate me sharing a little humor with them. And they'll know that when I get into spiritual matters, like in the song "Redemption," when I say, "I was redeemed by the blood," I think they'll believe it. I hope that if I'm ever arrested for being a Christian, there'll be enough evidence to convict, and "Redemption" is a song that really came from the heart. I think they'll know the real me, whatever that's worth.

CMM: *Can I backtrack a while now? When did you first play at Newport to young urban audiences?*

CASH: '64. That was right in the middle of the folk song revival, which is what I've been doing all my life! I felt like, hey, they're finally singing the songs that I sing. Everything from "Hobo Bill's Last Ride" to "Delia's Gone." I didn't feel like I was charting a new direction, I felt like I was doing something that really worked; I was doing all these hootenanny shows all over the country at colleges, was even in a movie called *Hootenanny Hoot*. I feel confident in saying that I've always done what I felt was right for me to do musically, and I have held on to my musical integrity, except for a period there in the late 70's when I got caught up in all the overproduction that was going on in country music, and which is still going on.

CMM: *Maybe it wasn't so different musically to play dates like Newport and hootenannies back then, but certainly there was a huge gap perceived between Nashville and the young urban types who went to those kinds of things.*

CASH: There was a gap perceived between me as a Memphis rockabilly and Nashville, also, so what's the difference there? When I came to Nashville in '56 to see the manager of the Grand Ole Opry—my manager brought me up here to try to get a guest shot on the Opry—he walked by me a dozen times without speaking, and let me sit there for two hours, and finally he just motioned me to come in his office. I came in there and sat down, and he said, "What makes you think you belong on the Grand Ole Opry?" That was the first thing he said to me. And I said, "'Folsom Prison Blues' is Number Two, and I think the fans would like to hear me sing it." So he stared at me for about two hours it felt like, and then he said, "Be here Saturday night." So I was. Now the people—Minnie Pearl, Ernest Tubb, Hank Snow—all of them welcomed me with open arms. I think some of the old-timers in the business had a lot more vision



Guitar in hand, in the House of Cash or in the cabin studio, Cash looks strikingly at ease. "I can only strum with my thumb," he laughs.

about what this is all about than some of the people who were running the business. I was encouraged to do it the way I felt it by people like Ernest Tubb. He told me, "You're different, you sound different, you act different, you look different; if that's the way you honestly feel it, then that's the way you want to do it, and don't let anybody change you."

Very reluctantly, after the success of that first night, they invited me back, said "Come back sometime," you know. Then I became a member of the Grand Ole Opry a year later, but they had this rule that if you're a regular member, you have to be here 26 Saturday nights out of the year. I knew I couldn't do that—I was booking all over the North American continent. So I had to quit the Opry. And I guess I've always been sort of an outsider. It's been a good five years since I was asked to come down and do the Grand Ole Opry. It's not that I'm waiting for them to ask me, it's just that that's the country music community's attitude here towards me.

CMM: *What's your take on what's going on here now? So many veterans have been hung out to dry, and those demographics you mentioned a while ago have taken on such priority...*

CASH: We are a fact of life. Some of them, not all of them, down on Music Row act like, Johnny Cash, go away, we don't want to see you anymore. They also said that to Charley Pride, they said that to Merle, they said that to Waylon, and Waylon is one of the most actively loved people in this town. Now I hear that they don't wanna play Hank Williams Jr.'s records, cuz he's too old. The worst story I've heard down in Nashville: I was in a recording studio about three years ago, and somebody from

Randy Travis' record company came in. I asked him what was going on, and he said, "Nothing, we're just looking for a new Randy Travis." I said, "What's wrong with the one you got?" (*Laughs.*) That was so stupid. I'm not moaning about not being played on the radio. I know I'm 62 years old. And I've been around twice, and it looks now like I might have a third shot at a new audience. If I don't, I can still get work, and I'm not worried about the *Billboard* charts, I'm not worried about bookings next year.

The music scene in Nashville is very exciting right now; I love some of the videos I see, though I'm a little tired of seeing everybody getting in an old car or running through a wheatfield. But they entertain me, even if every video's a new artist I never heard of. There's a lot of good-looking women in country music right now, and I like that. I like the way the women have come into their own in country music. I think Trish Yearwood is around from now on. I think she's so great.

CMM: *Do you have other favorites among the new artists?*

CASH: I like that Collie boy. Yoakam. Yoakam dares to be different. I see a lot of myself in him, and I appreciate him—I think he's probably better than a dirt sandwich. (*Laughs.*) I think Carlene Carter's a ball of fire, she's doing great. I'm proud of Rosanne; she's got so much integrity. Maybe that's why she left here; not only musical integrity, but integrity as a person. This town is still the place to come to make it in country music. There's a lot of great talents in this town. Tony Brown, I really admire him. Randy Scruggs, he's a great producer and great musician. Jack Clement, there ain't nobody like Jack Clement, and he's still a man of vision.

CMM: *You describe yourself as a perpetual outsider here, but you lived in California from '58 until '65 and then came back; why have you stayed here so long if that's really how you feel?*

CASH: I came because like I said, it was the place to go. I'd also just gotten divorced and was killing myself on amphetamines. I wanted to be in the Country Music Hall of Fame one day, and I almost missed it a few times, I guess—I went off in some weird directions in the 60's. All my friends were here, people I admired. Still have a lot of friends here and people I admire. It's that record-making machine that I hate. That's my big gripe about Nashville. And that machine is a money-eater, it's a glutton for money, and if you don't have the big bucks behind you, you don't get nowhere. They spend millions on promotion.

CMM: *This talk about the machine ties back in to something you said about the new album, which is that you'd been wanting to do it for 25 years without being able to. But there was a time in the late 60's and early 70's when Johnny Cash was the biggest thing in this business, and it seems like you should have been able to call your own shots.*

CASH: I tried it, I tried it. I did an album in '59 called *Ride This Train*. That was the closest thing to it. But I said then that someday I'd do it with just my guitar, and more personal, more up close, more just me and you. When I was doing the TV show, right after the prison albums, I mentioned to the producers, to the record company, that now is the time I wanna sing songs just me and my guitar, maybe tell a few stories. They didn't wanna hear about it, because the success of the prison albums, the TV show with Bill Walker's orchestra, that was all going

good and they didn't wanna change a thing. And I didn't push it; I just hoped that someday I would have a producer and a record company that would go for it.

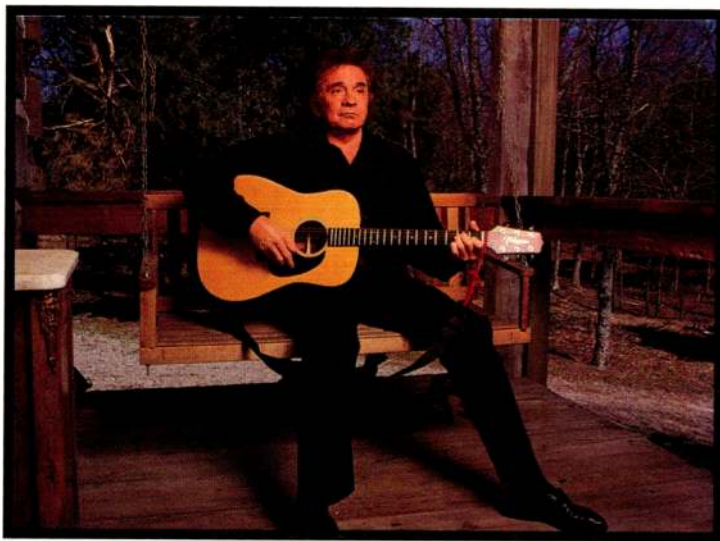
CMM: *When you look back to that period we're talking about on Columbia, which of those albums really stand out for you as complete albums, which are your real favorites?*

CASH: I think artistically it's one that Larry Butler produced called *Any Old Wind That Blows*. But my real favorite is *Ride This Train*. I'm proud of the work I did with Larry Butler, but my all-time favorite producer is Jack Clement; he's like a brother, but he knows me so well it's scary sometimes. I work really good with him, because we work everything out together, even if we have to fight it out, but we always accomplish what we set out to do.

CMM: *Do you have favorites of other peoples' versions of your songs?*

CASH: Yeah, I like The Sweethearts of the Rodeo singing "Get Rhythm." I think those girls are great. I like Collin Raye's version of "Big River." A rock

BETH GWINN



group called One Bad Pig recorded "The Man in Black." (*Laughs.*) It was kinda wild, but it was good. Crystal Gayle's "I Still Miss Someone," she did such a great job on that one; I like the way Rodney Crowell sings that song too. The greatest thing that's been recorded for me is a Rosanne song called "My Old Man." That was a wonderful song.

CMM: *The way you performed in Austin last week, doing a set solo with acoustic guitar and then one with your band, is that the way you intend to work in the immediate future?*

"It's an album I've always wanted to do," says Cash of American Recordings. He first talked about it years ago, with Marty Robbins.

CASH: No. I'm mainly working with June and John Carter and The Carter Family, which is what I'm really comfortable doing. But the shows I'm doing for the record company, I'm working as a solo artist, just me and my guitar, for an hour or so, and then the band comes out and we do 30 or 40 minutes of the old stuff. That was nothing new in Austin, that was like a 50's honky tonk. It was the in-place in Austin, and it was a very exciting night; they were really receptive, and I loved doing that show. I went out and looked at it the day before so I knew what I was getting into.

CMM: *Did you have apprehensions about playing to audiences like that?*

CASH: No, I talked to Rosanne about it. She thought it was the thing to do, but she said be careful. I said, "What do you mean be careful, remember I'm 62, right?" And she said, "No, just don't let them embarrass you." I got to thinking, how could I go wrong by just taking my guitar and singing these songs that I worked on for a year? That's what I did, and the rest of it was songs I been singing for 30 years or more. People always ask, "Do you give your daughter advice?" "No, I ask her advice." Her and Carlene both. They're out there bouncing around the younger generation and know what's going on in that demographic world, and we talk a lot.

CMM: *The funny thing is, in that demographic world, you're playing to a younger audience than they are, in this instance.*

CASH: The other night I told that audience, "I hope you enjoy the show, grandchildren." ■

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Of Travel, Pen Pals and Books

An interesting array of features round out this issue as we ring in the summer of 1994, including some more travel tips. If you do any country music-related travelling this summer, let us know. Did you go to Nashville, see your favorite artist in concert, or visit Branson or any of the country music parks around the country? Write down your experiences, include photos if you can, and share them with other CMSA members here.

Another item of interest in this issue is some more talk about Pen Pals. A member writes in that the section has changed. Despite our stated intentions, she feels that the section has become a personals column. While some romance may occur between correspondents (there's another letter in this issue about

a couple who met through Pen Pals and are now married), our intent remains the same: to provide a way for Society members to correspond about music and other common interests. What happens after that is up to you. We advise caution. But what do you all think? Is the Pen Pals section serving its purpose? Are changes needed? Give us your input.

Reminder: We're updating *The Country Music Encyclopedia* and *The Illustrated History of Country Music*, and need reference copies of the original volumes. So, if you turn in either book, we'll send you a free copy of the new one when it's published (late fall). Send to: *Country Music Magazine*, Book Offer, 329 Riverside Ave., Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include your name and address. Thanks to those who've sent them already!

Updates from the Mailbag

Revisiting topics from Newsletters past.

PEN PALS WED

I want to thank you for your Pen Pals section because, through it, I met the girl of my dreams. She is from Dahlonega, Georgia, and I call her my Georgia Peach. We were married on December 4, 1993. Enclosed is a picture. I've also enclosed a copy of the poem I wrote and read when we exchanged vows. I wanted to share it with you and your readers. Thanks again for a great magazine.

John and Sherri Carter
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Space constraints prevent us from printing John's poem.—Ed.



Sherri and John Carter met in Pen Pals.

COUNTRY RADIO ATLAS UPDATE

The new, 1994 edition of *The Traveler's Country Music Radio Atlas* is out now. It can be ordered for \$4.95 from Hanalei Publishing Company, P.O. Box 369, Port Hueneme, California 93044-0369. See the feature in the March/April 1993 *Newsletter* for complete details on this guide.

NEWS FROM EDDIE G.

Back in November/December, you did an article on my album, *It's Never Too Late*. Well, since then, I've been on the radio here in San Jose, California, and across the country. "Bouquet of Roses" climbed to Number 11 on an independent label chart, and in Denmark, "You'll Never Know" climbed to Number 20. My album is avail-

able from GOJO Productions, 195 S. 26th St., San Jose, CA 95116. CD is \$10.95, cassette \$7.95. Include \$2.00 postage and handling per order. **Eddie "G" Greiner**
San Jose, California

In This Issue

- More Members' Album Picks
- More CMSA Travel Tips
- The Legendary Wilburn Brothers
- Collections and Readers Create

Editor: *George Fletcher*

Executive Editor: *Helen Barnard*

Art Director: *Katheryn Gray*

STRICTLY FOR FUN

I can remember reading somewhere in the CMSA *Newsletter* that Pen Pals is not a dating service and would not be used in that manner. However, this last issue seems to have nothing but men looking for women and vice versa. Why don't you start up a section just for that and leave the Pen Pals section for what it was meant to be: country music fans corresponding with other fans strictly for fun.

Kathleen Chaney

Long Beach, California

Agree with Kathleen? Disagree? Any suggestions? Let us hear from you.—Ed.

More CMSA Travel Tips

Last issue we filled you in on some country music events taking place around the world. Here are a few more ideas, perhaps a little closer to home.

BILLY BOB'S TEXAS

Billy Bob's has become a Fort Worth institution. For 13 years now, visitors to Fort Worth's historic Stockyards have been enjoying food and music at "The World's Largest Honky Tonk." Billy Bob's entertainment complex features 40 bar stations, a 10,000 square-foot dance floor, a huge restaurant serving bar-b-que and more, shops, an arcade and even live bull-riding (none of those mechanical contraptions here). But country fans will be even more impressed with the concert listing: everyone from legendary favorites to fresh-out-of-the-chute newcomers



Look for Country Music on the Air at the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Billy Bob's Texas is the world's largest honky tonk. Alan Jackson and Asleep at the Wheel (that's Ray Benson below) have graced the stage.



have graced the stage at Billy Bob's. Upcoming this summer are John Anderson, Martina McBride, Rick Trevino, Tracy Lawrence, Asleep at the Wheel, Delbert McClinton, The Mavericks and more.

The building that now houses Billy Bob's was once a complex of cattle pens, back in the days when the Stockyards really were just stockyards. (Can anyone guess why the sloped floor in the concert area was built that way to begin with?) The Stockyards have a number of other attractions including a coliseum, museum, river walk, shops, a tourist railroad and even cattle sales (they continue to this day). For concert schedules and other information on Billy Bob's call 817-624-7117. For general information on The Stockyards, call 817-624-4741, or write them at 131 E. Exchange Ave., Suite 116, Fort Worth, Texas 76106.

COUNTRY ON THE AIR

"Country Music On The Air" is the name of a special exhibition at The Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago this summer. Running from June 25th through September 30th, the exhibit will trace the broadcasting history of country music over the last 50 years, from the ABC *Hayloft Hoedown* in 1948, to the *Johnny Cash Show*, *Hee Haw* and *Austin City Limits*, right on through to CMT and

TNN. In addition to the audio and visual exhibits, special seminars and mini-concerts are planned throughout the run. Among those scheduled to appear at the seminars are Ralph Emery, Bill Anderson, Porter Wagoner and Pee Wee King. For exhibit updates, call 312-629-6000.

May 1994 Poll Results

Alan Jackson	<i>A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)</i>
Alan Jackson	<i>"(Who Says) You Can't Have It All"</i>

Not that it should come as any surprise, since he was the cover star of the May/June issue, but Alan Jackson is tops again. For the seventh time in a row, he's got your favorite album. And his current single is your favorite, too. In albums, he is once again followed by George Strait twice—*Pure Country* is second, *Easy Come, Easy Go* is third. Your fourth favorite album is Vince Gill's *I Still Believe in You*. Taking fifth is Dwight Yoakam with *This Time*.

In singles, Alan is followed by Dwight Yoakam, "Try Not to Look So Pretty," in second, and, for the second time, Brooks & Dunn with "Rock My World (Little Country Girl)" in third. Your fourth favorite is Neal McCoy's "No Doubt About It." Fifth is Tim McGraw's "Indian Outlaw."

A Send Off for Wild Rose

Julie Yocum, a member in Mapleton Depot, Pennsylvania, is a big fan of Wild Rose. Since the group has broken up, she wanted to thank them for their music. Herewith, her tribute.

While country music's popularity has exploded in the past several years, and artists are selling millions of records, there has been a downside: With all of the competition for the precious few slots on radio playlists, many talented acts are finding it hard to keep from getting lost in the shuffle. One such act, Wild Rose, fought a hard battle to hang in there, but they've now broken up. What makes this so disturbing is that the five ladies of Wild Rose are some of the most talented musicians in the business, and have such a magical sound and stage show.

Wild Rose came together in 1986 when Wanda Vick recruited four of the best musicians she knew to form a band. That all the members were female was interesting, but it was their musical abilities that made them special. The band consisted of Vick, Pam Gadd, Pam Perry, Kathy Mac and Nancy Given-Prout.

They hit the country scene in 1989 with the Top 15 hit, "Breaking New Ground." Their second single, "Go Down Swinging," fared just as well. They were nominated for a Grammy in 1991 for Best Country Instrumental Performance for the song "Wild Rose." Then the Academy of Country Music nominated them for Best New Group.

Things were going well, then suddenly they were no longer heard on radio. Their third single, the beautiful ballad, "Where Did We Go Wrong," didn't get added at many of the big stations for whatever reason, and didn't chart well. It was over four months before Capitol released another single, and by then the momentum at radio was gone and many new acts had hit the scene. The band put out several more singles, but just couldn't break through again. By late 1991, Capitol Records began trimming its huge roster, and Wild Rose was one of several talented acts that suddenly found themselves without a recording contract.

There were a lot of great times in between their first big hit and the end of Wild Rose. They toured heavily and built a loyal following of devoted fans. Their concerts consisted of great picking, lots of energy, emotion-packed singing, beautiful harmonies and lost of fun! Those of us who did experience their music will never forget how wonderful they were, and will always cherish their three albums.

**Julie Yocum
Mapleton Depot, Pennsylvania**

Readers Create

The Tale of the Farmer

Charles Mathers, a member from Charlevoix, Michigan, says he appreciates Willie Nelson's dedication to the farmers of the United States. Says Charles, "I'm a long standing fan of Willie and would like to dedicate this song I have written to him and his Farm Aid program. The farmers need an advocate to publicize their plight." Charles' saga song is below.

The City Came To Me

I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me,
The buildings sprang up around me,
as far as you can see.

I like country living,
That's what is real to me,
Being a city slicker,
Don't appeal to me,
I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me.

Now there is this old pig farmer,
Who lives down the road a spell,
It seems his neighbors have been bitching,
And complaining about the smell.

A lawyer came to see him the other day,
He told him he would have to move,
When the lawyer got all through talking,
The old farmer laid it right in the groove.

He said, "I'm not gonna stand here bickerin',
about who likes who the worst,
We're not moving, fact is fella,
Me and my pigs were here first.

Now if you don't like the smell,
I guess you'll have to lump it,
See that four-foot fence yonder,
With a little help from old betsy here,
I'm bettin' you can jump it."

I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me,
The buildings sprang up around me,
as far as you can see.

I like country living,
That's what is real to me,
Being a city slicker,
Don't appeal to me,
I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me.

This old moonshiner I knew,
Was living on a prime piece of land,
A big land developer tried to run him off,
And when the moonshiner took his stand.



Aaron Inspires

Lisa LaCombe counts Aaron Tippin and Mike Reid as her favorites. The Grandview, Missouri, resident not only drew Tippin, but also wrote a poem about him. Space prevents us from printing it all, but here are a few lines:

*Wheel in Motion
into the center
of light
he
strides with a purpose
long hair flying
wild embers
dancing
in his eyes*

The battle that resulted
Was the likes you've never seen before,
the hills rang with gunfire,
It was right next to a third world war.

The fight didn't last all that long,
And when the battle was over,
The developers that didn't have the sense to
run,
Are in a field somewhere pushing up dover.

The way I see it, it's their own darn fault,
They should have had more sense,
I ain't seen a developer yet,
That can jump a four-foot fence.

I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me,
The buildings sprang up around me,
as far as you can see.

I like country living,
That's what is real to me,
Being a city slicker,
Don't appeal to me,
I didn't move to the city,
The city came to me.

—Charles Mathers



Young Readers' Corner

Younger CMSA members continue to send in a wide variety of drawings of their favorite stars. Two talented teens this time out are 13-year-old Tanya Maurice who drew Marty Stuart, left, and 14-year-old Joe Baker who sends his take on Garth Brooks (right). Tanya's from Chilliwack, British Columbia, in western Canada and says that she and her mother are both big fans of Marty Stuart. Joe Baker is from Hamilton, Ohio—not far from Cincinnati—and says he loves Garth Brooks' music.

Collecting the Magazine

Members help each other complete their magazine collections.

•Country magazines for sale. State interests. Four-page list available. Two stamps. **Rick J. Cunningham, Box 661-C, Somersworth, NH 03878-0661**

•To sell: complete years of *Country Song Roundup* magazine, '79-'84. No individual issues, sell complete years or make offer on entire collection. SASE to: **Round-up Office, c/o 214 3rd Ave, Columbus, TX 78934.**

•For sale: issues of *Country Music Magazine*, a few 1973, some 1976-'83, all from '84 to present. Also have *Music City News*, 1986 to present, others such as *Country America*, *Country Rhythms*. Send want list/SASE. \$1.00 each, includes postage. **Doris E. Boutin, RFD 2, Box 361, Woodsville, NH 03785.**

•For sale: various issues of *Country Music Magazine*, *Country Song Roundup*, *Country America*, *Country Fever*, *Music City News*, *American Country*. Also articles, photos, posters at reasonable prices. **Sarah Zahm, 4060 9 Mile Rd., Sparta, MI 49345.**

•For sale: *Country Music*, *Country Music USA*, Modern Screen's *Country Music Stars*. Also, albums and other memorabilia I have collected from 1960's through present. Lots of Strait, Garth, Elvis and other stars of yesterday and today. Old sheet music available. Send two .29 stamps for detailed list and prices. **Cheryl Simkins, 4707 E. Oak St. #5, Phoenix, AZ 85008.**

•I have about 235 magazines (1965-1980) for sale. Will sell one or all. Also pin-back buttons. I have list or send want list and #10 SASE. **Dean Paris, 1004 E. Front St., Bloomington, IL 61701**

Information, Please

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

•Looking for an album, *The Best of Johnny Rodriguez*, released in 1980 by Lake Shore Music and sold on TV. Also need an RVS black satin fur jacket, size XL. **Carol J. Scheffler, Rte. 2, Box 157-C, Newman Grove, NE 68758.**

•Looking for Garth Brooks key chains, especially *Ropin' the Wind*. Garth is wearing a blue and black striped shirt. Have *The Chase* and *In Pieces* key chains. **Laurie L. Janiak, 2300 S. 12th Ave., N. Riverside, IL 60546.**

•For sale: large collection of Mickey Gilley, Charly McClain, The Judds, Lee Greenwood albums. Send want list and phone number to **John Kalinsky, 208 2nd St., Niceville, FL 32578.**

•I'm looking for anything and everything on Aaron Tippin. Will pay reasonable price. Send list and prices to **Paula Shafer, Box 125, New Point, IN 47263.**

•Strait fans! Must share my vast collection of George Strait memorabilia with you! I've collected since 1985 and have many out-of-print publications, albums and photos for sale. Have some duplicates in mint condition. I have protected each magazine and album and all pictures with great care. Send two .29 stamps and your address for list and prices. **Cheryl Simkins, 4707 E. Oak St. #5, Phoenix, AZ 85008.**

•Wanted: old Emmylou Harris fan club newsletters, photos, video VHS (especially *Austin City Limits*). Would like to hear from other fans, also members of current fan club in Louisville, KY. **Devin Allen, Box 8535, Reno, NV 89507-8535.**

•Howdy! Looking for all C.W. McCall albums, except *The Real McCall*, *Four Wheel Cowboy* and *Greatest Hits*. I have looked for several years. Will pay reasonable price for his other albums (early 70's). Any format. **Jeff Norman, P.O. Box 222, Switz City, IN 47465.**

•Wanted: anything on George Jones. Will pay reasonable price. He's my favorite country singer and always will be. I would like to get whatever I can on him. **Tracy Blue, 600 Woodland Dr., Rolla, MO 65401**

•Wanted: any and everything concerning George Strait. Will pay reasonable price. I have some great pictures of Clint, RVS, Alan Jackson and others from Fan Fair '93 and concerts that I will swap with you. **Barbara Pollan, Rte. 1, Box 22, Pittsboro, MS 38951**

•Wanted: VHS tape of *Family Feud* game shows featuring Mandrells, Statlers and Brenda Lee. **Celeste Barfield, P.O. Box 1645, Dillon, SC 29536.**

•Wanted: Desperately seeking life-sized cardboard cut-out of Merle Haggard advertising George Dickel whiskey. Pay up to \$100 if excellent condition. **Vicki Beck, Box 4327, Helena, MT 59604.**

•For sale: ACM Country Classics cards, posters of country artists, albums, more. SASE for list. **Cynthia Lockie, 307 Waterside Dr., Little Ferry, NJ 07643.**

•Wanted: Conway Twitty memorabilia such as candid photos, videos, live albums, interviews, tapes, etc. Looking for pen pals who are true, devoted fans of his. Conway fans only, please. I'm 39. Also sell candid photos of the stars. **Leslie Gardner, 7533 Madora Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91306.**

•Wanted: pictures and articles of George Strait, 1981-86, and also of his family. I'd really like to see a picture of Jennifer. If you have any of these for a reasonable price, please write. **Melanie Unruh, Rte. 2, Box 74, Galva, KS 67443.**

•Looking for photos, articles, anything pertaining to Marty Stuart. Will trade photos, posters, articles of Lorrie Morgan, Billy Ray Cyrus, Tracy Lawrence. **Janet Simpson, P.O. Box 503, Roseboro, NC 28382.**

•Looking for Vince Gill memorabilia, especially early albums *Turn Me Loose*, *The Things That Matter*, *The Way Back Home* and others on CD, cassette or both. Also, photos, Barbara Walters interview and other VHS tapes, posters, T-shirts, autographs, articles on Vince, fan club items on Vince or Sweethearts of the Rodeo.

Also wanted: CMA, ACM, TNN awards shows on VHS and *Grammy's Greatest Moments* (aired 1/5/94 on CBS), and *CMT Year-End Countdown* (aired 1/5/94 on TNN). Country Gold trading cards also wanted. Reasonable price will be paid and blank VHS tape sent if needed. **Tammy Needham, 16619 C.R. 144, Kenton, OH 43326.**

•Fan club newsletters for sale or trade: **Tritt, Little Texas, John M. Montgomery, Trisha, Reba, Hal Ketchum, Sammy**

Kershaw, Alan Jackson, Aaron Tippin, Billy Dean, Lorrie Morgan, Wynonna, Mark Chesnut, Tracy Lawrence, Steve Wariner, Mark Collie, Sawyer Brown, Brooks & Dunn, Michelle Wright, Holly Dunn, Doug Supernaw and Billy Ray Cyrus. For complete list, mention your favorites and send SASE. **L. Douglas, P.O. Box 4976, Huntsville, AL 35815.**

•Wanted: videotape of an *Austin City Limits* show that George Strait did sometime in the fall of 1988 or 1989. He sang "Milkcow Blues," "Lovesick Blues," etc. Thanks. **Gloria Brown, RR#1, Box 17, Oswego, KS 67356.**

•For sale or trade: 2500 mint country LP's (many autographed), also autographed photos, T-shirts and magazines with your favorites on the cover. Send SASE and want list with three loose .29 stamps for reply. Serious buyers only, please. **Tom Weaver, 406 Winston Ave., Wilmington, DE 19804-1855.**

•Recently Waylon Jennings hosted *Music City Tonight* on TNN with Lorianne Crook. If anyone made a VHS tape, I'd love to have a copy. **Lotus Roberts, Rte. 4, Box 88, Harrison, AR 72601**

•Dolly fans, please help. Want these shows on VHS. I'll send VHS tape, pay postage and no more than \$3.00 a show. All episodes of Dolly's variety show, '87 ABC, all appearances on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson (his last with Dolly especially) or with Jay Leno, *Late Night* with *David Letterman*, *Joan Rivers Show*, *Regis & Kathy Lee*, awards shows, etc. **A Country Music Celebration** tribute to Dolly and anything else. Send list/prices to **Tim Kisling, Rte. 1, Box 126, McGaheysville, VA 22840.**

•Wanted: anything on Patsy Cline, Jim Reeves and Tammy Wynette. Will pay reasonable price. Would like to hear from other Patsy, Jim and Tammy fans. **Robert L. Chudicek, 117 Northview Cr., Beaver, PA 15009.**

•Close-up concert photos of many country artists: Reba, RVS, Marty, Judds, Conway, Lorrie, Tanya, Loveless and many more. Send .29 stamp for list. **Richard D. Moore, 20 Maple St., Hopedale, MA 01747.**

•For sale: large collection of radio station country shows, live concerts and interviews from the early 1980's. Artists include Gatlins, Hank Jr., Alabama, Statlers, Oaks with Golden, Sylvia, Kenny Rogers and others.

Also have Elvis 45's, EP's and albums (some rare). For a list, send name of artist you are interested in and SASE. **Steve O'Leary, 8487 Farley, Overland Park, KS 66212.**

•For sale: concert and offstage photos of all your favorite performers 1970-1994. I also have a large collection of LP's, magazines, posters etc. Send SASE for my latest list. **Galen Duncan, 3517 Grier Nursery Rd., Street, MD 21154.**

•Wanted: pictures, T-shirts, anything on Confederate RR. **Loretta Merricks, Rte. 2, Box 285, Evergreen MHP, Lynchburg, VA 24501**

•Desperately in search of CD or LP covers only of The Judds' albums. Have for sale or trade: cassettes, CD's, articles, pin-ups, posters, trading cards, etc. Also looking for photos on The Judds/Wynonna, etc. Send SASE for list. **Kevin Abercrombie, 30345 Chualar**

Cyn Rd., Chualar, CA 93925.

•Senior citizen looking for someone 20-45 years of age to pass on history of country music artists from 1898-1950. If you want to find out who cut the road for younger artists, first words spoken into the phonograph, first man to sing over the air in 1915 in country music and hear the first broadcast of the Nashville Barn Dance along with history before 1900, write. You can have the story of Nipper on RCA records.

I can only take two or three to correspond with. I have a list of over 200 names artists went by. Have been interested in country music since 1930. **Albert Shewmaker, 8221 Rustoak Ln., Louisville, KY 40219.**

•For sale or trade: Classic Country trading cards, CMA Country Gold trading cards; 1992 editions. Will sell complete (new) sets in covers or individual cards. Write for info. Send SASE to **Brenda Dungan, 4010 Maxwell Pl., Colorado Springs, CO 80909.**

•For sale: Reba's *Heart to Heart* cassette. Reba's newsletter stated that it is a collector's item because it is no longer being made and has sold for as much as \$400.00. Still in wrapper, make best offer. **Shelynn Kelly, 1711 Hwy. 77 N., Perry, OK 73077-2444.**

•For sale: onstage/offstage photos of many of your favorite country stars. Send SASE for list and prices. Also, list your favorites. **Laura Messina, 405 Main Ave., Clifton, NJ 07014.**

•Wanted: VHS copy of televised Grand Ole Opry 67th anniversary show. Aired in '92. Hosted by Porter Wagoner, guests included Shelly West. Will pay reasonable price. **John Schroeder, 500 Josephine #13, Billings, MT 59105.**

•For sale: two sets of Country Gold cards, one set of Country Classic cards. Also, one set Elvis cards, complete set. Also, cards for trade: Elvis, Country Gold, Country Classic, Branson and more. **Trecia Floyd, R #2, Box 61-B3, Monticello, KY 42633.**

•Wanted: VHS tape of Waylon Jennings' shows on ABC, October 23, 1980, from Phoenix, AZ, and Red Rock Amphitheater in Denver, CO, with James Garner and Jessi Colter. Also, have misplaced my copy of CMM with Waylon 20 Questions feature. Anything on Waylon wanted. **Charles S. Whitaker, P.O. Box 19133, Asheville, NC 28815.**

•For sale: Loretta Lynn albums, Decca and MCA, including *Before I'm Over You* and *Songs From My Heart*. One with Ernest Tubb and some with Conway. SASE for list and prices. **Anne Bolyard, Rte. 1, Box 386, Thornton, WV 26440.**

•Wanted: Kevin Welch tapes or CD's. Will pay reasonable price. Send price list, or please tell me where I can find them. **Richard Bennett, 128 George St., Spotswood, NJ 08884.**

•Wanted: anything and everything on Roy Acuff or Minnie Pearl: records, Opry programs, live performances, memorabilia, videos.

Especially want VHS copy of Minnie's 50th Anniversary special on TNN; Minnie's TNN award 1989; NBC tribute to Roy around 1982. Will pay reasonable price. **Craig Davis, Rt. 2, Box 129, Miami, OK 74354.**

Atlanta Housewife Investigated And Almost Arrested For Losing 73 Pounds

By Kathleen Ann Muldowney

Did you ever notice that when you're fat, people actually stare at you while you eat. It's as if they want to tap you on the shoulder and say, "If you wouldn't eat that stuff, you wouldn't be so fat!"

Hello. My name is Kate Muldowney. You don't know me from Adam. But I'm a real person. I live near Sandy Springs, Georgia. And, up until two years ago, I was the fat lady that everyone was staring at.

I was too tired to go out with my friends at night. I was even embarrassed to go out on weekends by myself. I waddled when I walked. I sweat when I ate. I wore anything loose that would hang straight down and wouldn't cling. I couldn't even cross my legs. I wasn't just "overweight." I was fat. I was 5'4" and weighed 202 pounds.

I went to my doctor for help. But I wasn't optimistic. During the past seven years I had tried 16 *different* diets. One by one. And I failed at all of them.

My doctor listened to me very carefully and then recommended an entirely different program. This wasn't a "diet." It was a unique new weight-loss program researched by a team of bariatric physicians — specialists who treat the severely obese. The program itself was developed by Dr. James Cooper of Atlanta, Georgia.

I started the program on May 17th. Within the first four days, I only lost three pounds. So I was disappointed. But during the three weeks that followed, my weight began to drop. Rapidly. Within the next 196 days, I went from 202 pounds to 129 pounds.

The reason the program worked was simple: I was *always* eating.

I could eat *six times every day*. So I never felt deprived. Never hungry. I could snack in the afternoon. Snack before dinner. I could even snack at night while I was watching TV.

How can you eat so much and still lose weight?

The secret is not in the amount of food you eat. It's in the *prescribed combination* of foods you eat in each 24-hour period. Nutritionally dense portions of special fiber, unrefined carbohydrates, and certain proteins that generate a calorie-burning process that continues all day long ... a complete 24-hour fat-reduction cycle.

Metabolism is evened out, so fat is burned away around the clock. Not just in unhealthy spurts like many diets. That's why it lets you shed pounds so easily. Without hunger. Without nervousness.

And it's all good wholesome food. No weird stuff. You'll enjoy a variety of meats, chicken, fish, vegetables, potatoes, pasta, sauces — plus your favorite snacks. Lots of snacks.

This new program must be the best kept secret in America. Because, up until now, it's *only been available to doctors*. No one else. In fact, the Clinic-30 Program has been used by 142 doctors in the U.S. and Canada to treat more than 9,820 patients. So it's doctor-tested. And proven. This is the first time it's been available to the public.

There are other benefits too ...

- There are no amphetamines. No drugs of any kind.
- No pills. No powders. No chalky-tasting drinks to mix. Everything's at your local supermarket. No special foods to buy.
- There's no strenuous exercise program.
- You don't count calories. Just follow the program. It's easy.
- It's low in sodium, so you don't hold water.
- You eat the foods you really enjoy. Great variety. Great taste.
- You can dine out.
- There's no ketosis. No bad breath odor.

But *here's* the best part ...

Once you lose the weight, you can keep it off. Permanently! Because you're not hungry all the time.

Let's face it. We all have "eating lifestyles." Our eating habits usually include three meals a day. Plus two or three snacks. We all love snacks. Especially at night.

But most diets force us to change all that.

And that's why they fail!

The Clinic-30 Program lets you *continue your normal eating lifestyle*. You can eat six times a day. You can snack when you wish. So, when you lose the weight, you can keep it off. For good. Because no one's forcing you to change.

Here are some other patients from Georgia who entered Dr. Cooper's Clinic-30 Program with me ...

- Reverend Donald F. is a 42-year-old minister who went from 227 to 179 in just four months.

"In spite of church suppers, I've lost almost 50 pounds in four months and I'm not having a rebound gain."

- Renate M. was a G.I. bride from Germany who went from 212 to 140.2 in 8½ months.

"I believe I was a participant in every weight-reducing plan there ever was. Then, about two years ago, I started the Clinic-30 Program. And I haven't regained a pound."

And then there's me. About 4 months ago I was stopped by a policeman for not using my turning signal. When he looked at my driver's license he claimed it wasn't mine. He said it had someone else's picture on it.

After he called for a computer check, he came back to the car smiling. "You must have lost a lot of weight. This picture doesn't even look like you." I agreed. In a way, it was one of the nicest "warnings" I'd ever received.

Obviously, I'm excited about the program. This is the first time it's been available outside of a clinical setting. Dr. Cooper has asked Green Tree Press, Inc. to distribute it.

We'll be happy to send you the program to examine for 31 days. Show it to your doctor. Try it. There's *no obligation*. In fact, your check won't be cashed for 31 days. You may even postdate it 31 days in advance if you wish.

Choose a day and start the program. If you don't begin losing weight within five days — and continue losing weight — we'll promptly return your *original uncashed check*. No delays. No excuses.

Or keep it longer. Try it for six months. Even then, if you're not continuing to lose weight on a regular basis, you'll receive a full refund. Promptly. And without question. This is the fairest way we know to prove to you how well this new program works.

To order, just send your name, address and postdated check for \$12.95 (plus \$3.00 shipping/handling) to The Clinic-30 Program, c/o Green Tree Press, Inc., Dept. 650, 3603 West 12th Street, Erie, PA 16505.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

As your weight begins to drop, do not allow yourself to become too thin.

It's also very important to consult your physician before commencing any weight-loss program. Show him this program. And be sure to see him periodically if you intend to take off large amounts of weight.

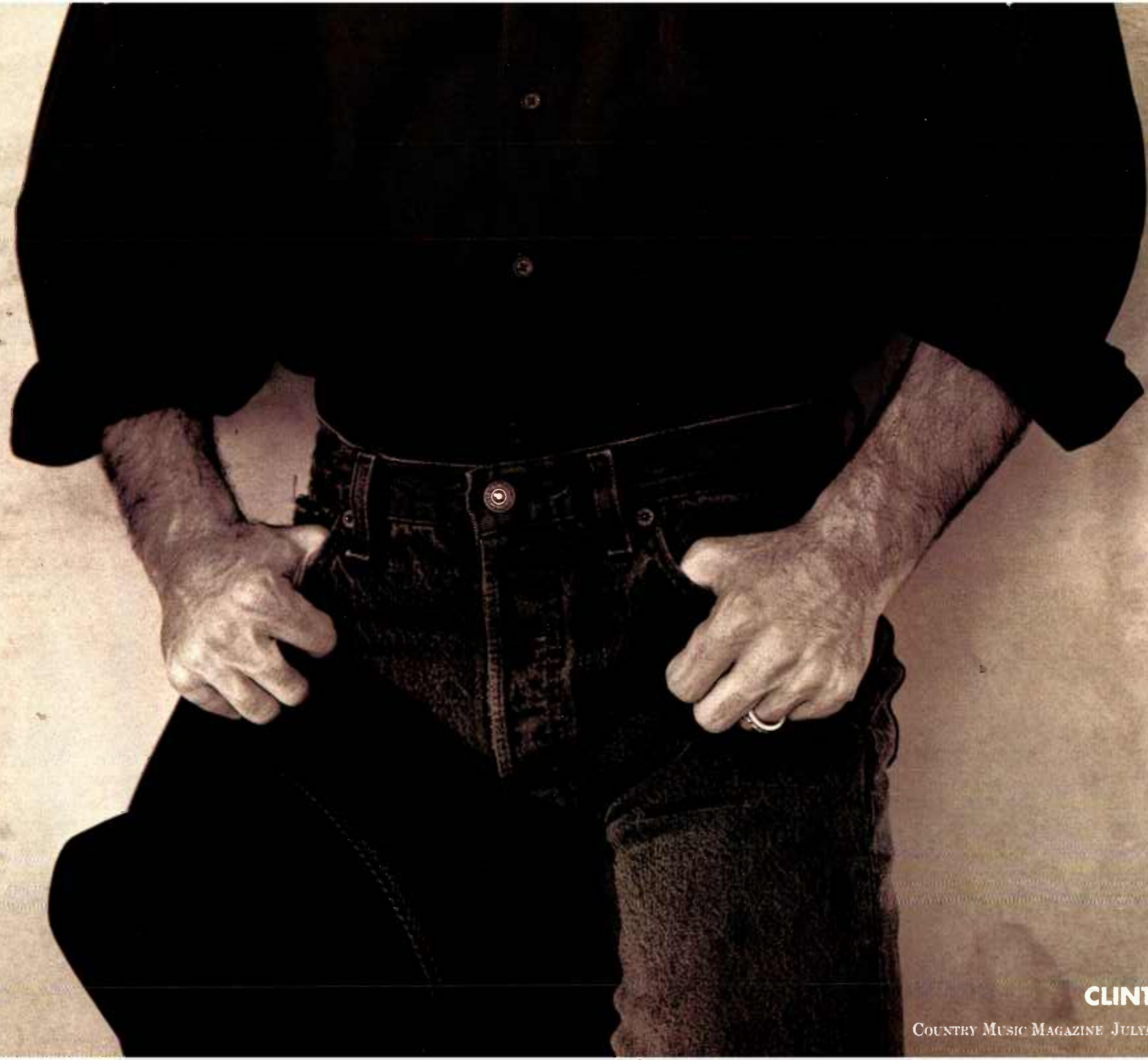
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COUNTRYMUSIC



World Radio History



CLINT BLACK

COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE JULY/AUGUST 1994

CLINT BLACK

Facts of Life

Personal Data

Birthdate: February 4, 1962
Birthplace: Long Branch, New Jersey
Hometown: Houston, Texas
Family: Wife, Lisa Hartman-Black
Current Residence: Nashville, Tennessee
Leisure Activities: Being together with Lisa (since their schedules are so hectic); motorcycles; playing with his dog, Cole.
Early Influences: Merle Haggard, James Taylor, Kenny Loggins, Jimmy Buffet, Timothy B. Schmitt
Instruments: guitar, harmonica, drums

Vital Statistics

Height: 5'9"
Weight: 155 pounds
Color of Hair: Brown
Color of Eyes: Green

Recording Career

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

Albums:

<i>Killin' Time</i>	1989**
<i>Put Yourself in My Shoes</i>	1991**
<i>The Hard Way</i>	1992**
<i>No Time to Kill</i>	1993**

***The Hard Way* and *No Time to Kill* are certified platinum. *Killin' Time* and *Put Yourself in My Shoes* are certified double platinum.

Clint's next album is due out in October.

Singles:

"A Better Man"*
 "Killin' Time"*
 "Nobody's Home"*
 "Walking Away"*
 "Nothing's News"*
 "Put Yourself in My Shoes"
 "Loving Blind"*
 "One More Payment"
 "Where Are You Now"*
 "Hold On Partner" (with Roy Rogers)



"We Tell Ourselves"*
 "Burn One Down"*
 "When My Ship Comes In"*
 "A Bad Goodbye" (with Wynonna)
 "No Time to Kill"*
 "State of Mind"
 "Good Run of Bad Luck"*
 "Half the Man"
 *Number One single

Recording Points of Interest

• Although they weren't officially released as singles, "This Nightlife" (from *Put Yourself in My Shoes*) and "Desperado" (Clint's contribution to *Common Thread*, the recent multi-artist tribute album to The Eagles) both received significant radio airplay and made the charts.
 • Clint was the first artist to score five Number One singles from a debut album, according to *Radio & Records*.

Videos:

"A Better Man"
 "Killin' Time"
 "Walking Away"
 "Put Yourself in My Shoes"
 "Loving Blind"
 "We Tell Ourselves"
 "When My Ship Comes In"
 "A Bad Goodbye" (with Wynonna)
 "State of Mind"
 "Good Run of Bad Luck"

Awards

1989: CMA Horizon Award

1990: CMA Male Vocalist of the Year/
 American Music Awards Favorite New Artist/ACM Album of the Year (*Killin' Time*), Single of the Year, ("A Better Man"). Top Male Vocalist, Top New Male Vocalist/TNN-*Music City News* Awards Star of Tomorrow, Album of the Year (*Killin' Time*)/NSAI Songwriter of the Year

Current Events

Clint received the Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Music and Performing Arts Unit of B'nai B'rith in June of this year. He has a role in the movie, *Maverick*, and recently collaborated with Billy Joel on "Light as the Breeze," a tribute to Leonard Cohen.

Fan Club

Membership in the Clint Black Fan Club includes a membership card, signed color photo, tour itineraries, five newsletters per year, fan club button, merchandise offers, preference seating (at most shows) and an after-show pass (not available at all shows, restrictions apply). To join, send check or money order for \$15 to Clint Black Fan Club, P.O. Box 299386, Houston, Texas 77299.

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 16 and under.

•Hi. My name is Patti. I'm 29 years old and a single mother of three. My favorites are Dwight Yoakam, Brooks & Dunn, Suzy Bogguss and George Strait. I like to read, fish, ride on Harleys, be outside with my kids. Would like to hear from anyone. **Patty Forrester, P.O. Box 206, Decatur, NE 68020.**

•Hello! I'm a 40-year-old single mom who loves country music! Favorites are Vince, Trisha, Mary-Chapin and Hal Ketchum. Interests are camping, sewing and genealogy. Would like to hear from guys and gals from all over. **Jeanie Klinker, 113 Appleton St., Menasha, WI 54952-3117.**

•Hi! I'm 21 and single. Country music and country living are my life. Favorites are Reba, George Strait, Ronna Reeves, Garth, Alabama and more. Hobbies include outdoors, animals and writing letters. Would like to hear from gals 18 and up, especially single. But will answer all. **Brad Hahn, P.O. Box 183, Black Creek, WI 54106.**

•Hi, I'm a 38-year-old divorced lady. I love country music and would love to hear from you. My favorites are Travis Tritt, Confederate RR, Dwight, George Jones, Gary Stewart and many more. Also love horses, dancing and quiet, cozy evenings. Will answer all. **Loretta A. Merricks, Rt. 2, Box 285, Evergreen MHP, Lynchburg, VA 24501**

•I am a 73-year-old widow who would like to have a pen pal. I've always loved country music. Used to listen to the Opry on the radio when I was a young girl. I thought Mr. Acuff was a wonderful man. I liked Hank Williams, Willie and Waylon. I like a lot of the new singers: Alan, Clint and Vince. Hope someone will write to me. I get lonely sometimes and would love to get letters. Be glad to write to anyone, man or woman. Thank you. **Christine Spurlock, RR 2, Box 253A, Manchester, KY 40962.**

•Hi! I'm a 19-year-old college sophomore studying anthropology. I love country music. Some favorites are Garth, Alabama, Travis Tritt, Alan, Trisha, Billy Ray, Aaron Tippin and more. Enjoy reading, the outdoors, fishing, travel and writing and receiving letters. I'll try to answer everyone. No inmates, please. **Tanya Eicher, 1342 Asbury Dr., New Haven, IN 46774.**

•31-year-old female who loves all country music and likes to have pen pals. Please write and let's see if I can find a few pen pal friends. Will answer all. **Ivy Lehr, 107 Runnels, Willis, TX 77378.**

•I'm 24 and looking for some new pen pals. I'm especially crazy about George Strait, but also enjoy Sammy Kershaw, Mark Collie, Mark Chesnutt and Doug Stone. Hobbies include reading, collecting porcelain dolls and collecting country music tapes. Looking forward to hearing from pen pals from across the U.S. I'll answer as many as possible. No inmates, please. **Rochelle Fager, 15 Elm**

Court, Bolingbrook, IL 60440-1929.

•Hi! I'm 21 and single with no children. I have lots of favorite artists, but at the very top of my list is Ricky Lynn Gregg. Love to hear from country music fans, especially those who love RLG. Also love to hear from Native Americans, those interested in Native American culture and animal lovers, males or females any age. No inmates, please. **Donna M. Fuller, 22301 Wyldwood Dr., Little Rock, AR 72210.**

•Hi! My name is Etta. Love country music, lots of hobbies. Love to travel. I'm 63 and a widow. Love George Strait, Sammy Kershaw and Billy Ray. Men and women write. No inmates, please. **Etta McCarty, 2544 Gideon Ave., Zion, IL 60099-2534.**

•Hello! I'm a 20-year-old, single female. Faves are Garth, Reba, Martina McBride, Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, John Michael Montgomery. Love to hear from guys and gals all over, any age. Hope to hear from you soon! **Crystal Norris, 847 West Washington St., James, MO 65559.**

•Howdy! My name is Mary. I'm an 18-year-old, single female. I love country music. Looking for a few pen pals, especially guys. Travis Tritt is my favorite! **Mary A. Taylor, 19248 Sumpter Rd., Belleville, MI 48111.**

•Hi, I am 25 years old. I love country music. Some favorites are Alabama, George Strait, Lorrie Morgan, Confederate RR and Travis Tritt, plus more. I'd like to hear from anyone between the ages of 20-35. No inmates, please. **Lisa Badger, Box 144, Atwood, IL 61913.**

•Hi there. I'm a 36-year-old, single man who loves country music. My absolute favorite is Loretta! I also like Tammy, Dolly, Kitty, Dottie, Alan Jackson, Conway Twitty, Connie Smith and a lot of the older artists. Would like to hear from anyone who likes these artists, especially Loretta! **Lenny Mattison, RR #1, Box 63A, Parish, NY 13331**

•Hi! I would love to hear from anyone who likes newcomer Daron Norwood. Will answer all. **Shelia Morgan, P.O. Box 8095, Greenville, SC 29604.**

•Hi! I'm 31, happily married and "mom" to two silly dobermans. I like all music (especially country) old and new. Too many favorites to mention. Interests include reading, writing and receiving long letters, traveling, snow, comedy movies, fishing, NFL (49ers!). I'll welcome all letters from anyone, male or female, any age. So c'mon and write me! No inmates, please. **Debbie Ballard, 112 Fern Lea Cir., Bardstow, KY 40004.**

•Hi, country fans. I'm 18 and would love to hear from cowboys and cowgirls and anyone in the military. I love country music, old and new, and meeting new people. Write me and I'll write you! Hope to hear from you soon! **Brenda Gail Bennett, 2033 Spanish Trail, Irving, TX 75060-7340.**

•30-something. Faves are BRC, Marty, Lorrie, Reba. Other interests: stamp collecting, collecting unicorns (ceramic or other material), concerts, taking pictures. Interested in corresponding with people all over, any age. **Debi Fowler, P.O. Box 1044, Tucker, GA 30085-1044.**

•Hi, I'm a 15-year-old girl who loves country music. Favorites are Little

Texas, Diamond Rio and Travis Tritt. Like to hear from males 16-19 years of age. No inmates, please. **Nicole Passmore, 26302 S. Judy Cr., Brownstown, MI 48174.** Nicole has a parent's permission to participate in Pen Pals.—Ed.

•Hi, I'm 25 years old and single, no children. Looking for male country fans, 24-35 years old, who love country music as much as I do. My favorites are Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, Alan Jackson, Randy Travis. **Linda Lewis, 8505 Linda Cir., Catlettsburg, KY 41129-8745.**

•Hi! I'm 18 years old, and I just switched back to country music. Favorites are Alabama and Reba. Enjoy Trisha, Tanya and more. I like baseball, favorites are Colorado Rockies and Minnesota Twins. Enjoy the Olympics, both summer and winter. I would love to hear from pen pals all over the world, any age. Will answer all letters, but, please, no inmates. **Mindy Giles, 214 Dotson Lane, Church Hill, TN 37642.**

•Hi, I'm a 34-year-old truck driver who loves c&w music, outdoors and camping. Like to hear from single ladies who might be interested in going to Jamboree in the Hills and would like to correspond with someone who travels between OH and MA. **Brian Lechleider, 615 Chester Ave., Riverside, NJ 08075.**

•I am a 57-year-old widow. I love country music. Favorites are Alan Jackson, Vince, Reba and many more. I like to read, crafts and writing letters. Please fill my mailbox. No inmates, please. **Darlene Livingston, 124 East Main St. #25, New Hampton, IA 50659.**

•Hi, I'm 38 years old and single. I enjoy country music and going to concerts. I have too many favorites to list. Like to hear from you. No inmates, please. Enjoy outdoors and the country. **Clarence Stapleton, P.O. Box 308, Mapleton Depot, PA 17052-0308.**

•Howdy! My name is Sarah Smith. I'm 15 years old. My favorites are Mark Chesnutt, George Strait, Chris LeDoux and Randy Travis. Looking for female pen pals, any age. No inmates, please. **Sarah Smith, 1632 Woodworth, Modesto, CA 95351.** Sarah has a parent's permission to participate in Pen Pals.—Ed.

•Howdy. I am 17 and single. I live at home with my mom and animals. I have two dogs, two cats and one fish. My faves are Vince, Doug, John, Billy Ray and a whole lot more. Hobbies are horseback riding, fishing, collecting stubs from concerts, plus more. Please write back, boy or girl. No inmates, please. Thanks! **Andrea Goble, P.O. Box 297864, Columbus, OH 43229-7884.**

•Hi, I'm a single female, 29 years old with a dog. I like most kinds of music—country, pop and rock. Favorite artists are Billy Ray, Alabama, Lee Greenwood, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Michael Bolton, Richard Marx and Janet Jackson. I like to read, watch movies and listen to music. Will answer all. **Beverly Thompson, 354 Berry St., Chase City, VA 23924.**

•Hello, I'm 35, single and would like to hear from females 20-35. Favorites include Statlers, Ray Stevens, Reba, Johnny Cash. I also enjoy reading, watching videos, travel. No inmates, please. **Joe Carey, 210 Oakmanor Wy.,**

Walkersville, MD 21793.

•Hello. I'm a female, 36, with two children, three birds and a man friend. Looking for pen pals who like Garth, Clint, Reba, Trisha, Sammy Kershaw and others artists. Also like Kenny G., Mozart and Michael Bolton. Interests are politics, health issues, reading, movies and writing. Welcome letters from caring, honest and fun men/women, 30-45. **Lorraine Buskey, P.O. Box 221435, Anchorage, AK 99522-1435.**

•Hiya! I'm 33, married with one child. I am one of the biggest Vince Gill fans... but also like Doug Stone, Clint and others! Would love to hear from and correspond with other Vince fans, but will answer all. No inmates, please. Interests include rug making, bartending and driving my truck. **Leanne Andrews, 3549 Esplanade Rd., Sp. 320, Chico, CA 95926.**

•Hi. I'm 40 years young and love country music. I collect autographed pictures of the stars. Would love to hear from you. **Randy L. Harris, Rt. 6, Box 95, Advance, NC 27006.**

•Hi! I'm 12 and in 6th grade. I love animals and most kinds of music, but my favorite is country (and Travis Tritt). I'm looking for pen pals 15 and under and would especially like to find a friend from another country. **Iris West, 120 E. Palm St., Roadhouse, IL 62082.** Iris has a parent's permission to participate in Pen Pals.—Ed.

•I am 17 years old and would love to hear from males and females, 16-25. My favorites are all country singers, but I am dead set for Alabama, George Strait and Vince Gill. No inmates, please. **Johna Brittain, Route 5, Box 542, Murray, KY 42071.**

•Hi! I'm an 18-year-old country girl. Fan of George Strait and Chris LeDoux. Hobbies include rodeos and dancing. Born and raised in CO, would love to hear from real cowboys in or around my home state, ages 18-25. No inmates please. **Erin Corley, 4611 Moffat Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80915.**

•Aspiring cartoonist wishes for pen pals. Be my country critic! Write **Brenda Stueve, P.O. Box 9413, San Bernardino, CA 92427.**

•Hi, I am an 18-year-old college student. I love country music. My favorite is Clint. Others are Garth, Vince, Little Texas, Wynonna, Alan Jackson. Love to hear from country fans, male or female. No inmates, please. **Heather Koons, RR3, Box 240, Felton, PA 17322.**

•Hi. I'm 37, married and have a 10-year-old son. We are all country music lovers. Favorite is George Strait! Also, Clay Walker, Clint, Wynonna and Alabama. Enjoy rodeos, concerts, hiking. Love to hear from you! **Terri Gentile, 6074 Rosa Ct., Chino, CA 91710.**

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By Rich Kienzle

Most great family acts in this business were around long before any of their members became stars. They didn't have any high-paid publicists, record company hype or other superficial jumpstarts. Hard work and cultivating audiences was their road to success. Eventually certain members stepped out on their own, the way The Everly Brothers evolved from The Everly Family and Sonny James emerged from The Loden Family. Bill Monroe, the Father of Bluegrass, emerged from the popular Monroe Brothers, which teamed him and his older brother, Charlie. So it was with The Wilburn Brothers of Arkansas, as brothers Doyle and Teddy emerged from The Wilburn Family in the 1950's. They enjoyed over 30 years of success as a duo before Doyle's death.

Judging The Wilburns on hits alone is a major mistake. Granted, their successes on record were important. Yet not all their contributions were obvious. Doyle and Teddy were among the earliest stars to translate their successes into a hit syndicated national TV show in the 1960's, when nationwide country TV shows hosted by individual acts were just taking off. Like their friend Webb Pierce, they became shrewd businessmen and astute talent scouts, directly responsible for the superstardom of, among others, Loretta Lynn and Patty Loveless. Both singers cut their teeth performing with The Wilburns, and Loretta, Patty Loveless and Johnny Russell all wrote for the Wilburn song publishing company, Sure-Fire. Their booking agency was once among Nashville's top talent agencies.

The Wilburn children were Lester, born in 1924; Leslie, born in 1925; and Geraldine, born 1927. Then came Virgil Doyle in 1930 and Thurman Theodore, or "Teddy," born in 1932. All began life in Hardy, a small town in northern Arkansas. On Christmas Eve of 1937, the Wilburn children sang and played their instruments on a street corner in Thayer, Missouri, north of Hardy, and made \$6.40. Gradually, the family became more seasoned as performers and by 1940 had a formidable reputation throughout the South. That same year, Roy Acuff heard them sing the hymn, "Farther Along," at a performance in Birmingham, Alabama, and told Grand Ole Opry officials about them: In 1941 The Wilburn Family joined the Opry. They got off to a strong start until child labor laws intervened six months later. Both Doyle and Teddy were

The Wilburn Brothers

Doyle and Teddy Wilburn's musical and business talents ensured their own success and helped launch the careers of several others.

too young to be working, and the family had to leave the Opry.

World War Two intervened; Leslie was drafted. In 1948 the brothers resurfaced on *The Louisiana Hayride* barn dance show over KWKH radio in Shreveport; around that time, Geraldine Wilburn married and quit the act. Shreveport was a new and developing scene, and soon The Wilburn Family was working with more top-level talent including Hank Williams, Faron Young and Johnnie and Jack. The most important relationship developed with Webb Pierce, who, like The Wilburns, combined performing with astute business sense. The Wilburns made their first recordings for Four Star. Teddy also recorded four songs for Webb Pierce's Pacemaker label (only two were released), and Doyle and Teddy were part of Webb Pierce's band.

Too young for World War II, they were of prime draft age when the Korean War broke out in 1950. Doyle was first to go, with Teddy following some months later, both doing two-year hitchhikes. By 1953, when the brothers were discharged, Webb Pierce was a superstar. He had Doyle in his band again for a time before Teddy returned home. At that point The Wilburn Family evolved into The Wilburn Brothers, as Doyle and Teddy began working on their own and with Pierce. They made one record for the tiny, Arkansas-based Nemo label while still actively performing with Webb.

Pierce played a major role in getting them signed to Decca Records; their major label debut came in 1954 on a duet with Webb (The Wilburns received label credit) on the old number, "Sparking Brown Eyes." It broke the country Top Five nationally. That same year Teddy and Webb recorded an awful, unsuccessful duet single issued under the name "Rob and Bob." In addition, the brothers sang backup vocals on Pierce's now-classic hit recording of Jimmie Rodgers' "In the Jailhouse Now."

In October 1954, The Wilburns went on their own, signing with Hubert Long as their manager. Their first solo hit was "I Wanna Wanna Wanna" in 1955, followed by "You're Not Play Love." In 1956 "I'm So in Love With You" went to Number 10. That same year, "Go Away With Me" did even better, reaching Number Six. Two duets with Ernest Tubb helped establish them. They recorded "Mister Love" (Number Eight in 1957) and "Hey Mr. Bluebird" (Number Nine in 1958). Their business sense led them to found both their booking agency, Wil-Helm (with former Hank Williams steel guitarist Don Helms), and Sure-Fire Music in

the late 50's. Sure-Fire was particularly interested in cultivating young songwriting talent. Meanwhile, the brothers had their biggest hit yet in 1959 with "Which One Is to Blame," which reached Number Four. The flipside, their rendition of the traditional ballad, "The Knoxville Girl," reached Number 18. That single was followed by another Number Nine hit, "A Woman's Intuition."

In 1960, they met a woman who would benefit enormously from her association with them: Loretta Lynn, who'd had one big hit on the Zero label and was ready to establish herself in Nashville. Loretta's singing and songwriting impressed the brothers, and they were instrumental in arranging her first Opry guest appearance on October 15, 1960. She was a guest so often that other stars griped behind her back before she became a member.

Not only did The Wilburns book her and publish her songs, they used their clout to get her a Decca contract. Owen Bradley wanted to use a Sure-Fire song, "Fool Number One," for Brenda Lee. Doyle Wilburn said he could have the song for Brenda only if Loretta got a Decca contract. Bradley got the song (a massive hit for Brenda), and Loretta got her contract. Meanwhile, The Wilburns' successes continued on Decca, on the Opry and on tours around the nation.

At this particular time, the "brother" sound in country music was slipping, becoming dated in the minds of many. One reason that The Wilburns thrived was a vocal style that set them apart from most other brother acts. The high harmonies of The Louvins or even non-brothers Johnnie and Jack fit perfectly with hard country arrangements but didn't mesh particularly well with the more neutral, subtle demands of the smoother Nashville Sound. The Wilburns sang in unison, their voices blending easily with the smoother sound Owen Bradley created for them (and many other artists). As a result, they were about the only brother act still enjoying big hits during this time, aside from The Everly Brothers, then primarily a pop act.

In 1962 "Trouble's Back in Town" reached Number Four. "Roll Muddy River" reached the same chart position, followed up by "Tell Her So" (Number 10) in 1963. That year also marked the beginning of *The Wilburn Brothers Show*, which was syndicated to TV stations around the country. The lineup included Doyle, Teddy, Loretta, comic Harold Morrison and Don Helms playing steel guitar. Loretta's career blossomed with The Wilburns, and she was a regular on their touring show as well. Wil-Helm con-

tinued to thrive, booking everyone from The Osborne Brothers and Loretta's brother, Jay Lee Webb, to Charlie Louvin (after Ira's death).

Their successes continued with "It's Another World," their 1965 Top Ten, and "Someone Before Me" in 1966. Late that year, they had the biggest hit of their careers with "Hurt Her Once for Me," a song that remained on the charts for 20 weeks, well into 1967. It was their final Top Ten record. Though they remained on Decca, their hitmaking days were over. Their final chart entry came in 1972 with "Arkansas," a sentimental ode to their home state which reached Number 47. But their active performing schedules included regular spots on the Opry and on *The Wilburn Brothers Show* until its run ended in 1974.

As Loretta's success grew into full-fledged superstardom in the early 1970's, she began severing her connections with The Wilburns, though she was still signed to Sure-Fire as a writer. In a dispute over that contract, she quit writing songs for a number of years. The differences between The Wilburns and Loretta were eventually settled, but their importance to her career is wrongly downplayed in the film version of *Coal Miner's Daughter*. (They do appear in the book.)

The Wilburns continued to tour and at a show in Louisville, Kentucky, discovered another young female singer. She was 15-year-old Kentuckian Patty Ramey, working with her brother Roger. The Wilburns liked both her singing and her original songs and signed her to Sure-Fire as a writer. They also took her on tour during her high school summer vacations. A decade later she succeeded on Decca's successor label, MCA, as Patty Loveless.

The Wilburns continued performing and working the Opry until Doyle was stricken with cancer. He died October 16, 1982. In succeeding years, Teddy remained part of the Nashville scene. Lester, who had played bass behind Doyle and Teddy on the Opry, died in 1990. Today, Teddy and Leslie still handle Sure-Fire Music, and Teddy still appears on the Opry, often backed by Leslie.

The Wilburns were never among country music's more exciting, flashy or arresting acts. They never had a Number One record. But hits alone don't tell the story. Their career continued through changing times, and their best material endures. In their roles as song publishers, bookers, TV personalities and talent scouts, their impact was profound.

Albums Available
See For CMSA Members Only page.

Members' Favorite Albums
More of you have sent in your lists of your favorite albums—some cover all-time favorites, others cover 1993 only, and there's even a list of favorite videos.

TOP TEN, ER, ELEVEN
MIRIAM ROZIER
Dillon, South Carolina

Anne Murray
Greatest Hits

Randy Travis
Storms of Life

Randy Travis
Always and Forever

Kathy Mattea
Willow in the Wind

Kathy Mattea
Greatest Hits

Ronnie Milsap
Almost Like a Song

Shelby Lynne
Tough All Over

Rosanne Cash
Greatest Hits

Mary-Chapin Carpenter
Shooting Straight in the Dark

Marty Stuart
Hillbilly Rock

May I have eleven?

Patsy Cline
Greatest Hits

THE BEST OF '93

DEAN EATON
Somerville, Massachusetts

Carlene Carter
Little Love Letters

Bobbie Cryner
Bobbie Cryner

Lee Roy Parnell
On the Road

Patty Loveless
Only What I Feel

Ralph Stanley, et al.
Saturday Night and Sunday Morning

Shelby Lynne
Temptation

Dwight Yoakam
This Time

Trisha Yearwood
The Song Remembers When

Martina McBride
The Way That I Am

Sweethearts of the Rodeo
Rodeo Waltz

ROCKIN' THE COUNTRY
LISA TEXEIRA
Achusnet, Massachusetts

Travis Tritt
It's All About to Change
 "Homesick" is awesome!

Travis Tritt
Country Club
 I'm a member!

Travis Tritt
t-r-o-u-b-l-e
 What can I say? He's great.

Travis Tritt
All future albums!!!

Marty Stuart
This One's Gonna Hurt You
 What a talent! What a smile! He's "The Wild One."

The Kentucky HeadHunters
Pickin' on Nashville
 Smoooooth!

Bob Seger
Nine Tonight
 He's got the fire down below and inside! Hint: please tour.

Lynyrd Skynyrd
Gold and Platinum
 Legends...

Various Artists
Honeymoon in Vegas
 Tritt and Trisha tear it up. Elvis would be proud!

George Strait
Pure Country
 He is the "Heartland."

Sorry...I have twelve
Mark Chesnut
Longnecks and Short Stories
 Great album!

Bad Company
10 from 6
 What a sound.

FIVE FAVORITES
RORY BURKE
Equality, Alabama

Ronnie McDowell
Greatest Hits
 Features a song that you only have to listen to once and the tune carries you away—my all-time favorite, "Never Seen a Mountain So High."

Sylvia
Just Sylvia
 My favorite singer. She had many songs that were never heard by many people.

Lionel Cartwright
Chasin' the Sun
 "Leap of Faith" is a killer song!

T.G. Sheppard
All-Time Greatest Hits
 The album has made me "Finally" realize that "I Love Them Every One."

Lee Greenwood
The Best of Lee Greenwood
 Starting from "Inside Out" to "I.O.U.," this album a classic to the Lee, I mean tee.

ALL-TIME VIDEO PICKS
MICHAEL D. YOST
Hannibal, Ohio

Travis Tritt
"Anymore"

The Judds
"Love Can Build a Bridge"

Garth Brooks
"The Dance"

K.T. Oslin
"80's Ladies"

Pirates of the Mississippi
"Fighting for You"

Reba McEntire
"Is There Life Out There"

George Jones
"Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes"

Dolly Parton
"Eagle When She Flies"

Marie Osmond
"No Stopping Your Heart"

Kathy Mattea
"Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses"

Honorable Mentions...

Baillie & The Boys
"I Can't Turn the Tide"

Reba McEntire
"Whoever's in New England"

Alabama
"Pass it On Down"

Barbara Mandrell
"I'll Leave Something Good Behind"

TOP TEN ALBUMS
JUANITA MURPHY
Princeton, Kentucky

Alan Jackson
Here in the Real World

Alan Jackson
Don't Rock the Jukebox

Alan Jackson
A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)
 The best voice since Jones!

Joe Diffie
A Thousand Winding Roads

Clint Black
Killin' Time

Keith Whitley
Don't Close Your Eyes

Aaron Tippin
Read Between the Lines

Tanya Tucker
Tennessee Woman

Randy Travis
High Lonesome

Ricky Van Shelton
RVS III

TOP TEN, PART 2
ROXANNE JOHNSTON
Hibbing, Minnesota

After she submitted her first Top Ten list, Roxanne realized that ten albums just wouldn't cut it. "If someone yelled 'fire,'" she says, "these albums would have to come, too."

Stonewall Jackson
I Pawned My Past Today
 The liner notes say that my favorite song on here, "Black Sheep," is over 200 years old!

Charley Pride
The Country Way
 This is the one that made me a Pride fan.

Merle Haggard
The Best of The Best
 The title is right!

David Allan Coe
Greatest Hits
 These songs just never grow old.

Gary Stewart
Greatest Hits
 Honky tonk hasn't been covered as thoroughly since.

Creedence Clearwater Revival
Willy and The Poor Boys
 The greatest band there ever was.

Dwight Yoakam
If There Was a Way
 One of the few "new" artists to make consistently good music.

Travis Tritt
It's All About to Change
 Travis shows off his stuff!

Waylon Jennings
Too Dumb for New York City, Too Ugly for L.A.
 Just Waylon, at it again!

Joy White
Between Midnight and Hindsight
 Somewhere between the sweet clarity of Dolly Parton and the forthright gutsiness of Loretta Lynn is Joy White.

LEE ROY PARNELL: *Timing Is Everything*

Twenty years-plus on the road and it's more fun than ever. Parnell's time has come.

BY MICHAEL McCALL

These days, it seems, you can tell a lot about country stars by how they set up on stage. In many cases, the more successful a performer is, the bigger, broader and flashier the production becomes. The larger the crowds, the more distance there is between instrumentalists and the higher the heights for the perilous stage risers on which they stand. No wonder they need those high-tech headsets; it's the only way big-time musicians can communicate with each other anymore.

Lee Roy Parnell will have none of that, thank you very much. He likes to look his band members in the eye; it's all the better to surprise them with a tricky new instrumental turn, a sudden inspirational jolt or an impulsive song choice. You see, Lee Roy isn't concerned with overwhelming an audience with flash; he'd prefer to dazzle them with good, spontaneous performances. He doesn't want his shows to be choreographed; that would get in the way of enjoying himself. He figures fun is infectious, and the show starts with him. It's a rather alarming concept, but it works.

"We set up real tight on stage," Parnell explains, "rather than being spread out and theatrical looking. We take the old-timey approach to the way we do it. That way we can hear one another and play off each other. My deal is, if you can't hear the guy next to you, then you're playing too loud, or he ain't playing loud enough."

Parnell knows about the bands with members who can't stand each other; he's seen them in action, on stage and off. At age 37, he's logged some 21 years of road experience, and he's just now beginning to feel the fruits of all those years of labor, all those endless nights in gin joints where he'd play three sets a night. After all that, he's not about to start having a bad time.

He's been in it too long and worked too hard for the consequences of success to be a bunch of grumpy prima donnas rolling down the road acting mad and feeling sad. He's getting what he always wanted, and he's about as happy as he can be. He expects the same of his band.

"I'm telling you, man, there are a lot of bands out there who hate one another," he says. "They hate crawling on that bus. That's no way to live. So I hire the man first, the musician second. My experience is that a guy is going to be easy to get along with or hard to get along with no matter what the circumstances."

The man and the musician must maintain a love for music to fit in with Parnell and his handpicked crew. With Lee Roy, the music is still key. "I sometimes think they pay me to do all the extra things outside of playing the music," he says, "because

getting on a bus and going out playing for people, I absolutely love that part. I love it more today than the day I began."

His enthusiasm for the music doesn't just beam from the stage. For Parnell and his merry band of music makers, playing for a paying audience makes up only a portion of the day's entertainment. "What's so odd about this band is we do an awful lot of picking off stage," the leader reports. "We may play a two-and-a-half hour show in a club, and once we've got on dry clothes and gotten on the bus and are rolling down the highway, we might play for another two hours for ourselves. That's not unusual for us."

Unlike most country stars, Parnell doesn't isolate himself from his band by maintaining his own separate bus; in fact, he doesn't even utilize the large, specially designed star quarters set up in the back of most customized tour buses. Instead, he takes no liber-



“I’d been shoving original songs down people’s throats for years, and all of a sudden, we’d kick into ‘What Kind of Fool,’ and the whole place applauds. It gives you a sense of worth up there. Let me tell you, it makes a big difference when that happens.”

ties beyond what the other band members receive; just like them, he sleeps in one of the cramped bunks stacked along the aisle in the mid-section of the coach. In hotels, he treats himself just as he treats the other guys. He doesn’t grab a luxury suite on the top floor while the others bed down on lower floors; he stays in the same kind of room furnished other band members.

“I like the camaraderie of a band, the brotherhood of being on the road,” he explains. “I find that it gives me a lot of moral support. Being in a band is sort of like high school with money. We enjoy the brotherhood, and we love the music we share. We’re out there to have a ball.”

Other than camaraderie and an obsessive love for music, Parnell expects one other quality in bandmates. He requires they keep their wildness in check and refrain from over-indulgence. “There’s nobody who rides on that bus who is abusive,” he says flatly. “The road can be a corrosive lifestyle if you don’t take the proper steps. It’s very important to be health-conscious on the road. I try to exercise while I’m out there. I’m fairly picky about what I eat. I don’t drink, I don’t do drugs. Basically, my biggest vice is coffee these days. I think it has to be that way. If you’re plowing into the nightlife and you’re wearing yourself out, then the music suffers. And that’s the reason we’re supposed to be out there in the first place.”

He speaks from experience. When Parnell sings of hitting the town all night long in his song, “Fresh Coat of Paint,” he is drawing on memories of an earlier decade when, as he puts it, “I burned the candle at both ends, as hard and as fast as I could.”

He’d lit the torch by the time he’d finished high school in Texas. He moved to Nashville at age 18, where he partied, played the bars and eventually joined up with a Southern rock outfit known as Panama Red. The band spent time living on the streets of New York City in a battered bus, then limped to Florida, where a series of low-paying nightclub gigs finally finished them off.

Parnell high-tailed it back to Texas, where he started exploring a personal brand of roots music that merged jumpin’ blues rhythms, slide guitar and soulful country vocals. His reputation as a multi-dimensional artist spread quickly; Texas cult act Marcia Ball recorded several of his songs, and friends and music industry associates started telling him that Nashville was the place he ought to be.

In 1987, he moved to Nashville, leaving behind his second failing marriage. (Parnell has two children, Blake and Allison.) He began performing weekly at the high-profile Bluebird Cafe, and a successful opening gig for Bonnie Raitt at another Nashville club earned him a recording contract with Arista Records.

As often is the case, a record contract doesn’t necessarily



CANDACE WEST

usher a talented singer into a life of fame and glory. Parnell’s first album—a rollicking, R&B-flavored affair pumped up with a honking horn section—was ignored by everyone but the music critics, who loved it. One radio honcho told him it sounded like James Brown, another gave him directions to the rock station down the street.

During that time, Parnell’s parents died of natural causes within weeks of each other. He was now sober, but things weren’t getting any rosier. Then he met his third wife, Kim, and started work on his second album. The horn section stayed home this time, and Parnell concentrated on showing off his soulful vocals on a series of solid, emotionally resonant songs.

It worked. The second album featured three consecutive Top 10 hits, including the title song, “Love Without Mercy,” as well as “Tender Moment” and “What Kind of Fool Do You Think I Am?” His success has continued with *On the Road*, a looser-limbed album that combines his rowdier side with romantically tender ballads.

“There came a time when people started noticing the songs right away just as we were going into them,” he says. “That is such a great feeling, hearing people respond to a song before it’s gotten going. I’d been shoving original songs down people’s throats for years, and all of a sudden, we’d kick into ‘What Kind of Fool,’ and the whole place applauds. It gives you a sense of worth up there. Let me tell you, it makes a big difference when that happens.”

Obviously, when Parnell titles his third album, *On the Road*, it’s not a casual reference. It’s where he has spent a good part of his life; it’s also where he’s as comfortable as anyone this side of Willie Nelson. “It’s my natural habitat,” the singer says with a grin. Parnell’s reputation as a lord of the highway may explain why famed songwriter Bob McDill, while working on a song called “On the Road,” sent a rough early draft of the tune to Parnell while he was, well, out on the road.

“When I heard it, I knew it was a smash,” Parnell notes. “More than that, I knew it was my smash.” The song became the first hit off of his third album and his fourth consecutive Top 10 success.

All of which sits quite well with our boy Lee Roy. It’s evident in his easy-going, friendly manner and in his playful wit, which suggests there’s a devilish, unpredictable joker lurking just under the surface. It’s been a bit of a long struggle, he says, but everything seems to have surfaced at just the right time in his life.

“I feel more relaxed, more self-confident about the music and about myself,” he admits. “I really love the way it all came down. I love my life so much more now than I did when I was younger. It’s pretty amazing, the timing of it all.” ■

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You Gotta Have FAITH

BY BOB MILLARD

A new generation seems to arrive on the country music scene about every two years now, and Faith Hill represents one of the fastest risers of the latest crop. Her debut single, "Wild One," held *Billboard's* Number One spot for the whole month of January, making her the first female since Trisha Yearwood to top the country charts right out of the box.

There is no better example of the rapid transition between generations in 90's Nashville than Faith Hill, 26, who came up through the ranks of professional demo singers at much the same time as Ms. Yearwood yet never met Trisha. Here's another bit of trivia illuminating just how new this new generation is: Faith Hill was born the year Janis Joplin made a macho blues-mama anthem out of Bert Burns and Jerry Ragavoy's hard-edged "Piece of My Heart," but she had never heard that classic 60's record before tackling it as a second single with her own country flair. It was too much before her time.

"When I told everybody I was recording that song, they said, 'You're doing what!? Girl, you are crazy,'" Faith explained with a laugh. "I honestly have to say, if I had listened to that before I recorded, that would have been a completely different record. Obviously, I have listened to it since then, but I still think it works."

Indeed, much about this fresh-faced girl from Star, Mississippi, works. In addition to possessing a strong, emotionally honest voice, she is young, intelligent, sexy without flashing cleavage, and a hard worker with a grasp of the administrative side of the business that few of her country thrush forebearers had at her stage of career.

Raised singing in a Baptist church, she earned quarters singing "Jesus Loves Me" at family reunions. A cheerleader, she began singing country music semi-professionally in high school. College never entered her mind. She moved to Nashville when she was 19.

"My first taste of being in a big city and coming here to follow my dream was working for Gary Morris," she said. "The first job I had was selling T-shirts at Fan Fair, but after that I started working as a receptionist for Gary Morris. Boy, I immediately became right in the center of it all happening. I got to see sides of the business that I never even thought existed. I was very, very young and naive. I was very green, but I was thrust into learning really quick."

By 1992, Faith Hill had met songwriter Gary Burr and was becoming known as a talented demo singer on Music Row. Burr, a glib, funny, big city Northerner with tremendous talent and a big heart but no illusions about the industry, helped this small town Mississippi girl get ready for the Warner Bros. recording deal in many ways. When, after a mighty promotional effort by the label, she ran headlong into instant success, she handled it like a seasoned pro. She didn't get nervous until later.

"I used to say, nah, it isn't scary," she said, "but, I've been in the press so much. You read so much about yourself, and you realize, golly, everybody is putting me on a pedestal...What if my second single goes to Number One and only stays one week? Does that mean I'm not happening? I can't think that way."

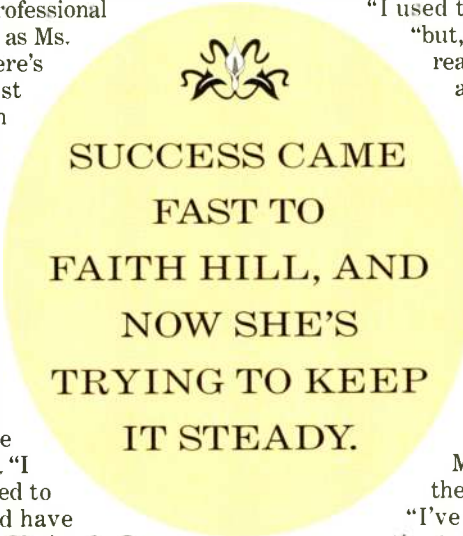
Partly, Faith handles herself so confidently because she has had Reba McEntire as an up-close role model, as well as an obvious musical influence. She learned firsthand how a strong-willed woman can control her own career destiny by working for McEntire's Starstruck Enterprises in the early 90's.

"I've always been very independent and wanting to know what's going on in my life and to be in control of things," Faith said. "But to see it firsthand from someone who does it well and also does it with class was definitely good for me."

McEntire the performer impressed Faith indelibly long before that.

"The first time I saw her, it was in Meridian, Mississippi, which is about an hour and a half from Star," said Faith. "She was there performing for the Jimmie Rodgers Memorial Festival. I was sitting pretty close to the front. I was a fan of hers at that time. She stood up there with such grace and strength and just sang. I was either crying, or I don't know what. It may sound silly, but if somebody has ever done something for you or in your life that impresses you that much, you'll never forget it. It's a moment in time when you were just so influenced by something that you kept looking back at that moment and saying, 'Regardless of whatever else happens to me, I am going to achieve what that woman has achieved.'"

And Faith Hill just might. She's certainly off to a good start. ■



SUCCESS CAME
FAST TO
FAITH HILL, AND
NOW SHE'S
TRYING TO KEEP
IT STEADY.

It's a long, long way from the rowdy dance halls and windy wide open plains of Oklahoma to the narrow pin-striped world of the greater Washington, D.C., area with its hi-rise office complexes and congested freeways. Yet if Toby ("I Should've Been a Cowboy") Keith is suffering from culture shock as he strides nonchalantly through the glass and marble lobby of an Arlington, Virginia, office complex on his way to do some radio interviews via satellite link in the same studio where Larry King does his radio show, he's sure not showing it.

Dressed casually in blue jeans, blue Western shirt, black cowboy boots and dark sunglasses, Keith strikes a contrast with the legion of three-piece suitors who scutter officiously through the lobby. Even though it's 9:30 A.M., and he was up till 3:30 that morning signing autographs after a show at a steakhouse/country dance club in nearby Springfield, Virginia, Keith seems to just quietly take in stride all the perks and obligations that come with being a star on the rise—as if having a Number One record is the most natural thing in the world.

"'I Should've Been a Cowboy' is a huge career song for me, a big impact song. Especially comin' when it did, as my very first single," the tall, blond Oklahoma-born singer explains nonchalantly as the elevator whisks him up several flights to the radio syndication company. "The song's bigger than Toby Keith is right now. So I'm just tryin' to catch up. Just tryin' to get Toby Keith to be as big a household word as 'I Should've Been a Cowboy' is."

Almost from the time Mercury Records signed Toby Keith in 1992, there's been a great deal of anticipation and speculation that this laid-back, youthfully handsome Western dance hall star could well be the next big thing in a country market already saturated with next big things. Keith indeed seems to have all the vital assets of an Alan Jackson or a Clint Black: pretty hair, rugged good looks, a fine voice and a batch of impressive original songs. Yet, the field being currently as crowded as it is, nobody quite anticipated the reception that awaited his first single.

"I Should've Been a Cowboy," a song which Keith wrote while on a quail-hunting expedition near Dodge City, Kansas, shortly after he'd signed with Mercury (one of eight impressive originals on his new album), went straight to the top. It was the first lead-off single from a male debut artist to hit Number One since his labelmate Big Billy Ray scored with "Achy Breaky Heart" a year or two ago.

Since then, "He Ain't Worth Missing," his second single (which Keith also wrote) went Top Five; "A Little Less Talk and a Lot More Action," his third, made it to Number Two, *Toby Keith*, his self-titled debut album, was already Gold (for half a million sales), headed for platinum.

If all that wasn't enough, "I Should've Been a Cowboy" opened other doors for this former semi-pro gridiron player, as well. He performed more than one half-time show for the

Dallas Cowboys this past year, and was invited to participate in a University of Oklahoma alumni/varsity scrimmage coached by Dallas Cowboys coach Barry Switzer. And back in Moore, Oklahoma, they've renamed a street Toby Keith Boulevard in honor of the hometown boy.

Amazing what a couple of hits will do for you.

Yet, despite all the hoopla, Keith seems remarkably cool about it all on this smoggy D.C. morning: calmly taking it all in stride. He explains that he's particularly proud that he—unlike many first-time recording artists who end up several hundred thousand dollars in debt to their label for "tour support" money—is, due to the first single's fine showing, already paying his own freight—already putting money in the bank. "I've always been very business-minded," concedes the Johnny-come-lately country star, whose second album is already wrapped up and in the can, awaiting a September release. "And thanks to Harold Shedd and my manager, I've got one of the best deals in the world," he adds, speaking of Mercury producer Shedd and his manager, Fred Cortez.

But Keith knows as well as anyone that the career-building process, even with a Number One record and a couple more Top Fives under your belt, is still an arduous, uphill process. There's usually a serious lag time between when the public first hears and catches on to a hit song and when—after countless interviews with dozens of magazines, newspapers, and TV entertainment tabloid shows—the average fan can match up a face, name and image with the song.

And Toby Keith knows full well that he's still caught somewhere in the middle of that time warp. So he's trying hard to introduce the world to the singer behind "I Should've Been a Cowboy." Everywhere he plays these days—Reno, Nevada, Oklahoma City, Wilmington, North Carolina, or Cancun, Mexico—people know the words to the song, even if most of them still aren't quite sure who the guy with the long blond hair who sings it is.

So that's why he's up early on what should have been his first day off in weeks, sitting in Larry King's chair, smacking gum, drinking stale coffee and answering inane questions from any motor-mouthed country deejay who'll take the time to talk with him. "Usually it's the same eight or ten questions," he chuckles. "My road manager's heard me answer them so many times he told me the other day that he might start doin' interviews for me."

"Okay, we're on satellite now, Toby," the radio producer announces cheerfully through the control room glass. "The next call will be from one of our affiliate stations in Nevada." Intent on injecting a little levity, Keith smirks and leans up to the microphone. "Did'ja hear the one about the two nuns...." Everybody in the studio tries to stifle their laughter.

If 31-year-old Toby Keith does seem a bit casual and self-assured about his status as a hit recording artist, it's only because he's been patiently laying the groundwork for it for the past ten or 12 years. He started out in the very early 1980's in

TOBY KEITH

Gets the Job Done

BY BOB ALLEN

Hit records have Toby Keith in the throes of a media frenzy. But for him it's all in a day's work.



an “Alabama-type copy garage band” back home in South Oklahoma City. At first, music was merely a sideline; but it became his livelihood after a two-year stint as a semi-pro football player with a short-lived USFL farm team called The Oklahoma City Drillers ran out, and after his top-dollar oil rig job dried up along with the domestic oil market.

For the last eight years, Keith, along with his Easy Money Band (the same accomplished band that backs him today), has been a fixture on the highly competitive Western dance hall circuit. “You’re up against the best bands in the world out there, including a lot of name bands with record contracts” he explains. “The competition’s fierce, and if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere. I’m not bragging when I say that The Easy Money Band and I can hold our own against any of them. We made a damn good living at it.

“Really, what I’m doin’ now isn’t that much different from what I’ve been doing out there the last eight or nine years,” he calmly insists as he leans back from the microphone, yawns, smacks his gum and stretches out in a chair that seems small for his lean, six-foot-four frame. “Before, I’d be playing in the same city for five or six nights a week. Now I’m in a different city every night. And all those years on the road paid off more than I realized. I look at my record sales now, and they’re strongest in the cities where I’ve been playing for a long time.”

To hear Keith tell it, he was doing so well out West that he was initially a little skeptical about even coming to Nashville (though he is thinking of moving his wife and two kids there, now that things are happening for him). And his first experiences in Music City merely confirmed his skepticism.

“I was doin’ real good back home, and I wasn’t gonna move and take a big cut in pay just to do that Nashville thing, just to knock on doors and all,” he explains as he works on a fresh cup of coffee and patiently waits for the engineer to beam up another affiliate station, this one somewhere in South Carolina. “I was gonna come into Nashville and take my one little shot, and if it didn’t work, I was gonna go back home. I knew either way I wasn’t gonna starve. I was very successful with my band, and eventually, if I didn’t get a record deal, I would’ve opened a nightclub somewhere and made a lot of money.”

Still, he did eventually end up visiting Nashville where he recorded some demos backed by members of George Strait’s Ace in the Hole Band (his manager’s nephew is a long-time Strait bandmember) and pursued a dead-end artist development deal with Capitol (now Liberty) Records.

“They wanted me to do this Western swing thing—straight-ahead steel-fiddle, with a bunch of Dean Dillon and Harlan Howard-type songs,” he recalls. “They were kind of interested in me as an artist, but not as a writer. In fact, they about had me flat-out convinced I wasn’t a songwriter, and that it just wouldn’t work with my own songs. Then it seemed like they kept draggin’ their feet on givin’ me an actual record deal, and meanwhile Garth Brooks started breakin’ big. When that happened, I just thought, ‘Man, I’m just gonna get shelved over here.’”

Not one to sit and wait for something to happen (much like the guy in his self-penned song “A Little Less Talk and a Lot More



“I look at my record sales now, and they’re strongest in the cities where I’ve been playing for a long time.”



Action”), Keith took matters into his own hands. While Capitol dragged feet in giving him the thumbs-up or thumbs-down on a full-fledged record deal, he kept passing tapes around. He gave a copy of some of his original songs (many of the same songs that ended up on *Toby Keith*) which he’d cut back in Oklahoma with his own band to a friend who promised to get it to Mercury producer Harold Shedd. The friend just happened to be going to a party that night on Shedd’s houseboat. Shedd, of course, first made a name for himself back in the 1980’s, producing Alabama. More recently, with Mercury, he hit paydirt with Billy Ray Cyrus.

“Trying to get the tape to Harold was just one more shot in the dark, like a thousand other times I’d passed out tapes,” Keith remembers. “But I always felt that if I could find just one person in Nashville who’d sit down long enough to listen to what I was doing, I might have a chance.”

Shedd proved to be that one person. Mercury-Nashville’s label chief/staff producer listened to Keith’s tape that night on his boat and called the singer the next Monday morning to schedule a meeting. Months later, after flying out to Oklahoma City, Shedd saw Keith’s live show, and signed him to Mercury shortly thereafter. Shedd (along with Nelson Larkin) also ended up co-producing *Toby Keith*.

Back in the D.C.-area radio studio, Keith is patiently and politely answering questions from some clueless bush league country shock-jock somewhere out West. The jock tells unfunny, adolescent anecdotes about getting down on his hands and knees in front of his TV when he watched *Crook & Chase* in order to look up Lorianne Crook’s dress....

When Toby’s finally finished his last interview, he still has a look of infinite, unruffled forbearance. But as he yawns and stretches and sips on one more fresh cup of coffee, he also looks a little droopy-eyed, and the wear and tear of the road begins to show through like the worn treads of a tire.

But the record company limo is waiting downstairs to whisk him across the Potomac River into downtown D.C. for more radio and TV interviews. And then there’s the long drive, via tour bus, to his next show, somewhere in the Carolinas. So there’s no time to waste.

“This business is funny,” he muses as he slips his sunglasses back on and glides through the lobby, back out to the car. “You go from nothingness, from being absolutely idle when you’ve signed your deal and you’re just waiting for the record to come out, to full steam ahead. Just rockin’ and rollin’ and slammin’. Even the week my record went Number One, there really was no time to sit down and enjoy it,” he shrugs. “It was just business as usual.

“But whatever I’m doin’ right now is working,” he smiles and squints at the purple-tinged urban skyline through his tinted glasses. “So my attitude is, whatever it takes. I mean, how many times does a chance like this come around?”

At presstime, Toby is recuperating nicely from a broken ankle incurred in the Oklahoma football game mentioned above. Yet another Keith single, “Wish I Didn’t Know Now,” is in the upper reaches of the charts, and the singer is now signed to Mercury’s sister label, Polydor. ■

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GEORGE JONES Same Ole Me - 60 mins.

They call him "Possum." They also call him "Country Music's Living Legend." *Same Ole Me* is the story of George Jones, finally told his way with the help of such great stars as Roy Acuff, Loretta Lynn and Johnny Cash. It includes hits like "He Stopped Loving Her Today," "Bartender's Blues," "The Race Is On," "She Thinks I Still Care," "White Lightning," "Why Baby Why?" "Some Day My Day Will Come." Item No. G4Z - \$29.95

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 Race Is On," "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?," "Bartender's Blues" **AND 10 MORE!** Item No. V1X - \$19.95

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

RICKY VAN SHELTON To Be Continued... - 35 mins.

Ricky had topped the charts in three out of three tries and scored seven #1 singles at the time this video was released. *To Be Continued...* features every one of his early videos plus two live performances and an interview. Included are "Crime of Passion," "Someone Lied," "Life Turned Her That Way," "I'll Leave This World Loving You," "Hole in My Pocket (Live)," "Living Proof(Live)," "I Meant Every Word He Said" **AND MORE!** Item No. G5W - \$24.95

SAWYER BROWN (NEW) Greatest Hits Vol. 2 - 20 mins.

They are a testament to the philosophy that hard work is rewarded. After more than ten years together, they have become one of the top concert draws on the country music circuit. Their first video was one of our bestsellers. Now, we present *Volume 2* which features "Some Girls Do," "The Walk," "All These Years" and "Thank God For You." There's also special behind the scenes interview footage. Item No. V3X - \$14.95.

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

BEST OF MARTY ROBBINS TV SHOW Vols. 1, 2, 3 - 55 min. each

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Take a return visit to Marty's first syndicated TV show, (1968-1969). **VOLUME ONE** features 21 songs along with a bunch of humorous excerpts. Included are "I Can't Help It," "Are You Sincere?," "Long Gone Lonesome Blues," "Tumbling Tumbleweeds," "El Paso" and "Running Gun." Item No. V8E - \$29.95

VOLUME TWO includes "Take Me Back To Tulsa," "Mississippi River Blues," "Anytime," "Oh How I Laredo," "Deep Water," "Candy Kisses," "Never Tie Me Down," "Time Changes Everything" and "Kalu." **22 SONGS IN ALL.** Item No. V9I - \$29.95

VOLUME THREE includes "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," "Lonely Old Bunkhouse" and "People's Valley." **22 SONGS IN ALL.** Item No. V2E - \$29.95

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BILLY RAY CYRUS Live On Tour - 60 mins.

Here are 14 songs performed live on stage, including "Should I Stay or Should I Go," "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'," "She's Not Cryin' Anymore," "When I Gonna Live?," "Someday, Somewhere, Somehow," "Could've Been Me," "I'm So Miserable," "Never Thought I'd Fall in Love With You," "Ain't No Good Goodbye," "Only Time Will Tell," "Achy Breaky Heart" **AND MORE!** Item No. V2B - \$29.95

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," "When I Gonna Live?," "She's Walkin' Not Cryin' Anymore," "Some Gave All" and "In the Heart of a Woman." Item No. V3C - \$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



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

SAMMY KERSHAW (NEW!) The Hit Video Collection - 40 mins.

With eight Top Ten singles under his belt, this comes as a welcomed release. It features all seven of Sammy's videos including the new single, "National Working Woman's Holiday" and his recent smash, "Queen of My Double Wide Trailer." Also included are "Cadillac Style," "Don't Go Near the Water," "Yard Sale," "Anywhere But Here" and "Haunted Heart." Plus there is a new interview and behind-the-scenes footage. Item No. V5X - \$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 (NEW!) Greatest Hits - 31 mins.

We also have Reba's much anticipated *Greatest Hits* video ready to send out to you by return mail. Be among the first to bring country music's reigning queen home for a private screening of her latest video. It features the making of "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia" plus "Take It Back," "The Heart Won't Lie" (duet with Vince Gill), "It's Your Call" and "Does He Love You" (duet with Linda Davis). Item No. V3D - \$29.95

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

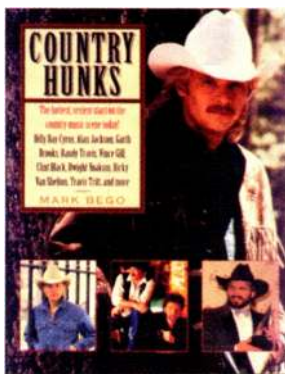
JOHNNY CASH The Man And The Music - 90 mins.

Here is a long-overdue reissue of one of the best documentaries ever made on a country singer. Its timing is particularly opportune, for it was shot at the very moment that Johnny burst beyond the world of country into the national mainstream. You'll see him on the road, in the studio, traveling back to his roots, mingling with friends and fans and performing hits like "Ring of Fire" and "Orange Blossom Special." It is a must! Item No. V9D - \$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

LAST MINUTE BOOK ADDITION!



BRAND NEW! COUNTRY HUNKS

Get the inside scoop on the sexiest men in music today. *Country Hunks* is an intimate, inside look at today's top young singers, from the smooth, soulful Vince Gill to the smoldering, sexy Billy Ray Cyrus. There's Alan Jackson, Garth Brooks, Ricky Van Shelton, Dwight Yoakam, Clint Black, George Strait and more. Each photo-packed chapter is an up-close, personal look at the men behind the music. Here in the stars own words is the last word on their ups and downs, loves and heartaches, fantasies and frustrations. Hardcover, illustrated. Item No. B4R - \$7.95

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

GRAMMY'S GREATEST COUNTRY MOMENTS, Vol. 1 - 55 mins. (NEW!)

The most exciting live country performances from the annual Grammy Awards show have been assembled in this exclusive video collection. Volume 1 features: Billy Ray Cyrus - "Achy Breaky Heart"/George Strait - "All My Ex's Live in Texas"/The Judds - "Love Can Build a Bridge"/Randy Travis - "Forever and Ever, Amen"/Johnny Cash - "Folsom Prison Blues"/Willie Nelson - "Always On My Mind" AND 11 MORE! Item No. V3Z - \$29.95

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

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 Flatt-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 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

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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Highway 101—The New Frontier (Liberty) **466•003**

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Steve Wariner—Drive (Arista) **464•255**

Kelly Willis **463•513**

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

Collin Raye—Extremes (Epic) **473•025**

Conway Twitty—20 Greatest Hits (MCA Nashville) **470•955**

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Neal McCoy—No Doubt About It (Atlantic) **474•619**

Marty Robbins—Lost And Found (Columbia) **474•056**

Pam Tillis Collection (Warner Bros.) **473•744**

The Statler Brothers—Home (Mercury/Nashville) **471•722**

Nanci Griffith—The MCA Years (MCA) **470•971**

Lee Roy Parnell—On The Road (Arista) **470•450**

Emmylou Harris—Cowgirl's Prayer (Asylum) **468•975**

Trisha Yearwood—The Song Remembers When (MCA Nashville) **469•924**

Tanya Tucker—Soon (Liberty) **468•850**

Dolly Parton/Tammy Wynette/Loretta Lynn—Honky Tonk Angels (Columbia) **467•712**

Suzy Bogguss—Something Up My Sleeve (Liberty) **465•997**

Tracy Lawrence—Alibis (Atlantic) **456•558**

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

Joe Diffie—Honky Tonk Attitude (Epic) **454•629**

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

Confederate Railroad (Atlantic) **439•158**

Wynonna Judd—Wynonna (MCA/Curb) **435•909**

Mark Chesnut—Almost Goodbye (MCA) **463•273**

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

#1 Country Hit Mix—Various Artists (Real) **457•911**

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

Dolly Parton—Slow Dancing With The Moon (Columbia) **454•264**

Mark Collie—Mark Collie (MCA) **453•860**

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**

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

Billy Ray Cyrus—It Won't Be The Last (Mercury/Nashville) **463•240**

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

Ricky Van Shelton—A Bridge I Didn't Burn (Columbia) **454•611**

Randy Travis—Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 (Warner Bros.) **448•662**

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

Kenny Rogers—20 Greatest Hits (Reprise) **444•885**

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

Waylon Jennings—Too Dumb For New York City (Epic) **444•430**

Doug Stone—From The Heart (Epic) **444•075**

JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY

Keep your eye on this Kentucky boy. His strong second album shows that he's no flash-in-the-pan success.

Kickin' It Up. *Be My Baby Tonight; Full-Time Love; Swear; Ropa The Moon; Friday At Five*; and others. (Atlantic) **473•157**

Life's A Dance. The debut album that includes *Nickels and Dimes And Love; Everytime I Fall (it breaks her heart); I Love The Way You Love Me*; etc. (Atlantic) **453•746**



REBA MCMENTIRE

Gr. Hits, Vol. 2. More of the hits that made her a legend. *You Lie; Fancy; Walk On; They Asked About You; Love Will Find Its Way To You*; and more. (MCA) **467•316**

It's Your Call. Featuring the rousing *Take It Back; For Herself; The Heart Won't Lie (with Vince Gill)* etc. (MCA) **450•361**

For My Broken Heart. Heart-touching collection includes *Title Cut; Is There Life Out There; The Greatest Man I Never Knew*, etc. (MCA) **430•090**

Gr. Hits. *What Am I Gonna Do About You; Little Rock; Whoever's In New England*; and more. (MCA) **355•826**

Pirates Of The Mississippi—Dream You (Liberty) **468•868**

Rodney Crowell—Gr. Hits (Columbia) **467•720**

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

Kathy Mattea—Good News (Mercury/Nashville) **466•920**

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

Ronnie Milsap—True Believer (Liberty) **461•889**

Chris Ledoux—Under This Old Hat (Liberty) **461•871**

Patty Loveless—Gr. Hits (MCA) **458•349**

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

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

Crystal Gayle—Best Always (Branson Entertainment) **461•228**

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

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

Carlene Carter—Little Love Letters (Giant) **461•079**

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

Dan Seals—Greatest Hits (Liberty) **420•059**

John Anderson—Gr. Hits (Warner Bros.) **330•720**

Willie Nelson—Gr. Hits (And Some That Will Be) (Columbia) **311•001**

Billy Ray Cyrus—Some Gave All (Mercury/Nashville) **441•451**

☒ Contains explicit lyrics which may be objectionable to some members.

HOT COUNTRY ARTISTS



Clay Walker (Giant) **467•449**

Shania Twain (Mercury/Nashville) **458•273**

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

Mavericks—What A Crying Shame (MCA Nashville) **474•403**

Kentucky Headhunters—Rave On (Mercury/Nashville) **455•691**

Palomino Road (Liberty) **455•584**

Toby Keith—(Mercury/Nashville) **458•315**

Faith Hill—Take Me As I Am (Warner Bros.) **473•728**

Evangeline—French Quarter Moon (Margantville/MCA) **473•090**

Shawn Camp (Reprise) **471•730**

Kix Brooks (Liberty) **471•649**

Mark O'Connor—Heroes (Warner Bros.) **468•512**

Ricky Lynn Gregg (Liberty) **458•869**

Tracy Byrd (MCA) **446•468**

Randy Travis—Greatest Hits, Vol. 1 (Warner Bros.) **448•654**

Collin Raye—In This Life (Epic) **447•268**



Little Texas—Big Time (Warner Bros.) **460•204**

"8 Seconds"—Orig. Sndtk. Feat. *Reba McEntire, Vince Gill*, etc. (MCA/Nashville) **475•483**

Jeff Foxworthy—You Might Be A Redneck If... (Warner Bros.) **474•833**

Pam Tillis—Homeward Looking Angel (Arista) **446•963**

Michelle Wright—Now & Then (Arista) **441•147**

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Letters

Alan Cover Reels 'Em In

I am a big country music fan, and I was looking at the magazine rack in our Wal-Mart store. I saw your magazine with Alan Jackson on the front cover. He is my favorite, so I purchased your magazine. I'm very pleased that I did. I very much enjoyed the cover story by Michael McCall. This was the first time I had purchased your magazine, but it certainly won't be the last. I love it.

Geraldine Hutcherson
Pullman, Michigan

Grabbing the Brass with Alan

I'd like to say thanks for the great article on Alan Jackson in the May/June issue of *Country Music*. I had the privilege of seeing him and John Anderson in concert in September of '93. As for me, Alan's songs are down-to-earth, things that happen in real life. You know what hard living is, and you know that brass ring don't come around too often. Well, I got my brass ring when I got to see Alan in concert. True country artists' music still lives on today, and it makes "us," the country people, feel real good about ourselves.

Darlene Tittle
Lansdale, Arkansas

Down-to-Earth Alan

Thanks for the great cover story on Alan Jackson! It's nice to read about a down-to-earth guy who loves his family, sings from the heart, writes hit songs and uses his God-given talent in a positive way! Keep it goin', Alan!

Larry Sabiston
Worthington, Indiana

Alan Fills Shoes

Thank you, Michael McCall, for the great article on Alan Jackson. For those of us who have always "been country," it's comforting to have Alan "filling their shoes" with his traditional sound and honest "what you see is what you get" style. If we wanted to see someone jump through fire or swing from the rafters, we'd buy tickets to a circus!

Karen Parent and Geri Roberts
Auburn, Maine

Endearing Alan

Your May/June article on Alan Jackson was tops! He is truly a real superstar. My husband and I have followed his career from early "honky-tonk" times. We knew



right away he would be a country great. Thank God he's stayed true, homespun country. His modest waves and clumsy walk are part of what endears him to his fans. There's nothing wrong about his aw-shucks grin!

Ruth and Harvey Nagarya
Apopka, Florida

Swiping Granny's Mag

I love your magazine very much! My granny gets the magazine, and I read it all the time! I am only 10 years old, but I love country music. I liked the article about Alan Jackson, and I loved the pull-out poster of Brooks & Dunn! But I would like to see more of Reba. Thanks.

Misty Mader
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Just Call Him Lucky McCall

I just received my copy of the May/June issue of *Country Music*. It's your best ever! Alan Jackson on the front and an article, plus one on John Michael Montgomery! Not to mention the pull-out poster of Brooks & Dunn. Michael McCall must be the luckiest man alive, getting to do the articles on Alan and John Michael!

Lori Nicholls
St. Louis, Missouri

Stick to Music, Waylon

After reading "The World According to Waylon" (March/April), I must say I've lost none of my admiration for Waylon's music through the years... And I certainly

hope he sticks with that as opposed to, say....politics. (God gave Palestine to Israel like He gave Mexico to Cortes!)

Brian Gilliland
St. Louis, Missouri

Ridin' with Waylon

We were so happy to once again see Waylon Jennings on the cover of your March/April issue of *Country Music*. We recently spent a wonderful evening with Waylon and Jessi, and they are two of the nicest folks you would ever want to know. We truly wish Waylon all the very best. We have always been in there with you, and always will be. Keep ridin', Waylon.

Gary and Ella Mae Kessell
Gaithersburg, Maryland

March/April Fills the Bill

Great article on Waylon Jennings. I had never been a major Waylon fan, but had bought his new boxed set before your article. And I must say, I love every song. And your interview only made me more of a fan! I also like 20 Questions and Record Reviews. Would like more articles on the making of videos, like you did on Little Texas.

Rae Meyer
Springerville, Arizona

Bluegrass Unlimited Approves

Thank you very much for the fine article written by Geoffrey Himes about Alison Krauss (May/June 1994). We greatly appreciate all that your magazine does to encourage country music fans to search out all the good bluegrass acts. I am very proud of the way Alison has managed her career and how she remains true to her music, spreading out a little but always sure of her roots. It's a risky business, and she is always willing to stick to her guns. Wouldn't it be nice if the commercial radio stations would understand that there are millions of listeners out there who want to hear this music on the radio. One can only dream. I have one comment to make about Geoffrey's lament that there is not enough good bluegrass songwriting today. He needs to remember that we have such writers as Laurie Lewis, Tim O'Brien, Kevin Williamson, Randall Hylton, Charlie Sizemore, etc., putting out wonderful songs. Have no fear, the tradition of good music continues!

Kitsy Kuykendall
Bluegrass Unlimited Magazine
Broad Run, Virginia

Recognition for Krauss

As a long-time fan of Alison Krauss, I've believed that recognition in the pages of CMM has been long overdue. So, imagine my surprise when I received the May/June issue and found not just one, but two articles on her! It was a treat to read Geoffrey Himes' feature story, and I thought he covered all the bases well. Also, Rich Kienzle's review of the Krauss/Cox collaboration, *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow*, was very well written. It's a wonderful album, and I would love to see it capture the Grammy for Best Bluegrass Recording next year. Also, let me suggest that more bluegrass be covered in future issues. To me, bluegrass is just as much a part of country music as two-stepping and line dancing, cowboy boots and Western clothes, country hunks and down-home divas. Thank you for your attention, and keep up the fine work!

Greg Treadway
Artie, West Virginia

Alison and The Coxes

Thanks so much for Geoffrey Himes' article on one of my favorites, Miss Alison Krauss, in your May/June issue. Finally, someone realized that she deserves every bit of attention that's given her. Also, Rich Kienzle's review of her new album, with The Cox Family, is right on the money. I've heard Alison quote that when The Coxes sing, it's like Christmas, but with her along for the ride, what better way to describe it but "heaven sent."

Jimmy Howson
New Marshfield, Ohio

Poster, Please, on JMM

I love John Michael Montgomery! I just got my May/June issue, and boy was I happy to see him in it. I would really like to see him in a centerfold, please. He would definitely be better than Aaron Tippin or Brooks & Dunn any day.

Amanda Chandler
Lawrence, Kansas

May/June Best Yet

Thank you so much for the article on John Michael Montgomery in your May/June issue. I've been a big fan since I first heard "Life's a Dance," and I've been waiting for an article on him. I would love to discover a pull-out poster of John in the next issue. I believe that the May/June issue has been the best I have received in the year and a half that I've been subscribing to *Country Music*, with articles on Alan, John Michael and 20 Questions with Naomi Judd.

Melody Watts
Franklin, West Virginia

A-1 Aaron

I'm a country girl from the East, and I love to hear and sing country music. I just subscribed and got my first issue,

March/April '94. Wow! What a surprise. I am a big fan of Aaron Tippin. He is a talented man. I loved the write-up on him. Can't wait to see what's next.

Mary Locke
Bath, New Hampshire

More Trouble with Tippin

When I received my March/April issue, I was thrilled to see an article about Aaron Tippin. He is gorgeous. I was a bit disappointed as I read the article because there are a couple of mistakes. First, his daughter's name is Charla, not Charlotte, and second, he was not born in South Carolina. He was born in Pensacola, Florida, but grew up in South Carolina. I'm glad for the article, though.

Cindy Ruffino
Houston, Texas
We had 'em both right in the centerfold in the November/December '93 issue.—Ed.

Tippin Steals the Show

Thanks for the feature story on Aaron in your March/April issue! I'm a new subscriber and look forward to reading more about him in your magazine. It would be great to see him on the cover! I saw him in concert for the first time at Arco Arena in Sacramento, California. Brooks & Dunn were the headliners, and Toby Keith opened. It was a fantastic concert! I did enjoy all three, but Aaron really stole the show! We all just wish that Aaron could make it out to the West Coast more often!

Janice Morris
Redding, California

Tritt and Texas

Thanks for the great cover story on Travis Tritt in the January/February issue and the Little Texas article in the March/April issue. These guys are my favorites and are truly awesome in concert. I saw the Rock 'n' Country tour three times last year and Little Texas a total of five times. I had the distinct privilege of meeting Travis and the guys of Little Texas at a concert in Nashville in September 1993. It was a night we won't forget!

Shelia Castle
Kingsport, Tennessee

More Little Texas, Please

I very much enjoyed your article on Little Texas in the March/April issue. It is so good to know that there are other people in country music than Alan Jackson, Wynonna, Clint Black and Garth Brooks. I get tired of hearing about them. How come you don't have groups in the centerfold? I think Little Texas is a definite centerfold group.

Laura Harris
Kokomo, Indiana

Still More Dwight Recordings

I wanted to write and say thank you for your centerfold and update on Dwight Yoakam in the March/April issue. He is



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 September/October 1994 issue.

1. What non-Nashville record label is Johnny Cash now signed to?
2. Which organization named Clint Black its Humanitarian of the Year?
3. Name Randy Travis' brand new album.
4. Toby Keith's very first hit became an anthem for which pro football team?
5. Who are the two stars Faith Hill worked for before she began her recording career?
6. Chevy's new Full-Size Pickup is built for comfort. What feature allows it to ride so smoothly?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:

1. The Strayhorns
2. Number One
3. Garth Brooks
4. The Goofiest Woman in Country Music
5. Seven
6. *Four Wheeler Magazine* named Chevy's S-Series the Pickup Truck of the Year.

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The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

FRI., JULY 22

William Lee Golden
T. Graham Brown
Earl Thomas Conley
Shelly West
Jeannie C. Riley
Lacy J. Dalton
Holly Dunn
Tammy Wynette
Ricky Skaggs

SAT., JULY 23

Cleve Francis
Sweethearts of the Rodeo
Baillie & the Boys
Delbert McClinton
Mel McDaniel
Forrester Sisters
Carl Perkins
Emmylou Harris

SUN., JULY 24

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one of my favorite performers, and I don't think he has ever received the recognition he deserves. I was happy for him when he won a Grammy this year, but it seemed like forever in coming. I can't believe the CMA people always overlook him when it comes to the CMA awards. I do thank *Country Music* for not forgetting about him. I also wanted to ask if you realized that in his Update, you did not mention his work (song and video) "Hey Good Lookin'," with Buckwheat Zydeco. He is also featured on *Country's Cutting Edge: The Rebels of Country Music*. I hope to see more on him in the future in this magazine. Too much is never enough.

Maxine Phibbs
Millville, Pennsylvania

Tanya a Favorite

I really enjoyed 20 Questions with Tanya Tucker in the March/April issue. I think she's great. She has a great singing voice. She's my favorite female country singer. My next favorite is Reba. Tanya and Reba are beautiful and sweet women. I hope to see them someday in person. Maybe you can bring out a pull-out poster and a cover story on them. Speaking of pull-out posters, that one on Dwight Yoakam was great. John Wert

McClure, Pennsylvania
Reba and Tanya have been cover and centerfold persons many times.—Ed.

Give Dwight the Cover

I'm writing to let you know I love your magazine. This is the first time I've ever read your magazine. I purchased your March/April 1994 issue at my local Winn Dixie. I enjoyed your magazine so much that I sent in for a subscription. Can't wait for my first issue. I especially loved the pull-out poster of Dwight Yoakam. Not only was it a good picture, but you also included all kinds of information about Dwight and his career on the back. I have never belonged to a fan club, but at 30 years old, I joined my first. I guess that was because no one has ever inspired me as much as Dwight. I hope you will do an issue with Dwight Yoakam as your cover story. I would love to read a full article and an interview of Dwight. Thanks for a great magazine.

Lisa Fraser
Deltona, Florida
Most recent Dwight cover: May/June '93. Back issues \$3, Westport office.—Ed.

Kickin' Ourselves

In the May/June edition of *Country Music* on page 60, Top 25, you said that John Michael Montgomery's album, "I Swear," was the second-place album. That is incorrect. The name of his album, which had the hit song "I Swear" on it, is actually *Kickin' It Up*.

Melissa Henkel
San Diego, California

Mattea's Background Vocalist

I meant to write this letter a long time ago.... In the People section of your March/April 1994 issue, you ran a picture of Aaron Neville and Kathy Mattea singing together on TNN's *American Music Shop*. The main question seemed to be, "What were they singing?" Well, to be honest, I can't remember, but I can tell you this much, it was a Christmas song. I sang BGV's for Kathy on her Grammy-winning *Good News* and also on this particular television production, and I know for a fact that the show was aired in late December, long before the picture was printed in *Country Music*. For those of you who missed it, you missed a great show, but pick up the *Good News* album and you can hear most of the songs over and over until next Christmas, when you can try to convince TNN to run it again.

Marcus Rowe
Nashville, Tennessee

Get It Right, Already!

I received the May/June 1994 issue of your magazine today to find that you've corrected one mistake with another. When you published my letter saying that W.S. "Fluke" Holland is Johnny Cash's drummer, you misprinted the part of my letter concerning Bob Wootton, John's lead guitarist. If you'll check my original letter, you'll note that Wootton is spelled as such, and not with an "e" as you reprinted it. I'm sure Bob will be happy to confirm the spelling of his last name for you. I would think you would know this after doing the "Pickin' for Cash" feature on Bob in conjunction with the Cash Silver Anniversary feature in 1980.

Vicki Langdon
Denison, Texas

Right again.—Ed.

Waiting for BRC

In your May/June issue, in Letters, someone said they had read enough of Billy Ray Cyrus. Please don't stop putting articles on BRC in your magazine. For all the Billy Ray fans, we wait by our mailboxes for *Country Music* hoping for articles of pictures of Billy Ray.

Christine Odom
Houma, Louisiana
For BRC, see People section.—Ed.

Murray, Montgomery and More

I second the comment in last issue's Letters section on Anne Murray—we just don't hear or see enough of her. Also, where did John Michael Montgomery get that beautiful leather jacket with the Native American motif (May/June 1994)? I saw George Jones in a similar jacket.

Kathy Wagnitz
Chesterland, Ohio
Don't know where he got the jacket. As for Murray, one of last winter's blizzards postponed our planned interview.—Ed.

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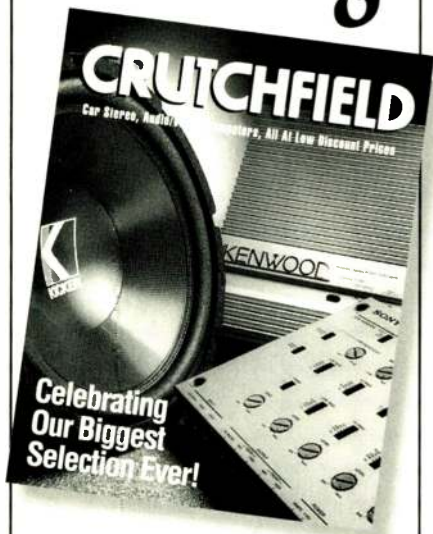
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Who's Harlan Howard?

This concerns Letters in the May/June issue. Who is Harlan Howard? Honey, let me tell you who Harlan Howard is (please keep in mind this is just a very small taste). Have you ever heard of Patsy Cline? Well, then, I'm sure you have heard her song, "I Fall to Pieces." Mr. Howard co-wrote that song with Hank Cochran. Plus he is still going strong today co-writing songs for Patty Loveless and writing with Marty Stuart. Sorry, hon, but I think you need to do a little research. Perhaps a good dose of *The Journal* would help.

Beth Ramsey
Chester, Illinois

To subscribe to *The Journal*, our sister publication on the roots of country music, contact the Westport office.—Ed.

Where's Charlie Rich?

What has happened to Charlie? I haven't heard anything about him in years and am wondering if he's still recording. He was one of the very best. I've seen him in three concerts and have 35 of his albums. RVS sounds like Charlie, even looks like Charlie would have looked in early days in Memphis.

Carolyn Carter

Worthington Springs, Florida
In 1992 Charlie was back with *Pictures and Paintings*, released on the Warner Brothers/Blue Horizon label, reviewed in our July/August 1992 issue.—Ed.

CMM Best There Is

I am tired of people putting down this magazine because it isn't up to their standards. This magazine is the best magazine out there on the shelves. *Country Music*, keep up the good work.

Melanie Cantrell
Carriere, Mississippi

Sawyer Slammed Again

First of all, I've been a faithful reader for years and I love CMM. What I want to know is why the Academy of Country Music has again chosen not to honor Sawyer Brown. Don't get me wrong, Little Texas is great, and I congratulate them. But those of us who have been Sawyer Brown fans since *Star Search* have seen how talented they are and have waited patiently for them to get the praise and recognition they have deserved for years.

Dorothy Howell
Ferguson, North Carolina

More McGraw!

Why isn't there anything about Tim McGraw? His album *Not a Moment Too Soon* has been Number One on Billboard for six weeks. We have seen Tim and his great band, Dance Hall Doctors, in concert. They're great. Would like to hear more about Tim and the band.

D. Holladay
Lawrence, Kansas

As *Tanya* says in her song, "soon."—Ed.

Achieving Anderson

I was pleased to see John Anderson win the career Achievement Award on the ACM Award Show May third. He is one of my favorites. I have followed his career from day one. Congratulations to John.

John and Cynthia Ducksworth
Mayo, Florida

Hazel agrees. See *People*.—Ed.

Radio Loses Another One

I agree with Stanton Lipton in Letters in the May/June issue. Merle Haggard is the greatest. I can't wait for his new release. Radio stations don't play his music, they play this new crazy stuff and forget the great Merle. I have his videos and his hit songs on cassette, so I'll listen to him—not the radio.

Ramona Tiller
Perry, Arkansas

See *Reviews for Merle's new one*.—Ed.

Stampede for LeDoux

Ever heard of Chris LeDoux? Apparently, no one has. Very disappointing. He has got to be one of the greatest country musicians/singers of our time. I guess everyone is into this "new country" now. Chris LeDoux put on a better concert in the middle of the rodeo arena at the Clements Stampede, California, than anyone else I've seen in concert. I have never seen people go more wild.

Isa M. Stai
Hayword, California

Wanting Walker

I know Clay Walker is new, but a lot of people like him already. Would you put his picture in at least one issue? Could I have his fan club? I would love that.

Krista Kitzmiller
Elk Garden, West Virginia

Stay tuned for *Clay*. Fan club's at P.O. Box 1304, Nederland, Texas 77627.—Ed.

Spotlight on Trevino

I'd like to see an article, centerfold, etc., feature on Rick Trevino. He is a new performer, but he doesn't get any recognition because others are always in the spotlight.

Betty Black
Houston, Texas

See *Record Reviews* this issue.—Ed.

Her Own Award Show

Are you as worn out with music awards shows as I am? There are so many now, I can't remember which ones are which, much less who's been nominated for what! Personally, I think that not only is the whole concept too subjective, it's predictable to the point of boredom. Take the Entertainer of the Year award. Isn't this kind of an apples and oranges situation? I mean, who's to say that a certain Oklahoman's pyrotechnic acrobatics are more entertaining than what anybody else does? I think it's time for a change. I think we need some categories that can

be awarded on the basis of documentable numbers, not personal opinion. Let's come up with categories that actually have meaning for people, like "Artist Whose Videos Employ the Fewest Anorexic 18-Year-Olds Doing Improbable Things While Wearing Clothing Most of the Female Population of America Couldn't Get Their Big Toes In." I not only could relate to that, I'd truly appreciate it—and I'd certainly buy their albums! I know there are those who will still cling to the past and demand Best (Male or Female) Vocalist or Album of the Year. So be it. But if you're one of those wonderful people who just loves good music, and doesn't sit around worrying about who does what best, give me a call and we'll come up with our own awards show. Bet ours will be a lot more fun!

Kate McClure
Texarkana, Texas

Crowing for Crowell

Thanks to Geoffrey Himes for a great review of Rodney Crowell's *Let the Picture Paint Itself* in the May/June issue. We Rodney fans know that he is the greatest and deserves much more recognition than he has gotten. When are you going to do a feature story and/or pull-out poster? Claudia Harper

Edna, Kentucky

Stuart a Good Man

I was very glad to read John Morthland's record review of Marty Stuart's *Love and Luck* in the May/June issue. I've had it since the day it was released, and I don't want to hear anything else. Marty is such an outstanding talent, but most of the general public hasn't caught on to that yet. With this release, I think Marty will finally get the recognition that he deserves. I also notice he was mentioned as one of Patrick Carr's "few good men." How true!

Joan Lance
Joplin, Missouri

Just the Facts, Bob, Just the Facts

Bob Allen is entitled to his opinion, but he should at least get his facts straight. In your May/June 1994 issue, he reviewed Sawyer Brown's *Outskirts of Town*, which, by the way, is their 11th album, not tenth. He also stated that "The Walk" was their first Number One hit. It was actually "Step That Step." And, for Mr. Allen's information, Mark Miller's "husky voice" is one of the band's most unique and best qualities.

Shawna Martinez
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Including Greatest Hits, Outskirts is Number 11. Right on the single, too.—Ed.

Patrick's Men and Women

I just had to write after reading The Final Note in the May/June issue. The pic-

ture of John Prine thrilled me, and though I didn't know who Rosie Flores was, I will very soon. I used to work on a horse farm in Virginia, and every weekend we'd sit down by the river and sing "Angel From Montgomery" and "Please Don't Bury Me." My next visit to the music store will be to update my Prine collection and to add Rosie Flores. After seeing Mr. Carr's 20 "must have" list, I must add one: k.d. lang's *Torch & Twang*.

Karen Zokoe
Walkill, New York

Hobbs Is One Good Woman

I read the Final Note column, "Good Men, Great Women," in the May/June issue. I do agree with some of the singers you mentioned, but I felt that Becky Hobbs should have been included. The album she did on her own label, Beckaroo Records, *Hottest Ex in Texas, All Keyed Up*, first MTM and then RCA, and now her new album, *The Boots I Came to Town In*, on Intersound. She is the best entertainer I've seen. Also, I believe it is past time that they did a feature on her in *Country Music*.

Jimmy Spencer
Kings Mills, Ohio

Hobbs' new one is coming soon in Record Reviews.—Ed.

Competitive O'Hara

The record review of *Rise Above It*, by Bob Allen in the March/April issue, was right on the money. I'd been enjoying The Mavericks' *Oh, What a Crying Shame* when I finally found Jamie O'Hara at a store (which ordered it for me—the chains won't). His lyrics, imagery and style knocked me out. The time and care he put into this album makes it superior to much of today's "trite" country. Watch out, Dwight, the cold, hard truth is: Jamie is real competition.

J.M. Montgomery
Grants Pass, Oregon

Research Problem

Dear VIP,

I would like to know how many artists recorded this country song: "From a Jack to a King." Please list *all*. I know of four, but are there more than these?—Elvis, Ned Miller, Jim Reeves, Ricky Van Shelton. Some said Jack Greene did it. How many female artists did this fine, outstanding song?

A.L.R.
Norwalk, Ohio

Okay, readers, do your stuff.—Ed.

House Call

I would like to make a correction regarding information you printed in your May/June issue. I am referring to page 10, "Songwriters Get Their Due," in the People section in the May/June issue. It appears you've overlooked giving a very talented singer/songwriter *his* due.

James House co-wrote Dwight Yoakam's Grammy-winning song, "Ain't Lonely Yet," but was omitted from your article, and Kostas alone got all the recognition.

There is a lot of teamwork involved in creating a great song, and James House is part of a team that created Dwight Yoakam's vocal masterpiece. He deserves to be recognized for his contribution.

Dawn Searle
Mokena, Illinois

Correction noted. Also, Jan Buckingham co-wrote Pam Tillis' hit, "Queen of Denial," with Pam and Bob DiPiero, not Gretchen Peters as stated in the same People item.—Ed.

Apologies to Rinzler

I write to you to express our profound shock at seeing our friend and colleague Ralph Rinzler referred to as "the late Ralph Rinzler" in the Buried Treasures section of your March/April issue. This type of error is not an incorrect recording date, or a misspelled name. We request that this reckless information be corrected in a manner or forum appropriate to its severity.

Ralph has just completed producing the Smithsonian/Folkways two-CD reissue of *The Original Folkways Recordings of Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley*. He is also busy completing work on a series of four two-CD set reissues of the historic *Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music* first released on Folkways over 40 years ago.

Matt Walters
Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings
Washington, DC

This mistake is particularly embarrassing since I personally know it is an error. We look forward to seeing the Doc Watson/Clarence Ashley reissue, another example of Ralph's many contributions to the preservation of America's folk music tradition.—R.D.B.

Keep Garth Coming

In response to all of your readers' letters that say they have had enough stories on Garth Brooks, I'm a huge fan of Garth Brooks. He is a wonderful singer and a very talented entertainer. I hope to see a story on him soon. Maybe a poster. Congratulations on your platinum album, John Michael Montgomery. Would it be asking too much to want an article on John Michael too? My renewal is in the mail.

Jenny Fadler
St. Charles, Missouri

JMM was in May/June. Stay tuned for Garth.—Ed.

Another Guy for Chapin

I am a huge fan of Mary-Chapin Carpenter. In response to the "Guys for Chapin" letter in the May/June issue: It was sensational. I feel that Chapin really expresses viewpoints from all points of life.

Her songwriting is unbelievable, and her powerful music just awes me. I've been trying to find her fan club address. I've looked everywhere. I'm in the "Rhythm of Blues" without it.

Louis Lenzmeier
Kimball, Minnesota
No fan club, but you can write her at her management office: clo Studio One Artists, 7010 Westmoreland Ave., Suite 100, Tacoma Park, Maryland 20912.—Ed.

CMM Is Tops

Hi. I just want to say I love your magazine. I've been getting it almost a year now. You all have the best magazine around, because you have all the insights about everything. I enjoy the articles, the Letters to the Editor—everything about *Country Music Magazine* is great! I give credit where credit is due, and you all deserve it. You have a lifetime reader here.

D. Hilbert
Bradley, South Dakota

Which Tribe Is It?

In the May/June issue of *Country Music*, there was a record review of Kennedy Rose's *Walk the Line*. In that review and in quite a number of reviews and articles there are references to Native American flutist, etc., Bill Miller. He has been referenced as belonging to several Native

American tribes, most recently as a Minominee tribesman. I am wondering if this is an error? I have always thought Mr. Miller was associated with the Stockbridge-Munsee tribe. I would appreciate any information.

Delores M. Jones
Bowler, Wisconsin

Native American experts, come in please.—Ed.

Railroading

I have had a subscription to your magazine for over a year now and would like to see a centerfold of Confederate Railroad and an article about each of these guys.

Judy Crawford
Springfield, Ohio

Bare on TV

Saw a great country & western concert at Silver Springs, Florida, Tom T. Hall, Michelle Wright and Bobby Bare. All were great! Bobby was one who graciously signed autographs afterward, and I was able to snap a great picture of him. I asked him if he was ever going to have a TV show like one he had in the past where he interviewed songwriters. He replied, "Probably." Do you know anything about this great show being revived?

Mrs. Charles Thomas
Fruitland Park, Florida

One can only hope.—Ed.

Cover Merle, Cover Merle, Cover...

I would like to read more about Merle Haggard. My husband and I think Merle is the greatest, and also think he should be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

John and Jewel Hutson
Antlers, Oklahoma

We're working on a feature.—Ed.

CMM Yes, Himes No

I really like your magazine a lot! The interviews and articles are in-depth, personal, interesting, well-written and different from the information in most of the other country music-based magazines. However, I do have one complaint. I have been greatly disturbed by the reviews given by Geoffery Himes. In every issue I have read, he has mostly negative things to say. I first noticed it when he reviewed Wynonna's *Tell Me Why*, speaking of "pale re-writes" and "second-rate Jimmy Buffet songs." Then came Trisha Yearwood's turn to get slammed in January/February. He only gave credibility to one song on her wonderful album.

I overlooked these reviews, negative as they were, realizing that his job is to express his opinion. But when I read Mr. Himes' review of Collin Raye's *Extremes* (March/April issue), I could not overlook it a third time! I realize that every record is not perfect and will get some negative comments, but they need not outweigh the positive, as in the case with the reviews of Mr. Himes—with the exception of the one he did on Randy Travis, *Wind in the Wire* (in the January/February issue).

Beverly Saratt
Coweta, Oklahoma

Boy Oh Boy Howdy

Bow howdy! Had to write, couldn't wait...will we be seeing an article on the group Boy Howdy soon? They done good with "Cowboy's Born with a Broken Heart," but they knocked 'em dead with "She'd Give Anything." Wow! What a tune, what a voice, what guitars! It took me two months after the first time I heard this new song to find it in the stores, but it was worth the wait. I actually cried with joy when it was Number Three for two weeks in a row on Crook & Chase's weekly countdown, next to J.M. Montgomery's "I Swear." It was as if I had done the song myself. Sound a bit ridiculous? Yeah, to me too. I've never felt this emotional about any music or its artist (except Garth's "The Dance," like everybody else).

I know I'm gonna see an article on them soon, so I've subscribed for another two years to make sure I don't miss it! (OK, I did it because I love the magazine, but I tried, huh?) Keep up the good work and thanks for existing.

Donna Dymowski-Fell
Rosamond, California

The answer is a definite maybe.—Ed.

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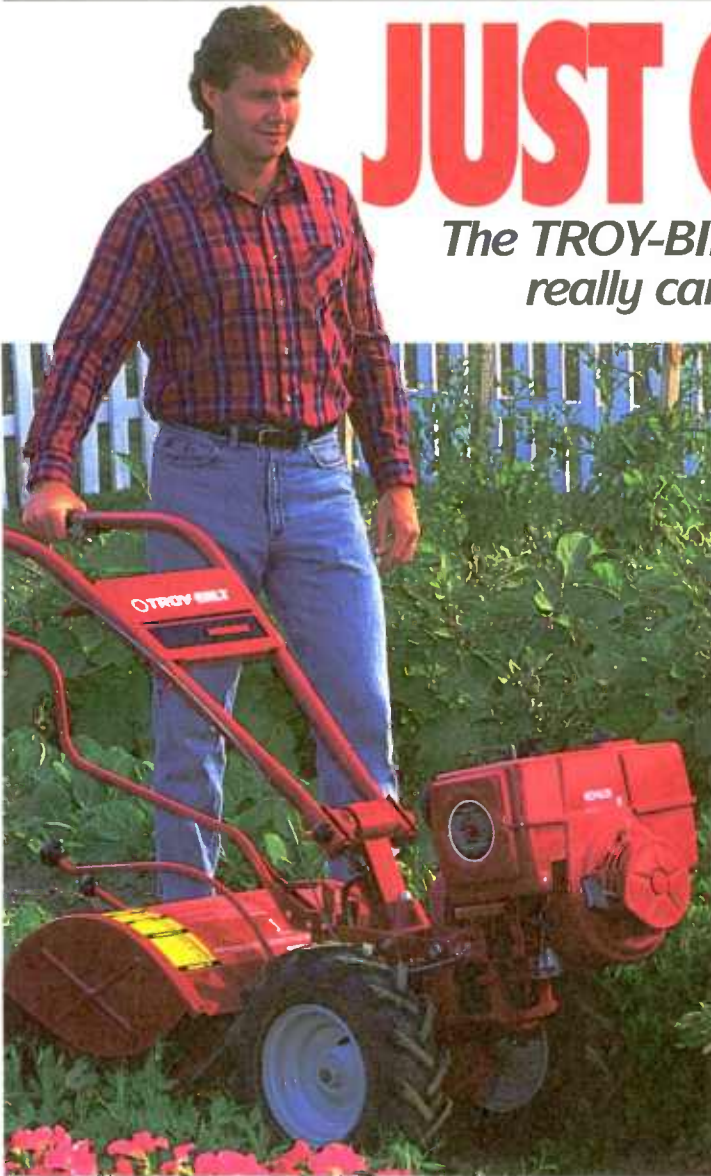
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2. AVERAGE (up to 50' x 60')
3. LARGE (over 50' x 60')



Dept. A4378

Name _____

Address _____

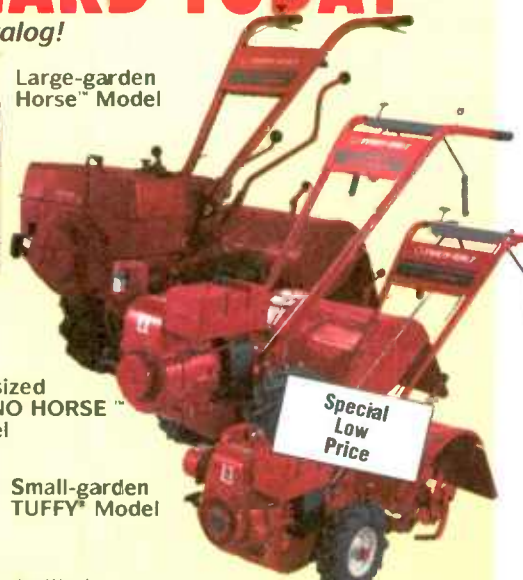
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Large-garden
Horse™ Model

Mid-sized
ECONO HORSE™
Model

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4HP JUNIOR MODEL Our small JUNIOR Model is specially-designed for folks with limited gardening space. It slips between close-planted rows, turns on a dime, and is as handy to use as a hoe...but a lot easier!



5HP PONY MODEL The mid-size Pony has plenty of power, for serious gardening, plus the easy handling that makes it a favorite for light-duty landscaping as well. This may be all the tiller you'll ever need for a small to average-size garden.



7 & 8HP HORSE MODEL 4-speed versatility, cast iron engines, and PTO capability make our 7HP STANDARD HORSE and our 8HP PROFESSIONAL HORSE Models the tillers chosen as America's best, by serious gardeners.

Choose the TROY-BILT® Tiller just right for you!

Whether you garden in a small backyard area or on an acre or more...there's a TROY-BILT® Tiller to fit your garden needs!

Every TROY-BILT® Tiller comes with big POWER DRIVEN wheels and tines in the rear...and they're so easy to handle you can guide them with JUST ONE HAND®!

Use the TROY-BILT® Tiller ALL YEAR LONG! In spring, break ground and prepare deep, smooth seedbeds...in summer, use the TROY-BILT® Tiller to cultivate and keep your garden WEED-FREE...come fall, power compost soil enriching organic matter directly into your garden!



FRONT-TINE TILLER TORTURE!



REAR-TINE TILLER JOY!

Front tine tillers shake you half to death! But the TROY-BILT® Tiller, with powered wheels and tines-in-the-rear, handles all your gardening chores with JUST ONE HAND®!



The TROY-BILT® Tiller is so easy to use... you can guide it with Just One Hand®!



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"TROY-BILT® brought the 'Joy' back into our lives!"

"The TROY-BILT® Horse Model tiller arrived following three years of gardening failures. But after tilling in organic matter with our 'Red Horse,' things were much improved...we had more crop than we could store and the garden just wouldn't stop producing! We cannot praise our TROY-BILT® enough: you have truly brought the 'joy of gardening' back into our lives!"

W.A. Harrell
Madison, TN



More Martina

Thanks to Michael McCall for his review of Martina McBride's *The Way That I Am* (March/April). He was right on in his review of the first seven songs. However, he missed out on the last three songs. "Life" is dance music that is fun. Now about being dramatic, Martina blows away audiences with her song "Strangers." "Ashes" is a catchy, fun song. How about more Martina in future issues?

Ed Sultan
Brooksville, Florida

Songs About Lubbock

In a recent conversation with my sister, she mentioned a song about Lubbock, Texas, and she asked me who sang it. Well, all I can recall is "Luckenbach, Texas." Did someone also sing about Lubbock? Can you help?

Laura Riensche
San Leandro, California
More work for you readers.—Ed.

Round 'Em Up for Reba

In response to the letter titled "Don't Get Me Started," in the March/April issue: As for Reba's sound, if that is what the cows in your neighborhood sound like, get thee to an agency and sign 'em up; you'll be a rich man! As for me (and millions of others, apparently), Reba Nell, keep on "bel-lowing"—you can cow-n't on us and will always be our Queen of Country (sorry) Moo-sic! An utterly devoted Rebaholic...

Susan M. Clapp
West Orange, New Jersey

Round Up Those Country Queens

I've read so many letters wanting Dolly, Tammy or Loretta on the cover. Why not get these "Ultimate Country Queens" together for a cover photo/story? Like one of your readers said, "Radio/record stores cater to new artists." I'm 22. I will always support my "Old-Timers."

Timothy Scott Kising
McGaheysville, Virginia

Sweepstakes Winner Responds

Just a quick note to let you know I received your check and, once again, thank you very much. You asked how I intended to use the money. Well, I put half the money towards insulating our garage. My wife, Lisa, bought some clothes and the rest we put into savings. Once again, we would like to say how much we both enjoy *Country Music Magazine*. We look forward to every issue. A big thank you for everything.

Harlan Kiemele
Cavalier, North Dakota

Bushful of Sweeps People

1993 Grand Prize Giveaway winners have been announced as follows: 1993 Chevy Blazer: Winner to be announced next issue/Color TV with Remote: Gary Okeefe, Kalamazoo, Michigan; Michael Jones, Vidor, Texas/Four-Head VCR: Carol

Hayes, Weedsport, New York; Vera Thomas, Douglasville, Georgia; Brant Lee Bastian, Temperance, Missouri/CD or Cassette Player: Joe Cordova, Las Vegas, Nevada; Cassandra Harding, Carmel, Indiana; Linda Fichtner, Monroe, Michigan; Kevin Rader, Covina, California/Sony Walkman: Virginia Felsch, Sutter Creek, California; Alice Wagner, East Greenwich, Rhode Island; Pete Diaz, Oceanside, California; Robert Brasington, Lancaster, South Carolina; Ina Thompson, Harrisonburg, Virginia/Billboard Top 10 Country Tape Collection: Nancy Gregory, Martinsville, Virginia; Lurene Petty, Valliant, Oklahoma; Catherine Emory, Centreville, Maryland; Karren Morreau, Junction City, Oregon; James Fortune, Fort Walton Beach, Florida; O. D. Kershner, Odessa, Texas/and 70 lucky winners of the Country Bestseller (book).

Another Sweeps Winner

Congratulations also to Grace Sanford of Bremerton, Washington. She's the lucky winner of \$1000 in the February/March 1994 Renewal Sweepstakes.

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.

VOTE

See For CMSA Members Only Page 66

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<p>NEW! SAMPLE HOT NEW MUSIC!</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>CODE</td><td>ARTIST</td></tr> <tr><td>8471</td><td>Karon Tippin</td></tr> <tr><td>2521</td><td>Alabama</td></tr> <tr><td>3223</td><td>Alan Jackson</td></tr> <tr><td>6871</td><td>Anne Murray</td></tr> <tr><td>2751</td><td>Asleep at the Wheel</td></tr> <tr><td>3322</td><td>Billy Dean</td></tr> <tr><td>7691</td><td>Billy Joe Royal</td></tr> <tr><td>2972</td><td>Billy Ray Cyrus</td></tr> <tr><td>2694</td><td>Boyz II Men</td></tr> <tr><td>2767</td><td>Brooks & Dunn</td></tr> <tr><td>3263</td><td>Charlie Daniels</td></tr> <tr><td>9252</td><td>Clay Walker</td></tr> <tr><td>2528</td><td>Clint Black</td></tr> <tr><td>4733</td><td>Clinton Gregory</td></tr> <tr><td>7291</td><td>Cullin Raye</td></tr> <tr><td>2666</td><td>Confederate RR</td></tr> <tr><td>3583</td><td>Darryl & Don Ellis</td></tr> <tr><td>3264</td><td>Davis Daniel</td></tr> <tr><td>2882</td><td>Deborah Allen</td></tr> <tr><td>3352</td><td>Delbert McClinton</td></tr> <tr><td>3372</td><td>Desert Rose Band</td></tr> <tr><td>3422</td><td>Diamond Rio</td></tr> <tr><td>7271</td><td>Dolly Parton</td></tr> <tr><td>3373</td><td>Doug Kershaw</td></tr> <tr><td>7861</td><td>Doogie Stone</td></tr> <tr><td>9621</td><td>Dwight Yoakam</td></tr> </table>	CODE	ARTIST	8471	Karon Tippin	2521	Alabama	3223	Alan Jackson	6871	Anne Murray	2751	Asleep at the Wheel	3322	Billy Dean	7691	Billy Joe Royal	2972	Billy Ray Cyrus	2694	Boyz II Men	2767	Brooks & Dunn	3263	Charlie Daniels	9252	Clay Walker	2528	Clint Black	4733	Clinton Gregory	7291	Cullin Raye	2666	Confederate RR	3583	Darryl & Don Ellis	3264	Davis Daniel	2882	Deborah Allen	3352	Delbert McClinton	3372	Desert Rose Band	3422	Diamond Rio	7271	Dolly Parton	3373	Doug Kershaw	7861	Doogie Stone	9621	Dwight Yoakam	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>6282</td><td>Eddie Rabbitt</td></tr> <tr><td>7642</td><td>Eddy Raven</td></tr> <tr><td>7733</td><td>Elvis Presley</td></tr> <tr><td>9442</td><td>Emmylou Harris</td></tr> <tr><td>3831</td><td>The Everly Brothers</td></tr> <tr><td>4488</td><td>Faith Hill</td></tr> <tr><td>2764</td><td>Garth Brooks</td></tr> <tr><td>4281</td><td>Garth Brooks</td></tr> <tr><td>8661</td><td>George Jones</td></tr> <tr><td>7874</td><td>George Strait</td></tr> <tr><td>2263</td><td>Glen Campbell</td></tr> <tr><td>5381</td><td>Hal Ketchum</td></tr> <tr><td>9451</td><td>Hank Williams, Jr.</td></tr> <tr><td>4441</td><td>Highway 101</td></tr> <tr><td>3861</td><td>Holly Dunn</td></tr> <tr><td>3431</td><td>Joe Diffie</td></tr> <tr><td>6863</td><td>John M. 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PLUS...OVER 500 MORE! (If your favorite Artist is not listed here, just press or say the numbers on your phone that contain the first 3 letters of the Band, or Artist's last name (i.e. HIGhway 101 = 444, Marty STUART = 788).)

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FOR CMSA MEMBERS ONLY

VOTE

MEMBERS POLL/JULY 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 Have Dogs or Cats?

5. a. Do you or anyone in your household own a dog?

Yes No

b. If yes, how many dogs? 1 2 3 or more

6. a. Do you or anyone in your household own a cat?

Yes No

b. If yes, how many cats? 1 2 3 or more

What Do You Feed Your Pets?

7. Which brand(s) of dog food do you use? (Check all that apply.)

Alpo Gaines Gravy Train Purina Dog Chow
 Ken-L-Ration Kibbles 'n Bits Other _____

8. Which brand(s) of cat food do you use? (Check all that apply.)

Tender Vittles Alpo Purina Cat Chow
 Nine Lives Friskies Hill's Science Diet
 Other _____

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: July Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880.



Wilburn Brothers Special

Regrettably, no good Wilburn Brothers reissues currently exist. MCA, encouraged by Patty Loveless, had issued a 12-song Wilburn retrospective in 1990 that deserved to stay in print, but it did not remain available for long. Nothing else is in print from the brothers' Decca era, and there's no indication that MCA plans to change that any time soon, a sad commentary on their cavalier way of handling their vintage country catalog. The only Wilburn material available at all is *The Wonderful Wilburn Brothers* (KCD 746), a set of their recordings for Four Star Records. It's not a particularly good sampler of their work. Nevertheless, the dozen songs included on it are: "Heart Please Be Still," "Are You Lonely Too," "Way Down Under Blues," "Put Me in Your Pocket," "Down in Dixie (Where They Say You-All)," "Bugle Call from Heaven," "Goose Pimples," "Give a Little Take a Little," "Anticipation Blues," "Because You Care," "The Long Gone Lonesome Blues" and "Will You Be Ready (To Wear a Golden Crown)." Available on cassette or CD. Regular price \$8.95 cassette, \$12.95 CD. Members' price \$6.95 cassette, \$10.95 CD. Follow ordering instructions at the bottom of this page. Include membership number when taking discount.

Classic Photo

Though there wasn't enough room to include the photo below in the Wilburn Brothers story in Legends, it's too good to pass up. Shown are the cast members of The Wilburns' TV show when it went on the air in 1963. Left to right: Don Helms, Shorty Lavender, Doyle Wilburn, Loretta Lynn, Harold Morrison, Teddy Wilburn, Leslie Wilburn and Lester Wilburn.

Buried Treasures Special

An advantage of CMSA membership is the discount on items featured in Buried Treasures. Members may deduct \$10.00 off the prices shown for the boxed sets on Merle Travis, Claude King and Reno & Smiley. Take \$2.00 off the prices shown on all other items. Remember to include your membership number if taking discount. See complete ordering instructions in Buried Treasures.

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CMSA members are also entitled to a discount on all merchandise featured in Essential Collector. This time out, books and videos on artists old and new make the cut. Members may deduct \$2.00 off the prices shown on all items except for the Ray Flacke and Merle Travis guitar instruction tapes. On those higher priced items, members may deduct \$5.00. Be sure to include your membership number with your order. Ordering details are included on the Essential Collector page.

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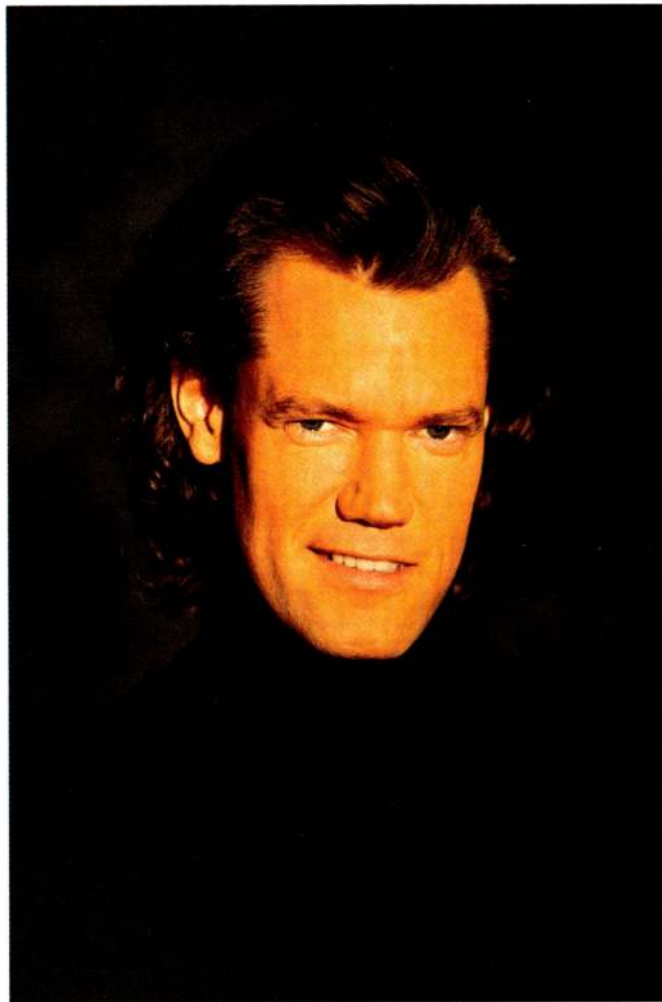
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The old-time gym is the essence of heavy metal—iron weights, stained by the hundreds of reps since Vince Gironda opened Vince's Gym in Studio City, California, in the 1930's. The only light comes from filthy skylights, and Randy Travis takes one look at the stained and faded red carpet and breaks out laughing. "When was the last time this carpet was cleaned?" he asks jokingly. "Ain't never been cleaned," says one gym rat. "Erik Estrada bought it when he was riding high with 'Chips.' That's the last time it was clean." As with so many other trips with Randy Travis, we've ended up in a gym, back to do battle with the iron. Randy is, by his own admission, in the best shape of his life—should he decide to forgo country music, he could compete as a bodybuilder. He's recovered from back problems brought on by heavy squats and his lifting a heavy stove into the back of a truck, and, after a 15-month layoff, he's back with an album, *This Is Me*, that's received adulatory reviews. And he looks happy, a far cry from his run-ragged demeanor of a few years ago. His voice is strong, the iron is waiting and between descending biceps curls, he agrees to answer 20 Questions:

1 So, quickly, you're back on the road. Did you miss it? I missed the audience. (Laughter.) I didn't miss the road. I'd still have to say that. I miss the people. When we performed in Vegas, and then Houston and Nashville, I realized how much I really missed that audience. It was wonderful. After we got through that first night, it just kept getting better and better. The shows were better every night. Of course, I had such a great band—it was as tight as when I traveled all the time.

2 What was it like that first night back on stage? You're not going to believe this, Michael, but it's the only time in my life I was more comfortable talking than singing. My hand shook so bad I almost dropped the mike...



PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

20 Questions with **RANDY TRAVIS**

by Michael "Iron Mike" Bane

3 I'd like to have seen you so nervous you almost dropped the microphone... (Laughter.) Michael, I literally was shaking like that (he shakes) when I walked out. But it was after 15 months, and that's a long layoff. But we're gonna tour some more this year—not a lot. A few fair dates, Vegas. But in January,

we're going to do a real tour—three months.

4 But it took you that long to recharge, didn't it? I mean *This Is Me* is a testament to the fact that you did need the time off. I feel it's comparable to those first two albums, and it's the only one we've done since that

compares to the first two. When you look at the quality of the music from beginning to end, I think it's the best collection of songs I've come up with in a long time. But, you know, we had time on it. When you think about it, most people are trying to finish two albums in a little over a year. It's ridiculous. And we took a year and a half just to do one—and looked for the songs a lot longer than that.

5 True, true. With *Storms of Life* you'd been getting ready for a long time, looking for songs...
...For 18 years! (Laughter.)

6 And from then on it was crazy times...
It was. From the end of *Storms of Life* to the beginning of *Always and Forever*, it was crazy. It was a schedule that was unbelievable...

7 The last time I saw you before you went off the road, you were shot. Your voice was tired; you were tired; I was worried about you; Lib was worried about you...
Well, she was, because she saw me sing when I didn't have a voice. There were days when I would do shows, and I would barely be able to talk. Then I'd go out there and do one, sometimes two, shows. You think about it—for eight years, I had no break, as far as giving my voice really time to recuperate and get back in shape. So when I went back in the studio for *This Is Me*, I was ready to sing. I felt good. I had control. I had more range. I was just ready to do it. And it's the same with live shows. My voice was more ready to sing—it was easier for me to sing—than it had been in years.

8 So tell me about the movies. That seems to be going really, really great.
Boy, it is! I'm really enjoying it, especially playing cowboys. Of course, I want to do other things. I don't want to just play westerns from now on. But, it's fun, because of the way I was raised and what I like to do. Westerns are my

first love. But I want to become a competent actor, continually learn with each part I do. Work movies. Sing. Tour. Write songs. Produce—we just co-produced Del Singleary's first album. I'm not sure how far into his career I'll do that, but I wanted to work with him on the first one.

9 *What's your favorite role? I mean, I watched that whole Bruce Dern movie to see you in it, and you weren't on screen until the last 10 minutes.*

(Laughter.) Okay, okay. The way they advertised that, you'd of thought I was on-screen every minute...but, you know, I feel so much more comfortable with doing dialogue now. As far as the best thing I've done, you haven't seen it, but it's Cole Younger in the *Frank and Jesse* movie—be out in the fall. That's the best I've been able to do.

10 *I hear that's a strikingly dramatic part...*

He was a bad—heck, that was a bad group of people, period. I really got to do some riding, some good strong dialogue and some good scenes as far as shooting goes. I really enjoyed it. I haven't seen it put together yet, so you never know. I hope it turns out to be a good movie, and I think it can.

11 *What have you got in front of you now? More cowboys?*

Nope. I've got three scripts in front of me now; two aren't westerns, but one is.

12 *I think you ought to play an urban detective.*

Believe it or not, somebody mentioned that yesterday. A studio person we met with. It would be fun. You know, I've always loved those kinds of roles that Clint Eastwood did, the Dirty Harry character. That would be fun to do, wouldn't it.

13 *So how did you like producing a record for somebody else?*

I've only done it once. I mainly worked with the vocals for

Del. I'll tell you what, I think I'd be good at finding the material he needs. I think that's where my talent lies as a producer, knowing a little bit about what makes a good country song. I know what I like to hear, musically, but I'm going to be co-producing Del with James Stroud, and he's musically so far beyond me; I mean, I'm not even in his ballpark. But as far as picking songs and vocals, I think I can help.



Bill Paxton, Rab Lawe and Randy Travis in *Frank and Jesse*.

14 *It's harder to get songs than it was a few years back, isn't it?*

Boy, it's a lot harder. There are so many people out there. When a good one's written, now, it goes right to somebody. It doesn't lay around and wait, the songwriter thinking, "I'm gonna wait for Haggard or Jones to do their next album." Shoot, it goes right out to whoever's recording.

15 *Man, it was disheartening watching the ACM's, being backstage, this year. A friend with me kept asking, "Who's that? Who wrote that song?" And I didn't know.*

(Laughter.) Mike, I used to listen to country radio five years ago...I could listen to the radio and hear a song, and even if I'd never heard that song before, the first time it was played, I knew who was singing it. Now, I hear songs two

or three times, and I'm still sitting there going, "Who in the heck is that?" And I think we're getting into a little bit of dangerous territory, because there's a lot of things coming out, and these people sound just alike. Just like two or three or four other people out there. I think the labels need to concentrate a little more on quality and less on quantity. Because when I first came into this business, new blood is what it needed. Several

what's going on and realize what they have to do. Or maybe they won't. Maybe it's a cycle the business has to go through. Music, everything, goes through cycles, and maybe we're seeing that happen. We talk about the business being great, but the reality is that record sales have dropped off some in the last couple of years.

18 *So did you recharge your batteries as far as writing. Is songwriting coming any easier to you?*

No, writing's always been the same way. There are days when it's great and days when it doesn't work. I'm more proud of the co-writing on "The Box" than anything else I've helped write in a long time. I think that's really a special song. I think that one says something a lot of people can relate to. I'm sure your dad was the same way—how often does he say, "Son, I love that." I mean, my dad just wouldn't say that; you couldn't beat that out of him.

And you tried!

I tried and lost! (Laughter.) Seriously, that generation was just raised in harder times. It was different for them. But I think a lot of people can relate to that song.

19 *Let's shift to a quick gym topic. I know since you pulled your back a couple of years ago, you've had to slow down. Is your back back, so to speak, 100 percent?*

No, I don't think it's back 100 percent. I'd say about 70 percent now. And now I'm going to pay attention to what I do...

That's right, it's your birthday today. You're supposed to be smarter...

...Well, I'm, not going to be picking up any cars or stoves anymore. I'm very, very cautious with it now.

20 *But you do your own movie stunts...*

Well, yeah. In one movie, they said I needed to be shot by a shotgun, jump in the air; then fall on the ground. I said, yeah, I'll do that. (Laughter.)

Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

Mac Wiseman: Wiseman's music has changed over the years, as has Claude King's (see below), only the changes have been more dramatic. Today Mac Wiseman is best known as a powerful advocate for traditional bluegrass music, the music he started with. It seems odd to imagine him making the transition from raw bluegrass to pop singer, but in the late 50's he actually pulled it off, and two recent releases reveal how. *Early Dot Recordings, Volume 3* (County CCS-CD-113) covers 16 bluegrass titles from 1952-1954. These feature Mac's magnificent voice and solid traditional accompaniment by a mix of bluegrass sidemen and Nashville studio pickers. On these tracks, the bluegrass flavor was still in force. The variety of material was impressive, covering everything from Hank Williams' "Six More Miles" and "Don't Let Your Sweet Love Die" to "The Waltz You Saved for Me." Things changed dramatically right after these sessions.



What do I mean? Well, if you buy both, put on the County first. When it's over, put Bear Family's *Teenage Hangout* (BCD 15694) on and stand by for a jolt. On these 30 Dot recordings from 1955-1960, fiddles and banjo were replaced by electric guitars, drums and on some tracks, vocal choruses. Wiseman truly rose to the occasion, becoming a respectable rocker and blues shouter on the New Orleans r&b standard, "I Hear You

Knocking," and other gut-bucket blues. Even his pop remake of the bluegrass favorite, "Tis Sweet to Be Remembered," retains considerable grace. Mac never became a rock star (few middle-aged men with receding hairlines did). Yet by putting the same conviction into pop that he put into bluegrass, he survived at a time many traditional singers struggled. Few of his peers could have pulled this off (though Mac did have to stretch to succeed with the silly "Running Bear"). Today, Wiseman stays close to tradition, but these memoirs of his past remind all of us of his versatility.

Claude King: One song will define Claude King for all time: his 1962 crossover smash, "Wolverton Mountain" (written by Merle Kilgore). The song was a Nashville Sound landmark in a period when numerous Columbia country artists (Jimmy Dean and King's friend, the late Johnny Horton, among them) had made inroads onto the pop charts. A former member of the *Louisiana Hayride* who also did some acting, King managed to sustain some momentum on records into the mid-60's before his career declined (he's now retired). Bear Family's *More Than Wolverton Mountain* (BCD 15619) covers King's entire recording career from beginning to end—133 songs on five CD's, nearly every single number he ever did. This is a lot of Claude King for all but the hardcore fan.

The Louisiana native started out in the Shreveport scene, later becoming a regular on the *Louisiana Hayride*. His first records, with his friend, guitarist Buddy Attaway (they called themselves "Buddy and Claude") came in 1947. King had a strong Ernest Tubb style on his 1949 singles for Webb Pierce's Pacemaker Records. By the time he signed with Specialty Records (Little Richard's label, and strongly

r&b oriented) in 1952, he had developed a smoother vocal style. After an abortive stab at rockabilly, King moved to Columbia, with Johnny Horton's help; the results were Nashville Sound hits like "Big River, Big Man," "The Comancheros" and "Wolverton Mountain." All of King's 1961-1973 Columbia recordings appear,



among them his rare 1968 tribute album to Horton. Some of the Columbia recordings worked better than others, and by the late 60's, he sold poorly. He continued recording for the tiny True label and re-recorded his hits for Gusto; samples of this material (not everything) is included. Bear wisely avoided adding the later, mediocre remakes of earlier hits that King recorded. Colin Escott's notes, based on new interviews with King, detail the story of a Louisiana boy who might have done better had he been willing to move to Nashville—which he wasn't.

Merle Travis: I've been heavily involved in this project for several years, so here's what it is and what's on it, without further comment. Last year Bear Family issued Travis' 1947 album, *Folk Songs of the Hills* (originally released on 78 rpm), and his 1963 album of original coal mining songs, *Songs of the Coal Mines*, on one CD. Now comes *Guitar Rags and a Too Fast Past* (BCD 15637), which assembles Travis' complete 1943-1955 recordings from beginning to end, 141 recordings

on five CD's. Issued for the first time anywhere are his first recordings from 1943. At the time, these sides were the premier releases of the now-legendary King Records of Cincinnati. The first two, cut in 1943, feature Merle and Grandpa Jones, then performing over WLW radio, recording two duets as "The Sheppard Brothers" (WLW discouraged their artists from making records). Merle also cut two songs as "Bob McCarthy." Both are among the rarest country recordings of any decade. Also included from King are obscure 1944 Travis sides, one never released anywhere.

Most of the rest of Disc One consists of recordings Merle did in California in 1944-45 as both vocalist and sideman, before he signed with Capitol. These include his uncredited duet work with Wesley Tuttle and his instrumental work with Shug Fisher and The Ranchmen Trio and with Hank Penny (on Penny's 1946 hit "Steel Guitar Stomp"). Before signing with Capitol, Merle also recorded some vocals under pseudonyms, such as his 1945 recording of Smiley Burnette's "Hominy Grits" under the name "Tem Martin."

The remaining four CD's cover Travis' Capitol recordings from 1946 through 1955 including all his honky tonk hits like "Cincinnati Lou," "Divorce Me C.O.D.," "So Round! So Firm! So Fully Packed!," "Steel Guitar Rag" and "Merle's Boogie Woogie." The set also features the complete sessions for *Folk Songs of the Hills*, including two unissued songs. Other unreleased material includes his version of Jimmie Rodgers' "Any Old Time" and "Little Miss Sherlock Holmes" as well as alternate takes of better known tunes. His guitar solos from the early to mid-50's (including all the material on his first LP, *The Merle Travis Guitar*) are assembled, several never before issued.

The booklet features an essay by me (judge for yourself) and dozens of rare photos including some of actual Travis recording sessions, and a complete, factual discography. And this may be just the start.

Country All-Stars: In 1989 Bear Family issued an LP of material by The Country All-Stars. This studio unit consisted of 1950's Nashville session pickers Chet Atkins, Jerry Byrd, Homer & Jethro, fiddler Dale Potter (on some tracks) and other sidemen; after hours of working on country singles, it gave the participants a way to blow off steam and play the pop and jazz tunes they all loved. Though they spent most of their studio time backing singers, they recorded pop vocals and instrumentals for RCA on the side, as a breather. Now Bear has reissued the set (with tracks added) on CD as *Jazz From the Hills* (BCD 15728). Originally, these records didn't sell, yet the performances were loose and excellent, revealing the players' broad musical backgrounds. Homer and Jethro's reputations as excellent jazz players are well known, but Byrd isn't often seen in that context. Atkins was never a jazz player, but made his fingerstyle technique fit the songs. The material ranges from vintage pop oldies like "Stompin' at the Savoy" and "Sweet Georgia Brown" to vocals (by Homer or Jethro) on "What's the Reason (I'm Not Pleasing You)" and "Do Something."

Potter's two instrumental showcases, "Fiddle Patch" (a reworking of Spade Cooley's "Oklahoma Stomp") and "Fiddle Sticks" remind everyone what an awesome fiddler he was in his prime. This collection adds three previously unissued 1956 performances done in New York featuring Chet, Homer & Jethro, legendary country-jazz guitarist George Barnes and other session musicians. No one knows exactly what purpose these three instrumentals were to serve. A jumping version of the swing favorite, "Song of the Wanderer," two takes of a blazing "Royal Garden Blues" and an ethereal "I'll See You in

My Dreams" all hold up well. The furious interplay on the first two numbers makes them worthy additions, while the latter is dreamy and pleasant.

Reno & Smiley: The bluegrass duo of Don Reno and Red Smiley never had to record rock 'n' roll (except once). *Reno & Smiley and The Tennessee Cutups: 1951-1959* (King KBSCD-7001) summarizes their traditional bluegrass legacy with 155 songs on four CD's (or cassettes). Reno is best known as Earl Scruggs' replacement in Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys in 1948 (he and Scruggs played a similar style since they both worked with the same North Carolina acts). His son, Ronnie, later worked with Merle Haggard's Strangers. Don's major contributions, however, came when he and guitarist Red Smiley linked up in fiddler Tommy Magness' band. The Magness group recorded four songs



for King (all on this collection) in 1951 before Don and Red went on their own.

Over the next seven years, they recorded an impressive mix of sacred music, bluegrass instrumentals (some fine Reno

banjo showcases among them), pop instrumentals done bluegrass style and secular numbers like "I Wouldn't Change You If I Could" (a 1983 hit for Ricky Skaggs) with fine vocal harmonies. Their sole rocker was the weird "Country Boy Rock 'N Roll" in 1956, but most of their repertoire remained down to earth. Their other deviations were excellent bluegrass versions of current country hits like Buck Owens' "Under Your Spell Again."

Jimmie Logsdon: Jimmie Logsdon, alias Jimmie Lloyd, enjoyed two distinct identities as a honky tonk singer and a rockabilly from 1951 to 1958. *Rocket in My Pocket* (BCD 15650) is the definitive Logsdon collection. It begins with both sides of his rare 1951 Harvest 78 (his first record) and runs through Logsdon's Decca, Dot, Starday and Roulette sides. The early Logsdon was a straight-ahead Hank Williams honky tonker; the Harvest single helped him land a contract with Decca. He did some respectable work there, including "Let's Have a Happy Time," Jimmie Davis' "Where The Old Red River Flows" and the impressive (and previously unissued) "One Way Ticket to Nowhere."

One problem was the over-emphasis on Logsdon as a Hank Williams clone, particularly apparent on flat material like "I Wanna Be Mama'd" and the two tedious 1953 post mortem Hank tributes. The Dot and Starday sides are equally mediocre, but Logsdon regained his power with Roulette as rockabilly Jimmie

Lloyd. "Where the Rio De Rosa Flows" from 1957 and 1958's "Rocket in My Pocket" (featured in the film *The Right Stuff*) both aged well. The hot band on "Rocket" featured Grady Martin, Harold Bradley, Hank Garland, Floyd Cramer and other Nashville regulars. Check out the inside back cover for a strange photo of



Logsdon with a string-tie-wearing Raymond Burr.

Terry Fell: Terry Fell had one shining moment: his 1954 recording of "Truck Driving Man" for the RCA subsidiary label, X. It remains a classic of the trucker style. And that's the main attraction on Bear Family's 24-song *Truck Driving Man* (BCD 15762). It's safe to say that little else Fell recorded for X or RCA was terribly interesting, though "Mississippi River Shuffle" is pleasant and "I'm Hot to Trot" anticipates Roger Miller's looniness. Fell's own compositions are mildly interesting, and "Don't Drop It" is amusing the first couple of times.

Like other RCA country artists of the 50's, Fell endured the label's proclivity for shoving silly novelty songs down artists' throats, hence the dreadful "Wham! Bam! Hot Ziggety Zam" and "(We Wanta) See Santa Do the Mambo." You may want to keep the worst novelty, "Cave-man," around to play in the background if you have unwanted guests. Aside from Fell's biggest hit, virtually nothing else here was worth reissuing, even though Buck Owens appears as a sideman on a few tracks. Try as he might, annotator Colin Escott has trouble mustering up enthusiasm in his notes. It's understandable.

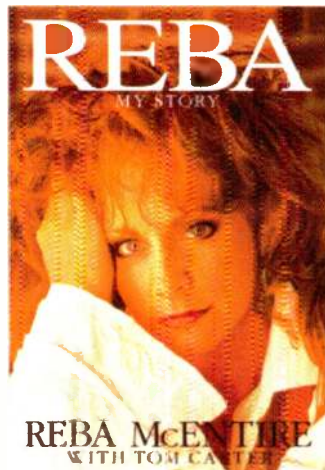
How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: Merle Travis, *Guitar Rags and a Too Fast Past* (BCD 15637), a 5-CD boxed set, \$149.95/Claude King, *More Than Wolverton Mountain* (BCD 15619), a 5-CD boxed set, \$149.95/Mac Wiseman, *Early Dot Recordings, Volume 3* (CCS 113), CD or cassette, \$15.95 CD, \$10.95 cassette/Reno & Smiley, *Reno & Smiley and The Tennessee Cutups: 1951-1959* (KBS 7001), a 4-CD or 4-cassette boxed set, \$69.95 CD's, \$59.95 cassettes/Country All-Stars, *Jazz From the Hills* (BCD 15728), CD only, \$24.95/Jimmie Logsdon, *Rocket in My Pocket* (BCD 15650), CD only, \$24.95/Terry Fell, *Truck Driving Man* (BCD 15762), CD only, \$24.95. Send check or money order payable to *Country Music Magazine* to Dept. 070894, 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*

▪ Books ▪

Reba McEntire: Reba McEntire's long awaited autobiography, *Reba*, written with Tom Carter, is on the stands and even being advertised on millions of bags of corn chips. It's neither the best nor worst such volume ever written. The strongest portions deal with her early days as part of a



ranching family and her early work in music. She's candid about the rise and fall of her marriage to Charlie Battles. She's equally frank about her painful split with old Oklahoma friends who, she felt, sided with Battles in the divorce.

The most cathartic section, as anyone would expect, deals with the 1991 plane crash that killed her band and its aftermath. She also takes several justifiable swipes at tabloid coverage of her career. Strangely enough, though she discusses her musical evolution in various portions of the book and professes her love for traditional country, she says little of her recent 180-degree turn towards pop, which echoes the switch Dolly Parton made in the late 1970's. As a longtime Reba fan, it's been no fun seeing her New Traditional roots cast aside in favor of music that tries to cross too many boundaries and comes off as neither good country nor good pop. I'd like to know her view

of it. Her fans, of course, won't care. They'll love it, and it reads like a future made-for-TV movie.

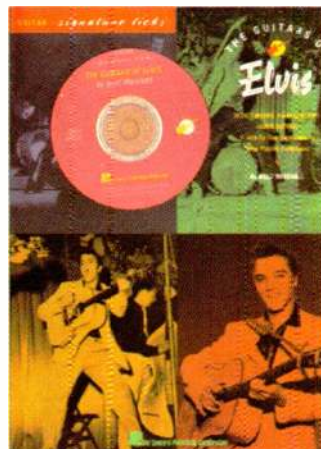
Glen Campbell: *Rhinestone Cowboy*, also co-written with Tom Carter, traces Campbell's career from his roots in Delight, Arkansas, through his early days of struggle in the music business. The earliest chapters are the best, since they chronicle an area of Campbell's career many don't fully realize. After leaving rural Arkansas, he evolved into a highly successful L.A. studio musician, working with future Garth producer Jimmy Bowen and playing on dozens of pop hits. In his heyday of stardom he lived in the fast lane. Though some of his touring stories are hilarious, the alcoholism that plagued him for years eventually evolved into major-league cocaine abuse. He ran through three marriages (including one to Mac Davis' ex-wife, Sarah) before beginning the wild, sometimes violent relationship with Tanya Tucker that gave the tabloids plenty to write about in the early 80's.

After marrying his fourth wife, Kim, in 1982, Campbell eventually tamed his demons and committed himself to Christianity. Though he insists that he doesn't intend to preach, in Chapter 20 he does just that by expounding on the state of the world. In doing so, he uses a tone some may appreciate but others might find judgmental and offensive, even if they agree with his ideas. While insisting he doesn't "judge" people, he provides various examples of himself doing just that. Don't misunderstand—he has a right to his opinion and religious beliefs, and I respect the fact he doesn't mince words. But the mean-spirited tone, considering his own admittedly wilder past, is hard to take.

Tom Carter's airy, breezy style in co-authoring these books is certainly succeeding

in the marketplace, and, in the case of the Campbell book, the star's individuality still shines through. Sadly, that's not always the case with Carter-co-written books. Reba's voice seems submerged when compared, for example, to the way Loretta Lynn's combination of toughness and vulnerability came across in *Coal Miner's Daughter* (Loretta's co-writer was George Vecsey).

Elvis: Last issue, we reviewed two volumes of rockabilly guitar instruction on video. *The Guitars of Elvis* by Wolf Marshall takes a different direction. This book, with a CD enclosed, focuses on the techniques of Elvis' three legendary lead guitarists. Scotty Moore worked on the Sun and early RCA recordings; Nashville session legend Hank Garland played on Elvis' late 1950's and early 60's RCA recordings; and James Burton began working with Elvis when he returned to live performing in 1969 and worked with him until he died. The book lays out the music on paper, while the CD includes re-creations of each song in stereo, to permit



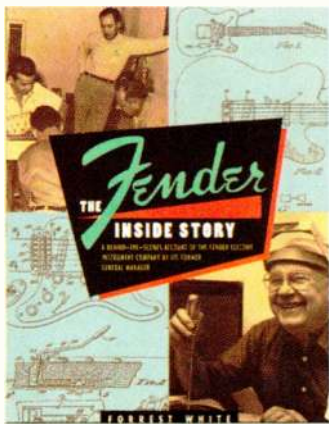
playing along on everything from "Good Rockin' Tonight" and "Mystery Train" to the RCA standards like "Heartbreak Hotel," "Hound Dog" and "Hard Headed Woman" and even his later onstage favorites, "See See Rider" and "Never Been to Spain."

Record Guide: Yet another country record guide has appeared, this one from Britain's Blackwell Publishers. Though *The Blackwell Guide to Recorded Country Music* is published in Britain, it's American-grown, edited by CMM Contributing Editor Bob Allen with some other regulars (though not myself) involved. It shares some of the drawbacks of the Country Music Foundation's record guide (reviewed last month) and has some unique problems of its own. Any such guide runs the risk of some of the recordings being out of print. At least the CMF volume stuck with available compact discs. The Blackwell guide foolishly included long out-of-print LP's, many now rare and nearly impossible for the average reader to find.

Western expert Laurence Zwisohn, old timey music authority Charles Wolfe, bluegrass writers Frank and Marty Godbey and honky tonk historian Nick Tosches handle their respective areas well. Allen and Pete Loesch capably tackle the 50's through the 80's. Not all do so well. CMM contributor Geoffrey Himes' inept essay on Western swing indicates little understanding of the genre as a whole. He concentrates primarily on Bob Wills and Asleep at the Wheel, discussing Wills largely by drawing not from his own knowledge but from Charles Townsend's Wills biography. He also wrongly credits Wills guitarist Junior Barnard with playing a solidbody instrument. His chapter on Alternative country is on stronger ground, in part because of his background as a rock music critic. Like the Country Music Foundation record guide, this is simply one more validation of the dubious value of *any* such book.

Fender Guitars: From the time their first multiple-neck steel guitars and amps appeared in the mid-1940's,

Fender has been intertwined with the development of country music, particularly on the West Coast. Bob Wills was an early endorser, and the Telecaster long ago became a staple for pickers. Ohio industrial engineer Forrest White became interested in building steel guitars and met Leo Fender in California in 1948. By 1954, White was working in California; at that point, Fender hired him as the company's first plant manager. White, a no-nonsense problem solver, had much to do with Fender's success and expansion. Over time his title expanded into Vice President and General Manager. He be-



came Director of Manufacturing after Fender sold the company to CBS. White was also Leo's best friend, and *Fender: The Inside Story* reflects the company's history and the personal and business relationship between the two (Leo Fender died in 1991).

White's direct, can-do attitude comes through in the book as he lays out the truth and knocks aside the many myths about Fender history and about the country pickers who helped launch the company. He explains Fender's eccentric genius from first-hand knowledge. Using rare photos, old catalogs and advertising from his collection, he mixes anecdotes, facts and figures. He doesn't mince words, assailing CBS, whose corporate cost-cutting severely damaged Fender's reputation for quality and led to White's resignation (the company has been sold to Bill Schultz, who has restored that reputation). There is room

for other Fender histories, but because of White's use of copies of internal correspondence from the 50's, this book has the authority of an official history.

■ Videos ■

Sunset Park: Sometimes the most worthwhile new items don't come from the big name publishers, video producers or record companies. These are labors of love, reflecting genuine commitment on the part of those who produced it. *Sunset Park: A Video Documentary* is just such a project. This 41-minute video chronicles the saga of one of America's greatest outdoor country music parks, founded by farmer "Uncle Roy" Waltman in 1941 near Jennersville, Pennsylvania, southwest of Philadelphia.

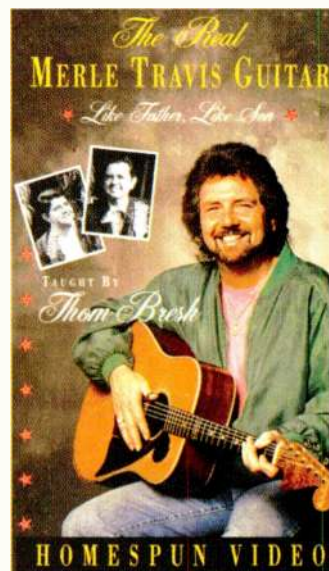
Sunset was among the first such parks, and though most others have closed, it continues as a thriving institution. The story is told from several perspectives. Over 200 rare still photos illustrate the legends who've played there from the beginning. Active performers who've played there for years, among them Bill Monroe, Jim and Jesse, Mac Wiseman, Johnny Russell, Little Jimmy Dickens, Gene Watson and Marty Stuart, all relate their view of the park. (Marty first played there years ago, with Lester Flatt.) The Waltman family, who still own the park, also relate its history, including Uncle Roy's children, Lawrence and Anita, Lawrence's wife, Hazel (who met him when she performed at Sunset as a musician in the 40's), and Lawrence's son, Larry. Producer P.J. March and Coordinating Producer Molly Daly clearly

knew what they were doing, and never lose sight of the focus: Sunset Park itself and its ability to survive and prosper despite ever-changing trends.

Merle Travis: Interest in Merle Travis seems to be hitting some kind of high right now. In the past couple of months, in addition to the Bear Family box, two important Travis videos have appeared. *Merle Travis, Rare Performances 1946-1981* assembles 19 rare Travis performances from his early hitmaking days until 1981, two years before his death. It begins with a 1946 "Soundie" video made of Travis singing his first hit record, "No Vacancy," and includes the complete 1951 Snader Telescriptions. These were filmed studio performances by country and pop artists sold to local TV stations in the early 50's. The Travis Snaders include solo acoustic performances of songs like "Nine Pound Hammer" and "John Henry." Others are full band performances of "Sweet Temptation" and "I'm a Natural Born Gambler" backed by a band including steel guitar ace Speedy West and fiddler Harold Hensley. The remainder of the cuts include performances from *Town Hall Party*, *The Ozark Jubilee*, *The Porter Wagoner Show*, *Austin City Limits* and the early 80's Canadian TV program, *Nashville Swing*, which was hosted by Merle's biological son, guitarist Thom Bresh, with whom Travis plays "Barbecue Rag" and "I'll See You in My Dreams."

Thom Bresh's video, *The Real Merle Travis Guitar*, produced by Homespun Tapes, is

the definitive instruction course for playing Travis-style Muhlenberg County finger-picking. As a veteran entertainer himself, Bresh has it over other musicians whose instruction videos tend to bore the student. Even Travis fans who don't play guitar can enjoy Bresh's entertaining explanations and demonstrations of such Travis classics as "Canonball Rag," "I'll See You in My Dreams" and "Guitar Rag." Throughout, Bresh interjects anecdotes about Merle and his picking style. At the end, he teaches a song using his own personal variation of Merle's technique.



Ray Flacke Guitar: British guitarist Ray Flacke first gained fame as part of Ricky Skaggs' band. Originally a devotee of the Albert Lee style of Fender Telecaster picking, Flacke has gone beyond that to become a formidable stylist in his own right. Homespun Videos' *Ray Flacke Teaches Country Telecaster Virtuosity* from Homespun Tapes is not for the beginner. It's a master class for the picker interested in learning the technical hot licks that have made Flacke a widely respected session picker. He also explains some of his personal picking secrets and equipment tricks. Flacke doesn't play any well known songs, but concentrates on original instrumentals that spotlight the various elements of his picking.

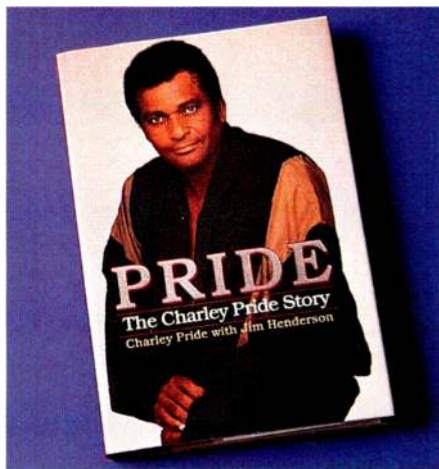
How to Get These Collectibles

Books: Reba McEntire with Tom Carter, *Reba* (B2F) \$21.95/Glen Campbell with Tom Carter, *Rhinestone Cowboy* (B4K) \$22.00/Forrest White, *Fender: The Inside Story* (B4L) \$22.95/Bob Allen, *The Blackwell Guide to Recorded Country Music* (B4M) \$24.95/Wolf Marshall, *The Guitars of Elvis* (B4N) \$19.95. **Videos:** *Sunset Park: A Video Documentary* (V4J) \$20.00/*Merle Travis, Rare Performances 1946-1981* (V2K) \$19.95/*The Real Merle Travis Guitar* (V2W) \$49.95/*Ray Flacke Teaches Country Telecaster Virtuosity* (V5T) \$49.95. Send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 070894EC, 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.**

EDITOR'S CHOICE

NEW! CHARLEY PRIDE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Johnny Cash says it's "probably the most interesting book ever written by a country music artist." And you would expect nothing less from the man who crossed the color barrier to become the only black superstar in the white galaxy of country music. This is the story of his remarkable career—from his impoverished childhood in Sledge, Mississippi, to his years playing semi-pro baseball and his first audition in Nashville during the most bitter and polarized period in the civil rights struggle, an audition that persuaded Jack Johnson to offer to manage him. Glittering successes followed with three Grammys, sales of 30 million records in the U.S. alone and 13 Gold albums. This forth-

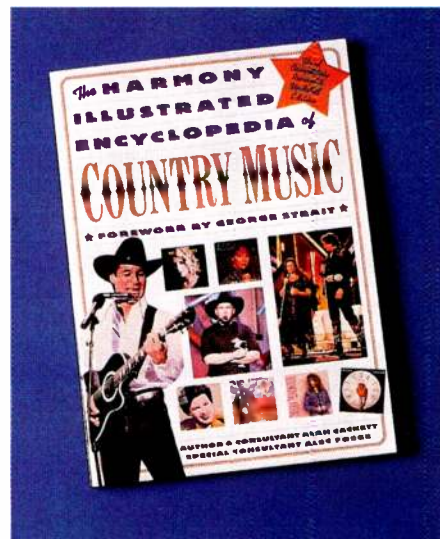


right autobiography offers funny, and sometimes disturbing, insights into this unique artist's life and career. As Rich Kienzle writes in last issue's Essential Collector section, Pride's public relations advisors gave him a non-threatening image—quite the opposite of the real Pride who speaks frankly about many different topics, including his bouts of depression and severe anxiety. Pride fans will see the real man through the high and low points in his life and his career, without the usual glamorizing of most recent biographies. Charley Pride was unusual in every way, and with the help of those closest to him in the industry—like Chet Atkins and Faron Young—he turned would-be obstacles into stepping stones to a rich and successful career in country music. No country music fan should miss this one. 288 pages, illustrated. Item #B2B, \$20.

And don't miss the rich baritone voice of Charley Pride in this noteworthy live performance. *Charley Pride In Concert* features his best-loved songs such as "Kiss an Angel Good Morning," "I Ain't All Bad," "Crystal Chandelier," "Someone Loves You Honey" and "Mountain of Love." There are ten songs in all! Order Item #V2V, \$19.95.

ALL NEW REVISED EDITION! THE HARMONY ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Completely revised and updated for the first time since 1987, this reference book traces the development of country music from the 1920's to the present. It takes you from the first commercial country music recordings and the artists who founded the institution of country music to recent artists who are carrying this great tradition into the 90's. This first-rate publication offers comprehensive information in the form of 700 entries and 500 quality color photographs. You'll find the most up-to-date information on superstars of the 90's, like Reba McEntire, Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, Alan Jackson, Wynonna Judd, Billy Ray Cyrus—and that's just the beginning. It also covers hot artists like k.d. lang, Lyle Lovett, Mary Chapin-Carpenter and others who aren't always in the limelight, but who nonetheless have a place in the broad spectrum of country music today. Revised entries are included on legends like Patsy Cline, Hank Williams Sr., George Jones, Johnny Cash and more. In addition to the biographical information, these entries detail recent discoveries about careers, personal lives and, of course, the music that made these artists who they are. You'll find detailed information, a recommended discography, authoritative evaluations of careers and obscure facts that will be of interest to any country music historian or fan.

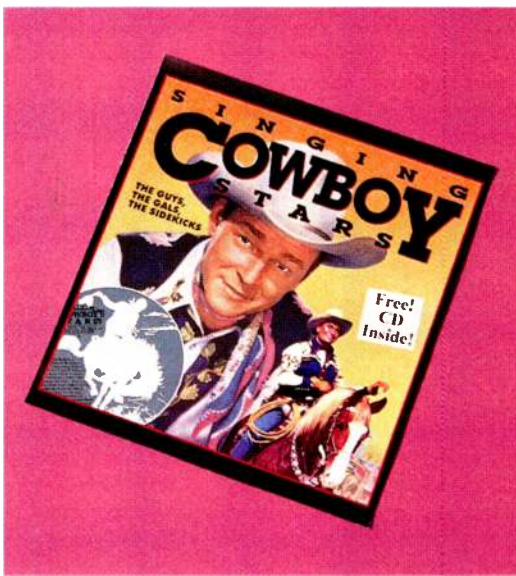


Also of interest is a foreword by George Strait, a legend in his own right, in which he links the old and new generations of country music artists and says, "I believe that this book brings that rich heritage into perspective, historically and musically. . . essential reading for anyone with an appreciation of country music." Compiled by two established music writers, Alan Cackett and Alec Foege, this book, with its incredible photos and detailed entries, is a work that no music library should be without. It's 208 pages, softcover. Item #B3V, \$20.00.

NEW BOOK—SINGING COWBOY STARS WITH CD!

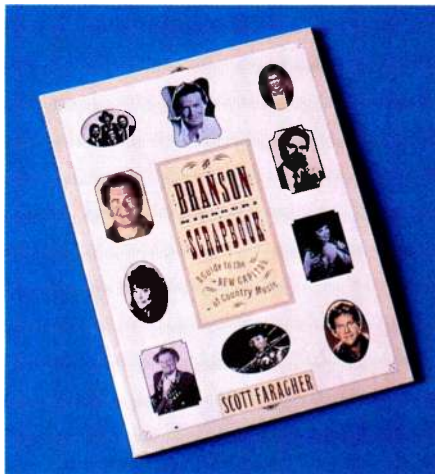
Who could forget "I've got spurs that jingle, jangle, jingle?" or "Happy trails to you, until we meet again?" This great book stars 18 of the valiant heroes who

rode and sang their way across the silver screen. These cowboys, like Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and Tex Ritter, had the power to make the West a magical land, where romance, music and gallantry were a way of life. It was a land where a cowboy could win a girl's heart with his charm, bravado, handsome features and sentimental song. This mythical era is recaptured in a memorable collection of photos, film clips, lobby cards and sheet music. Author Robert Phillips grew up on Texas rodeos and the Gibson guitars of the singing cowboys. He presents 110 photos which bring these best-loved silver screen heroes to life. A high-quality CD includes 12 songs sung by the original artists! You'll get "Back in the Saddle Again" (Gene Autry), "Jingle, Jangle, Jingle" (Tex Ritter), "Don't Fence Me In" (Roy Rogers) and more! Item #B3G, \$19.95, cloth bound with CD.



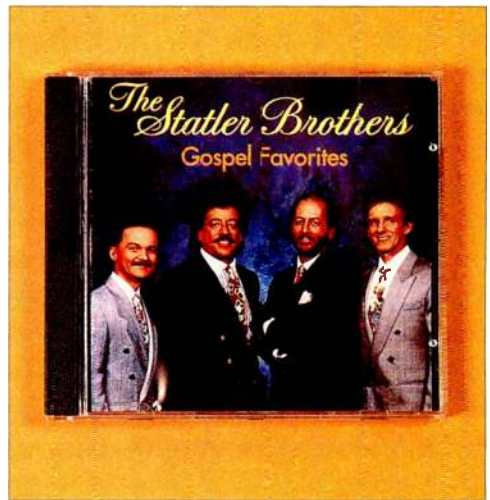
THE BRANSON, MISSOURI SCRAPBOOK

Scott Faragher, author of the bestselling *Music City Babylon*, takes you on an insider's tour of the new country music hotbed, Branson, Missouri. With over 100 photos and illustrations of Branson (and photos of the performers and their haunts), this is the guide for anyone who's interested in visiting Branson, or simply knowing why this town has become all the rage for country music lovers and stars. You'll find the curious history of Branson's development as a music capitol, plus a Branson entertainment guide. Learn how to meet the stars who live and perform in this small town and where to spend those hard-earned dollars. Get the what, when, where and how much on the hundreds of entertainment opportunities at your fingertips in Branson. 192 pages, paperback. Item #B4A, \$14.95.



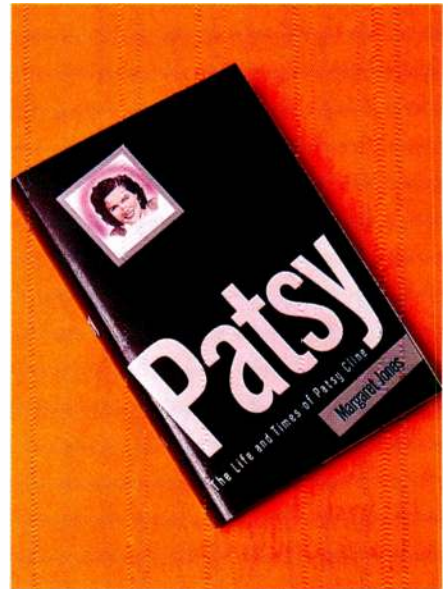
THE STATLER BROTHERS

Everyone knows that the Statlers have deep roots in Southern gospel music, where the act began in 1955, under the name The Kingsmen. *The Statler Brothers Gospel Favorites* is a 22-track cassette or compact disc that includes the boys singing just about every gospel song that ever mattered, from "Amazing Grace," "Rock of Ages" and "There Is Power In the Blood" to "How Great Thou Art." They also tackle Stuart Hamblen's "This Ole House" and "Over the Sunset Mountains." Statler originals include "I Believe I'll Live for Him" and "Jesus Is the Answer Everytime." Ask for the cassette, HDCA2012 for \$11.95 or the CD, #HD2012 for \$15.95.



SPECIAL 60 MIN. VIDEO! REMEMBERING PATSY

Now Patsy's musical legacy lives on in this acclaimed video from Hallway Productions (not shown). 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 Charlie Dick and others. If you are a Patsy Cline fan, you should also make it a point to order this fascinating video. Ask for #V1E, \$19.95.



NEW! HANK WILLIAMS BIOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS

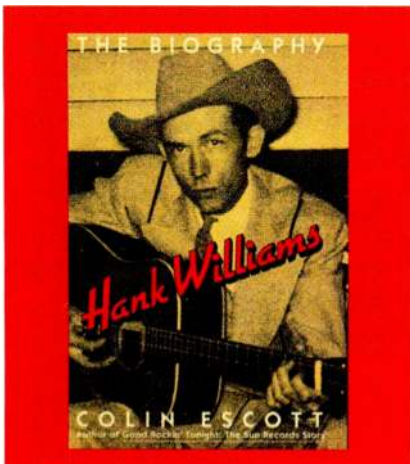
Here's the new, definitive biography of this country music legend, *Hank Williams: The Biography*. Based on years of research and interviews, it discards the myths created by heirs (who claim they never saw him drunk) and fellow performers (who never saw him sober). An artist whose basic lyrics expressed worlds of

truth, Williams emerges here as a "pure product of America"—driven, unsophisticated, intelligent, weak. Order your copy today. Ask for Item #B2A, \$22.95.

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 has been rated a country music collectible. Select Item #V2M, \$19.95.

And here is another new Hank video, *Hank Williams: The Show He Never Gave* (not shown). Using Hank's last ride as its dramatic context, 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. "Sneezy" Waters plays the self-destructive superstar and performs 23 songs. Hank fans will find this full length movie fascinating. Ask for #V2L, \$24.95.

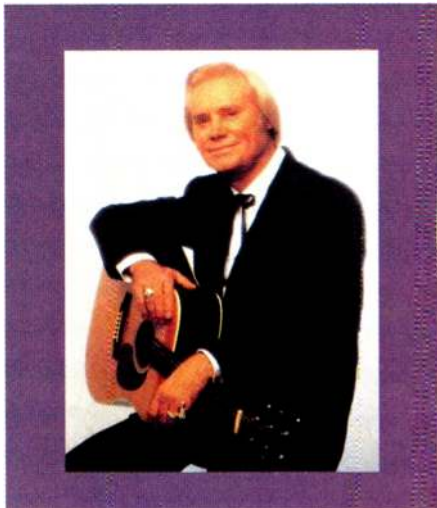
When you order any two Hank Williams items above, DEDUCT \$2.00!



NEW BIOGRAPHY! PATSY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PATSY CLINE

Country fans who never seem to get enough on this legendary songstress will be delighted with the release of Margaret Jones' new biography, *Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline*. Although the first of two Patsy Cline biographies by Ellis Nassour remains the definitive record of Patsy's life and career, this new release delves into the more personal and controversial areas that were less explored by Nassour's previous biographies. That's what makes *Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline* a worthwhile read for any fan who is looking for a better understanding of the turbulent life of this uniquely talented country music sensation. Hardcover, 273 pages, illustrated. Don't miss it. Ask for Item #B2L, \$23.

ORDER THE BOOK AND THE VIDEO FOR ONLY \$39.95—YOU SAVE \$3.00!



BRAND NEW! GEORGE JONES VIDEO

Golden Hits is a rare video look at this "living legend" as he discusses his greatest hits. Even better are 14 full-length film clips of Jones performing these hits at the exact time each was on the charts: everything from 1959's "White Lightning" to his more recent "Golden Ring" and "He Stopped Loving Her Today." It's a unique production that shows Jones' illustrious career as it unfolds. Item #V3T, \$12.



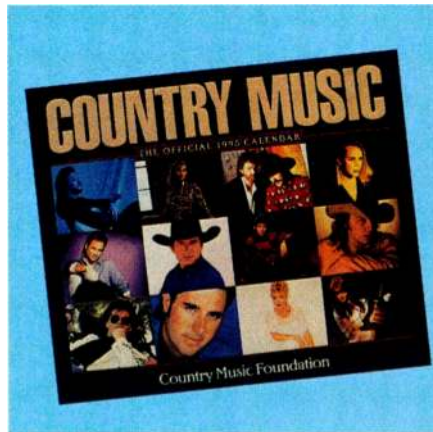
LIMITED EDITION! COUNTRY MUSIC INTERNATIONAL POSTAL STAMPS

The International Collectors Society has released a limited number of St. Vincent and Grenadines country music stamps. Unlike the country music series issued by the U.S. Postal Service, with tens of millions released, only 5000 of this series has been produced. Additionally, these stamps are larger and have a more vivid presentation than those released in the U.S. Each comes in a plate block of twelve stamps featuring legends Jim Reeves, Hank Williams, Roy Acuff and Patsy Cline in various poses. Each set comes with a numbered Certificate of Authenticity. The International Collectors Society is releasing these gems on a first come, first served basis, so order now. Item #G2S, \$12 per plate of twelve (as pictured).

THE HOT NEW 1995 CALENDARS ARE HERE!

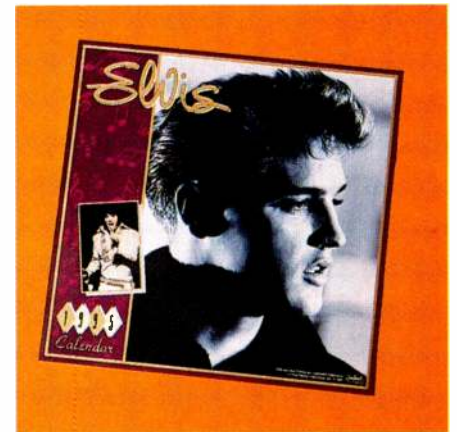
THE OFFICIAL 1995 COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION PHOTO CALENDAR

Here it is again, the official calendar of the world's largest and most active research and exhibition center dedicated to country music. Featured are Travis Tritt, Vince Gill, George Strait, Garth Brooks, Dwight Yoakam, Wynonna Judd, Clint Black and MORE! It's 14" x 10" on heavy duty glossy paper. Cites historic events in country music by day and year. Item #G1B, 16.95.



BRAND NEW! THE OFFICIAL 1995 ELVIS PRESLEY WALL CALENDAR

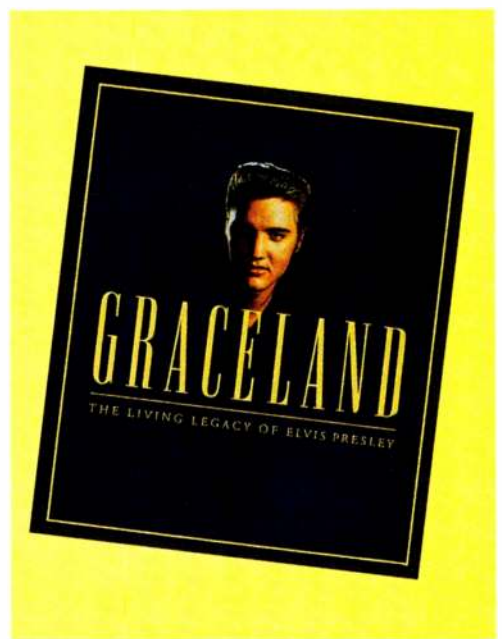
Here are twelve fabulous photos of "The King" during the early years, when his career was in full swing. The pictures measure 12" x 12", and the entire calendar opens to a big 12" x 24". We've ordered a limited quantity, and from past experience, we know that they go fast. So order yours right away! Order one for \$10.95 or two for \$19.90 and SAVE \$2.00. Item #G6F.



GRACELAND: THE LIVING LEGACY OF ELVIS PRESLEY

This famous estate has become a place of pilgrimage for Elvis fans, and, for others, a great tourist attraction. Since Graceland opened to the public in 1982, over six and a half million people have come to pay homage to the legacy of the King of Rock 'n' Roll. This book takes you through the Presley Estate with 350 rare photographs, some recently released from the personal collection of Elvis' manager, Colonel Tom Parker. The collection includes, along with great shots of nearly every room in the house, personal shots of Elvis with his family, in the Army, on horseback, at RCA, on tour and in Vegas. You see the Music Room, with white carpet and furniture and gold-fringed, cobalt blue draperies and crystal chandeliers. Room by room, Elvis' glitzy—even bordering on gaudy—taste in decor, along with the influence of the times, is brought to the eye through 175 large, vibrant color photos. There's the famous Jungle Room with its full stone waterfall and dark, hand-carved furniture, upholstered in imitation animal fur. It's said that Elvis' love of Hawaii inspired this room. The inescapable Pool Room comes at you with walls and ceiling completely covered with red, orange, blue, gold and green pleated

fabric. Outside the house, there's the peaceful Meditation Garden where several of the Presley family members are buried; the graves are framed by a brick wall inset with stained glass windows. Enter Graceland's music gates through the pages of this book, and you enter the private world of an American legend. 256 pages, hardcover. Item #B3Z, \$45.00.





DOLLY PARTON DOLL

This replica of Dolly Parton stands one-and-a-half feet tall. Her costume is a red-leatherette dress accentuated with gold and white lace. In her gold-tone belt is a red, ruby-like stone, and the whole ensemble is topped with a gold-tone necklace. Of course, it wouldn't be complete without Dolly's trademark big, beautiful blonde hair, which is decorated with a red lace bow. The Dolly Parton Doll makes a great gift for both young and old—plus it's an invaluable collector's item! And if you order right away, we're giving away an early Dolly album, *Just the Way I Am*. You'll receive this Dolly favorite on cassette. The Dolly Doll costs only \$49.95, Item #D1A, and includes a stand. The FREE cassette is Item #R4A. When ordering, include both codes.

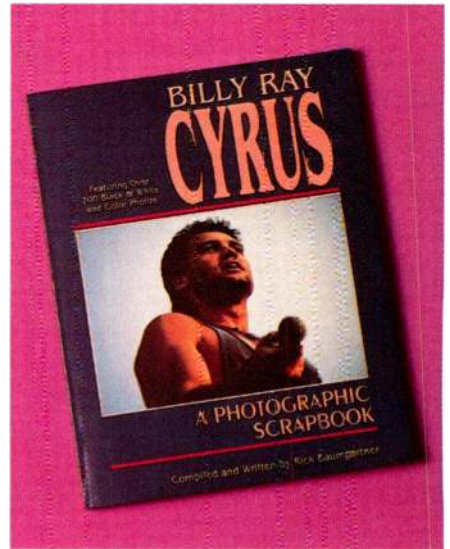
THE NEW 1995 BILLY RAY CYRUS PHOTO CALENDAR!

Be sure you don't miss out on the hot new Billy Ray Cyrus Calendar either (not shown). This year's edition measures 12" x 12" and features 12 sensational color photos of Billy Ray in different poses. Ask for Item #G3G, \$11.99.

BRAND NEW!

THE BILLY RAY CYRUS SCRAPBOOK

Here's the book you Billy Ray fans have been waiting for—the very first photo-filled edition about superstar Billy Ray Cyrus. Not only is it the first, it's also the most intimate look at Billy Ray you'll find anywhere, for the author traveled to Billy Ray's hometown of Flatwoods, Kentucky, and visited with the friends and family who know him best. It contains over 325 black and white and color photos (some even taken from BRC's old bedroom walls) and personal, detailed captions chronicling his life and career. Fans are calling it "the bible on Billy Ray." Billy Ray himself endorses this photographic biography. He says, "Man, you really hit the nail right on the head,



you really did. Thanks for takin' the time to prove that I'm certainly no overnight success. Pictures don't lie!" Softcover, 159 pages. Item #B4J, \$19.95.



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Summer is the perfect time to get the widely recognized *Country Music Magazine* logo on a cool, 100% cotton Champion T-shirt in navy blue or red. The logo is in white. Or pick our other bestselling "I Love Country Music" T-shirt in navy blue only. They are \$10 each. *Country Music* logo T-shirt, #G2P-navy blue, #G2Q-red; "I Love Country Music," #G2O-navy blue only. S, M, L, XL and now, XXL!

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Singles

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3. Travis Tritt *Ten Feet Tall & Bulletproof*
4. John Michael Montgomery *Kickin' It Up*
5. Various Artists *Maverick (Soundtrack)*
6. Various Artists *Rhythm Country & Blues*
7. Garth Brooks *In Pieces*
8. Lorrie Morgan *War Paint*
9. Brooks & Dunn *Hard Workin' Man*
10. Pam Tillis *Sweetheart's Dance*
11. Patty Loveless *Only What I Feel*
12. Kathy Mattea *Walking Away a Winner*
13. Alan Jackson *A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)*
14. John Berry *John Berry*
15. Neal McCoy *No Doubt About It*
16. Reba McEntire *Greatest Hits, Volume Two*
17. Mary-Chapin Carpenter *Come On Come On*
18. Little Texas *Big Time*
19. Faith Hill *Take Me As I Am*
20. Randy Travis *This Is Me*
21. Confederate Railroad *Notorious*
22. Vince Gill *I Still Believe in You*
23. Various Artists *Common Thread: Songs of The Eagles*
24. Collin Raye *Extremes*
25. Garth Brooks *No Fences*

1. Brooks & Dunn *That Ain't No Way to Go*
2. Vince Gill *Whenever You Come Around*
3. Patty Loveless *How Can I Help You to Say Goodbye*
4. Kathy Mattea *Walking Away a Winner*
5. Tim McGraw *Don't Take the Girl*
6. Neal McCoy *Wink*
7. Pam Tillis *Spilled Perfume*
8. Collin Raye *Little Rock*
9. Confederate Railroad *Daddy Never Was the Cadillac Kind*
10. Toby Keith *Wish I Didn't Know Now*
11. John Michael Montgomery *Rope the Moon*
12. Reba McEntire *Why Haven't I Heard from You*
13. Boy Howdy *They Don't Make 'em Like That Anymore*
14. Mary-Chapin Carpenter *I Take My Chances*
15. Travis Tritt *Foolish Pride*
16. Blackhawk *Every Once In a While*
17. Alabama *The Cheap Seats*
18. John Berry *Your Love Amazes Me*
19. Garth Brooks *One Night a Day*
20. Tracy Byrd *Lifestyles of the Not So Rich and Famous*
21. Steve Wariner *It Won't Be Over You*
22. John Anderson *I Wish I Could Have Been There*
23. Randy Travis *Before You Kill Us All*
24. Lari White *That's My Baby*
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Cash Has Always Been Cool

Well, well. The grand old Music Row tradition of not letting Johnny Cash make the music he wants because "it won't sell" or "nobody cares" seems to have run out of short-term future. Cash today is hot-hot-HOT. Having executed a maneuver every bit as effective as the Wehrmacht's little jog around the Maginot Line in 1940, he's outflanked Nashville entirely, gotten to make exactly the music he wants—an unplugged, unaccompanied collection of stark and wonderful songs simply titled American Recordings—and ended up splashed all over Time, Newsweek, People, Rolling Stone and almost everywhere else, major retail outlets included. So, Yo! Suddenly Cash is hip and cool, very hip and cool.

Who'd have thunk it? Well, I'd have thunk it. In fact, I did think it, repeatedly and in public. As long as 20 years ago I was promoting the unique and utter coolness of Cash in tastemaking rags like the Village Voice and the New York Times, and ever since then I've been doing my damndest to get that message across to chic-hip-trendy consumers via various organs of the major-metropolitan press. I've had very little luck—article proposals on Cash didn't get past the first editor in most cases—and so a couple of decades' worth of Cash's work has simply sunk without trace in hipster-land.

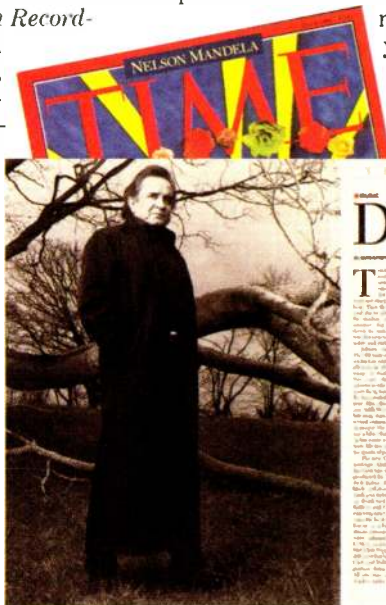
It was pretty erratic work, partly because various executives of CBS, then Mercury Records, couldn't keep their hands off it, and partly because Cash himself has always been a little too responsive to whatever half-baked new notion someone's blowing in his ear, and partly because the man contains such extreme contradictions: In Cash the person and the artist you have everything from a loving Christian witness to a feral junkie dog (guess which the hipsters dig). Amid all the confusion, though, there were some truly magic moments down the years: spine-tingling versions of John Prine's "Unwed Fathers" and Bruce Springsteen's "Highway Patrolman"; virtually every track on Rockabilly Blues and Johnny Cash Is Coming to Town; all Cash's contributions to the first Highwayman album; and perhaps another two dozen truly great songs of all shades, not just the darkness to which American Recordings brings such

bright human light, on this, that, or the other disk since '72 or so.

The folks who missed all that missed something wonderful, and now most of it's gone: out of print, out of mind. But that's okay with the enraptured reviewers of American Recordings. According to them, the "wise and beautiful new album" (Time) was preceded by years during which Cash "betrayed his art" (Rolling Stone).

Well, pig manure—and that leads me to an aspect of Cash's new cachet which p's me off. As you yourselves have probably observed, the behavior of the

until Rick Rubin, the young, long-haired, ripped-jeaned record producer/entrepreneur who won Cash's business with promises of real creative freedom and serious product promotion when Cash was beaten down by all the crap he'd taken from CBS and Mercury/Polygram, made his appearance. Rubin delivered on his promises, and more: His name, previously associated only with thoroughly non-country, hipster-endorsed acts like The Beastie Boys, Run-D.M.C., and The Red Hot Chili Peppers—all major stars with the slammin', jammin', head-bangin' set—was enough to guarantee that Cash's American Recordings became News. Reviewers saw the right label attached to it, the right names mentioned: The press package began with the words "Keith Richards," the People photo was posed with Generation X arch-hipster Johnny Depp. And really, folks, that stuff means everything. A collection of uniquely brilliant Johnny Cash tracks produced by Rick Rubin commanded instant attention and prominent coverage. A collection of uniquely brilliant Johnny Cash tracks produced by Jack Clement wouldn't even have made it to most reviewers' CD players.



Dream Album
Johnny Cash, the country music legend, was all but washed up. Now he has a great record, improbably produced by a not-unknown hipster.

entertainment press has a lot in common with that of well-trained farm swine. Called by the food bell, they rush en masse to the trough and gobble up whatever they're served—the new Eastwood movie, the new soap star, the new Bonnie Raitt or Eric Clapton or Tony Bennett or Johnny Cash "comeback"—and then they go their separate ways to digest and process their meal into the final product, one dollop of which is pretty much indistinguishable from another.

That much is obvious. What isn't quite so apparent is that neither well-trained entertainment presspersons nor honest swine respond to any old bell. You can be offering them the tastiest table scraps ever laid before boar, sow or Music Editor, but if your clapper doesn't clang just so, they'll go right on rutting and rooting regardless. They're not adventurous creatures.

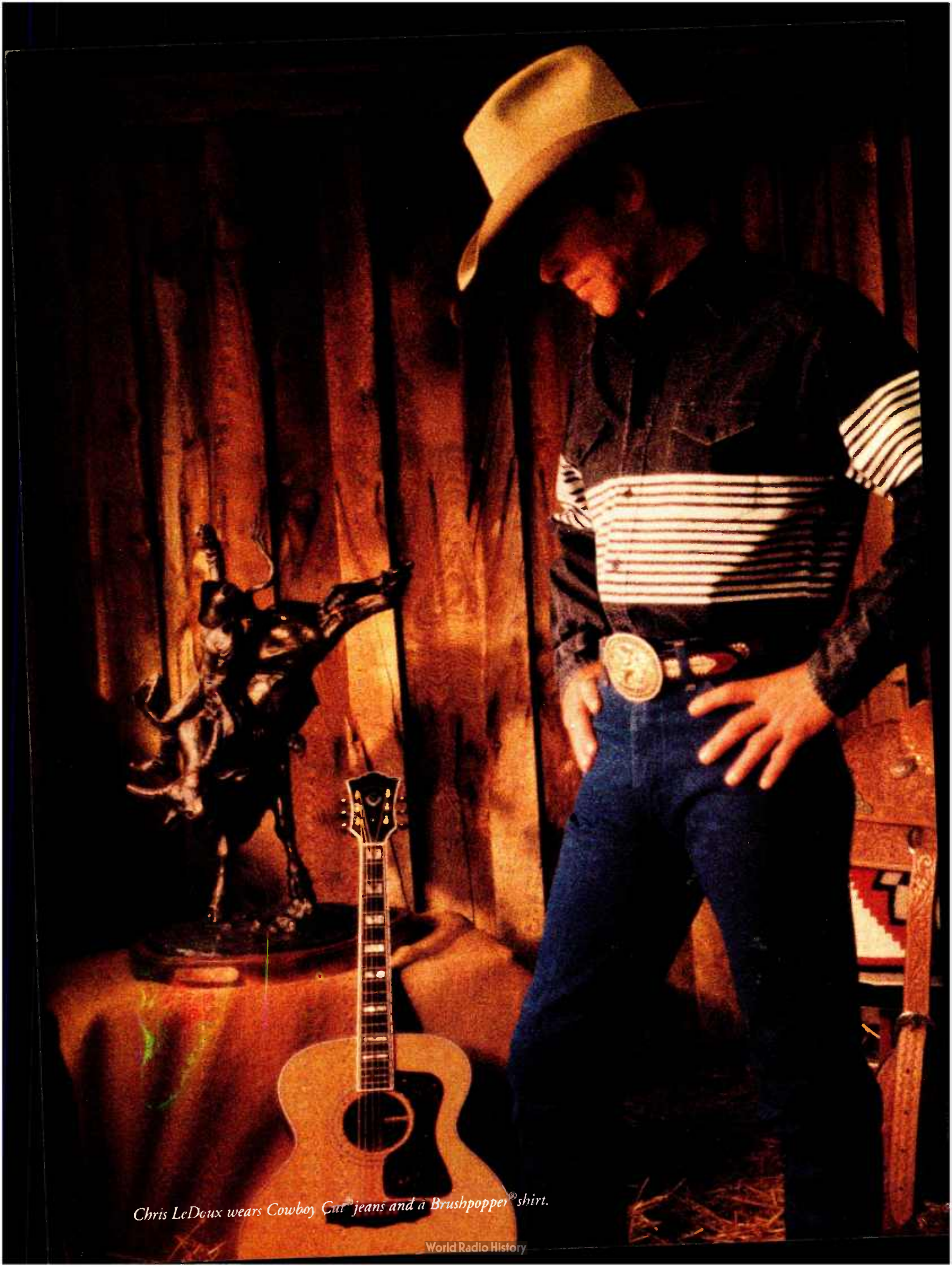
Perhaps I'm getting carried away (who, me?), but you get the picture. In the Johnny Cash case, I had the wrong bell all those years. The right bell didn't show up

until Rick Rubin, the young, long-haired, ripped-jeaned record producer/entrepreneur who won Cash's business with promises of real creative freedom and serious product promotion when Cash was beaten down by all the crap he'd taken from CBS and Mercury/Polygram, made his appearance. Rubin delivered on his promises, and more: His name, previously associated only with thoroughly non-country, hipster-endorsed acts like The Beastie Boys, Run-D.M.C., and The Red Hot Chili Peppers—all major stars with the slammin', jammin', head-bangin' set—was enough to guarantee that Cash's American Recordings became News. Reviewers saw the right label attached to it, the right names mentioned: The press package began with the words "Keith Richards," the People photo was posed with Generation X arch-hipster Johnny Depp. And really, folks, that stuff means everything. A collection of uniquely brilliant Johnny Cash tracks produced by Rick Rubin commanded instant attention and prominent coverage. A collection of uniquely brilliant Johnny Cash tracks produced by Jack Clement wouldn't even have made it to most reviewers' CD players.

It might in the future, though. Maybe after American Recordings (note the 'maybe') Cash will have the freedom to follow whatever creative course he pleases, including unrestrained work with Clement, without some Executive Vice President birthing gerbils, and maybe he will use that freedom well. That's good, then, and so are other things: the energy summoned up by Mr. Rubin's offer/challenge to Mr. Cash and now enhanced by creative, commercial and critical success; the good hard blow just delivered by that success in the cause of profound, deeply rooted, non-hormone-driven, non booty-scooty country music; and of course the quality of American Recordings itself.

Now, I could dwell at loving length on that last point, but for the first time in 20 years, I really don't have to. The group feeders have finally gotten around to where I am, so until they take off again, I can just say, "I'm with them; it's beautiful," and leave it at that.

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



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