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APRIL/MAY 1999



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# COUNTRYMUSIC

April/May 1999

## COVER STORY

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Keep your eye—and ear—on the double-Grammy-winning Dixie Chicks, three women leading the way to the future with style, sass and musical substance.  
By Michael McCall

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By Tamara Saviano

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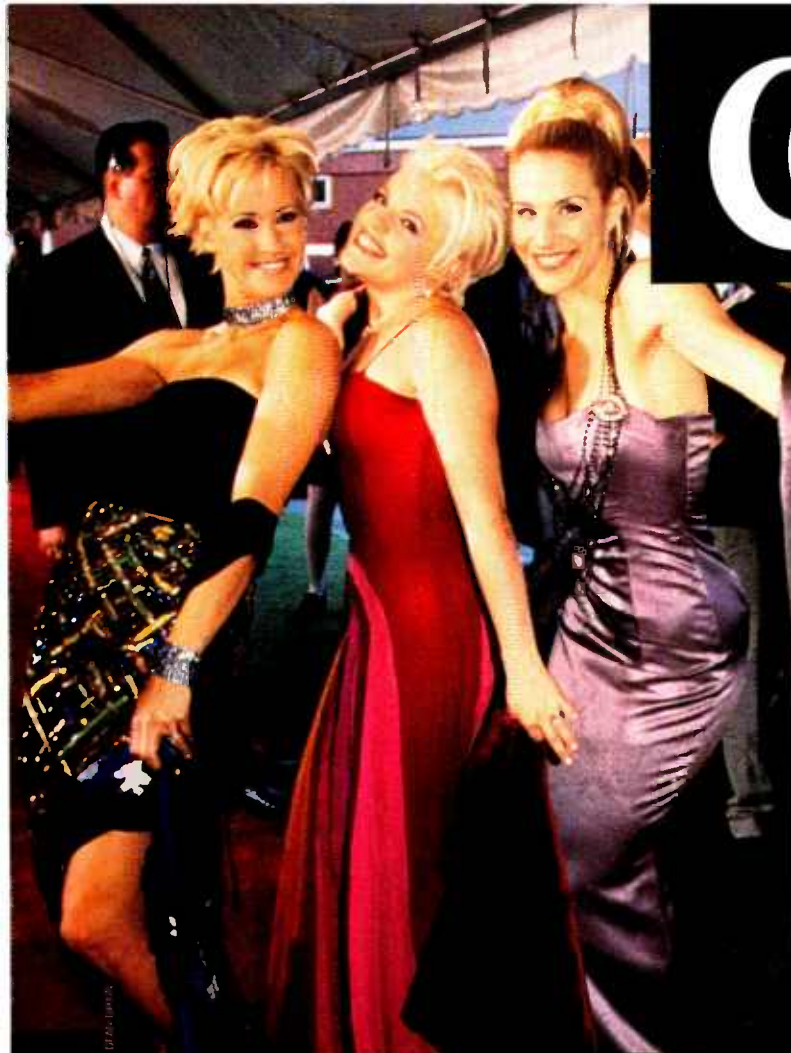
Five of country's hottest new acts—Shannon Brown, Claudia Church, Shane Minor, Julie Reeves and Monte Warden—turn up the heat in gear that runs the gamut of country style.

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By Tamara Saviano



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From top: These Chicks are plucky, not fluffy; Billy Ray Cyrus is in the center of things; Mark Wills gets cheeky with daughter Mally.

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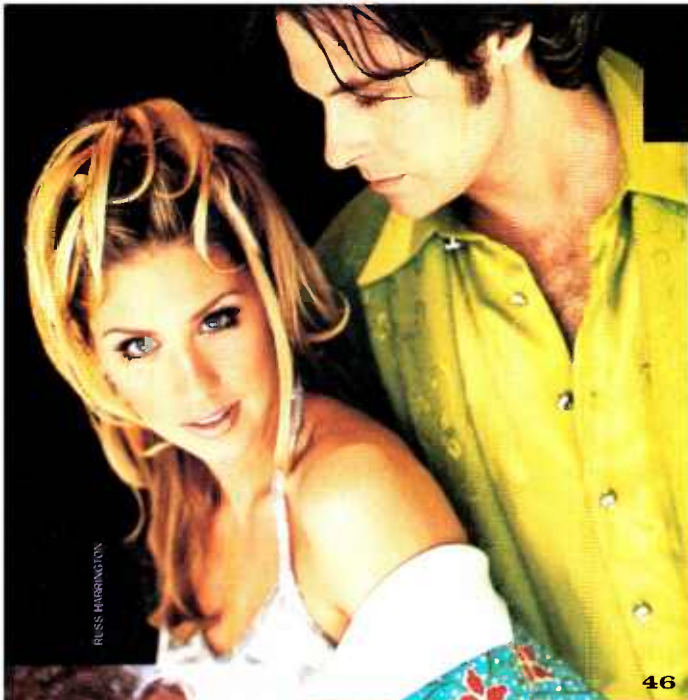
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From top:  
Country's newest trendsetters Shannon Brown and Shane Minor; recently redeemed Hal Ketchum; dreamy Deana Carter; "Volmaniac" Kenny Chesney.

# Mark CHESNUTT

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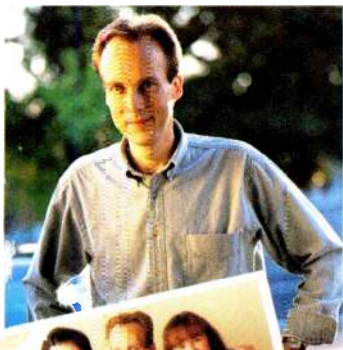


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Hello and welcome! As you hold this issue of *Country Music* magazine, you have in hand the beginning of an exciting new era.



Veteran country music journalists Deborah Barnes, left, yours truly and Tamara Saviano bring more than 50 years of combined magazine experience to the *Country Music* table.

**AFTER 26 YEARS** as the world's foremost authority on the subject, *Country Music* is changing and growing in several important ways. Perhaps most dramatically, it is now—for the first time ever—based in Nashville. As such, it is plugged in like never before to the happenings, the personalities and the very heartbeat of the music that it channels through its pages. From new offices on fabled Music Row, we are poised like never before to bring you the wide, colorful world of country music.

You'll also notice several different things about the way we look. *Country Music* is still the same magazine you know and love, but it has undergone a major redesign to make it better reflect the exciting music and stars it covers.

And finally, there are a few new faces behind the scenes here. For starters, there's me. I'm the new editor-in-chief, and I'm honored to carry *Country Music's* flag of tradition onward and upward. Managing editor Deborah Barnes and senior editor Tamara Saviano come aboard with keen writing skills, savvy editing experience and priceless reportorial integrity. Our esteemed editor-at-large, Robert K. Oermann, is an author, television producer and all-around internationally recognized expert on country music and its performers. There's also our dazzling art director, Wendy Stamberger, whose steady hand and sharp eye made this first issue of the "new" *Country Music* sparkle and shine. And Hazel Smith, who has graced the magazine for years with her insight, wit and wisdom, will continue to bring you the buzz from Music Row. I'm not much of a braggart, but I can rightly boast that you won't find a finer editorial team anywhere in the realm of country music than here at the magazine that still calls itself, as always, simply by those two words: *Country Music*.

If you're new to this magazine, I'm so glad you've found us. Welcome aboard! If you're one of the many loyal readers who've enjoyed *Country Music* throughout the years, I hope you share my excitement and enthusiasm about beginning this new chapter in its already illustrious history. And no matter who you are, I hope this magazine entertains you, enriches your life and expands your musical horizons.

Thanks for joining us! Remember, if it's country music, it's in *Country Music*!

Sincerely,

**NEIL POND**  
Editor-in-Chief

P.S. We'd like to know what you think! Please write to *Country Music*, 7 Music Square West, Nashville, TN 37203, or e-mail us at: [comments@countrymusicmag.com](mailto:comments@countrymusicmag.com)

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A BRAND NEW  
DODGE  
GRAND  
CARAVAN ES**



**IN THIS ISSUE!**

Look for complete details in  
*The 34th Annual  
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Country Music  
"Viewer's Guide"*

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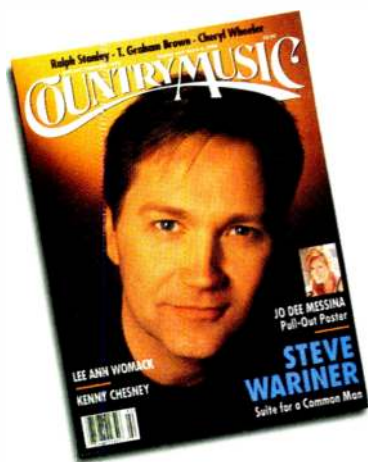
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**'NICE GUY' FINISHES FIRST**

**THANKS FOR** the excellent article on Steve Wariner in the last issue. It's about time this exceptional artist is getting the recognition he so much deserves. He is the "Mr. Nice Guy" of country music. It's great to see him achieve the success he has over the past 20 years and still keep a level head about it all.

**Todd Fussy**

Royalton, Minnesota



**I WAS SO PLEASED** when I received my last issue of *Country Music*. To see Steve Wariner on the cover was such a treat and long past due. For years I have loved his music and wondered how in the world Nashville was ignoring such a talent. Not only does he have vocal ability, he is a number-one musician who has had many great songs. It was great to see the nice guy finally get some awards after all these years. Steve Wariner is truly a talent who has paid his dues and is finally getting the recognition he deserves. I also loved the article on Lee Ann Womack—she is a breath of fresh air.

**Sheila Baker**

Franklin, Ohio

**HAL-LELUJAH**

**I HAVE BEEN A** *Country Music* subscriber since 1996 and eagerly await every issue. But I've been waiting to see a review of Hal Ketchum's *I Saw*

*the Light*. Sadly, it's never come! As a matter of fact, there is rarely a mention of Hal's name in the magazine. My family and I saw Hal play at the Iron Horse in Northampton, Mass., and I can only say he is truly awesome! He played for over three hours, sharing the spotlight with a young harmonica player from Northampton and the very versatile Al Anderson. He not only shared the stage with his fellow musicians, he shared a very private portrait of himself with the audience. While some might not be aware of the personal trials Hal has been through, let it suffice to say that he is back and better than ever. Perhaps someone at your magazine could take the time to interview this special human being and introduce him to a whole new legion of fans.

**Gail Landry Cappuccilli**

Jericho, Vermont

★ Check out the story about Hal's new album, *Awaiting Redemption*, on page 54.

**SHANIA CONTROVERSY**

**THANK YOU,** Patrick Carr, for saying what so many of us have known for so long. It's the MUSIC that counts—not the theatrics and brainwash techniques used by so many of today's "idols," like Shania Twain. I hope people read your column with an open mind and came to the realization that we are all being manipulated by the "dictators" of the music industry. Thank you for having the nerve and integrity to write this column.

**S. Hill**

Cantonment,  
Florida

**I WAS REALLY SICKENED** when I read Patrick Carr's column in the November/December issue of *CM*. I attended one of Shania's concerts in Florida and it was amazing. The very things of which Mr. Carr accuses Shania are the qualities that have made her endearing. He criticizes her for flattering the crowd, being nice to children and being friendly and warm to the audience. If only all performers had these nasty habits. I guess he's just nostalgic for the old days when performers arrived late, were drunk while performing and felt no sense of obligation to the very people who paid their bills. Shania is getting bigger and bigger and her fan base keeps growing. Country music should be standing by its top artist. It's about time she gets the respect and gratitude she deserves.

**Nan Lipinski**

Clearwater, Florida

**IN RESPONSE** to Patrick Carr's rant about Shania Twain, all I can do is quote a sign I saw recently..."\$5 fine for whining!" One of the reasons I integrated country into my life years ago was that it appeared to have evolved from the days of artists burning other artists' pictures at awards shows and being defined by rhinestone cowboys. I'm



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glad the musical horizons of the genre have expanded. I can't tell you how tickled I am to hear Shania or Faith Hill on my co-workers' mainstream radio stations. I laughed out loud when LeAnn and Dolly snuck their dance tracks into the discos. I'm proud that Garth can share a New York stage with Billy Joel, and know exactly what Travis Tritt means when he pines for Gregg Allman. How cool is it when Steve Miller and Bonnie Raitt can contemplate cutting records in



MORBELLO/GHERGIA

Nashville? Don't underestimate country music.

It's strong enough to morph without losing its roots. Can we please stop clinging to yesteryear at the price of country's tomorrow? George Jones and Shania Twain can share the same country stage, and that's what makes the music so much fun to listen to.

**Steve Bonvissuto**  
Millwood, New York

**REGARDING THE** Shania Twain article by Patrick Carr, I'm in total agreement. It seems like country has sold its soul for a few more glorified dollars from a generation who are really just rockers.

The 200 screaming cheerleaders rushing the stage at the CMA awards show was undignified. George Strait singing rock at the CMA show—Garth with an Elton John song—just where is country heading? Seems as though I'm listening to less and less radio and more CDs on the stereo, which means somebody's advertising dollar is no longer hitting a male adult who spent over \$60,000 last year on improvements

to his home/auto/business. I'll remain country until I die.

**Harry Collins**  
Nashville, Tennessee

### TRAVIS ROCKS!

**I AGREE WITH** Bob Allen's review of Travis Tritt's new album *No More Looking Over My Shoulder*, but I take offense to his calling Travis' earlier releases "super macho-redneck buffoonery" and "macho song fodder." Travis is a true southern country rocker and his unique voice and songwriting talents are better than ever. Every artist goes through stages to become what they are today and shouldn't be judged solely on the past. So lighten up and give Travis and his fans credit for knowing what they like!

**Jo Snyder**  
Quakerstown, Pennsylvania

### FAN CLUB INFO

**I RECENTLY SUBSCRIBED** to *Country Music*. It is a superb magazine. It's most informative, upbeat and enjoyable. I'd really like to get fan club addresses for Garth Brooks, Johnny Cash, George Jones and Charlie Daniels. They are my all-time favorites!

**Randy Pritchard**  
Winslow, Arizona

★ Check below for the fan club addresses you requested:

**Garth Brooks:** PO Box 507,  
Goodlettsville, TN 37070-0507

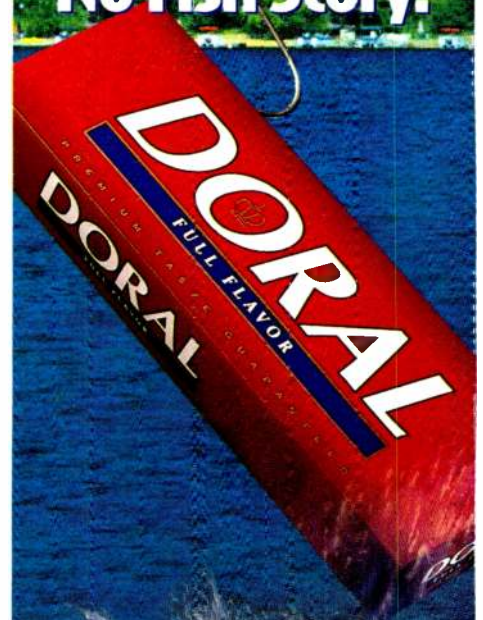
**Johnny Cash:** 430 Oaklawn Road,  
Winston-Salem, NC 27107

**Charlie Daniels:** 17060 Central Pike,  
Lebanon, TN 37090

**George Jones:** Rt 3, Box 150, Murphy,  
NC 28906

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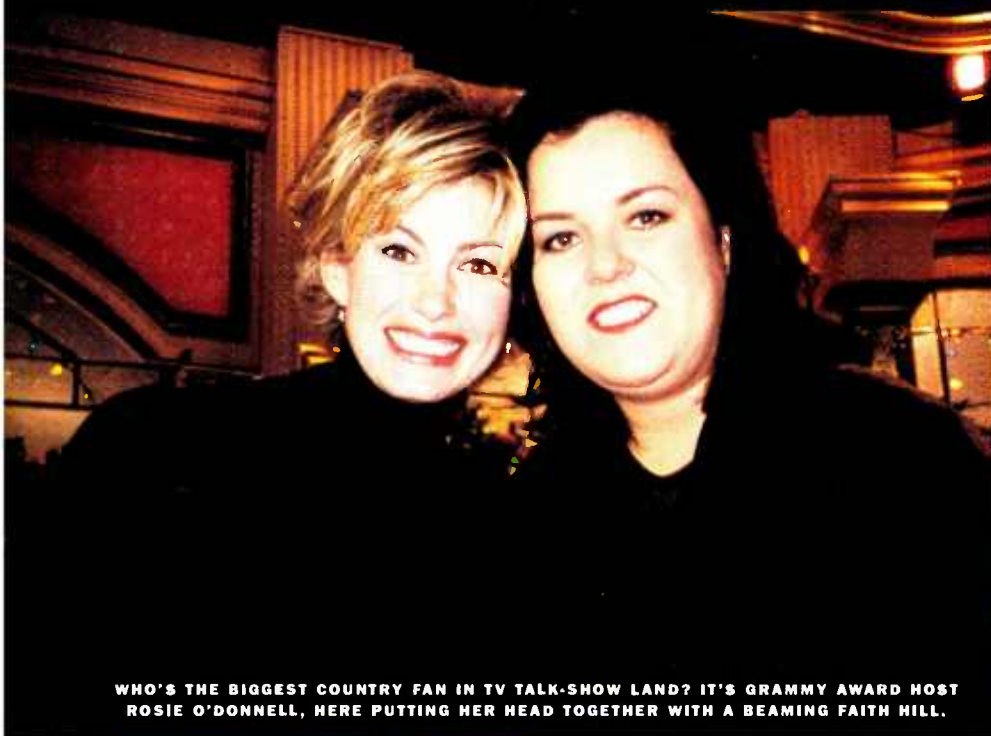
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# Country

## on the town

By Robert K. Oermann



WHO'S THE BIGGEST COUNTRY FAN IN TV TALK-SHOW LAND? IT'S GRAMMY AWARD HOST ROSIE O'DONNELL, HERE PUTTING HER HEAD TOGETHER WITH A BEAMING FAITH HILL.



ALAN L. MAYO

### "BYE BYE" TEARDROPS

When Jo Dee Messina was off the radio, her mama Mary wept tears of fear and frustration. A gold record for Messina's comeback CD presented to Mom worked better than a hankie.



MORELLO/GENEVA

### CROWN-ING GLORY

From left, Keith Harling, Mark Chesnutt, Choly Wright and Gary Allan celebrate the kickoff of their Crown Royal Tour in Nashville. (Allan, by the way, was the only country act on People magazine's 1998 list of Sexiest Men in America.)



CHANG MATHEWS

### STARS FELL ON ALABAMA, OR VICE VERSA

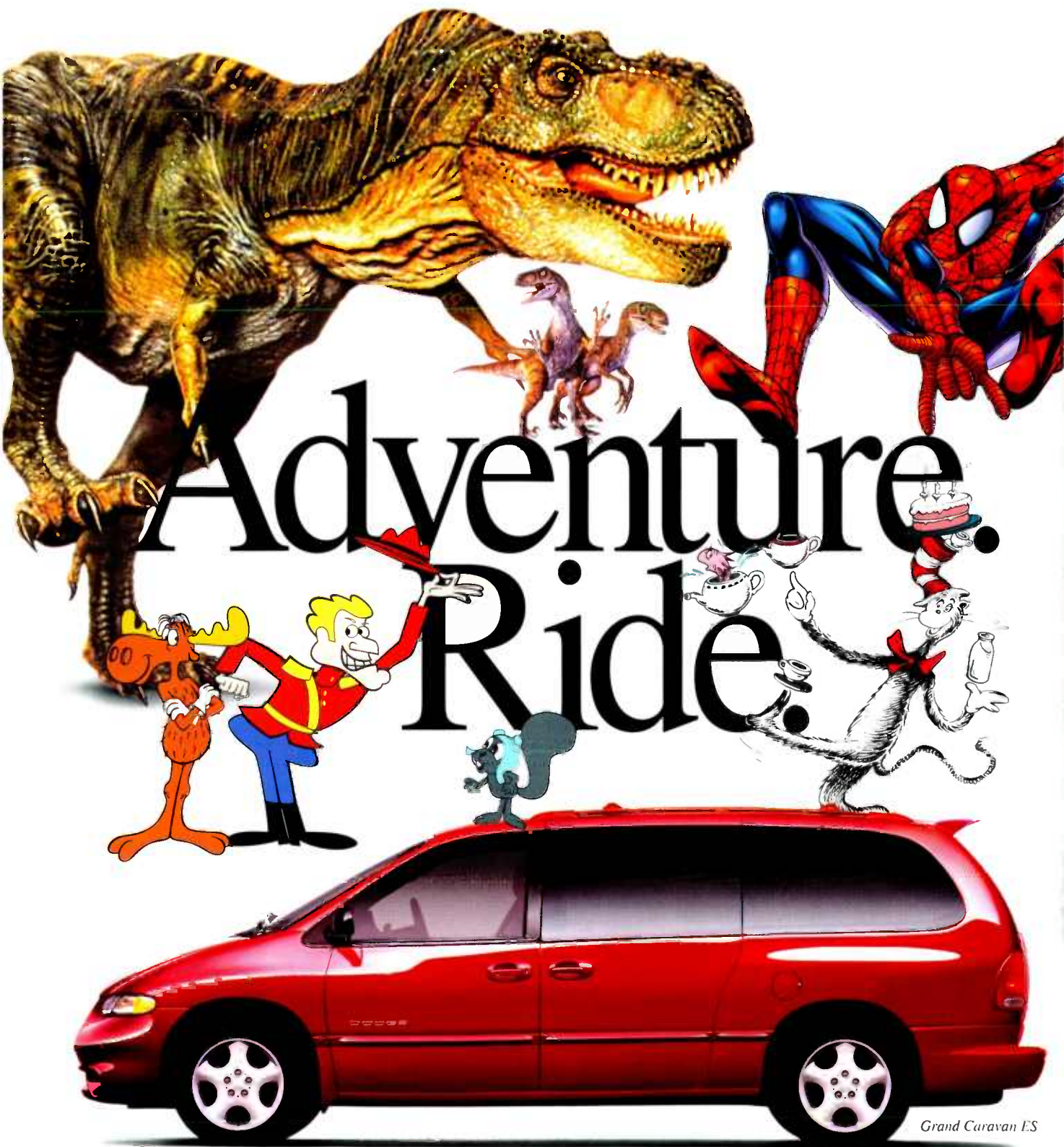
Alabama members Mark Herndon, left, and Randy Owen give a high-five over the band's new star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Others enshrined there include Gene Autry, Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn, Eddy Arnold, Glen Campbell, Roy Rogers and Dolly Parton.

### THE GAMBLER PAYS OFF

Maybe Kenny Rogers didn't know what a song encyclopedia Collin Raye really is. At a recent benefit, the Gambler offered \$100 for every Kenny Rogers hit Raye could name. Raye reeled off 17 titles while Rogers kept forking over the dough.



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## THE NOMINEES FOR 1998

Prior to the show, choose your favorite nominees by checking the boxes in the left column, then tune in May 5th and follow the action and see who wins.

### YOUR CHOICE THE WINNER

#### ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- Double Live *Garth Brooks*
- Faith *Faith Hill*
- I'm Alright *Jo Dee Messina*
- One Step At A Time *George Strait*
- Wide Open Spaces *Dixie Chicks*

#### SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

- 26 Cents *The Wilkinsons*
- A Broken Wing *Martina McBride*
- Holes In The Floor Of Heaven *Steve Wariner*
- This Kiss *Faith Hill*
- You're Still The One *Shania Twain*

#### SONG OF THE YEAR

- A Broken Wing *Martina McBride*
- Don't Laugh At Me *Mark Wills*
- Holes In The Floor Of Heaven *Steve Wariner*
- Husbands And Wives *Brooks & Dunn*
- This Kiss *Faith Hill*

#### VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

- Burnin' The Road House Down *Steve Wariner & Garth Brooks*
- If You See Him/If You See Her *Reba McEntire & Brooks & Dunn*
- Just To Hear You Say That You Love Me *Faith Hill & Tim McGraw*
- No Place That Far *Sara Evans & Vince Gill*
- Same Old Train *Various*

#### VIDEO OF THE YEAR

- Drive Me Wild *Sawyer Brown*
- Getcha Some *Toby Keith*
- Holes In The Floor Of Heaven *Steve Wariner*
- I'll Go On Loving You *Alan Jackson*
- This Kiss *Faith Hill*

#### TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

- Sherrie Austin
- Jo Dee Messina
- Allison Moorer

#### TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

- Deryl Dodd
- David Kersh
- Mark Wills

#### TOP NEW DUO OR GROUP

- Dixie Chicks
- The Warren Brothers
- The Wilkinsons

#### TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

- Faith Hill
- Martina McBride
- Jo Dee Messina
- Shania Twain
- Trisha Yearwood

#### TOP MALE VOCALIST

- Garth Brooks
- Vince Gill
- Tim McGraw
- Collin Raye
- George Strait

#### TOP VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

- Alabama
- Brooks & Dunn
- Dixie Chicks
- Sawyer Brown
- The Wilkinsons

#### ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

- Garth Brooks
- Tim McGraw
- Brooks & Dunn
- George Strait
- Shania Twain



## EURO REBA

Reba's sold-out debut European tour included stops in England, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium and Switzerland. But the city of Berlin made the biggest impression on her. She's pictured here at the famed Brandenburg Gate, which used to block East Berlin from West Berlin. Reba's music stayed behind after she returned Stateside—a compilation of her videos, an airing of her *Forever Love* TV movie, a pre-taped TV appearance and the promotion of her *Moments & Memories* CD all kept her flame burning brightly in the U.K. this spring.



CHUDY OWEN

## "GETCHA SOME" GOLD

Toby Keith took over the Longhorn restaurant in Nashville for hundreds of his closest friends to have a whoop-de-do in honor of the fact that his *Greatest Hits* CD has gone "gold" faster than any record in his career. Its "Getcha Some" and "If a Man Answers" tunes are the reasons why, he says. The big boy won't get any arguments from me.



MICHELLO GHERGHA



PHOTO: MATTHEW

HOWIE MANDELL HEARD THAT GARTH BROOKS LIKES TO KEEP HIS SMILE BRIGHT, SO WHEN THE SUPERSTAR APPEARED ON MANDELL'S TV TALK SHOW, BROOKS WAS PRESENTED WITH A BASKET FULL OF TOOTHBRUSHES. MANDELL DEMONSTRATES PROPER DENTAL HYGIENE, WHILE BROOKS SIMPLY FLASHES HIS PEARLY WHITES.

## OLD GUARD, NEW GUARD

Billy Ray Cyrus greets Boxcar Willie backstage at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. The Opry's renowned "singing hobo" character has had a rough year, health-wise, so he remained seated during their conversation.



MICHELLO GHERGHA



## 100 YEARS YOUNG

If it was stars you were seeking, you didn't have to look far the night of the gaia William Morris 100th Anniversary party in Music City. I didn't even make it to the ballroom before I got caught in a star gridlock that included **Glen Campbell, Steve Wariner, Bryan White** and **Vince Gill**. **Amanda Wilkinson**, middle, of the **Wilkinsons** had her own gridlock with twins **Heather and Jennifer Kinley**, above. The century-old agency also books **Brooks & Dunn, Patty Loveless, Trace Adkins, Diamond Rio, Kathy Mattea, Travis Tritt, Ricochet** and a bazillion others.

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a denim shirt and jeans, is sitting on a horse. The background is a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on the image, enclosed in large curly brackets.

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where the term  
“sitting pretty” came from.*



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# Tammy



WYNONNA PAYS MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO TAMMY.

☛ Guitar Town's stars twinkled brightly the night of the *Remembering Tammy Wynette* concert/taping at the Ryman Auditorium. Backstage, **Sara Evans**, **Gary Chapman**, **Lynn Anderson**, **Raul Malo**, **Bryan White** and **Mandy Barnett** were fondly recalling the late star while cameras rolled. **Wynonna** brought baby Gracie, who was a pip in a leopard-print hat and coat that matched her mom's. **Tanya Tucker** introduced songwriter **Jerry Laseter** as her fiancé.

And everyone had a story to tell. **Randy Travis**, who toured with Wynette for years, said, "We shared a lot of miles, a lot of laughs and a lot of meals together."

Tucker recalled, "I invited Tammy to dinner one night. I cooked her chicken-fried steak, mashed potatoes, a good country meal. That little woman couldn't have weighed more than 87 pounds, but she ate two plates of my food. I was so proud of that."

As a starlet, **Mindy McCready** had no transportation, so Wynette helped her out. "When I was asked to sing the National Anthem at the Taledega Speedway, Tammy loaned me her bus," McCready recalled. "I was overwhelmed. There was a note sitting on the kitchen table on the bus. It said, 'Dear Mindy. What's mine is yours. Make yourself at home. Love, Tammy.' I still have it. I framed it."



AFTER PERFORMING (LEFT) BRYAN WHITE HANGS OUT WITH PAL MINDY MCCREADY (RIGHT).

## A "Perfect Love," a Perfect Place, a Perfect Time

☞ When the Grand Ole Opry returned to its ancestral home at the Ryman Auditorium for one magical weekend, thousands of fans packed the hall. The historic venue means a lot to **Trisha Yearwood**, since her marriage to **Robert Reynolds** of the **Mavericks** was the event that reopened the Ryman after its '90s renovation. Now it means even more. After introducing her as an Opry guest, **Ricky Skaggs** surprised Yearwood by inviting her to become a member of the Grand Ole Opry's prestigious cast. Yearwood said it was tough to sing her peppy, happy hit, "Perfect Love," after choking back her grateful tears. Her official induction took place in March.



TRISHA YEARWOOD GETS EMOTIONAL WHEN RICKY SKAGGS INVITES HER TO JOIN THE OPRY CAST.



### COWGIRLS' NIGHT OUT

Do blondes have more fun? **Lynn Anderson**, left, and **Connie Smith** get giggly at "Girls' Night Out," a show that raised money for



### RUB IT IN, RUB IT IN

Opry star **Johnny Russell** takes five with **Billy "Crash" Craddock**. If they get any closer, they could duet on Crash's 1974 hit "Rub It In."



### A PENNY SAVED

"I feel like we've been adopted into this wonderful family," said a misty-eyed **Steve Wilkinson** at a recent celebration at the ASCAP office on Music Row. The dad of **the Wilkinsons** recalled how he and his daughter **Amanda** and son **Tyler** had moved to Nashville less than two years ago with nothing but hope and talent. Today, the trio is country's Cinderella story, with "26 Cents" and "Fly" as hits. When their Giant label wheeled in the giant penny and quarter to commemorate the Wilkinsons' best-known song, Steve's talented teens got a chuckle.

### TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**Clint Black** swaps his guitar for baseball hero **Mark McGwire's** bat at an encounter at the Los Angeles airport. Black has a ways to go to match career "hits" with Big Mac.



### SALON SECRETS

Who are the real stars of country music? The hairdressers, of course. Snipper to the stars **Earl Cox** is so fab that his clients



tossed a party to honor him. From left are the perfectly coiffed **Barbara Mandrell**, **Pam Tillis**, **Suzy Bogguss**, **Faith Hill** and **Jo Dee Messina**. In the inset, they're turning the tables by adjusting Earl's "do."

### THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Pop superstar **Elton John** bows and dramatically kisses the hand of **LeAnn Rimes** at the 25th annual People's Choice Awards. The star couple had just introduced their duet "Written In the Stars." He's clearly smitten, so can this mean "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" and hello "Blue"? Or a "One Way Ticket" to "Philadelphia Freedom"?



# THE BUZZ

BY HAZEL SIMMONS

**L**earned from the ever-wonderful **Pam Tillis** that she and her Pomeranian, "Buddy," continued their Endless Summer Tour through February. How? They toured "down under" in Australia, where it *was* summer.

for you, and here's how it happened. Chuck's bride, **Gina O'Kelly**, knew that her husband-to-be's favorite singer was Sammy, and that his favorite song was "Love of My Life." Well, she got in touch with Sammy,

to Dallas and sang for Chuck and Gina until I told them.

**W**hen **Toby Keith** chose a piece of property in Scottsdale, Arizona, to build his second Hatch Valley Chili Company restaurant, he had no idea he was making a down payment on a diamond mine. Right across the street from his property, those folks who built the Mall of America in Minneapolis, only the biggest mall in the country, are building a second mall every bit as large as the first.



TRAVIS TRITT AND WIFE THERESA ARE EXPECTING THEIR SECOND BABY IN JUNE.

I just had to call **Sammy Kershaw** to get the scoop! I was lazing back in my recliner watching **Chuck Norris'** wedding in Dallas on *Entertainment Tonight* when I heard Sammy singing, "Love of My Life." I got the goods

unbeknownst to Chuck. Chuck had no idea Sam was actually at the wedding until Mr. K began singing. And nobody in Music City (including the folks at Sammy's own record label!) knew Sammy went



**P**lumb perfect **Vince Gill** (above) says he plays golf every day he's on the road, if he can. He finds out the best course in each city where he performs, then goes there to play and swaps green fees for show tickets!

**I**t saddened me to get a call about **Martina McBride's** daddy's cabinet shop burning to the ground, destroying all the

contents. For 20 years, he'd made a living in that shop. All items of value, along with memorabilia Martina had given him for display, are gone. Martina, who has lived in Nashville now for several years, remains very close to her family. Knowing how much her dad loves music, she made arrangements for him to sing with her at the Grand Ole Opry. The diminutive Martina tooled her big double-seater pickup into the tiny parking space backstage, climbed down from the cab, walked to the other side, straightened her daddy's collar and tie, helped him put on his coat and brushed the lint away. Then she picked up his guitar and the two walked side by side toward the back door of the hallowed hall.

**G**arth Brooks did not attend the Grammy Awards this year. Instead, he chose to go to Arizona for spring training with the San Diego Padres baseball team. Upon completing a three-year tour, the biggest music star on planet Earth saw his spring open, and chose to hang with the so-called "boys of summer." Garth told me that when he was 4 or 5, his father was coaching baseball for 20 or so boys, and Dad let him play even though he was younger and smaller than the others. He said he'd never forget his mom sewing team logos with thread and needle, stitch after stitch, on 20 baseball caps. That's one of the reasons the G-man now wants to bat, throw, run,

pitch, catch, slide, stop grounders, scratch and sweat with the big boys.



**T**he ongoing courtship saga between the late **Sonny Bono's** wife, U.S. Representative **Mary Bono**, and Diamond Rio drummer **Brian Prout** continues to create interest in Palm Springs (where the Rep has a home and her two children reside), Washington, D.C. (where she serves in the House of Representatives) and Nashville (where Brian changes clothes and planes). Do you suppose the couple talks a lot about Trent Lott or a little about "Little" Jimmy Dickens? I swear, there's a song in there somewhere!

**D**oes **Deana Carter** still shave her legs? No, she says. "I'm a waxing woman now." The song loses a little luster when you substitute "wax" for "shave," doesn't it? Deana, get your razor back out, girl!

**Bryan White** has admitted that **Erika Page**, his actress girlfriend from the soap *One Life to Live*, is the woman he wants to spend the rest of his life with. They're officially engaged. Bryan calls Erika a great woman. I think she's a little on the skinny side, myself. \*

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# Song In Her Heart

Mandy Barnett has been a critics' darling for years. Everyone from *The Village Voice* to *Playboy* has raved about her soaring voice and stylistic prowess. Yet, until now, few outside of the media have heard her name. With her upcoming Sire debut, *I've Got a Right to Cry*, that's about to change.

With her new album, *I've Got a Right to Cry*, Mandy Barnett is no longer crying the "Cline clone" blues.

"I'm not doing it the way it's supposed to be done," Barnett admits of her latest effort. "I'm doing it the way I'm supposed to do it." That includes enlisting the help of legendary producer Owen Bradley and recording an album of pop standards and country shuffles, a glorious



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celebration of song that should appeal to many generations. "Every aspect of this record is different from what I've done before," she says. "And I'm different. I've grown up a little more."

With her previous self-titled effort, Barnett tried to walk the fine line between what commercial country radio would accept and where her heart was leading her. Though the album was a daring blend and attracted critical praise, it never broke through to a widespread audience. At the time, Barnett was also trying to shed the "Cline clone" image that she had gained through her starring role in the stage production *Always...Patsy Cline*.

Barnett has been belting them out since she was a little girl, playing fairs, weddings and funerals in her hometown of Crossville, Tennessee. By the time she was 13, she had landed a record deal and made her debut on the Grand Ole Opry. When she wasn't onstage, she spent her



BARNETT'S STAGE ROLE AS PATSY CLINE (SHOWN HERE IN 1994) KICK-STARTED HER CAREER.

after-school hours poring over the music of Linda Ronstadt, Jim Reeves, Ella Fitzgerald and Waylon Jennings.

She also studied the Patsy Cline, Brenda Lee and Loretta Lynn records produced by Owen Bradley and marveled at his ability to keep simplicity and passion at the forefront of a record,



FANS AND CRITICS RAVE ABOUT BARNETT'S POWERFUL PIPES.

even in the midst of a full string section. When she finally got up the nerve to talk with Bradley, she was immediately convinced he was the man to take the reins of her next project. "He was 82," she says, "60 years

older than me, but he had it together. I've never met anyone as talented as him."

The two spent months going over songs and arrangements, and though Owen cut only four songs on the album before his death in early 1998, his brother, Harold, and nephew, Bobby Bradley, followed his extensive notes for the rest of the project. "Owen really set the tone for the record," says Barnett, who cut the album live in the studio

"Every aspect of this record is different from what I've done before," she says. "And I'm different. I've grown up a little more."

with the players. "I really wanted to do it live, because I hate going back in and singing with headphones. When you are standing there with the strings and you can see everybody, there is so much energy."

Like other artists who dare to color outside the lines, Barnett may face more barriers at first, but the payoff is greater. And if time has proven anything, it's that those who follow their hearts always win in the end. \*

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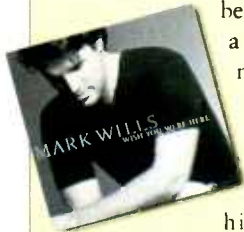
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World Radio History

# Life is Good

With his first gold album, a new home in a quaint Atlanta suburb, a brand new baby and a spot on the George Strait tour, Mark Wills has plenty to celebrate.

**“I** T’S KIND OF a scary time because all of a sudden things are happening pretty quick for me,” Mark Wills admits during a recent visit at his home. “I’m really excited about everything. I have a beautiful baby girl and a beautiful wife. And now I have my first gold album with *Wish You Were Here*.”



Wills is relaxing for a few days with his wife, Kelly, and 4-month-old daughter, Mally, before hitting the road again.

The Wills family moved into the airy Tudor last summer shortly before Mally’s birth. Framed photos are scattered around the comfortable living room and a few colorful toys dot the carpet. A warm fire crackles in the fireplace as Mally snoozes in her swing.

Wills’ eyes shine with love as he watches the baby doze. He touches her cheek briefly and comments on the softness of her skin.

“I don’t look forward to leaving anymore,” the Georgia native admits. “Since Mally was born, I have another reason to want to stay home. I recorded her crying and cooing and put them on my computer. When I’m out on the road checking my e-mail and wishing to God that I was

home with Mally, and then I hear her cry on my computer, it makes me cry. I don’t want to miss a thing, so I try to stay home as much as possible now.”

Apparently cutting back on tour dates hasn’t hurt Wills’ career at all. *Wish You Were Here* went gold only five months after its release. A plaque commemorating the event hangs over the mantel.

**“I love being a dad...I love cuddling with her. She wiggles around until she finds just that right spot.”**

As Mally awakens, Wills gently scoops his daughter out of her swing and holds her against his chest. Between coos, he talks about his second album and the attention it’s getting.

“This album has definitely had more impact than my first one,” he says proudly. “Even though ‘Jacob’s Ladder’ and ‘Places I’ve Never Been’ were big hits, no one really knew that I was the guy who sang them. You’d be surprised how many times my band and I would walk around at a

truck stop and people would ask us if we were in a band. My band would say, ‘We play with Mark Wills.’ People would respond with, ‘Never heard of him.’ Then the guys would say, ‘You know, “Jacob’s Ladder?”’ Everyone knew the song, but they had no idea who I was.”

*Wish You Were Here* changed all that for the 25-year-old artist. The record has yielded two No. 1 hits in the first eight months. The third single is quickly climbing the charts.

“This album is a little more grown-up,” Wills explains. “It’s what I feel I needed to express. The material on the first album was more of a learning process for me to know what I wanted to do. On this album, I wanted to show that I’m not just a club singer. I wanted to take some real-life issues and deal with them.”

The first single, “I Do (Cherish You),” became a popular wedding anthem last summer. The second, “Don’t Laugh at Me,” created a stir in schools, churches and homes throughout the country with its message about treating others with respect.

“I just sit there and cry when I read the e-mails and letters I’ve gotten about ‘Don’t Laugh at Me,’” Wills says. “Someone sent me a letter the other day and it was written in Braille. I can’t read Braille, but it just goes to show how many people this song has touched.”

BY TAMARA SAVIANO



ED RODE

HAPPY DUET: COUNTRY CROONER MARK WILLS AND CUDDLY COO-ER  
MALLY MAKE BEAUTIFUL FAMILY MUSIC.



ED RODE

MALLY HAS A WAY OF KEEPING DAD GROUNDED.

Wills thinks his current single, the title track, will have just as deep an impact as "Don't Laugh at Me."

"'Wish You Were Here' is just as hard for me to sing," Wills admits. "The song talks about eternal life. It talks about leaving this world, but going somewhere else and letting the people you love know you're okay when you get there. It says, 'Wish you were here, wish you could see this place, wish you were near, wish I could touch your face, the weather's nice, this is paradise.' That's what I think heaven is."

His fans are already responding to the new song.

"I met a lady whose husband worked for the state road crews," he says. "He wasn't usually very affectionate, but one morning when he got to the door to leave for work, he suddenly turned around and came back to sit on the bed with his wife. He gave her a big hug and said, 'I want you to know I really love you.' Later that

afternoon he was killed in an accident. The woman was in tears when she was telling me how much the song reminded her of her own life. It really

until she finds just that right spot. She pokes her little butt up in the air because she has her little knees drawn up and lies on my chest and I rub her

**"We send Mommy shopping a good bit so we can hang out together," he laughs. "I like to have some quality time with Mally when I'm not on the road."**

choked me up. We don't have the guarantee of tomorrow. We don't even have the guarantee of the rest of today. Listening to a song like this makes you very thankful for everything you have."

Wills is especially thankful for his wife and daughter.

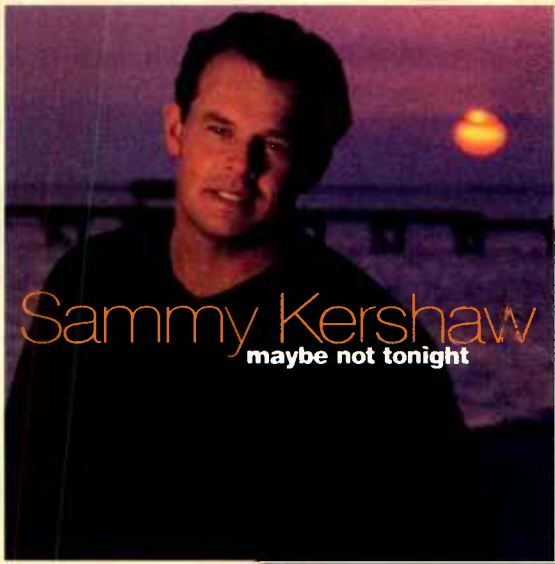
"I love being a dad," Wills says with a grin. "When I'm home, Mally sleeps in my arms a lot of times. I love cuddling with her. She wiggles around

back. She just coos. In baby talk, I'm sure she's saying, 'I love you daddy.'

"Having Mally brings back all the wonderful memories from my childhood. We weren't rich, but we were a close family. My mom and dad took me to church my whole life. I have a deep religious core. I had a lot of love in my family and I think that's the most important thing. Your kids need to know they have your support 100 percent of the time, in good times

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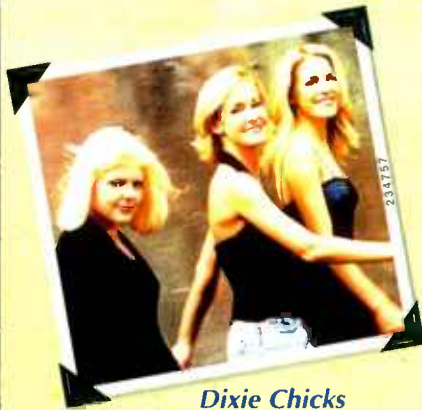
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**John Anderson**—*Greatest Hits* (J&A Records) 169409

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- Shania Twain**—*The Woman In Me* (Mercury/Nashville) 119768  
**Faith Hill**—*It Matters To Me* (Warner Bros.) 134908  
 Heather Myles—*Highways And Honky Tonks* (Rounder) 250761  
**Deana Carter**—*Did I Shave My Legs For This?* (Capitol Nashville) 166397  
**Reba McEntire**—*Whoa! If It's You* (MCA) 172973  
**Alison Krauss & Union Station**—*So Long So Wrong* (Rounder) 188524  
**Anita Cochran**—*Back To You* (Warner Bros. Nashville) 188813  
**Lee Ann Womack** (Decca Nashville) 211383  
**Lila McCann**—*Lila* (Asylum) 213611  
**Trisha Yearwood**—*Songbook: A Collection Of Hits* (MCA Nashville) 219436  
**The Kinleys**—*Just Between You And Me* (Epic) 223271  
**Mindy McCreedy**—*If I Don't Stay The Night* (Enhanced CD) (BNA Records) 227652  
**Patty Loveless**—*Long Stretch Of Lonesome* (Epic) 228676  
**The Lynns** (Reprise) 233049  
**Milo Mason**—*The Strong One* (Atlantic Nashville) 235549  
**Terri Clark**—*How I Feel* (Mercury) 245589  
**Suzy Bagguss**—*Nobody Love, Nobody Gets Hurt* (Capitol Nashville) 247734  
**Pam Tillis**—*Every Time* (Arista Nashville) 251439  
**Dolly Parton**—*Hungry Again* (Decca Nashville) 256701  
 Allison Moorer—*Alabama Song* (MCA Nashville) 259531  
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**Danni Leigh**—*29 Nights* (Decca Nashville) 263723  
**Lorrie Morgan**—*Secret Love* (BNA Records) 263764  
**Sara Evans**—*No Place That Far* (RCA Nashville) 265041  
**Jenny Simpson** (Mercury/Nashville) 265066  
**Tammy Wynette**—*Anniversary: 20 Years Of Hits* (Epic) 352427  
**Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits** (MCA) 365924  
**Loretta Lynn**—*The Country Music Hall Of Fame* (MCA) 416339  
**Wynonna Judd**—*Wynonna* (MCA/Curb) 435909  
**Mary Chapin Carpenter**—*Come On, Come On* (Columbia) 440560



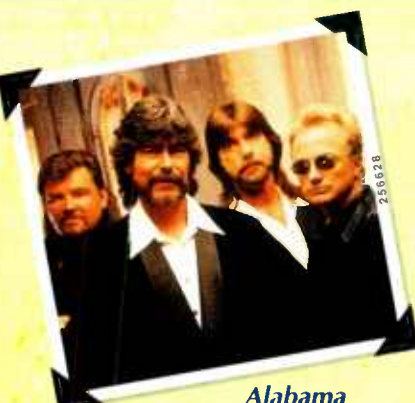
**Faith Hill**—*Faith* (Warner Bros.) 241356



**Trisha Yearwood**—*Where Your Road Leads* (Enhanced CD) (MCA Nashville) 253625







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For The Record: 41 Number One Hits (RCA Nashville) ■ 256628

- Tracy Byrd—Big Love (MCA Nashville) 17D464
- ◉ Dwight Yoakam—The Long Way Home (Reprise) 25D258
- Terri Clark—Just The Same (Mercury) 17D522
- Mark Chesnut—Greatest Hits (Decca) 173476
- Gary Allan—Used Heart For Sale (Decca) 173633
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- ◉ Charlie Robison—Life Of The Party (Lucky Dog/Columbia) ★ 256768
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- Johnny Cash—Super Hits (Columbia) 186346
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- ◉ Tribute To Tradition—Dixie Chicks, Martina McBride, more (Columbia) 259564
- Alabama—Dancin' On The Boulevard (RCA Nashville) 187153
- Aaron Tippin—Greatest Hits...And Then Some (RCA Nashville) 188532
- George Strait—Carrying Your Love With Me (MCA Nashville) 188631
- The Essential Charley Pride (RCA Nashville) 188656
- ◉ Willie Nelson—Teatro (Island) ★ 259614
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- Sara Evans—Three Chords And The Truth (RCA Nashville) 21D211
- Pam Tillis—Greatest Hits (Arista Nashville) 211441
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- Neal McCoy—Greatest Hits (Atlantic Nashville) 213595
- Dwight Yoakam—Under The Covers (Reprise) 214528
- Diamond Rio—Greatest Hits (Arista Nashville) 214627
- ◉ Deryl Dodd (Columbia) 262451
- Sherrie Austin—Words (Arista Nashville) 214635
- Lonestar—Crazy Nights (BNA Records) 214676
- Blackhawk—Love & Gravity (Arista Nashville) 215822
- Patsy Cline—Live At The Cimarron Ballroom (MCA Nashville) 216861
- Toby Keith—Dream Walkin' (Mercury) 21795D
- The Best Of Billy Ray Cyrus (Mercury) 217968
- Bryan White—The Right Place (Asylum) 22D418
- Total Country—Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, more (Real Gone Music) 221325
- Mark Chesnut—Thank God For Believers (Decca Nashville) 221341



Gary Allan—It Would Be You (Decca) 245530



Brooks & Dunn—If You See Her (Arista) 247759

- Chely Wright—Let Me In (MCA Nashville) 221457
- "Amazing Grace 2"—Trace Adkins, Bryan White, Gary Chapman, more (Sparrow) 222786
- ◉ Travis Tritt—No More Looking Over My Shoulder (Warner Bros. Nashville) 263392
- Lorrie Morgan—Shakin' Things Up (BNA Records) 222877
- Delbert McClinton—One Of The Fortunate Few (Rising Tide) ★ 225698
- Steve Earle—El Corazon (E Squared/WB) 225706
- John Michael Montgomery—Grt. Hits (Atlantic Nashville) 225862
- Trace Adkins—Big Time (Capitol Nashville) 227769
- Paul Brandt—Outside The Frame (Reprise) 23D615
- Wade Hayes—When The Wrong One Loves You Right (DKC Music/Columbia) 234740
- Chris Knight (Decca) 235515
- ◉ Toby Keith—Grt. Hits Vol. One (Mercury/Nashville) 263731
- The Derailers—Reverb Deluxe (Sire/Watermelon) ★ 235531
- Tanya Tucker—Super Hits (Columbia) 235895
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- Jimmie Dale Gilmore (Hightone) ★ 236737
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- Tulore Dust: A Songwriter's Tribute To Merle Haggard—Dwight Yoakam, Joe Ely, more (Hightone) ★ 236778
- ◉ Hank Williams, Sr.—20 Grt. Hits (Mercury/Nashville) 263798
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Come On Over (Mercury) 229021

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- Aerosmith—Big Ones (Geffen) 111468
- AC/DC—Back In Black (Remastered) (ATCO) 12D337
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- Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble—Greatest Hits (Epic) 140939
- Dave Matthews Band—Crash (RCA) 156703
- Sheryl Crow (A&M) 165969
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- Matchbox 20—Youself Or Someone Like You (Lava/Atlantic) ★ 168161
- Elton John—Love Songs (MCA) 168625
- Fleetwood Mac—The Dance (Reprise) 217869
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- Michael W. Smith—Live The Life (Reunion) 244541
- Backstreet Boys (Enhanced CD) (Jive) 244566
- Lucinda Williams—Car Wheels On A Gravel Road (Mercury) ★ 25D928
- Celine Dion—Let's Talk About Love (550 Music/Epic) 253245
- John Denver—Forever, John (RCA) ★ 259465
- Chris Isaak—Speak Of The Devil (Reprise) 261362
- Linda Ronstadt's Greatest Hits (Asylum) 286740
- Eagles—Their Greatest Hits 1971-1975 (Asylum) 287003
- The Steve Miller Band—Grt. Hits 1974-78 (Capitol) 29D171
- James Taylor's Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 291302
- Jimmy Buffett—Songs You Know By Heart (MCA) 339911
- "Grease" (Polydor) 424721
- ZZ Top—Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 438010

- Kevin Sharp—Love Is (Asylum) 238923
- John Denver—Greatest Country Hits (RCA) 238931
- ◉ Kenny Rogers—20 Greatest Hits (Reprise) 444885
- "The Horse Whisperer"—George Strait, Dwight Yoakam, more (MCA Nashville) 240754
- Roy D. Mercer—How Big a Boy Are Ya?, Vol. 1 (Capitol Nashville) 242255
- Roy D. Mercer—How Big a Boy Are Ya?, Vol. 2 (Capitol Nashville) 242289
- Jeff Foxworthy—Totally Committed (Warner Bros.) 245498
- Restless Heart—Greatest Hits (RCA) 245563
- Ty Herndon—Big Hopes (Epic) 246264
- Joe Diffie—Greatest Hits (Enhanced CD) (Epic) 250241
- Johnny Cash & Willie Nelson—VH1 Storytellers (American/Columbia) 250266
- ◉ Charlie Daniels—Super Hits (Epic) 456608
- Mark Nesler—I'm Just That Way (Asylum) 250944
- Chris LeDoux—One Road Man (Capitol Nashville) 252270
- BR5-49—Big Backyard Beat Show (Arista Nashville) 252296
- Collin Raye—The Walls Come Down (Epic) 253641
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HIS ROLE AS A DAD, AND HUSBAND TO KELLY, LEFT, HAS GIVEN WILLS A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON HIS ROLE AS A PERFORMER.

**“This album is a little more grown-up,” Wills explains. “It’s what I feel I needed to express...I wanted to take some real-life issues and deal with them.”**

and bad times. That’s what makes children feel secure. It’s a cool feeling to know that Mally’s going to look at me like I look at my daddy.”

Mally’s already inspired her father to write a song. While Wills was being interviewed on a radio show in Nashville, two of his co-writers heard him talking about his baby. They encouraged him to write a song about her. He did, and he hopes the as-yet-untitled piece will show up on his next album.

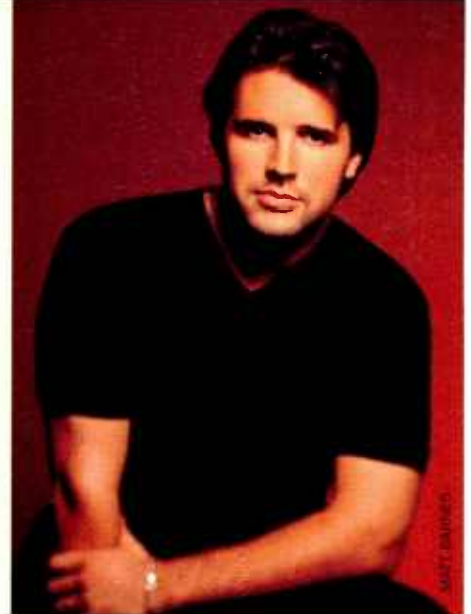
“It’s her whole life wrapped up into a three-minute song,” Wills laughs. “The song is about watching her grow from this little baby until the day I walk her down the aisle and she gets married and starts her own life.”

But for now, Wills is enjoying every minute with his daughter.

“We send Mommy shopping a good bit so we can hang out together,” he laughs. “I like to have some quality time with Mally when I’m not on the road. There is so much I feel like I miss out on. I missed her first smile. She smiles a lot now, but I won’t ever get to see that first smile. It’s a big deal to me.”

Right now, Wills is sneaking in quality time with his daughter between tour dates with his hero, George Strait.

“To be out with George on my first major tour is just incredible!” Wills exclaims. “George doesn’t know it, but he’s been part of my life for a long time. Kelly and I went to



see his movie, *Pure Country*, on our first date. Our wedding dance was ‘I Cross My Heart.’ Now I’m touring with him. It’s very cool.”

It looks like 1999 is going to be a very good year for Mark Wills. “I’m very thankful for what I’ve got,” he says. “I sure don’t take it for granted.” \*

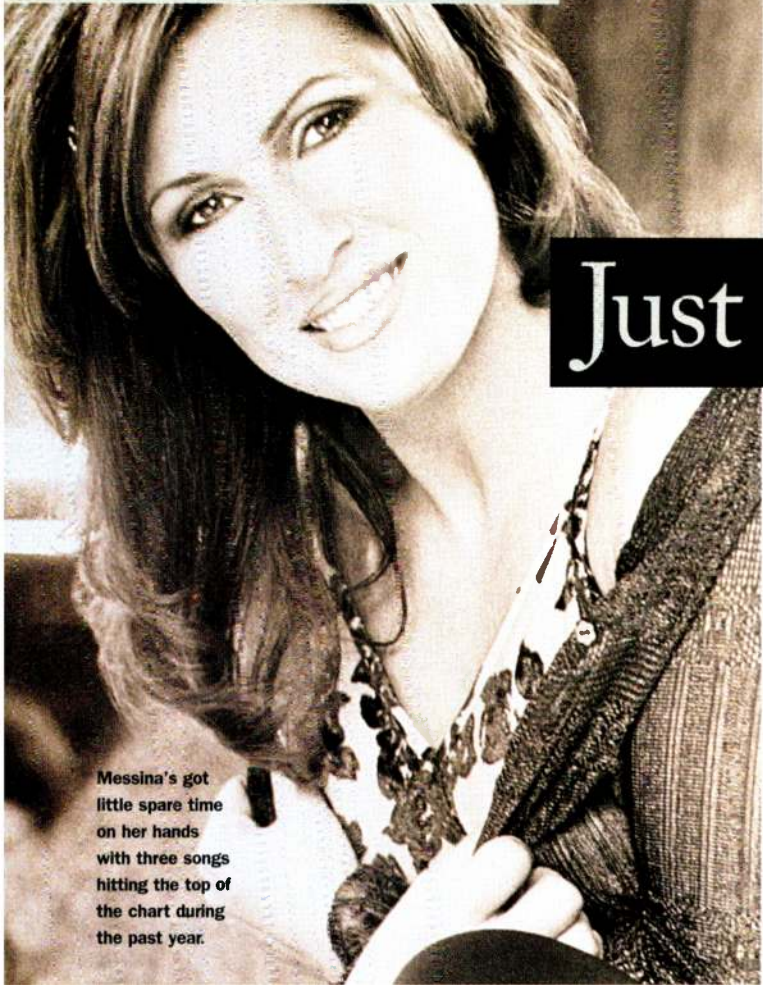
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**Jo Dee Messina takes time out for her favorite books, movies and more.**

# Just Messina-round

**A**dmittedly, Jo Dee Messina is a girl with “not a lot of free time.” The red-headed dynamo has spent the past few months recording her third album, preparing to tour with the George Strait festival and continuing to promote her second album, *I’m Alright*.

So when it comes to books, movies and music—well, let’s just say the heart is willing but the Timex is weak.

Still, Messina’s got her eyes and ears open to a few hot titles these days. Here’s what recently captured her interest:

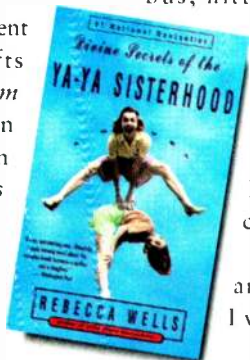
Messina’s got little spare time on her hands with three songs hitting the top of the chart during the past year.

**BOOKS**

Messina is an avid reader—she’s one of those people who’s always in the middle of a dozen different books, most of them information-oriented.

“I’m looking at all these books lying around,” she says, glancing around her Nashville home. “I’ve got *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, *New Owner’s Guide to Labrador Retrievers*, *WordPerfect for Dummies*. And I’ve picked up 20 different magazines, *Prevention* and *Runner’s Magazine*. I read all the time!”

Two novels are on her current “hot” list, both of them gifts from her brother: *Stones From the River* by Ursula Hegi (Simon & Schuster, available in paperback) and *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood* by Rebecca Wells (Harper Collins, available in paperback). Both feature larger-than-life



characters—at first blush a perfect match for the exuberant Messina. But is this what prompted her brother to pick these titles? Nah.

“I guess he’s been watching a lot of *Oprah*—they were both featured in her book club,” Messina laughs.

**MOVIES**

Here’s where a busy person really feels the time crunch. It’s hard enough to make it to the video store when your home is a rolling tour bus; hitting the multiplex is well-nigh impossible.

So right now, Messina’s must-see list is longer than she’d like. However, the self-described “sap” has her eye on Hollywood’s current crop of chick flicks.

“I’m a huge Julia Roberts and Susan Sarandon fan, so I want to see *Step Mom*. And

I also want to see *You’ve Got Mail* and *Patch Adams*.”

**MUSIC**

Messina is a big fan of power pop and cites Celine Dion as a perennial favorite. But Dion’s CD has been temporarily pushed aside by another female power pop singer.

“I’m listening to the new Gloria Estefan CD” with the hit single “Don’t Let This Moment End,” says Messina. “We do a Gloria Estefan medley in my show where I do all the percussion. And one of my fans went out and bought her new album and waited in line forever and got it autographed for me from Gloria. I’m talking about the real record, the 33 1/2! I didn’t even know they made those anymore. I mean, *vinyl!* Hello!” \*



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# Ruling the ROOST

COUNTRY MUSIC'S HIPPEST NEW ACT  
MAKES FEATHERS FLY. BY MICHAEL McCALL



On a rainy Nashville afternoon, the three members of the Dixie Chicks sit in an expensive Nashville hotel suite, picking at gourmet salads and pasta dishes and discussing their stressed-out schedule. Amazingly, they're laughing rather than griping as they snap through a series of difficult choices on how to fill the few open days on their calendar.

**R**ight now, everyone wants the Dixie Chicks. An avalanche of invitations from TV, magazines and awards shows have piled up in the wake of the band's sudden, skyrocketing success. Mainstream, non-musical publications like *Harper's Bazaar*, *People*, *Seventeen* and *YM* have been tripping over each other to get the Chicks on their pages. The act has also been pegged as the new print-campaign spokeswomen for Candies footwear—a perfect fit for the hip, colorful group and the hip, colorful line of shoes.

Clearly, the pressure is on: With a full concert schedule already on the books, the trio of Natalie Maines, Emily Erwin and Martie Seidel have more offers than time.

"Believe us, we're not complaining," smiles Erwin. "Bring it on, I say."

As they go over the schedule, their choices and opinions might surprise other country stars—and that's part of what sets apart this ground-breaking trio.

"The stuff we want to do is not what other people would normally do," says singer Maines, easily the act's most extroverted member. "We'd much rather do something fun and cool than the stuff that other people might think of as 'the big-time.'"

For instance, among television offers, the three blondes display the most excitement about *Loveline*, a saucy MTV series in which a psychologist and a comedian talk frankly about modern relationships with celebrity guests and call-in viewers.

Much of the time, the discussion centers—often graphically—on sex.

“Any excuse to talk about sex is all right by us!” quips Maines, bringing a burst of laughter from her partners.

Blake Chancey, a Sony Records vice president who coproduced the trio’s hit album *Wide Open Spaces* with Paul Worley, says the Chicks are an incredible combination of synergy and sass.

“They’re all perfectionists, and they’re all very opinionated,” says Chancey. “They’re totally individuals. Natalie is kind of wild but very genuine, and the sisters are very passionate and particular about their work. It’s amazing that they can sit in a room and not kill each other, really.”

That strong sense of who they are and where they want to go might surprise those who initially wanted to stereotype the trio as yet another prefabricated group of pretty faces foisted on the public by the music industry. Skeptics initially questioned the talent and depth of the group, thinking that perhaps they

were a concoction put together by a behind-the-scenes musical puppet master. However, as people have discovered, the Dixie Chicks are

**“We came out of bluegrass, so we could play,” Seidel recalls. “That would always surprise people. We’ve always had fun shocking people with what we can do.”**

experienced performers and capable instrumentalists—qualities that have been silencing doubters and turning skeptics into believers.

“We like proving ourselves,” says singer-guitarist Maines. “We like it that people get a kick out of the idea that we’re blondes and we can really play instruments. People find that humorous, and that’s OK with us.”

The truth is, it’s the band’s commitment to creating a fresh sound and an equally refreshing image that has turned the Dixie Chicks into country’s hottest new act.

After only four hit singles—

“I Can Love You

Better Than That,” “There’s Your Trouble,” “Wide Open Spaces” and “You Were Mine”—the trio’s debut album has sold 4 million copies. The

Chicks were also the toast of the Grammy Awards in February, taking home country-category trophies for Album and Duo/Group of the Year.

The Dixie Chicks originally formed in 1989. Erwin was a 16-year-old high school student, and 19-year-old sister Seidel was in her first year of college when they joined with singer Laura Lynch and guitarist Robin Macy to perform acoustically on the streets of Dallas.

Even then, Erwin and Seidel were accomplished performers. Seidel began playing fiddle at age 5; Erwin was plucking the banjo by 10. Both sisters had spent several years on the bluegrass festival

circuit as members of a teen

acoustic band,

Blue Night Express,

before helping form the

Dixie Chicks.

“We came out of bluegrass, so we could play,” Seidel recalls. “That would always surprise people. It still does, I guess. They don’t expect us to be able to do anything but sing and be pretty. We’ve always had fun shocking people with what we can do.”

Lynch, who formed the group, wanted to start a band that played old-time western swing, cowboy music and bluegrass. She dressed the group in colorful western wear, hung a rubber chicken from the neck of her acoustic bass and dubbed the act The Dixie Chickens. The name was inspired by the song “Dixie Chicken,” a rock hit for the band Little Feat. People kept shortening the name to the Dixie Chicks, and the group soon followed that lead.

“If we had known we were going to get beyond the street corner, we probably



**HIGH-SPIRITED VOCALIST NATALIE MAINES, THE NEWEST CHICK, HOOKED UP WITH THE GROUP AFTER RETURNING HOME TO TEXAS FOLLOWING HER STINT AT THE BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC IN BOSTON.**



would have thought about the name more," Seidel says with a laugh. "But every time we thought about changing it, our fans wouldn't stand for it."

In the early '90s, the band became a popular concert group, especially in Texas. Multimillionaire businessman Ross Perot adopted them as his favorite band, hiring them to play at corporate functions and big family parties. When Perot entered politics and mounted his run for president, the Dixie Chicks were often called upon to perform at campaign rallies. They performed at Dallas Cowboy games, on the Grand Ole Opry and at Bill Clinton's first Presidential Inaugural Gala.

"We had a lot of good opportunities along the way," Erwin says.

When interest from record companies didn't come, they created their own independent label and released their own albums. Eventually, their three albums—*Thank Heavens for Dale Evans*, *Little Ol' Cowgirl*, and *Shouldn't a Told You That*—sold more than 90,000 copies combined, largely from sales at shows and through the mail.

"We had a lot of fun, but it was a hard way to go," Erwin says. "A lot of the time we were playing gigs where the situations weren't very compatible to performing well. We didn't have as much to look forward to as we do now."

Even with a Nashville manager and booking agent, the act wasn't able to stir up recording interest from a major label. That's when the band knew it was time for a change. "The truth is, Martie and I started to feel limited creatively," Erwin says. By this time, guitarist Macy had already opted out of the act. Seidel and Erwin started thinking about the band's future.

"We felt we needed the next caliber of singer," Erwin continues. "We talked to Laura. We knew she was getting sick of not progressing further than we had. She had a teenage daughter, and road life was really wearing her down. She said she didn't want to keep going unless something happened. She understood we had to make a change."

Natalie Maines—whose father, Lloyd, a respected steel guitarist who had actually played on two of the Chicks' indie albums—was familiar with

the band and had seen the Dixie Chicks perform a few times. "I was always impressed at how well Martie and Emily played," she says. "But as far as the cowgirl music they were playing, I wasn't really into it."

Still, when the two sisters considered new singers, Maines was the first to come to mind.

"We knew she had a good voice," Seidel says. "We knew she came from a good family, and we were 90 percent sure she was a good person and someone we could get along with. We knew about her personality—that she was real outspoken and kind of bold and aggressive. She seemed like a front person for a band, which I knew neither of us wanted to be."

The sisters sent Maines a song they'd co-written, "You Were Mine." It was a contemporary country song rather than a retro-swing or cowgirl tune.

"I was surprised at how it sounded," Maines says. "I figured that if they wrote that, then that's where they wanted to go with the music. I could go there, I told them."

That song was among those that drew the attention of Sony Music. Allen Butler, president of Sony Music Nashville, met with the act and asked them why they wore retro-western clothes and why they played old-fashioned songs. "They told me, 'It makes us different, it makes us stand out,'" Butler recalls. "But, unfortunately, it made them so different that they wouldn't have fit in the country format. They were a great club act, but that was it. They weren't a recording act. But then they got Natalie, and it all changed." Butler signed the new and improved Chicks to Monument Records.

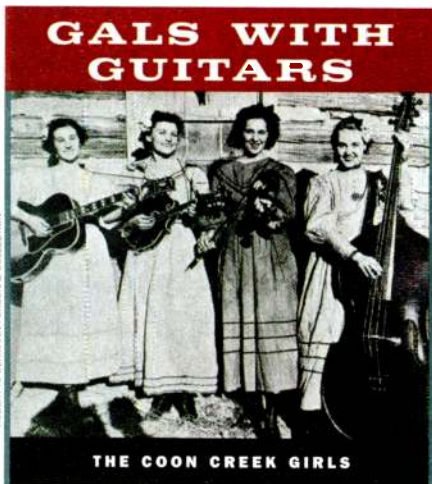
With Natalie installed as their lead singer, the trio brought in songs that some might consider outside of the usual Nashville fare, including "Am I the Only One (Who's Ever Felt This Way)," an old Lone Justice tune written by Maria McKee; "Loving Arms," an old Dobie Gray hit; "Give It Up or Let Me Go," an early Bonnie Raitt song; and "I'll Take Care of You," written by J.D. Souther.

The musical decisions obviously worked, which is why the band is talking about career pressures instead of moaning about a lack of work. The only downside to being so busy, they say, is that it separates them from loved ones.

"Sometimes I feel like we're paid to be away from our family," Seidel says. "I'm not paid to perform and play and write. That's the fun part."



**EMILY ERWIN WAS A BANJO-PICKING PRODIGY LONG BEFORE THE DIXIE CHICKS TOOK WING. SHE WON NUMEROUS BLUEGRASS COMPETITIONS AS A YOUNG TEENAGER.**



**As a female band, the Dixie Chicks are often thought of as a novelty. But “girl groups” are an established part of the country music tradition.**

★ In 1924, North Carolina banjo player Samantha Bumgarner and fiddler Eva Davis traveled to New York to record for Columbia Records.

★ In 1937, Lily May Ledford formed the Coon Creek Girls. As headliners at Kentucky's Renfro Valley Barn Dance, they continued as a group until 1957.

★ With men on the front lines during the 1940s, all-female bands proliferated—the Polka Dot Girls, Log Cabin Girls, Hollywood Cowgirls, Rancharettes, Texas Dollies and Girls of the Sunny South among them.

Kentucky's Amburgey sisters became the Hoot Owl Holler Girls, then Mattie, Marthie and Minnie. Guitarist Maybelle Carter formed an all-female band with daughters Helen on accordion, Anita on bass and June on autoharp in 1943. They came to the Grand Ole Opry with a second guitarist, Chet Atkins, in 1950.

★ In the 1950s and 1960s, new “all-girl” bands formed, including Ann Jones and Her Western Sweethearts, Abbie Neal and the Ranch Girls and Audrey Williams and the Cold, Cold Hearts. In California, Jean Shepard formed a band with school friends called the Melody Ranch Girls.

★ In the 1970s, female pickers formed bluegrass groups, including the Buffalo Gals, Bluegrass Liberation, Sidesaddle, Feminine Grass, Ladies Fancy, Mountain Lace, Petticoat Junction, Sassygrass, the Any Old Time String Band, Good Ol' Persons, Bosom Buddies and New Coon Creek Girls.

★ The 1980s saw a reemergence of all-female country bands. Calamity Jane signed with CBS and issued an album in 1982. Wild Rose emerged in 1987, recorded three major-label Nashville albums, and was nominated for a Grammy in 1991. In Dallas, the Dixie Chicks formed in 1989.

—Mary A. Bufwack

The Chicks' rapid ascent to the top left one family member in its wake. In January, Maines, the youngest of the three women at 24, filed for divorce from her husband of just over a year, Austin musician Michael Tarabay. Seidel, 26, is married to Ted Seidel, a pharmaceutical salesman. Erwin, 30, is engaged to Charlie Robison, a well-regarded Austin singer-songwriter who records for another Sony affiliate, Lucky Dog Records.

In the studio, the trio had to overcome being stereotyped as pretty faces rather than talented musicians. Chancey encouraged the women not to dress up—in fact, to dress down—before arriving for recording sessions.

“I told them to please wear baggy jeans, raggedy clothes, to put their hair up—anything to play down how beautiful they are,” says the producer. “I wanted the studio guys to concentrate on them as musicians.”

The trio's unconventional musical style made the music distinctive, Chancey believes. Putting the acoustic sounds of Seidel's fiddle and mandolin and Erwin's banjo and dobro within energized, contemporary country arrangements differentiated the Dixie Chicks from other modern Nashville acts.

“They're playing on every song, and it really gives the songs a personality,” Chancey notes. “The sound is more organic—there's less reverb, and the acoustic instruments are more prominent. Nobody else out there sounds like the Dixie Chicks, and that's one of the reasons they're having this success.”

At this point, even skeptics are realizing that the Dixie Chicks are an honest-to-goodness band, not an over baked studio concoction. “They are the music,” says Sony's Butler. “It's completely their sound. They didn't walk in and have someone say, ‘I can make a you a star.’

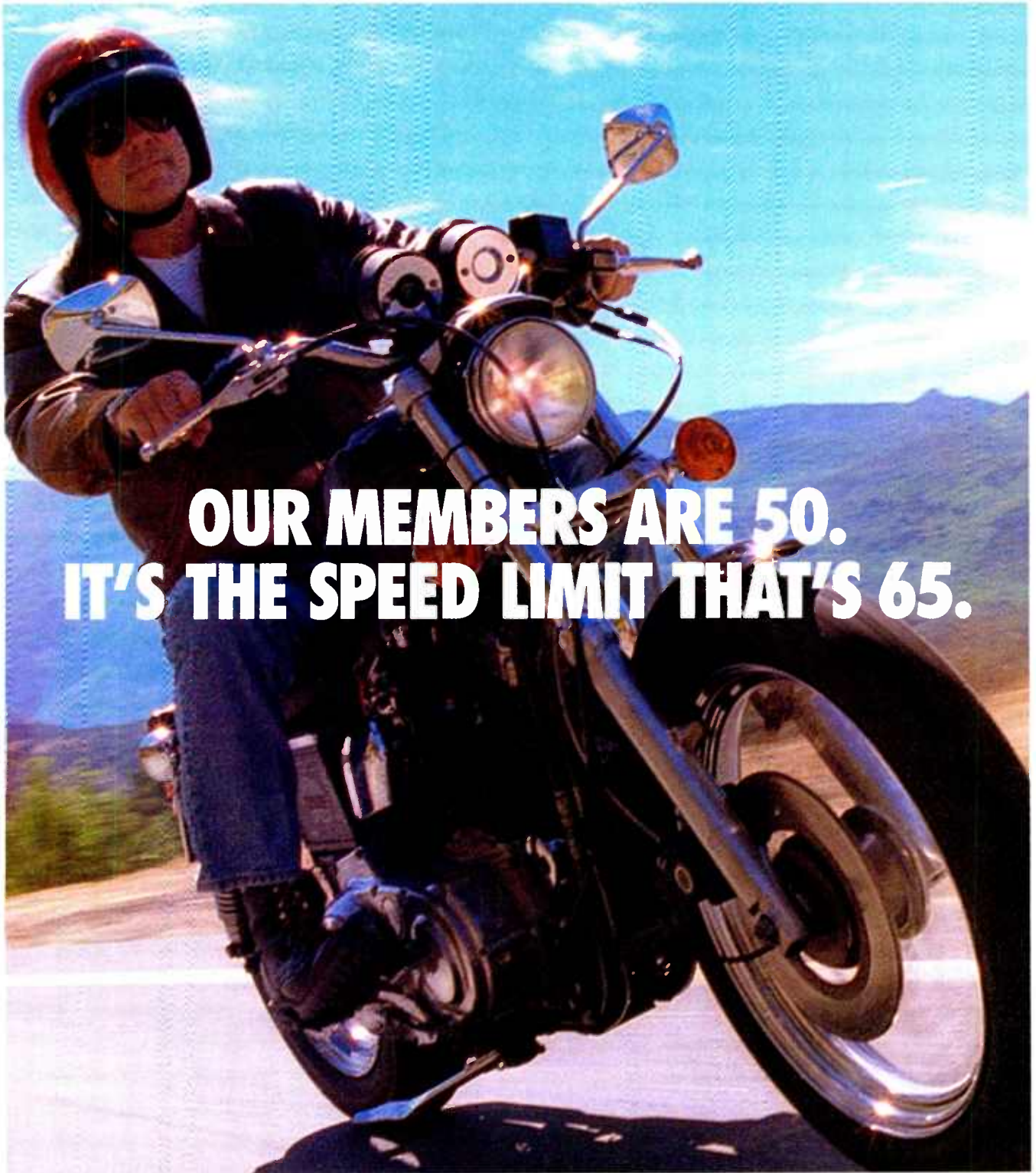
They've worked hard and paid their dues. Their experience is deep, and it's real.”

As for the band name, the trio admits it still raises eyebrows.

“We sometimes get flak about the ‘chick’ part,” Seidel says. “It sometimes rubs people the wrong way, especially some women, because we're all trying to get away from the condescending labels women can get stuck with. But when they see us play and see we've taken control of our careers and our own lives, they usually say, ‘Oh, yeah, now I get it.’ It's an empowerment thing.” ★



“SURE, IT'S HARD WORK, BUT WE'VE ALWAYS WORKED HARD,” SAYS FIDDLER MARTIE SEIDEL. “WE SURVIVED A LOT OF YEARS TRAVELING IN AN RV AND PLAYING SOUND CHECKS OR DRESSING ROOMS.”



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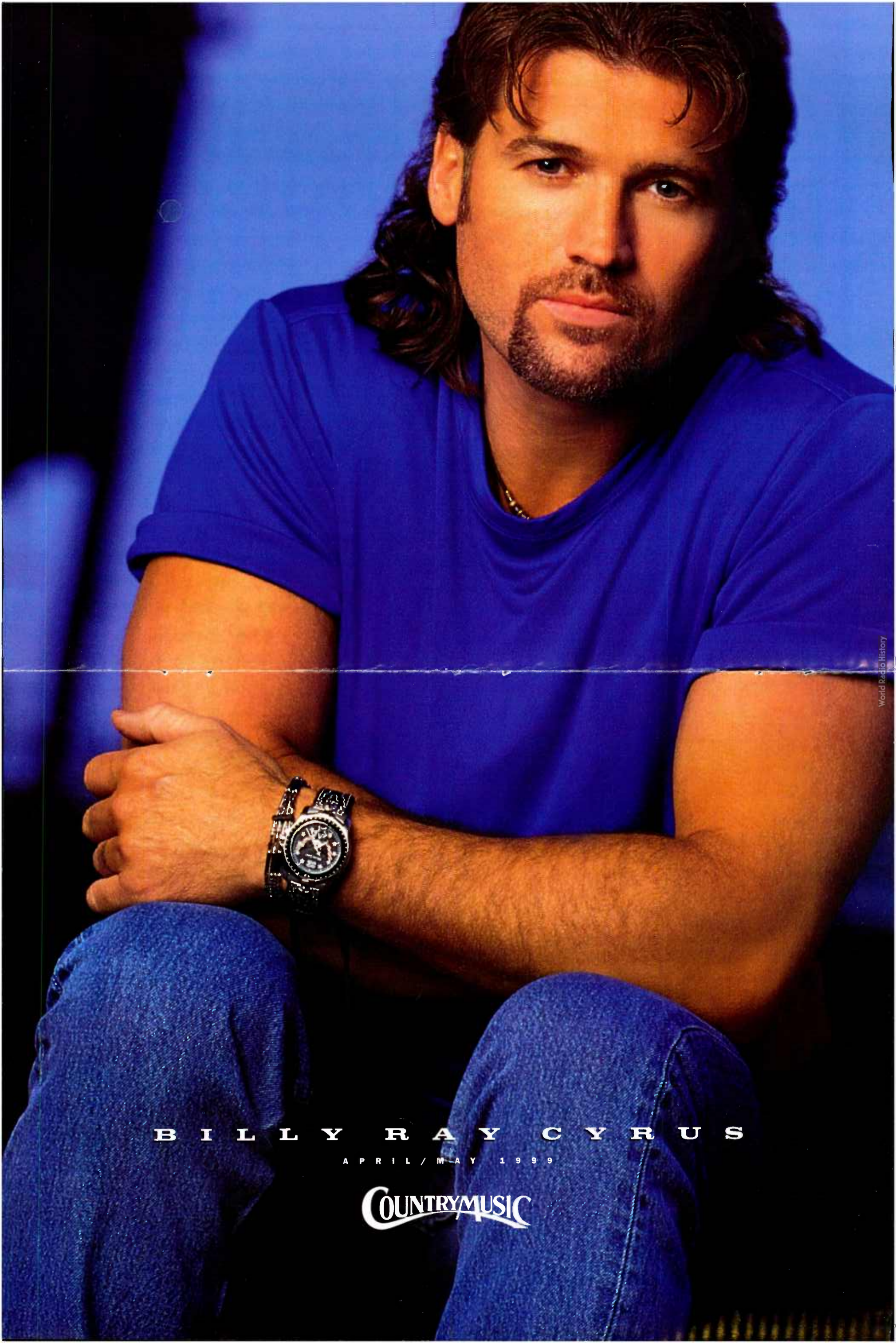
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COUNTRYMUSIC

# Billy Ray Cyrus

At the time of his birth, Billy Ray hadn't yet been given a name. The sign at the end of his bassinet read: Baby Boy, Cyrus. A nearsighted relative, visiting the maternity ward soon after the blessed event, misread the words as Billy Ray Cyrus, and the name stuck.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

**BORN** August 25, 1961 in Flatwoods, Kentucky

## CURRENT RESIDENCE

Singing Hills, a 500-acre farm south of Nashville

## FAMILY

Wife Leticia (married December 28, 1993); children Christopher Cody, Braison Chance, Destiny Hope, Brandi and Trace. Siblings Kevin, Mick, Angie, Lisa and Cherie. Parents Ruth Ann Adkins and Ron Cyrus; stepfather Cletis Adkins; stepmother Joan Cyrus.



## MAJOR MUSICAL INFLUENCES

Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, Bob Seger, Lynyrd Skynyrd, his mom and dad

## HIS BAND

Sly Dog, named after a one-eyed pet bulldog from his childhood

## HOBBIES

Four-wheeling, dirt-bike riding, horseback riding and being a dad

## FAVORITE TELEVISION PROGRAM

*Sanford and Son*

## FAVORITE ACTOR

Clint Eastwood

## FAVORITE ACTRESS

Faye Dunaway

## BEST MOVIE HE'S SEEN LATELY

*Born on the Fourth of July*

## FAVORITE TOY AS A CHILD

A mini-bike

## BEST ADVICE ANYONE EVER GAVE HIM

"Don't ever quit."

## VITAL STATISTICS

**HEIGHT:** Six feet

**HAIR:** Brown

**EYES:** Hazel

## RECORDING CAREER

### CURRENT ALBUM

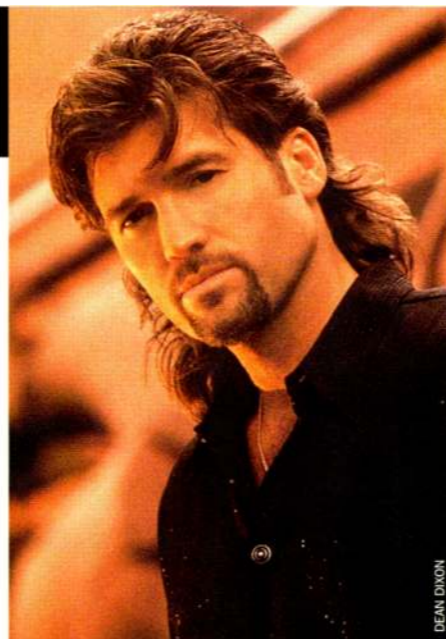
*Shot Full of Love*

### ALBUM DISCOGRAPHY

*Some Gave All* (1992), *It Won't Be the Last* (1993), *Storm in the Heartland* (1994), *Trail of Tears* (1996), *Cover to Cover* (1997)

### HIT SINGLES

"Achy Breaky Heart" (1992), "Some Gave All" (1992), "Could've Been Me" (1992), "She's Not Crying Anymore" (1992), "Where'm I Gonna Live" (1992), "In the Heart of a Woman" (1993), "Somebody New" (1993), "Words By Heart" (1994), "Storm in the Heartland" (1994), "Talk Some" (1994), "It's All the Same to Me" (1994), "It's All the Same to Me" (1997), "Busy Man" (1998)



## AWARDS

1992 CMA Single of the Year ("Achy Breaky Heart"); 1992 *American Music Awards* Favorite New Country Artist and Favorite Country Single ("Achy Breaky Heart"); 1996 Country Radio Seminar Humanitarian Award; 1997 *TNN Music City News* Single of the Year ("Trail of Tears"); 1998 *TNN Music City News* Male Vocalist, Album (*Cover to Cover*), Single ("It's All the Same to Me"), Song ("It's All the Same to Me") and Video ("Three Little Words") of the year.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

Billy Ray will be on tour this year in the U.S., Brazil, Australia and Europe. He recently appeared on TV's *Love Boat: The Next Wave*. He's written a screenplay for a movie called *Enough Is Enough*, which is being discussed in Hollywood. And he's been hired for a role in a new television project called *Mudbolland Drive*.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### WRITE TO BILLY RAY:

**Billy Ray Cyrus Spirit**  
P.O. Box 1206  
Franklin, TN 37065  
e-mail: [BRCSpirit@aol.com](mailto:BRCSpirit@aol.com)

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NEWCOMERS ABOVE PHOTO, FROM LEFT JILL RIEVES, SHANNON BROWN, SHANE MINOR, CLAUDIA CHURCH AND MONTE WARDEN.  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RUSS HARRINGTON - STYLING BY CLAUDIA FOWLER - HAIR & MAKEUP BY DEBRA WINGO AND KIMBERLY PONT LEZICA

For buying information, see page 68.



## Claudia Church

IF CLAUDIA SEEMS AT HOME IN front of a camera, it's because she's had plenty of practice. The North Carolina native spent years modeling and acting in videos while pursuing her dream of country music stardom. She met her husband, singer/songwriter Rodney Crowell, when she was cast in his "Lovin' All Night" video. Now Rodney makes an appearance in the quirky video for Claudia's sweet-good first single, "What's the Matter With You Baby." Rodney also produced and co-wrote several songs on her new self-titled Reprise Records debut, released in March.

Black poly ball bottom hip-huggers with white contrast stitching, \$30, Wet Seal; red button-down Western jacket, \$125, and black belt with multicolored stones, \$25, Katy K for Ranch Dressing; Nashville; blue/white checked shirt, \$100, and red boots, \$400, Billy Martin's, NYC; vintage navy flowered tube top, \$30, Silvery Moon, Nashville.

## Monte Warden

AUSTIN NATIVE MONTE WARDEN is a veteran at being a newcomer. "I've been making records for 10 years, yet by the grace of God I get to be considered a new face," he laughs. Monte founded the critically lauded rootsy quartet the Wagoneers, which released an album on A&M Records in 1989, and he recorded two solo projects for Watermelon Records in the mid-1990s. In March, Monte released his Asylum Records debut, *A Stranger to Me Now*. The collection of "hip-a-billy" songs includes his current single, the upbeat and infectious "Someday."

Rockmount, pale rose Western vintage shirt, \$95, and black vintage Western pants with leopard trim, \$75, both at Katy K for Ranch Dressing, Nashville.

Embroidered burgundy Manuel Collection jacket, \$400, suede skirt, \$250, burgundy boots, \$450, all at Billy Martin's, NYC; sterling silver garnet/pearl "flaming heart" choker, \$375, by Giselle Minoli, NYC; hair accessories, \$10, Wet Seal.

## Julie Reeves

BORN AND RAISED IN Ashland, Kentucky, hometown of the Judds, Julie grew up in coal mining country that's rich in music tradition. "Dwight Yoakam, Keith Whitley, Loretta Lynn, Patty Loveless—a lot of singers come from up there," she says proudly. The 24-year-old shows off her Appalachian vocal pedigree on "It's About Time," the first single and title track from her just-released Virgin Records Nashville debut.

## Shannon Brown

SHANNON GOT AN EARLY START onstage: Her parents owned nightclubs in her hometown of Spirit Lake, Iowa, and by 17 she was singing in those clubs. Over the years she became a versatile vocalist. "I grew up listening to Aretha Franklin, Barbara Mandrell, Glenn Miller and Ray Charles," she explains. "I loved every genre of music, but country is what I relate to most."

Shannon recently made quite an impression on country fans with the fiery video for "I Won't Lie," the first single from her new Arista Records debut, *A Tour of My Heart*.

Silver capri, \$20, and hair accessories, \$10, both by Wet Seal; silver lamé vintage capris, \$40, Silvery Moon, Nashville; sterling silver appetite/pearl bellflower earrings, \$250, by Giselle Mholi, NYC.

## Shane Minor

SHANE MAY BE THE ONLY country artist with "bull rider" and "undercover cop" on his resume. He started riding bulls on his family's ranch near Yosemite, California. After a few years as a pro, he gave up the rodeo life for a career only slightly less dangerous: a police officer in gang-dominated South Central Los Angeles. "Our guns were either out or they were coming out," Shane remembers. "You'd start cruising and hear gunshots. You'd go in that direction and there'd be three or four bodies in the street." Throughout his five battle-scarred years with the LAPD, Shane pursued his first love: music. His demo tape eventually landed at Mercury Nashville, and the result is his self-titled debut album, due in April. The first single, "Slave to the Habit," just landed at radio.



Chartrouse vintage 3pc satin suit, \$300; Katy K for Ranch Dressing, Nashville; black/white wing-tips, \$100; by Angels at U.S. Male.

## GET THE LOOK



# Martina McBride

## The Secret to Her Frosty Elegance

**H**er auburn hair, peachy complexion and cornflower-blue eyes have usually led Martina McBride to more bold and sultry stylings. But when the time came for the photo shoot for her *White Christmas* album, she was ready for a change.

"She wanted it to be kind of dreamlike," says Nashville makeup artist Mary Beth Felts, who also counts Trisha Yearwood and Faith Hill among her star clients. "She wanted a really ethereal, angelic look."

Despite the project's seasonal theme, McBride also wanted to stay away from traditional holiday colors like red and green. The result: an elegant, feminine look perfect for an evening out—any time of year.

• **HAIR** Stylist-to-the-stars Earl Cox of *Trumps Salon* in Nashville says McBride's hair is thick and straight, which requires "texturing" to make it move. Cox devised a cut that blends short and long pieces to give it lift. Golden highlights at the front and top also give her hair texture.

Cox applied Texture Gel by Artec to McBride's wet hair, then finger-dried it to keep it "messy and loose." He then ran large sections through a curling iron "just to give it a slight dent."

Cox then clipped the sections into pin curls. After loosening the curls, he gave the hair added shine by rubbing Artec's Texture Shine into his hands and using his fingers to separate strands from the roots out.

• **EYES** Felts uses primarily her own line of cosmetics, EMBE, on her clients. Felts blended light concealer sparingly around the eye, then shaped brows with Chanel Taupe brow pencil.

Felts applied EMBE's Dew on McBride's lids, and Ice on her browbone to complement her eyes. She wet black powder shadow and drew a line on the top lid above the lash line. The same powder in dry form was applied along the bottom lashes. "for subtlety." Two coats of black mascara and an eyelash curler followed.

• **FACE** Chanel's Natural Beige liquid foundation was then applied to the face, ears and neck. The foundation was "set" with a dusting of loose translucent powder.

• **CHEEKS** EMBE's Fifi was applied on the cheeks for a soft, slightly pink color.

• **LIPS** McBride's lips were lined with EMBE Spice and a flesh-colored pencil, and Felts finished with a dot of EMBE Boom Boom lip gloss.

• **CLOTHES** Nashville wardrobe stylist Claudia Fowler has worked with McBride for several years and knows her taste and figure well. Fowler found this silvery satin outfit at *bebe* in Chicago.

Fowler is conservative when it comes to accessories, which helps achieve that "simple but elegant" look. "I like to focus on one particular piece," she explains. "If it's earrings, I don't do a necklace, or vice versa. Or, if the outfit has a lot of detail, I don't do jewelry at all." ★

### WHERE TO GET IT

★ **bebe:** [www.bebe.com](http://www.bebe.com)

★ **EMBE Cosmetics:** toll-free, 1-877-EMBECOS, or [embecosmetics.com](http://embecosmetics.com)

★ **Trumps Salon:** 615-385-9898

—Lisa Zbito

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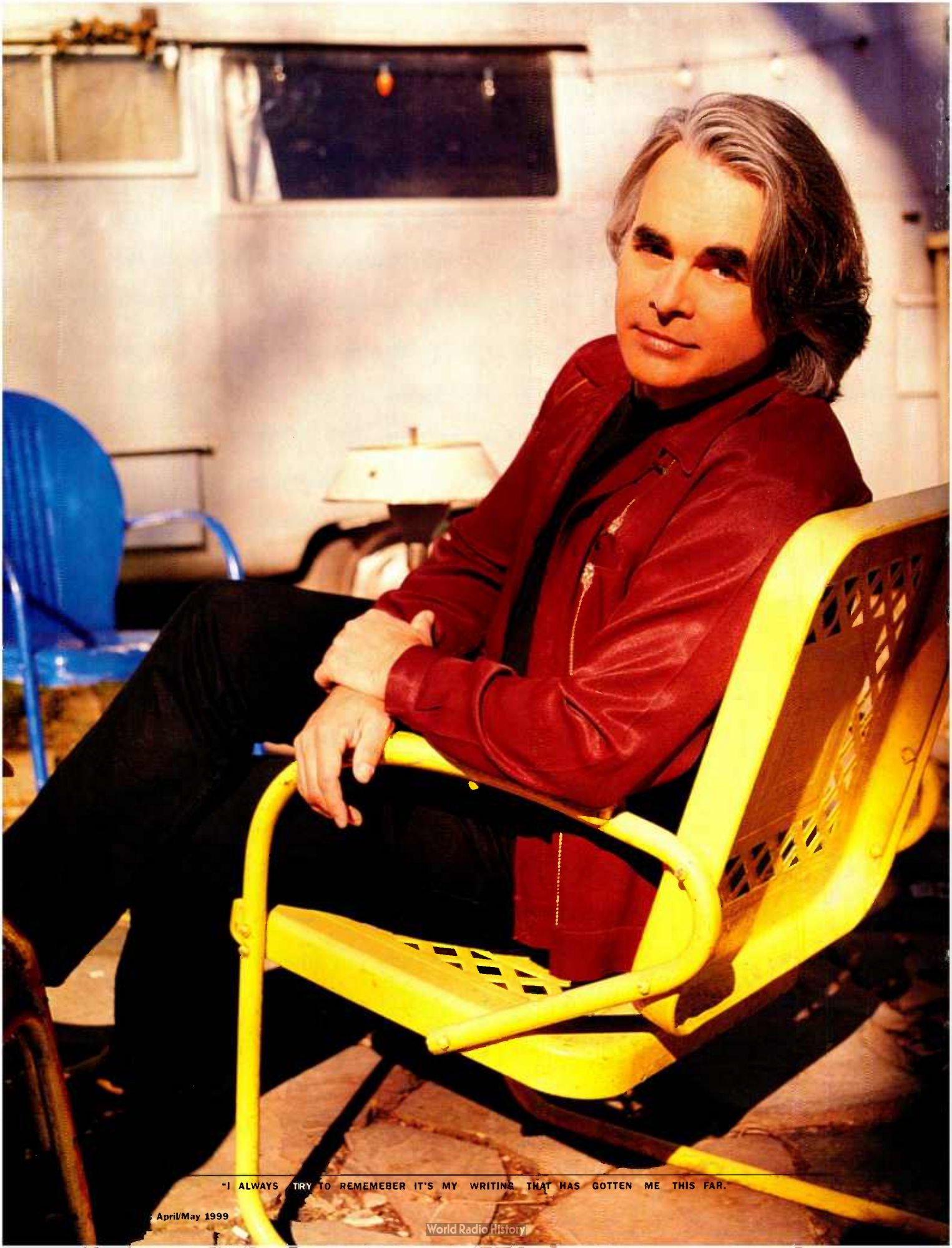
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# SWEET

## REDEMPTION

BY TAMARA SAVIANO

**T**HE MUSIC BUSINESS can sometimes get in the way of music. It happened to Hal Ketchum recently. Ketchum, who is revered in musical circles as a true artist, wrote a brilliant collection of songs on an album called *Hal, Yes*.

It was initially scheduled for release in the summer of 1997. Then, quite suddenly, the record was shelved. Those of us with review copies clung to them possessively, afraid of losing these provocative muses.

Last year, five of the songs from *Hal, Yes* made it on to Ketchum's very solid album, *I Saw the Light*. It was just enough to whet the appetite, but knowing the remaining seven songs were out in limbo somewhere, it was tough to feel completely satisfied.

Now, for reasons even Ketchum doesn't understand, Curb Records has reversed its initial decision. *Hal, Yes*, retitled *Awaiting Redemption*, is back on the label's release schedule for later this year.

"I think everyone has had the chance to rethink it," Ketchum says about Curb's change of heart. "My manager Mike Crowley and I have really lobbied for it the past several months."

A lot has changed since Ketchum wrote the songs on *Awaiting Redemption*. He got himself cleaned up after a serious bout with drugs and alcohol. He's recovering from a battle with a neurological disorder called acute transverse myelitis. And he married a lovely woman named Gina, who has stood by his side through it all.

"I would have been lost without Gina," Ketchum admits. "I was in a pretty dark place a couple of years ago and the songs reflected that. There really is a story behind every song."

Listening to *Awaiting Redemption*, it's easy to imagine the songs having healing powers.

"Writing this record was me wrestling with myself and maybe even winning," Ketchum explains. "There are songs about drinking badly, there are songs about loving badly, and there are songs about loving joyfully. A lot of those things were relative to my own life at the time."

The songs on *Awaiting Redemption* are poetic as well as autobiographical.

"I wrote 'Days of Wonder' on a sad night," Ketchum recalls. "It's about a

relationship that started beautifully. The song talks about the wishful thinking of trying to resurrect a relationship, trying to make it work again. You know, that great infatuation that a relationship has in the early stages—I was wishing for that.

"I'm really partial to classical poetry and if you listen to the bridge, 'You let down your golden hair, I climbed into your garden,' it has broad imagery. The

"I was in a pretty dark place a couple of years ago, and the songs reflected that. There really is a story behind every song."



more I can exercise that, the better. For me it's never been lines like, 'I walked out and got in my truck.' Musically, I really like the song a lot. I love the slide guitar, and the song is fun to play on stage."

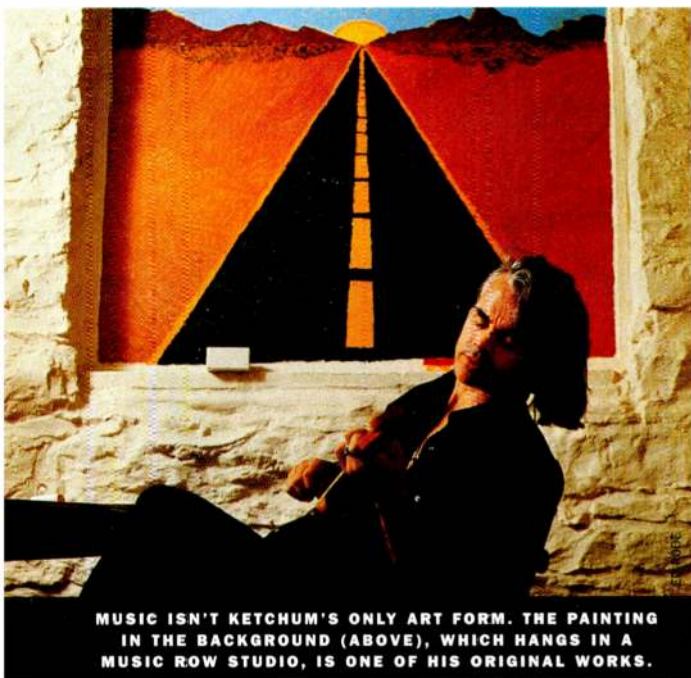
The bluesy title cut was written for the film *Something to Talk About* starring Julia Roberts and Robert Duvall.

"I evaluated Julia Roberts' character before I wrote the song," Ketchum says. "She was living this dream life with her husband and child and one day she drives down the street and sees her husband with another woman. It devastates her. I delved into the pathos of her character to write that song. It actually shows up under eight seconds of key dialog on a truck radio in the movie," Ketchum laughs. "But it was worth writing anyway. Part of the joy of that experience for me was getting to record with Carlos Vega, who has passed on now, and was one of the greatest drummers who ever lived."

Ketchum wrote "Annalee," a haunting ballad about a shipwreck, while trapped in his bus on a ferry crossing the Irish Sea.

"We had driven our bus from Liverpool into this holding area on the ferry." Ketchum recalls. "Everybody was supposed to get off the bus and go up on deck. I decided to stowaway. It was about four o'clock in the morning and I was locked in this chamber. It got a little freaky because it was dark as a cavern. I realized I might have made a pretty big error in staying down there. I was absolutely writing past my own fear."

Ketchum, who has Irish-American roots, wrote the Celtic flavored "Turn of the Wheel" in honor of his great-grandfather, Louis.



MUSIC ISN'T KETCHUM'S ONLY ART FORM. THE PAINTING IN THE BACKGROUND (ABOVE), WHICH HANGS IN A MUSIC ROW STUDIO, IS ONE OF HIS ORIGINAL WORKS.

**"There's so much depth to country music, and it needs to be explored," Ketchum says.**

"He was from County Cork and he only read Gaelic, he didn't read English. I used to read him the newspaper and he'd argue with me for hours. I was 8 years old," Ketchum laughs. "My great-grandfather had a rather one-sided opinion of the British monarchy. This song is my contribution to that jaded slant."

Ketchum, the 71st member of the Grand Ole Opry, made a name for himself with

songs like "Small Town Saturday Night," "Past the Point of Rescue," "Stay Forever" and "Sure Love." He refers to his musical style as "holler soul."

"There's so much depth to country music, and it needs to be explored," Ketchum says. "I think this musical style we call country has gotten very western. It's belt buckles and hats, and seems to be stemming from west of the Mississippi. Country music was Scottish airs and Celtic stories and the stuff I was raised on near the Appalachian chain in upstate New York. These are really funky and soulful and a real historical source of country music."

Ketchum's been making his considerable contribution to country music for nearly a decade. But it's not always been an easy ride.

"My intent has not changed over the years," Ketchum says. "My desire to write and perform good songs is intact and sometimes I've had to really fight for that. In this business there are two basic intentions: the intention of the artist and the intention of the record label. Neither is good or bad, they're just different. The record label's intention is to make

money. I'm not saying I'm right and they're wrong—it's not a plus or a minus, it's just reality. I used to think we were all in it together and we're not. Fortunately for me, Curb has given me the freedom to express myself artistically, but freedom comes at a cost."

Ketchum not only maintains his integrity in the recording studio, he insists on playing to his own audiences instead of taking an opening slot for a headlining act.

"I think it's very important to establish your own fan base. I'm very fortunate that I can put 1,500 people in the seats just about anywhere in the country. That's based on the musicianship of my band, and on shows where you can close your eyes and not miss some pyrotechnic event. It's a beautifully unspoken, deep relationship. If you're in

front of somebody else's crowd, you're never gonna know how the audience feels about your music."

Ketchum, who moved to Chicago last year, is channeling his creative energies in some new and exciting ways these days. He's hosting a radio show that his wife is producing, and he's begun to study acting.

"I have a drama coach from the Goodman Theater and I'm studying acting on a pretty serious basis," Ketchum says. "And Gina is co-producing a radio show called *Troubadours* that I'm hosting. Chicago is a hotbed for music—every national touring act comes through here. We've interviewed Lyle Lovett and Jimmy Dale Gilmore already, and we've lined up a number of other musicians for the show."

*Troubadours* is a one-hour musical talk show that will be aired on NPR.

"We talk to musicians about their musical influences and what prompted them to get into music," Ketchum explains.

Ketchum also plans to record another album sometime this year. With a Chicago blizzard howling outside, it's the perfect time to write.

"I grew up in upstate New York, but I've forgotten the beauty of hibernation," Ketchum says. "I've forgotten how nice it is to be able to sit inside and watch the snow fall and get everything in line for spring. I just finished two songs this morning, so now I've got five completed."

And as the snow falls silently on the Windy City, Ketchum counts his blessings.

"Having the health scare last year made me realize how lucky I am to have this job. The pressure is off. It's a lot easier to get up on stage and just enjoy myself."

"I've extracted myself from the pressures of the music business. Getting radio play is not even an issue for me. It's a matter of speaking my mind. As my dad would say, I've made a name for myself. My dad was a great advisor. He was always the guy I called. He said, 'Son, you've done it. Now remember why you did it. Don't sing stuff that you're not going to want to sing two or three years from now.'

"I consider myself a poet. I got famous for what I've been doing my whole life. To abandon that would be a terrible thing. I'm not T.S. Eliot, but I try to say things from my own perspective." \*

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World Radio History

# TALKING 'BOUT MY GENERATION

**Deana Carter is proud her '70s roots are showing.**

**By Tamara Saviano**

**W**hen Deana Carter was preparing to record her second album, *Everything's Gonna Be Alright*, she decorated the studio with lava lamps, fuzzy posters, black lights and a disco ball.

"I wanted the studio to be kind of like someone's basement," Carter recalls. "And I wanted the musicians to be in a frame of mind to reflect back on that whole '70s vibe that I was tapping into for this album. So I decorated the whole place to get that vibe.

"The '70s are just something I love and I can't get past it." She laughs and hugs her jean-clad knees to her chest. "I love everything about the '70s. It's who I am. I'm too young to be a baby boomer, and I'm too old to be a generation X-er. My generation has been dubbed '70s kids,' and that's just fine with me."

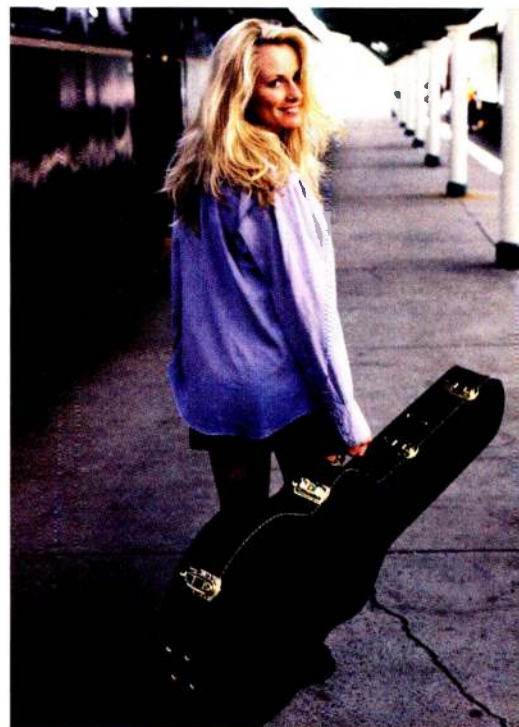
Although Carter is a contemporary country artist, musically, the '70s influenced her more than any other era.

"It was a time in music where it was just cool," Carter recalls. "I've got *The Best of Steely Dan* in my car right now, and every song has a different groove.

They all have that same disco beat behind them, but it's a different groove. I love the Bee Gees and disco music. I love grooves and I love beat."

The Nashville native is the daughter of Fred Carter, Jr.—a guitarist who played on many Nashville recordings in the '60s and '70s with such artists as Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison and Simon & Garfunkel. Despite the fact that the likes of Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson hung out at her house when she was a kid, Carter didn't pursue her musical career seriously until after college. She studied rehabilitation therapy at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. When she returned to Nashville, she worked with stroke and head-injury patients at Tennessee Christian Medical Center.

"I was coming home crying every day. My heart was breaking because I



**"I love everything about the '70s. It's who I am...and that's just fine with me."**



that I wanted this album to be even more raw and real than the first one," she explains.

"The only thing I had envisioned in my mind was laying the groundwork for creativity and spontaneity. I wanted to make it an event. Beyond that, I just concentrated on finding songs that we loved that had those elements in them. We just let everything else happen. We just did songs in two or three takes and that's it."

Carter got what she wanted.

*Everything's Gonna Be Alright* is a hip, retro-

yet-contemporary-

sounding record that recalls different musical styles from the '70s.

The first single, a touching ballad called "Absence of the Heart," climbed to the top of the *Billboard* chart at the end of 1998.

Songwriter Matraca Berg and Carter teamed up to write "Dickson County," an unintentional "prequel" to Carter's smash hit "Strawberry Wine."

"Matraca and I wrote that song about five or six years ago, and I've always loved it," Carter says. "When you're really hurt in a relationship, there is just no comparison to what that dagger feels like. As girls, I think we are so emotional we remember how hard breakups are on us. You always feel like such an underdog

couldn't heal people and make everything OK," Carter recalls. "And I saw all the behind-the-scenes stuff about how the patient is not always the priority. That's when I really started to focus on my music again. I dropped that part of my life and started all over."

Starting over meant working odd jobs to support her music habit. It paid off when her demo tape caught the ear of Willie Nelson, who was so taken by Carter's songs he invited her to perform at Farm Aid VII in 1994. The same demo tape led to a recording deal with Capitol Nashville.

Her first album, *Did I Shave My Legs for This*, was released in 1996. Two years and three No. 1 singles later, *Shave* has sold more than 4 million copies.

On *Everything's Gonna Be Alright*, the 32-year-old songstress blends her passion for the '70s with her country roots and comes up with a collection of songs that should please both audiences.

"I knew I wanted to use the same musicians as the first album, and I knew



CARTER'S FLNKY ALBUM IS A PERFECT MATCH FOR HER SASSY ATTITUDE.

BETH OWEN

had done and peeling back these layers of my life. It's kind of like going back to your first house and realizing the yard is not as big as you thought it was." She laughs. "So, I'm looking at this old relationship, and it took me 20

years to realize how let down I was. That's what this song is about."

Berg reappears as a writer on *Everything's Gonna Be Alright* with "Ruby Brown," a song that will probably remind other '70s kids of "Delta Dawn."

Then there's "The Train Song," which Carter describes as the album's "left hook."

"I had written down 'I want to love you like a freight train' on a receipt in my car and it sat in there for the longest time," she says. "It's tongue-in-cheek



**"The spiritual presence on this album is so strong. I couldn't have planned that if I tried!"**

for so long after that, and it seems like you're always affected by it.

"Matraca and I were talking about my boyfriend in high school. I was elaborating about some of the things he



about a strong woman saying what she feels to her man, knowing that men like women to take control in a sexual situation sometimes. I wanted to combine Lynyrd Skynyrd and Led Zeppelin and that whole vibe. It seemed frenzied enough to support the subject matter."

The planets were aligned for Carter when it came time to cut "The Train Song."

"We were booked at Emerald Studios, and Skynyrd was booked at the same place at the same time," she explains. "The spiritual presence on this album is so strong. I couldn't have planned that if I tried! They came in to get autographs for their kids and I asked them if they'd play on the song."

She loves "People Miss Planes" because it leaves the listener hanging.

"[Producer] Chris Farren found that song, and I love it for what it says. I love songs that don't have Hollywood endings. My life has a lot of curves in it and I don't know sometimes which route I'm going to take. I just have to figure out a way as I go. I think a lot of people are like that. Everything is not always neatly wrapped up."

The album's title track was written by Carter's father in 1971. Previously recorded by the Rambos, the song means a great deal to both the singer and her dad.

"Around the time Dad wrote that song, his sister was diagnosed with breast cancer and wasn't given much of a chance to live," she explains. "She read her Bible and sang this song every day and lived another 15 years. It's a message that I think can make a difference in people's lives. It offers a bright ray of hope."

In keeping with the '70s theme, Carter thought it was only right to cover a song from that era. She does justice to pop singer Melanie's "Brand New Key."

"We were looking for one more song for the record and I wanted to do something fun. When I first went out on my radio promotion tour, there was more than one program director who said I reminded them of Melanie. There was one guy in particular who, every time he saw me, he'd call me Melanie. So we decided to record it, and it was so much fun!"

One of the things Carter misses most about the '70s is radio.

"There was so much room for everything musically," she says. "You could listen to the radio and hear Glen Campbell and Willie Nelson mixed in with the Beatles and Zeppelin. I loved that. Another thing '70s radio did was play a whole album. They'd put an album on and the deejay would chill



out and we could hear the entire album. You got to learn more about the artist that way. The thing I love most about my generation was that we embraced diversity."

Although she plans to tour this year in support of *Everything's Gonna Be Alright*, Carter is also planning some time off to work on her next record.

"I want to try to gain ground for the next project and just stay home and write," she says. "I don't want to think about anything else except working on my music for awhile. I want to start having foresight again. I've started to have hindsight instead of foresight because I've been so busy. It's important to live in the moment at the same time—it all becomes very hectic."

"I read this fabulous book called *The Messengers*, and one of the messages in the book is that you know you're toward the end of your life when you're reflecting on what you've done more than setting goals for yourself. I don't ever want to do that." ★

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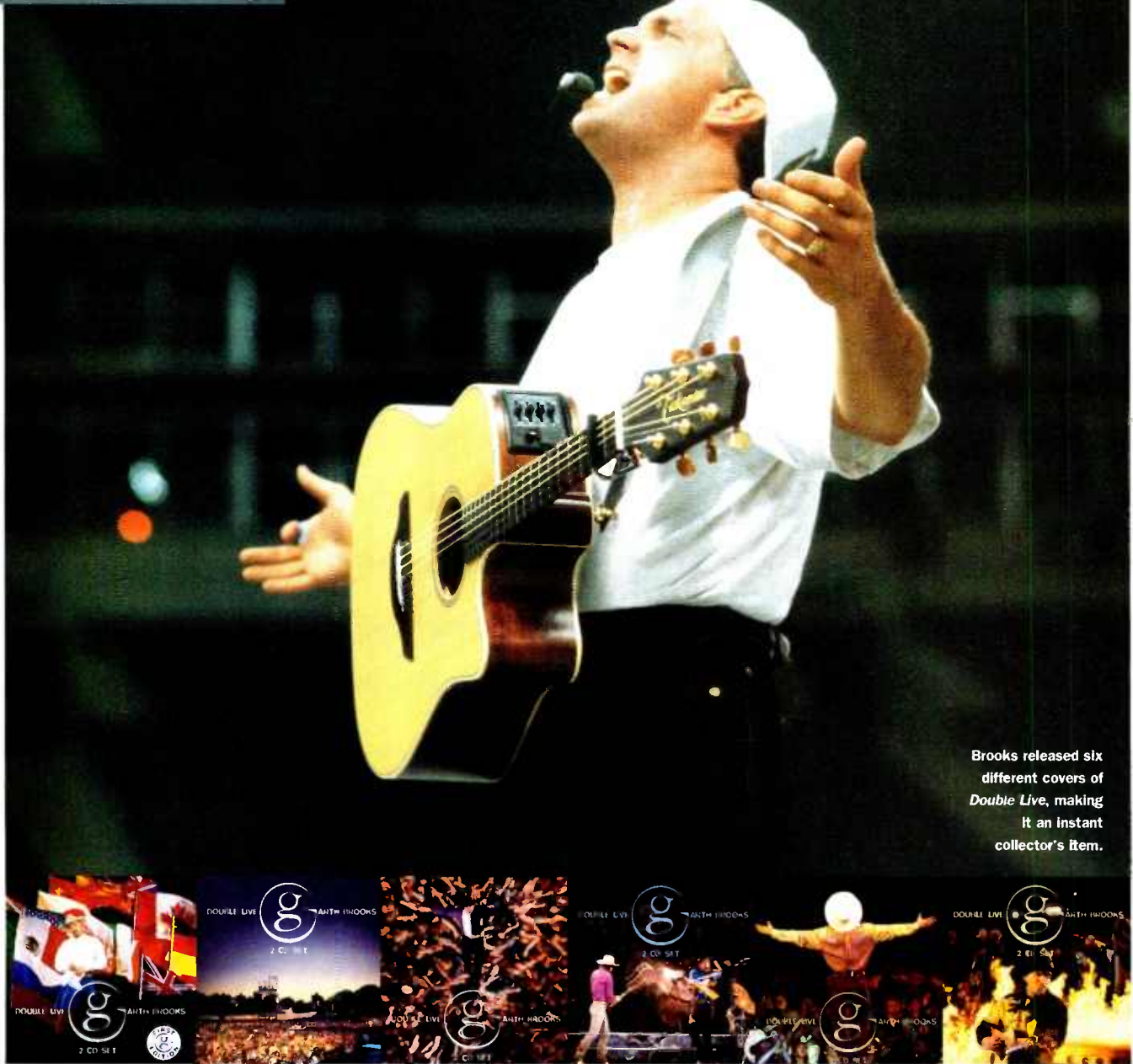
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Brooks released six different covers of *Double Live*, making it an instant collector's item.

**DOUBLE LIVE**

**Garth Brooks**

CAPITOL NASHVILLE

There are three certainties in life: death, taxes, and Garth Brooks reaching his goal of 100 million albums sold by the time the clock strikes 2000.

Arguably the country music ambassador of the '90s, and perhaps the genre's shrewdest marketer, Brooks stacks the odds in his favor with *Double Live*, his double-disc, predominantly unretouched concert album documenting a tour that began

around the release of 1995's *Fresh Horses* and ended one studio album (*Sevens*), one compilation album (*Limited Edition*), several awards, one label insurrection (Capitol Nashville's Scott Hendricks out, Pat Quigley in) and 5 million satisfied customers later.

If you look beyond the "six different covers, collector's edition" nonsense, Garth Brooks, the Entertainer, is a proven commodity. His marathon spectacles capture the Oklahoma wild man at his most unruly, and it's the element of surprise that draws his fans to the flame:

You just never know what Garth is gonna do next.

Although his original intention—to release a DVD version of *Double Live* containing a live video for each of the 25 songs—was stymied due to manufacturing problems, Brooks manages to convey the wiry excitement of his performances through the sound of his audiences unfettered adulation for him and his music. They serenade him word-for-word through the solemn "Unanswered Prayers," pipe in that risqué, "concert-only" third verse on the carousing "Friends in Low

Places," and audibly sigh in tender adoration when he completes Bob Dylan's moving ballad "To Make You Feel My Love." Brooks obviously enjoys surrounding himself with ace players like fiddler Jimmy Mattingly, special guest Steve Wariner and duet partner Tisha Yearwood, and relishes doling out such new country standards as "The Thunder Rolls" and "The Dance." But it's clearly the fans who are having the time of their lives.

Have you ever met a Garth Brooks ticket holder who didn't?

—Nick Krewen



**I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING**

**Mark Chesnutt**

DECCA

If you've heard Mark Chesnutt's recent single, "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing," you may have been heartbroken that one of the finest hard-country singers Texas ever produced has stooped to singing this big, gooey, phony ballad by Hollywood hack Dianne Warren. It was a bad song when Aerosmith sang it on the *Armageddon* soundtrack, and it hasn't improved in Chesnutt's string-laden pop arrangement.

Don't despair. The album named after "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing" begins with two pop numbers and then reverts to traditional country for the final eight songs.

Following the title track is "This Heartache Never Sleeps," a rather likable Southern-rock tune that finds Chesnutt warbling the hook in a falsetto. Then it's back to Beaumont and dance-hall Texas swing for "My Way Back Home," a hilarious story about a man whose wife didn't merely run off—she took the mobile home with her. From the fiddle-driven syncopation



to the whiskey-purr baritone, this song contains everything we've come to love about Chesnutt.

Just as funny and catchy is "That's the Way You Make an X" ("Once she draws the line, just cross it one time, and that's the way you make an ex"), one of four songs co-written by Chesnutt's personal muse, Roger Springer. Springer also co-authored "Tonight I'll Let My Memory Take Me Home," a haunting honky-tonk ballad sung from the perspective of a middle-aged man remembering when he was 17 and taking out his now-ex-wife for the first time.

No one should deny Chesnutt's right to expand his artistic boundaries, but neither should anyone pretend that his mediocre crossover attempts are the equal of his brilliant hard-country performances.

—Geoffrey Himes

release—the Grammy-nominated *Flashback*—but it's been well worth the wait. *Come on Down to My World*, the band's latest recording, is an auditory treat that strikes a fine balance between tradition and innovation. Hats off to bandleader and banjoist extraordinaire Crowe for making that happen. For more than 40 years, his modus operandi has been to bring traditional bluegrass music to an even higher level of sophistication by cleverly injecting it with just the right amounts of country, blues and rock 'n' roll. *Come on Down to My World* is definitely no exception.

Take his band's rendition of Dallas Frazier's "I'm So Afraid of Losing You Again," which was a huge country hit for Charley Pride. The tune starts off with Crowe employing some country-tinged, pedal steel-like licks on his five-string banjo, but then it segues into a bluegrass-inflected weeper a la Bill Monroe, rounded off by expressive twin fiddling courtesy of Glen Duncan and Buddy Spicher.

Then there's the band's spirited version of Townes Van Zandt's "White Freightliner." While incorporating a bluegrassy, high-lead trio vocal arrangement, Crowe and company lend the tune a lilting, country-rockish bite by showcasing some fiery instrumental interplay between J.D. and resonator guitarist Phil Leadbetter.

Throughout his career as a bandleader, Crowe has been more than generous in highlighting the talents of his band members, too, which over the years have included such soon-to-be superstars as Tony Rice, Larry Rice, Ricky Skaggs, Keith Whitley, Doyle Lawson and Jerry Douglas. That same democratic spirit is evident on *Come on Down to My World*, where two newcomers to the band—guitarist/singer Greg Luck and mandolinist/singer Dwight McCall—are prominently featured. McCall even wrote a song for the album, the emotionally charged "I Don't Know," which features his powerful tenor voice.

In an era when much of country and bluegrass music seems to be formulaic, it's refreshing to hear smooth, genre-bending performances that crystallize to form a diverse yet cohesive body of work—that mark not only experienced ensemble playing but also a deep-rooted passion for music

in general. J.D. Crowe and the New South's *Come on Down to My World* is one of those recordings and is not to be missed.

—Rick Petreycik



**FEARLESS**

**Karen Staley**

WARNER BROS.

Among the plethora of female talent to come out of Nashville in the last 10 years, Karen Staley has enjoyed steady success as a writer of hits for such artists as Tracy Byrd ("Keeper of the Stars") and Faith Hill ("Let's Go to Vegas"). But other than doing studio and live background vocal work, her skills as a singer went largely unnoticed until she toured with Hill in 1996.

Now comes *Fearless*, Staley's Warner Bros. debut, where she shines as a performer with five new songs and six from her repertoire, including "Wicked Ways" and "Half Over You," both familiar to fans of Patty Loveless. In fact, Staley resembles Loveless in spunk and attitude, as the strong but vulnerable woman trying to make sense of the frenetic world around her.

Vocally, Staley has no standout quality, like Reba McEntire's Okie tonality or Kathy Mattea's warm contralto, that will make her immediately recognizable at radio. But what comes across on *Fearless* is the surprising power of her voice, her ability



**COME ON DOWN TO MY WORLD**

**J.D. Crowe and the New South**

ROUNDER

It's been four years since J.D. Crowe and the New South's last

to successfully embody a variety of styles, and the consistently high quality of her songs. Written from a contemporary point of view, they're informed by country's past and present configurations—bluegrass, rockin' blues, gospel, country-rock, r&cb, and ballad.

As both a writer and performer, Staley particularly succeeds at getting the feeling in the grooves, whether it's the adrenaline rush of falling in love on "Can't Get Enough," or the stirrings that come from seeing a well-turned derriere in a pair of tight jeans ("Hindsight

is 20/20"). But she also knows how to convey heartache. The ballad "Good Memory" evocatively captures the melancholy ache of emotional wounds that refuse to heal, and "Somebody's Child" passes on a worthwhile lesson about human dignity.

In a time when aural lap dancing seems to sell the most records, Staley isn't about to become the next Shania Twain. What she offers is solid, well-performed music that nurtures as much as it entertains. A delight.

—Alanna Nash



**COLD COFFEE MORNING**

**Jon Randall**

ASYLUM

You gotta hand it to Emmylou Harris: She sure has a knack for nurturing fine talent. Such household names as Rodney Crowell, Ricky Skaggs, Albert Lee, Emory Gordy Jr., Vince Gill and Tony Brown all cut their teeth as backup musicians in Harris' various bands and subsequently achieved their own star status. Ex-Nash Rambler Jon Randall is the latest Harris band alumnus to strike out on his own, and judging by the sound of his latest release, *Cold Coffee Morning*, he's well on his way to joining the ranks of the other stellar musicians.

What makes the album so ear-pleasing is not only Randall's smooth tenor vocal styling, but also the CD's eclecticism. There's

the 1965-ish, Brit pop-flavored "She Don't Believe in Fairy Tales," which is sprinkled with some tasteful pedal steel guitar licks. "The Heartbreak Kind" is a killer country-rockin' tune with a thumping rhythm section that reminds you of Mick Fleetwood and John McVie's tension-building workout on Fleetwood Mac's "Go Your Own Way." "Fall From Paradise," with its jangling electric 12-string guitar coloration coupled with soaring three-part harmonies, is reminiscent of the Byrds and early Flying Burrito Brothers. Then there's "Reno and Me"—a lilting ode to the lure and romance of the road, which pairs Randall with Willie Nelson and his trusty Martin N-20 nylon-string guitar, "Trigger." Mentor Harris also contributes some fine, quavering, silver-throated backup vocals to the tune.

Randall is pretty darned adept in the songwriting department, too. Check out "I Don't Go There Anymore," a riveting, angst-ridden song about failed love and past regrets. "I keep my distance from your memory/Lord, it came close to killin' me," he sings in a tenor so plaintive and mournful you get the feeling he's right there in your living room, baring his soul and pain. This recording is definitely a winner.

—Rick Petreycik



**OLD DOGS**

**Bobby Bare, Waylon Jennings, Mel Tillis, Jerry Reed**

ATLANTIC

In the current Nashville mindset, if you're over 40, son, pack it up. You'll never get on the radio, TV won't have you, and gosh, are you sure you can even remember the words to all those songs? What's a fella to do?

Well, if he's Bobby Bare, Waylon Jennings, Mel Tillis or Jerry Reed, he forms country's hippest over-the-hill gang to sing Shel Silverstein's wacky laments about the solace of brotherhood and the joys of Metamucil.

*Old Dogs* is a novelty record, to be sure, with Bare and pals hamming it up with such glee that you can easily imagine them doing a little soft shoe and cane across the Opry stage. Most of the 11 cuts follow the humorous, self-deprecating thread of the "older" man wrestling with the realities of aging and feigning disinterest at the attention of younger women. They're not really too old to cut the mustard, they say, just too tired to spread it around.

Besides, it's hell trying to hold in that tummy, keep that toupee in place, and pull off those elevator shoes.

It's a cute shtick, and these old vets pull it off with aplomb, even as some of the material—especially "Elvis Has Left the Building," which dredges up every possible Presley cliché

("thankyouverymuch")—embarrasses as much as it disappoints. And if there's a further bone to pick, it's producer Bare's technique—reprised from his '80s recordings—of dubbing in hoot n' holler "audience" ambiance to simulate a nightclub atmosphere.

Yet the old boys work some hard-won truth and poignancy into the mix, especially with the bittersweet "Time," and "Rough on the Livin'," a dead-on satire about how Nashville discards its old stars, but then reveres them when they're dead.

Bare has recorded this song before, which suggests that maybe you really can't teach old dogs new tricks. But as this album amply proves, you can sure have fun trying. And maybe the old tricks are still the good ones, after all.

—Alanna Nash



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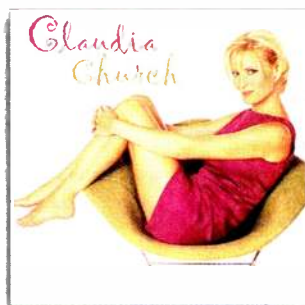
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soundtrack accompanying DreamWorks latest animated box-office smash, so accessible is it works on a variety of emotional as well as spiritual levels—especially in the relationship arena. For example, in Gary Chapman’s breathtaking “You Are My Light, Moses,” the tune’s narrator feels the weight of the world on his shoulders and even questions his ability to lead his people to deliverance across the Red Sea. Nevertheless, he finds the strength and the courage to carry on, saying, “You are my hope; you are my dreams/ You are the hand that feeds me... You are my life; you are my strength/ You are the joy I cling to.” Is he talking to God, or the woman in his life, or both? You be the judge.

There are other examples of double meanings sprinkled throughout the album, and that’s what makes it so interesting—and thought-provoking. Jessica Andrews could be addressing either God, a friend or a lover when she belts out, “When I lost faith, you believed in me/ When I stumbled, you were right there/ For every act of love you’ve done, I owe you one” in the emotional “I Will Be There for You.”

All 17 tracks on the album—including sparkling performances by Wynonna, Vince Gill, Pam Tillis, Alabama, Clint Black and Mindy McCready—go far beyond country music’s usual three-chord progressions and guitar-bass-drums accompaniment. Richly textured orchestrations and such unconventional instruments as the sitar and tabla lend some of the tunes an otherworldly dimension.

—Rick Petreycik



**SMALL TOWN GIRL**

**Claudia Church**

REPRISE

Claudia Church has an interesting story. A small-town girl who moved with her military family across the country (and who once convinced her father to take an assignment in Utah

so they could be closer to the Osmonds), Church is a country singer who became a model in Paris—and then decided her heart was in hillbilly music. In between she met and married Rodney Crowell, who produced her debut album.

Crowell had a hand in half the album’s songs, and his influence is felt throughout. Unfortunately, that influence sometimes seems to drown out Church’s. She’s a good singer, and although the songs are well-crafted, they don’t always seem to fit her. Even though many are biographical (“Home in My Heart,” “Small Town Girl,” “Streets of Nashville”), they do nothing to reveal her personality.

In fact, it’s not until the last song, a cover of “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow” (recorded as if Billy Sherrill were cutting it on Tammy Wynette), that Church really lets go, showing a vulnerability and tenderness that is captivating. Another highlight is “I Don’t Fall in Love So Easy” (previously recorded by both Crowell and Trisha Yearwood), which Crowell wrote when he first started falling for Church. She gives it a smoky, sultry delivery.

At least this album will serve to introduce Church, who can take a few more chances and get closer to the core on her next album.

—Cyndi Hoelzle



**THE MOUNTAIN**

**Steve Earle and the Del McCoury Band**

E-SQUARED

In 1995, Steve Earle returned to the stage in Nashville after drug abuse and jail time had sidelined him for much of the early '90s. His return was cause for celebration; the local *Tennessean* proclaimed him “Nashville’s most famous recovering crack addict.”

Halfway through that show, Bill Monroe strode out into the spotlight and, much to the delight of Earle, commandeered the stage through six songs before walking off as abruptly as he walked on. Earle says that the idea for *The Mountain* was born that night.

He couldn’t have chosen better collaborators than bluegrass veterans the Del McCoury Band. Besides being great pickers, Del and son Ronnie McCoury possess eerie tenors

that are the perfect foil for Earle, whose gritty, snarling vocals are tempered with a nasal mountain twang. Earle also asked a few friends to lend their voices, including Iris DeMent, who duets on “I’m Still in Love With You,” Emmylou Harris, Tim O’Brien, Gillian Welch, Marty Stuart and Peter Rowan.

Even more impressive is the fact that Earle wrote every one of the album’s 14 songs, songs that sound like they’ve been part of the bluegrass songbook for decades. Earle admits that one of his motivations for making this album was to write “just one song that would be performed by at least one band at every bluegrass festival in the world.” He may well have accomplished that with potential classics like “Carrie Brown,” “The Mountain” and “The Pilgrim.”

Produced by Earle and partner Ray Kennedy along with Ronnie McCoury, you can hear why Earle calls this record his favorite of all he’s recorded. The pure joy of playing leaps right out of the speakers. It’s a rare thing when that is captured in a recording; God bless the boys for leaving things loose enough to let the glory shine through.

—Cyndi Hoelzle

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**TRIO II**

**Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt, and Dolly Parton**

ASYLUM

This is one more reason to celebrate 1999. Rumors of the follow-up to 1986's groundbreaking *Trio* album have been circulating for years. Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt and Dolly Parton actually finished this project in 1994, but conflicting schedules and commitments kept *Trio II* from being released until now.

Whatever went on behind the scenes, we can all be thankful that these three voices came together once more. This album is a simple delight, one that you will want to hear again and again. Like their first project, the arrangements are traditional, with acoustic instrumentation (and an all-star band, including David Grisman on mandolin and Alison Krauss on fiddle). But this time the song selection is a little more diverse, with everything from the Carter Family to Neil Young, the O'Kanes to Randy Newman.

Though each woman's voice is distinctive on its own, together Harris, Parton and Ronstadt create a

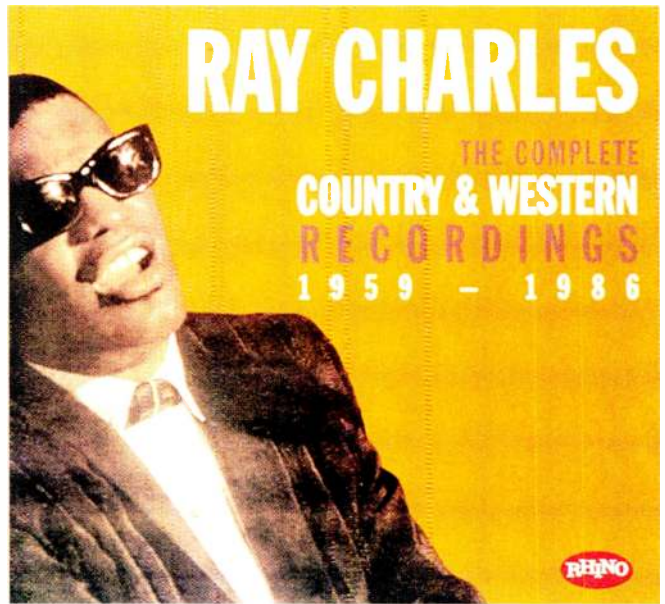
**THE COMPLETE COUNTRY & WESTERN RECORDINGS 1959-1986**

**Ray Charles**

RHINO

When a country artist scores a crossover hit, it's regarded as a modern-day miracle in light of today's tightly regimented radio formats. But back in the days when Ray Charles was at the top of his career and radio was less fragmented, if you had the talent, you were in—period. Charles had already been hailed as a master of r&b and jazz when, in 1959, the soulful, blind, piano-playing stylist announced—through the train-engine “horn” introduction of his jazzy, pedal-steel-laced rendition of Hank Snow's “I'm Movin' On”—that country music had attracted his attention. Actually, by that time, Charles was no stranger to country by any means. He had already apprenticed in a “hillbilly band” called the Florida Playboys, and he loved tuning in to the Grand Ole Opry over the radio while growing up in Georgia and Florida. He followed “I'm Movin' On” more seriously with 1962's crossover smash album *Modern Sounds In Country & Western Music*, which included a chart-topping hit with Don Gibson's “I Can't Stop Loving You.” Charles then went on to record more than 100 songs with Nashville roots, 92 of which are now represented on this impressive four-CD Rhino

magical blend. “It's like standing in a room full of mirrors,” says Ronstadt of her “singing sisters.” “Our voices reflect off one another and take on the characteristics of each other.”



collection. Despite the word “complete” in its title, it's not quite so: Charles' “Seven Spanish Angels” years and his trio of '80s albums on Columbia Nashville are distilled down to a handful of prime cuts. However, this box set is sweeping and offers a compelling argument for Charles' induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. While some may rightfully wonder if Charles' saccharin, swing-and-string-saturated Mantovani versions of “Bye Bye Love” and Curley Williams' “Half As Much” even qualify as country, the singer hit the target with some sweetly sung classics that are so entrenched in tradition they make Nashville's new country practitioners appear as alien as the *Body Snatchers*. Blessed with a warm baritone that could coax the

What makes this collection even more special is that it comes at a time when all three artists are still releasing vital music. This is not some desperate cash-in-the-chips reunion at a time when

soul out of a construction brick. Ray Charles converts the catalogs of such esteemed Music City icons as Hank Williams, Fred Rose, Don Gibson, Harlan Howard, Buck Owens and Troy Seals to his own. There's deep-rooted love in the heartfelt inflections and mournful lilt of “Born to Lose” or the funky gospel tones of “Ring of Fire,” almost unrecognizable from Johnny Cash's hit. And when there are friends around, like Willie Nelson digging in for “Seven Spanish Angels” or the fun-filled camaraderie of “Two Old Cats Like Us” with Hank Jr., the party is sublime. Trust Ray Charles to be the erudite messenger who first confirmed that the worlds of country and r&b are closer than you might imagine.

—Nick Krewen

individual careers are faltering. It's a labor of love, done for the love of song and harmony. It's also the perfect record to take you from the dead of winter into the joy of spring.

—Cyndi Hoelzle

WHERE TO FIND FASHIONS ON PAGES 46-51: Ranch Dressing, Nashville, (615) 259-4163; Jamie, Nashville, (615) 292-4188; Billy Martin's stores located in NYC, Denver, L.A., (212) 861-3100; Rave/G+G stores located nationwide, 1-877-467-2831; Wet Seal stores located nationwide, 1-800-508-8700; U.S. Male stores located in Nashville, Memphis, Little Rock, 1-800-715-6621; Silvery Moon, Nashville, (615) 329-9003; Giselle Minoli jewelry at select stores in NY and Chicago, (212) 684-4034; Banana Republic stores located nationwide, 1-888-BRSTYLE.

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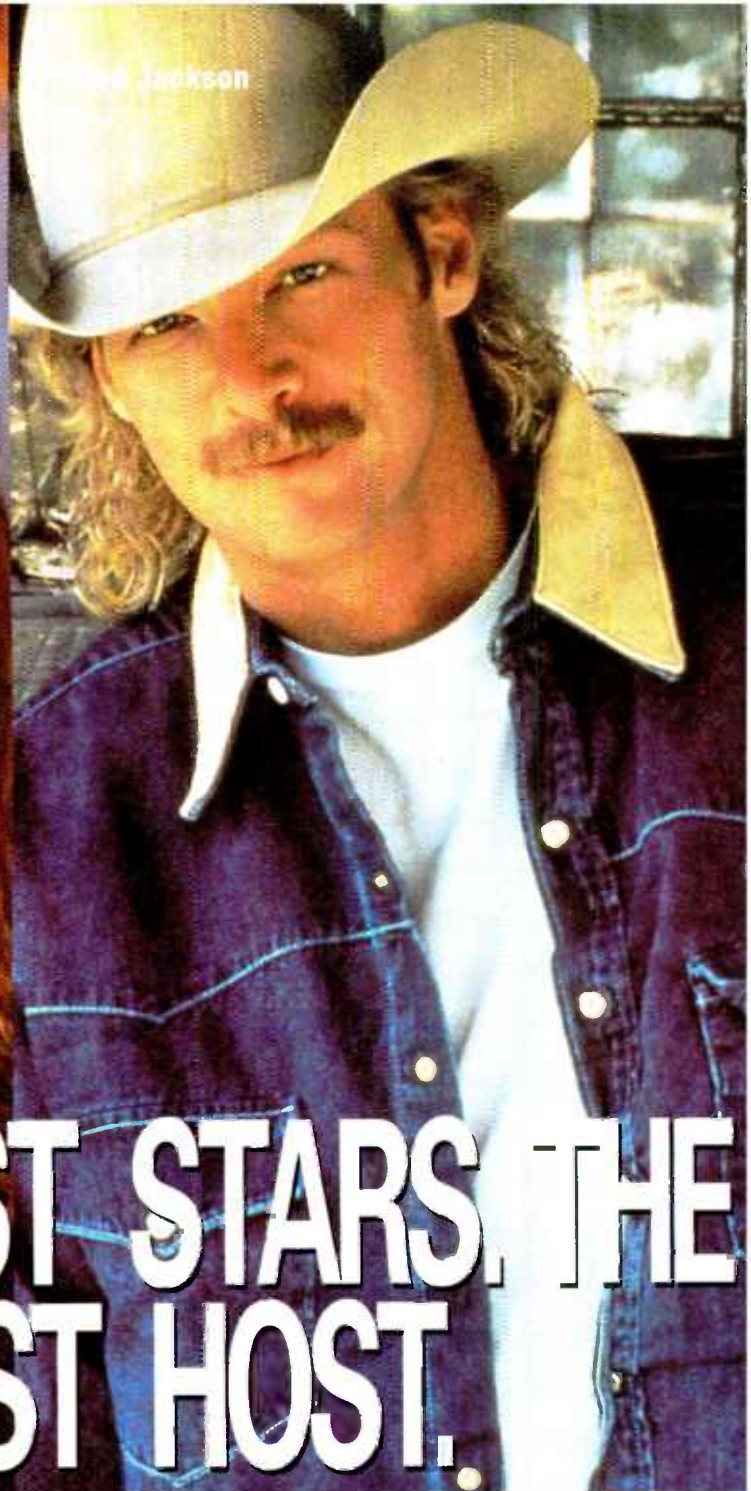
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Wynonna

Reba

# HOTTEST INTERVIEWS.

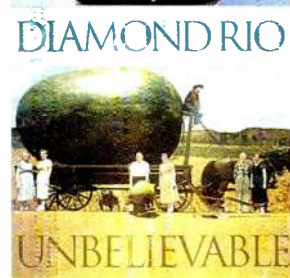
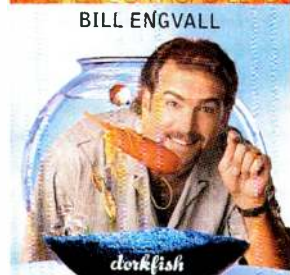
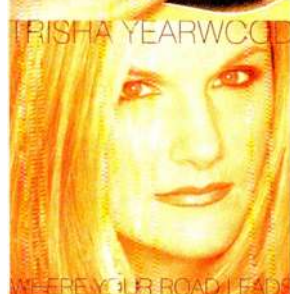
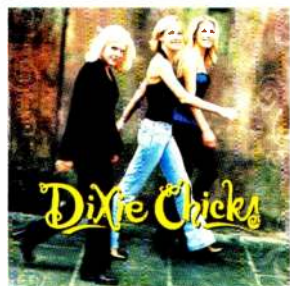
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- 2 **GARTH BROOKS** *Double Live* (Capitol)
- 3 **SHANIA TWAIN** *Come On Over* (Mercury)
- 4 **FAITH HILL** *Faith* (Warner Bros.)
- 5 **SOUNDTRACK** *Hope Floats* (Capitol)
- 6 **ALAN JACKSON** *High Mileage* (Arista)
- 7 **ALABAMA** *For the Record: 41 Number One Hits* (RCA)
- 8 **SOUNDTRACK** *Touched By An Angel* (50 Music/pt.)
- 9 **TIM MCGRAW** *Everywhere* (Curb)
- 10 **TRISHA YEARWOOD** *Where Your Road Leads* (MCA Nashville)
- 11 **VINCE GILL** *The Key* (MCA Nashville)
- 12 **TOBY KEITH** *Greatest Hits Volume One* (Mercury)
- 13 **JO DEE MESSINA** *I'm Alright* (Curb)
- 14 **GARTH BROOKS** *The Limited Series* (Capitol)
- 15 **DEANA CARTER** *Everything's Gonna Be Alright* (Capitol)
- 16 **GEORGE STRAIT** *One Step at a Time* (MCA Nashville)
- 17 **LEANN RIMES** *Sittin' on Top of the World* (Curb)
- 18 **MARTINA MCBRIDE** *Evolution* (RCA)
- 19 **BILL ENGVALL** *Dorkfish* (Warner Bros.)
- 20 **MARK WILLS** *Wish You Were Here* (Mercury)
- 21 **BROOKS & DUNN** *If You See Her* (Arista Nashville)
- 22 **TRISHA YEARWOOD** *(Songbook) A Collection of Hits* (MCA Nashville)
- 23 **DIAMOND RIO** *Unbelievable* (Arista Nashville)
- 24 **LYLE LOVETT** *Step Inside This House* (Curb/MCA)
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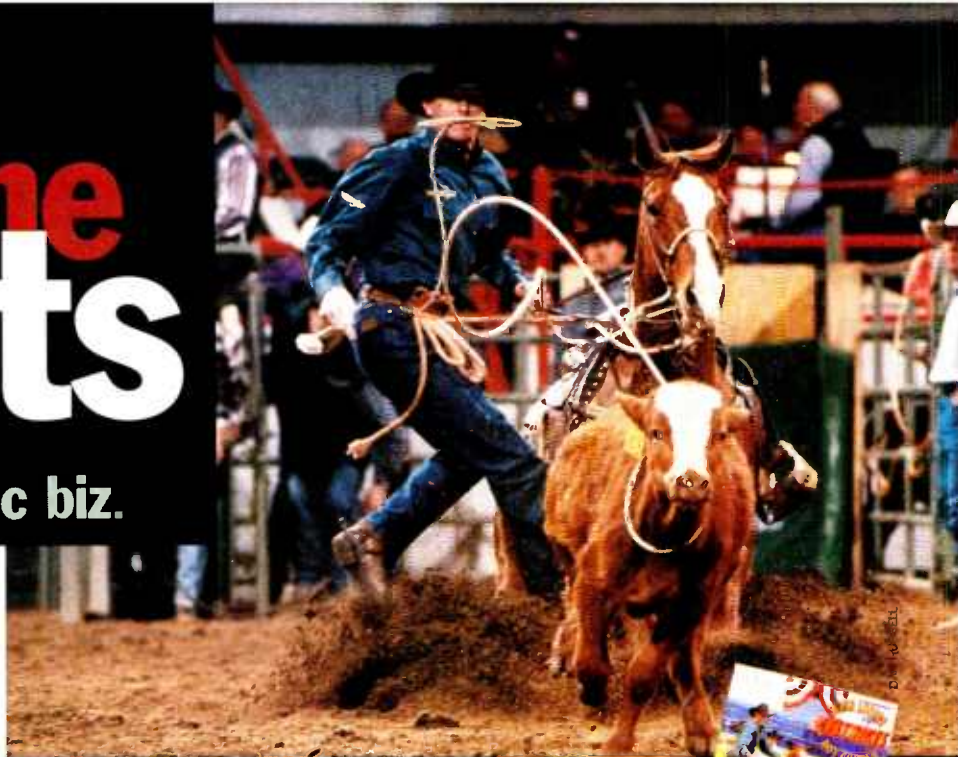
# Off the Charts

The country buzz outside the music biz.

## ROPIN' WITH THE KING

In a career that spans three decades, Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association roper Roy Cooper has amassed eight World Championships, becoming the sport's first million-dollar cowboy. Known as "Super Looper," Cooper and his winning rope techniques have influenced many up-and-coming cowboys—including his close friend and fellow PRCA roper, country superstar George Strait.

"It was about in '84 when we met," says Cooper, 43. "George was a roper and I was a fan of his music. Now he's like one of my very best friends."



"SUPER LOOPER" INCLUDES SOME STRAIT TALK IN HIS BOOK.

The Childress, Texas, native even invited Strait to write the forward to his self-published book, *Fast Times: Super Looper Roy Cooper* (ProRodeo Hall of Fame, Colorado Springs). The singer obliged in his typical straightforward manner with a short, handwritten note that reads, in part, "I don't want to write about Roy Cooper being the best ever in his sport because some might say I'm not really qualified to make such a statement.

However...He's my good friend, so what the hell, I'll say it anyway. He's the best ever!"

*Fast Times* features 192 pages of photographs documenting Cooper's personal life and pro career and includes various shots with fellow legend Strait. In addition to the book, Cooper is busy operating his roping arena, and he's working on plans for a Museum of Champion Ropers.

"Charlie Daniels and George have done concerts to raise some money for the museum," says Cooper. "We just hope we can start on it this fall."

And as if all his business endeavors weren't keeping him busy enough, Super Looper still has one milestone to conquer before he retires.

"I want to be rodeo's first \$2 million cowboy," he said. "I plan on retiring this year, but I want to cross that \$2 million mark first. I think that would be something special." —Michael D. Kennedy



## CHESNEY BOOKS A WINNER

IT'S A SAFE BET THAT WHEREVER he is out there in America, Kenny Chesney is still floating on a cloud. And it's not just because of his chart-topping hits.

Chesney is a lifelong fan of the University of Tennessee Volunteers football team,

which in January won its first National Championship since 1951. Chesney even made the trek to Tempe, Arizona, to watch his beloved Big Orange take home the championship trophy.

"There were a lot of orange rednecks out in Tempe, and I was one of them!" he laughs. "I've been watching Tennessee football since I started watching TV. But going to this game was an incredible, awesome experience."

The Tennessee native is one of the many Vol faithful featured in the photo book *Volmania* (Sports Mania Productions, Nashville). And last fall, Chesney recorded a special song, "Touchdown Tennessee," a tribute to longtime UT sportscaster John Ward. So many Big Orange maniacs snapped up the record, it reached No. 65 on the country charts.



## BROADWAY BABE

From March 16 to April 4, Pam Tillis takes over a major singing role in the hit Broadway musical *Smokey Joe's Café*.

## STREET TALK

Trisha Yearwood's visit to *Sesame Street* will air sometime in early April.



## GARTH'S Hunky Company

A recent internet poll asked women whom they would most like to lock eyes with over a bottle of wine. Garth Brooks made the top 10, along with such hunks as Brad Pitt and Mel Gibson.

### THE TOP 10

1. Harrison Ford
2. Brad Pitt
3. (tie) George Clooney,  
Mel Gibson, Tom Hanks
6. Sean Connery
7. Antonio Banderas
8. (tie) Ben Affleck, Tom Cruise
10. Garth Brooks

\*Source: Gymba's

### HOT ROLE



**MARK COLLIE IS** itching to play Johnny Cash in James Keach's upcoming biographical film about the country legend. Even Cash wants Collie for the part. So Collie teamed up with director John Lloyd Miller to produce a short, powerful film called *I Still Miss Someone* as an audition for the Johnny Cash role. Word has it that *Someone* proves Collie is not only an impressive musician, but one heck of an actor.

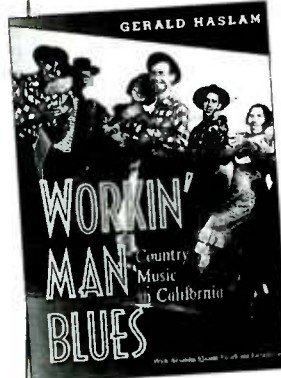
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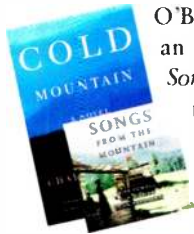
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**MAGIC MOUNTAIN** Traditional Appalachian music plays an integral role in Charles Frazier's best-selling novel *Cold Mountain*, the haunting story of a Civil War soldier's journey home. The award-winning book is about to become a major motion picture—and it may already have a soundtrack. Two of the millions of readers touched by the book, master musicians Tim O'Brien and Dirk Powell, have recorded an album of tunes mentioned in the story. *Songs From the Mountain*, released in March, includes generations-old fiddle tunes, as well as originals inspired by the novel. A paperback copy of the book is included with the purchase of the CD.



## DADDY'S BOYS

Actor/director Billy Bob Thornton (*Sling Blade*) tapped Music City's own Marty Stuart to compose the score for Thornton's latest feature, *Daddy and Them*. Both Stuart and Travis Tritt recorded instrumental tracks for the film, due in September.



## WILLIE WATCH

World-famous for his music, Willie Nelson has also established an impressive film career. He's appeared in 27 films, ranging from 1979's *The Electric Horseman* to 1997's *Wag the Dog* (left). Currently he's featured in the indie comedy *Dill Scallion*. Here's a selected recap of 20 years of celluloid Willie.

MOVIE TITLE	WILLIE PLAYS	WILLIE SINGS	ACTOR MORE GRIZZLED THAN WILLIE	RATING
<b>THE ELECTRIC HORSEMAN (1979)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Washed-up rodeo star Robert Redford steals a thoroughbred horse and escapes into the desert, followed by TV reporter Jane Fonda.	Wendall, Redford's loyal buddy	"My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys"	Wiford Brimley	Three Jose Cuervo shots 
<b>HONEYSUCKLE ROSE (1980)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Country star Buck Bonham is torn between his wife (Dyan Cannon) and a comely new singer (Amy Irving).	Country star Buck Bonham, duh!	"Whiskey River," "Lovin' You Is Easier," and the Oscar-nominated "On the Road Again"	Slim Pickens	Four bandanas 
<b>BARBAROSA (1982)</b> <i>The plot:</i> The legendary outlaw Barbarosa teaches the trade to naive country boy Gary Busey, in one of Willie's best vehicles.	The legendary outlaw Barbarosa	Nothing—his guns do his singin'	Nobody!	Six guns 
<b>SONGWRITER (1984)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Honky-tonkers Willie and Kris Kristofferson team up to sting the Music Row con man who ripped them off.	Doc Jenkins, songwriter	"Who'll Buy My Memories"	Rip Torn	Four gold records 
<b>RED-HEADED STRANGER (1986)</b> <i>The plot:</i> A preacher must contend with his cheatin' wife and some no-good varmints in this turkey loosely adapted from Willie's landmark 1975 LP.	Julian, the preacher	Songs from the original LP	R.G. Armstrong	One red-headed step-child 
<b>BAJA OKLAHOMA (1988)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Lesley Ann Warren (from <i>Songwriter</i> ) plays a hard-lovin' waitress who dreams of country stardom.	Willie!	The theme song, co-written by novelist Dan Jenkins	Certainly not co-star Julia Roberts	Three panhandles 
<b>GONE FISHIN' (1997)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Buddies Joe Pesci and Danny Glover wreak havoc on a nightmare fishing trip.	Billy Catch Pooler, bass-master extraordinaire	Nothing, but his TV commercial is pretty funny	Danny Glover could use a shave 	One that got away 
<b>WAG THE DOG (1997)</b> <i>The plot:</i> Spin doctor Robert De Niro and producer Dustin Hoffman divert attention from a presidential sex scandal by warring on Albania.	Johnny Dean, songwriter	The big "We Are the World"-type number, "Albania, Albania"	Merle Haggard, Pops Staples	Three-and-a-half paws 

—Jim Ridley

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## "All Shook Up"

Don't miss the *first-ever* Elvis juke box shaped collector's plate! It's the only one of its kind authorized by the Presley Estate to commemorate Elvis' number one juke box hit, "All Shook Up."

In the 50s, Elvis Presley wasn't just the King of Rock 'n Roll, he was King of the Music Charts as well. And wherever there was a juke box, fans couldn't wait to drop their money in, punch up "All Shook Up," and let the King of Rock 'n Roll loose!

Artist Chris Notarile's portrait of Elvis cutting loose at a '57 concert is extraordinary, and so is this fine ceramic limited-edition collector's plate. It is issued in a strictly limited edition, at the issue price of \$29.95. Demand is sure to be strong, so don't delay. Send no money now. Mail the coupon today!

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- A Bradford Exchange Exclusive authorized by the Presley Estate to celebrate Elvis' No. 1 Juke Box Hit, "All Shook Up"

Fired on the back of this plate is an official BRADEX™ number; this number guarantees that it is a genuine limited edition that can be traded on the Exchange™

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Mr. Mrs. Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
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For yourself? 60391-E90391  or as a gift? 60391-E90392

\*Plus a total of \$3.99 postage and handling. Illinois residents add state sales tax. Pending credit approval. Edition limited to 95 firing days. Plate stand not included. Prices higher in Canada.

# On the Road Again...

## Tour Dates for Some of Your Favorite Artists



CURTIS HILBUN

### TRACE ADKINS

- May**  
**5/1** RENFRO VALLEY, KY  
 800-765-7464  
 Renfro Ent. Ctr.
- 5/2** PIGEON FORGE, TN  
 423-428-9433 / 428-9492  
 Dollywood Celebrity Theatre
- 5/15** ARNOLD, MO  
 314-296-3244  
 Rickman Auditorium
- 5/29** LONGVIEW, TX  
 Gregg Cty. Fair
- June**  
**6/19** MARINETTE, WI  
 Country Music Fest.
- 6/25** RICHLAND CTR., WI  
 Kros Koup Pk
- July**  
**7/30** SPRINGFIELD, MO  
 417-833-2660  
 Ozark Empire Fair

### RHETT AKINS

- April**  
**4/16** FORT WORTH, TX  
 817-624-7117  
 Billy Bob's
- 4/30** STILLWATER, OK  
 405-377-0075  
 Tumbleweed Dance Hall

### ALABAMA

- April**  
**4/9-11** MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
 803-272-5758  
 Alabama Theatre
- May**  
**5/1** PRATTVILLE, AL  
 Stanley Stadium
- 5/15** CADSDEN, AL  
 205-543-3472  
 Riverfest
- June**  
**6/4** RICHMOND, VA  
 804-780-4970  
 Richmond Col.
- 6/5** STATE COLLEGE, PA  
 Bryce Jordan Ctr.

- 6/12** MILWAUKEE, WI
- 6/18** MARION, MI  
 Marion Fair
- 6/24** CADOTT, WI  
 715-289-1401  
 Chippewa Valley Country Fest.

### GARY ALLAN

- July**  
**7/3** GREELEY, CO  
 303-356-7787  
 Greeley Stampede
- 7/30** SIDNEY, OH  
 513-492-7385  
 Shelby Cty. Fair
- 7/31** RICH VALLEY, VA  
 Rich Vafey Fair

### JOHN BERRY

- May**  
**5/1** WARSAW, IN  
 Wagon Wheel Theatre
- 5/15** OWENSBORO, KY  
 502-926-9000  
 Executive Inn
- June**  
**6/11** PIGEON FORGE, TN  
 Governor's Palace



### BLACKHAWK

- June**  
**6/11** WINSTEAD, MN  
 Country Music Fest.
- 6/20** MARINETTE, WI  
 Country Music Fest.
- 6/24** OSHKOSH, WI  
 Country USA

### T. GRAHAM BROWN

- April**  
**4/10** DEQUINCY, LA  
 Railroad Days Fest.
- July**  
**7/23** ELEANOR, WV  
 Putnam Cty. Fair

### TRACY BYRD

- April**  
**4/29** LOS BANOS, CA  
 Merced Cty. Spring Fair
- May**  
**5/1** QUEENS CREEK, AZ  
 602-987-0073  
 Country Thunder
- 5/2** SANTA ANA, CA  
 714-549-8233  
 Crazy Horse
- 5/8** COCKEYSVILLE, MO  
 Oregon Ridge Bandshell
- 5/15** HIWASSEE, GA  
 706-896-4191  
 Anderson Music Hall
- 5/22** FALMOUTH, VA  
 McLane Mid Atlantic Co.
- June**  
**6/11** WINSTEAD, MN  
 Country Music Fest.

### BILLY RAY CYRUS

- April**  
**4/9-10** DOVER, DE  
 Dover Oown Slots
- 4/24** NASHVILLE, IN  
 513-738-1241 /  
 812-988-2235  
 Little Nashville Opry
- May**  
**5/29** CRETE, IL  
 Great Midwest Fair

### BILLY DEAN

- March**  
**3/26** MUSKEGON, MI  
 616-726-2939  
 L. C. Walker Arena
- June**  
**6/12** WHEELING, WV  
 Jamboree USA
- 6/17-23** SPARKS, NV  
 702-356-3300  
 John Ascuaga's Nugget

### DIAMOND RIO

- April**  
**4/10** MAHNOMEN, MN  
 218-935-2701  
 Shooting Star Casino
- 4/30** BRANDON, MS  
 ShHoh Park
- May**  
**5/15** GADSDEN, AL  
 205-543-3472  
 Riverfest
- 5/23** ANDERSON, IN  
 Paramount Theatre
- 5/28** LITTLE ROCK, AR  
 Riverfront Park
- 5/30** MONTGOMERY, AL  
 334-834-7220  
 Jubilee City Fest.
- June**  
**6/5** FARMINGTON, MO  
 Wilson Rozler Stadium

### SARA EVANS

- April**  
**4/1** STORRS, CT  
 203-486-2277  
 Jorgensen Aud.

- 4/9** WILMINGTON, NC  
 919-763-0905  
 Azalea Fest.
- 4/10** LYNCHBURG, VA  
 804-930-1814  
 Cattle Annie's

- May**  
**5/23** LEBANON, NY  
 Fun Haven

- June**  
**6/4** READING, PA  
 Municipal Stadium

### VINCE GILL

- July**  
**7/17** KELSEYVILLE, CA  
 707-279-4281  
 Konoco Harbor Resort

### MERLE HAGGARD

- April**  
**4/8** TAMA, IA  
 Meskwaki Casino
- 4/9** KANSAS CITY, MO  
 Station Casino
- 4/10** NASHVILLE, IN  
 513-738-1241 /  
 812-988-2235  
 Little Nashville Opry
- 4/18** LOWELL, MA  
 Lowell Mem. Aud.

- May**  
**5/7** BAY ST. LOUIS, MS  
 Casino Magic

- 5/8** PANAMA CITY, FL  
 Marriott Hotel

- 5/11** NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
 Calvin Gilmore Opry

- 5/14** ROBINSONVILLE, MS  
 800-456-0711 /  
 601-363-0711  
 Sam's Town Ent. Arena

- 5/15** PHILADELPHIA, MS  
 601-650-1234  
 Silver Star Casino

- June**  
**6/10** MT. PLEASANT, MI  
 Soaring Eagle Casino



CURTIS HILBUN

### WADE HAYES

- April**  
**4/8** OCALA, FL  
 Midnight Rodeo
- 4/9** FORT MYERS, FL  
 Ricochet's
- 4/10** TAMPA, FL  
 813-855-1464  
 Round Up
- 4/11** TAMPA, FL  
 Seminole Cty. Park
- 4/24** GUYMON, OK  
 Texas Cty. Activities Ctr.

- May**  
**5/8** COCKEYSVILLE, MD  
 Oregon Ridge Bandshell
- 5/14-15** SUTTONS BAY, MI  
 Leelanau Sands Casino
- 5/22** FALMOUTH, VA  
 McLane Mid Atlantic Co.

### TY HERNDON

- April**  
**4/3** FORT WORTH, TX  
 817-624-7117  
 Billy Bob's
- 4/30** TAYLORVILLE, IL  
 217-287-2103  
 Nashville North
- May**  
**5/1** PRATTVILLE, AL  
 Stanley Stadium
- June**  
**6/12** WAUKESHA, WI  
 Waukesha Cty. Fair

### FAITH HILL

- May**  
**5/1** LOS ANGELES, CA  
 213-665-5857  
 Greek Theatre
- 5/2** QUEENS CREEK, AZ  
 602-987-0073  
 Country Thunder
- June**  
**6/27** CADOTT, WI  
 715-289-4401  
 Chippewa Valley  
 Country Fest.

### GEORGE JONES

- April**  
**4/9** BOSSIER CITY, LA  
 Isle of Capri Casino
- 4/16-17** MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
 803-272-5758  
 Alabama Theatre
- 4/23** LOGAN, WV  
 Logan Theatre
- May**  
**5/1** WISCONSIN DELLS, WI  
 800-696-7999 /  
 608-254-4545  
 Crystal Grand Theatre

- 5/16** MERRILLVILLE, IN  
 219-769-6311 /  
 769-6600  
 Star Plaza

- 5/21** GREENVILLE, NC  
 Greenville Mem. Aud.

- 5/22** MONROE, GA  
 Madison Cty. Fair

- 5/29** BRANSON, MO  
 417-33-GRAND  
 Grand Palace

### TOBY KEITH

- May**  
**5/30** SILVER SPRINGS, FL  
 904-236-2121  
 Silver Springs Amph.

### SAMMY KERSHAW

- May**  
**5/30** PIGEON FORGE, TN  
 423-428-9433 /  
 428-9492  
 Dollywood Celebrity Theatre

### TRACY LAWRENCE

- April**  
**4/29** WILLAMINA, OR  
 Spirit Mountain Casino



Historic World Premier from the International Wildlife Coalition!

# THE SIBERIAN TIGER COLLECTOR KNIFE

BY ACCLAIMED WILDLIFE ARTIST J. NAHRA

Hand-set with  
a genuine Tiger's Eye  
ornamental stone!



A minted medal, set into  
the reverse of the handle,  
bears the emblem of  
Franklin Mint  
Collector Knives.

**Limited Edition.  
Richly Accented With  
24 Karat Gold... Just \$37.50!**

Shown approximately actual size of  
7" (17.75 cm).

It is the largest of all the Big Cats. Now, it becomes the subject of the first collector knife ever issued by the International Wildlife Coalition.

The rare and magnificent Siberian Tiger is portrayed in all its power by the internationally renowned wildlife artist J. Nahra. The tiger's near-hypnotic gaze is captured in a full color art work set against a dramatic background of black porcelain. Complementing J. Nahra's original portrait, a genuine Tiger's-eye ornamental stone set within a bezel richly accented in 24 karat gold. With folding blade crafted of stainless steel. And the minted medal of Franklin Mint Collector Knives is also set into the handle. The entire edition is forever limited to just 45 casting days. Complete with its own padded and zippered case. Just \$37.50.

**SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.** If you wish to return any Franklin Mint purchase, you may do so within 30 days of your receipt of that purchase for replacement, credit or refund.



**Rich With Accents of 24 Karat Gold.**

## A Limited Edition Collector Knife.

Please mail by May 31, 1999.

Franklin Mint Collector Knives  
Franklin Center, PA 19091-0001

Please enter my order for The Siberian Tiger Collector Knife.

I need SEND NO MONEY NOW. I will be billed \$37.50\* when my knife is ready to be sent.

Limit: one knife per collector.

\*Plus my state sales tax and \$3.95 for shipping and handling.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ ALL ORDERS ARE SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE

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TELEPHONE # ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ 18705-30-001

## On the Road Again...

**4/30** KELSEYVILLE, CA  
707-279-4281  
Konociti Harbor Resort

**May**  
**5/1** OROVILLE, CA  
Feather Falls Casino  
**5/2** EUREKA, CA  
Eureka Aud.

### LONESTAR

**May**  
**5/7** SAN ANTONIO, TX  
Far West Rodeo  
**5/15** DETROIT, MI  
313-224-1185  
Downtown Hoedown  
**5/21** NASHVILLE, TN  
615-251-1000  
Wildhorse Saloon  
**5/22** LYNCHBURG, VA  
904-930-1814 Cattle Annie's

**June**  
**6/4** READING, PA  
Municipal Stadium  
**6/24** RICHLAND CTR., WI  
Kros Koup Pk.

### LORETTA LYNN

**April**  
**4/2** ROBINSONVILLE, MS  
800-456-0711 /  
601-363-0711  
Sam's Town Ent. Arena  
**4/9** FORT LAUDERDALE, FL  
**4/10** FELLSMERE, FL  
Mesa Park  
**4/28** MT. PLEASANT, MI  
Soaring Eagle Casino  
**4/30** SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MI  
906-632-0530  
Kewadin Casino

### KATHY MATTEA

**April**  
**4/6** FAYETTEVILLE, AR  
Walton Arts Ctr.  
**4/9** NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ  
Cultural Ctr.  
**4/10** TORRINGTON, CT  
203-489-7180  
Warner Theatre  
**4/17** NEWBERRY, SC  
Newberry Opera House  
**4/19** CARROLLTON, GA  
Townsend Performing  
Arts Ctr.  
**May**  
**5/21** SHREVEPORT, LA  
Strand Theatre



**MARTINA  
McBRIDE**

**June**  
**6/18** MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
803-272-5758  
Alabama Theatre

**6/19** PIGEON FORGE, TN  
Governor's Palace  
**6/27** OSHKOSH, WI  
Country USA

### NEAL McCOY

**April**  
**4/17** FRANKFORT, KY  
**4/17** PORT ARTHUR, TX  
Pleasure Island  
**May**  
**5/1** QUEENS CREEK, AZ  
602-987-0073  
Country Thunder  
**5/15** CUMMING, GA  
770-887-7461  
Lanierland Music Park  
**5/22** NASHVILLE, IN  
513-738-1241 /  
812-988-2235  
Little Nashville Opry

**June**  
**6/19** LOCKBOURNE, OH  
Hoover Y Park  
**6/22** WEST FARGO, ND  
701-282-7029  
Red River Valley Fair

### TIM McGRAW

**April**  
**4/8** ROBINSONVILLE, MS  
Horseshoe Casino  
**June**  
**6/19** SPRINGFIELD, MO  
Route 66 Country Music Fest.  
**6/23** GREELEY, CO  
303-356-7787  
Greeley Stampede  
**6/27** CADOTT, WI  
715-289-4401  
Chippewa Valley  
Country Fest.

### LORRIE MORGAN

**April**  
**4/6** HOUMA, LA  
Terrebonne Civic Ctr.  
**4/8** FORT MYERS, FL  
813-489-3033  
Barbara Mann Perf. Arts Hall

### DAVID LEE MURPHY

**May**  
**5/7** GREER, SC  
Greer Family Fest.

### WILLIE NELSON

**April**  
**4/8** MT. PLEASANT, MI  
Soaring Eagle Casino  
**4/9** MERRILLVILLE, IN  
219-769-6311 /  
769-6600 Star Plaza  
**4/10** WISCONSIN DELLS, WI  
800-696-7999 /  
608-254-4545  
Crystal Grand  
Music Theatre  
**4/13** GREEN BAY, WI  
414-465-2145  
Weidner Ctr.  
**4/14** SAULT STE. MARIE, MI  
Dreammakers Theatre  
**4/16-17** RISING SUN, IN  
Grand Victoria Casino  
**4/24** HILLSBORO, TX  
"This Is Glory" Benefit  
**4/30** ATLANTA, GA  
Music Midtown Fest.

**June**  
**6/18-19** LAUGHLIN, NV  
702-298-2535  
Riverside Resort Hotel  
**6/20** SARATOGA, CA  
Historic Mountain Winery  
**6/21** STOCKTON, CA  
209-466-5041  
San Joaquin Cty. Fair  
**6/23-27** LAS VEGAS, NV  
Orleans Casino

### EDDY RAVEN

**May**  
**5/8** ROCK SPRINGS, WY  
Holiday Inn  
**September**  
**9/9** EL PASO, TX  
Stampede

### BILLY JOE ROYAL

**April**  
**4/18** HAVRE, MT  
Montana State Univ.  
**4/21** BOZEMAN, MT  
Bozeman Civic Ctr.

### DARYLE SINGLETERY

**May**  
**5/9** PIGEON FORGE, TN  
423-428-9433 / 428-9492  
Dollywood Celebrity Theatre

### RICKY SKAGGS

**April**  
**4/10** DECORAH, IA  
Luther College  
**4/30** WILKESBORO, NC  
Merle Watson Fest.

### STATLER BROTHERS

**June**  
**6/5** WABASH, IN  
219-563-1102  
Honeywell Ctr.

### MARTY STUART

**April**  
**4/15-16** ALTON, IL  
Alton Belle Casino  
**4/24** DALLAS, TX  
Hyatt Hotel  
**4/28** JOPLIN, MO  
Taylor Perf. Arts Ctr.  
**4/30** METROPOLIS, IL  
800-929-5905  
Players Riverboat Casino  
**May**  
**5/29** LANCASTER, PA  
American Music Theatre  
**June**  
**6/20** VICTORVILLE, CA  
Mojava Narrows Park



### PAM TILLIS

**April**  
**4/9-10** RED WING, MN  
Treasure Island Casino  
**4/11** SPIRIT LAKE, ND  
Spirit Lake Casino  
**4/16** JOLIET, IL  
815-726-7171  
Rialto Square Theatre  
**4/17** WISCONSIN DELLS, WI  
800-696-7999 /  
608-254-4545  
Crystal Grand  
Music Theatre  
**4/18** JACKSON, MI  
Potter Ctr.

**4/19** CLINTON TWSHP., MI  
313-286-2141  
Macomb Ctr.

**April - July**  
**4/20-7/3** BRANSON, MO  
417-335-6635  
Mel Tillis Theatre

### RANDY TRAVIS

**June**  
**6/10** TAMA, IA  
Meskwaki Casino

### RICK TREVINO

**April**  
**4/28** SAN ANTONIO, TX  
**May**  
**5/1** LEAGUE CITY, TX  
League City Village Fair  
**5/31** AMARILLO, TX  
Fun Fest

**June**  
**6/19** LOCKBOURNE, OH  
Hoover Y Park

**July**  
**7/24** DES MOINES, IA  
515-287-7357  
Toad Holler Nightclub

### TANYA TUCKER

**May**  
**5/6-7** RED WING, MN  
Treasure Island Casino  
**5/8** WISCONSIN DELLS, WI  
800-696-7999 /  
608-254-4545  
Crystal Grand  
Music Theatre

### STEVE WARINER

**June**  
**6/4** SAN ANTONIO, TX  
Far West Rodeo  
**6/5** FORT WORTH, TX  
817-624-7117  
Billy Bob's  
**6/26** NASHVILLE, IN  
513-738-1241 /  
812-988-2235  
Little Nashville Opry  
**6/27** CADOTT, WI  
715-289-4401  
Chippewa Valley  
Country Fest.

**June**  
**6/5** MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
803-272-5758  
Alabama Theatre

**6/12** CUMMING, GA  
770-887-7464  
Lanierland Music Park  
**6/19** RENFRO VALLEY, KY  
800-765-7464  
Renfro Ent. Ctr.

**6/26** SULLIVAN, MO  
Meramec Comm. Fair

### MARK WILLS

**May**  
**5/2** PALM SPRINGS, CA  
Hyatt Grand Champion  
**5/14** RALEIGH, NC  
919-829-1125  
Longbranch Saloon  
**5/17** UNCASVILLE, CT  
Mohegan Sun Casino

**June**  
**6/19** MONROE, NC  
Old Monroe Fairgrounds  
**6/24** CADOTT, WI  
715-289-4401  
Chippewa Valley Country Fest.

### CHELY WRIGHT

**March**  
**3/27** PELHAM, AL  
205-985-9797  
Oak Mountain Amph.

### WYNONNA

**March**  
**3/27** CATHEDRAL CITY, CA  
Field of Dreams  
**3/28** LAUGHLIN, NV  
702-298-5111  
Flamingo Hilton

**June**  
**6/19** UNIVERSAL CITY, CA  
818-622-4444  
Universal Amph.

**6/20** KELSEYVILLE, CA  
707-279-4281  
Konociti Harbor Resort

**6/22** LIVERMORE, CA  
Wente Bros. Winery  
**6/23** SARATOGA, CA  
Garden Theatre

**6/25** JACKSONVILLE, OR  
Britt Pavilion  
**6/27** WOODINVILLE, WA  
Chateau Ste. Michelle

**6/29** ANCHORAGE, AK  
907-263-2787  
Sullivan Sports Arena

**NOTE:** This concert listing contains the most up-to-date tour itineraries at the time of publication. *Country Music* is not in control of where and/or when an artist performs in a specific area or venue. Dates are subject to change without notice, so please check with the venue before traveling. If no telephone number is listed, we recommend contacting your local TicketMaster office listed in your telephone directory. If you come across an area code change and wish to share it with other readers, please send the complete venue name and location with the new telephone number by e-mail to: updates@thecrusader.net or mail to: Venue Updates, P.O. Box 120872, Nashville, TN 37212-0872. Tour dates are provided by Sheri Rettew.





Shane Minor

Features the single  
**“Slave To The Habit”**  
 IN STORES  
 APRIL 13TH

*“Shane Minor’s music packs the wallop of the bulls he used to straddle and the excitement of the L.A. police beat he used to ride. This Minor is headed for something major.”*

Neil Pond, Country Music

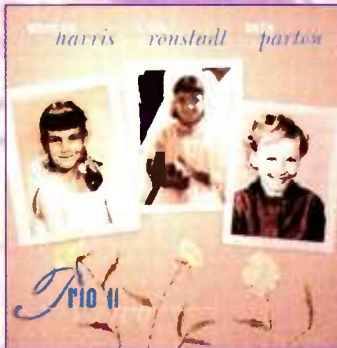
*“I just want my music to remind people of what’s good in life. I want them to hear the ‘I feel good music’ and the emotions. I want their hearts to move. I want their souls to move. I want them to feel it, to be in the song with me. That’s what I want my music to do.. That’s my passion.”*

Shane Minor



Produced by Dan Huff • ESP Management

**TRIO II** represents the reunion of the legendary LINDA RONSTADT, DOLLY PARTON and EMMYLOU HARRIS after their award winning 1987 TRIO album. Individually, they are three of the most influential and distinctive stylists in modern popular music. Together, as the TRIO, they have a fourth voice.



“The sum is greater than the parts. When it’s really good, I can’t figure out who is singing which part. That’s when it is magical.”

*Linda Ronstadt*

“This is a vehicle for three women to sing together. It inspires us. TRIO is driven by the love of the songs and the love of our harmonic opportunities.”

*Emmylou Harris*

“I am thrilled to death that we do great work together. I have prayed for years that the right time would come again for this project.”

*Dolly Parton*

TRIO II represents the love of the art of making music.

EMMYLOU HARRIS,  
 LINDA RONSTADT  
 AND DOLLY PARTON,

**Trio II**

IN STORES NOW

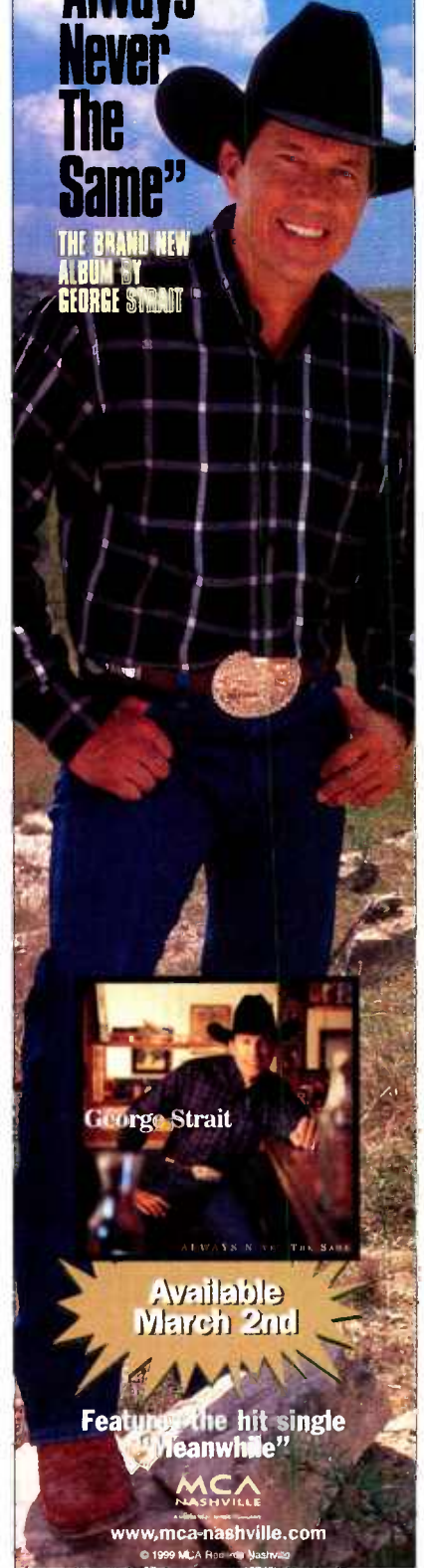
Asylum Records ©1999 Elektra Entertainment Group, a division of Warner Communications Inc., a Time Warner Company

George Strait

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

“Always  
 Never  
 The  
 Same”

THE BRAND NEW  
 ALBUM BY  
 GEORGE STRAIT



Available  
 March 2nd


Featuring the hit single  
 “Meanwhile”




www.mca-nashville.com

© 1999 MCA Records Nashville

# STRAIGHT TALK FROM THE STARS




TURNING SEVENTEEN WAS THE CATALYST FOR A LOT OF DIFFERENT LIFE EXPERIENCES. SOMETHING IN THE AIR IS FILLED WITH LOVE, EXCITEMENT, CRUSHES AND THE CHALLENGES THAT WE ALL FACE. FROM FACING YOUR FEARS WITH THE STRENGTH OF 'I WILL BE,' TO THE ANTICIPATION OF THAT FIRST KISS IN 'KISS ME NOW' IS MY WAY OF SPEAKING OUT TO THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, FILLING THE AIR WITH MAGICAL WHISPERS AND GUIDING US TOWARDS THE POSITIVE POWERS OF GROWING."

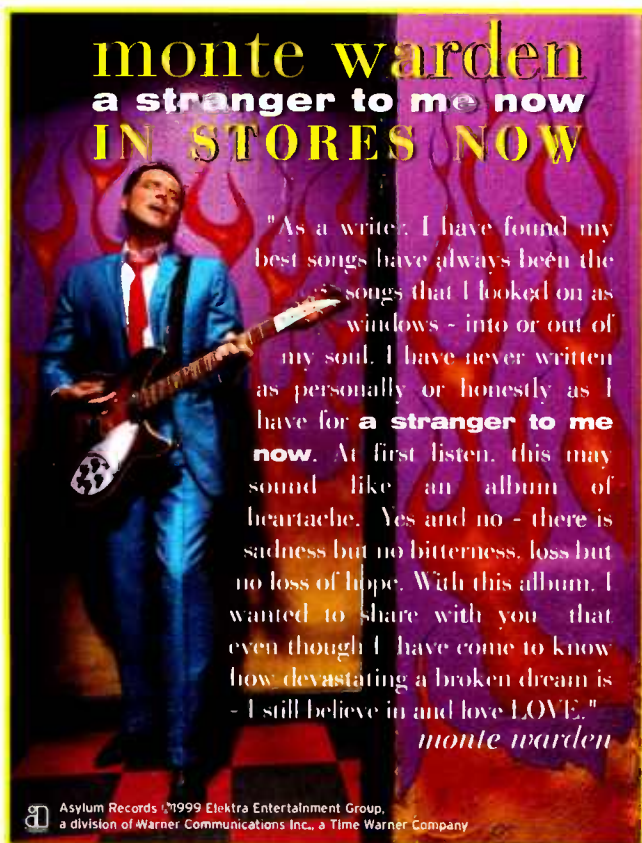


*Lila McCann*

*Lila McCann*  
SOMETHING IN THE AIR  
available *MARCH 23rd*


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**monte warden**  
**a stranger to me now**  
**IN STORES NOW**



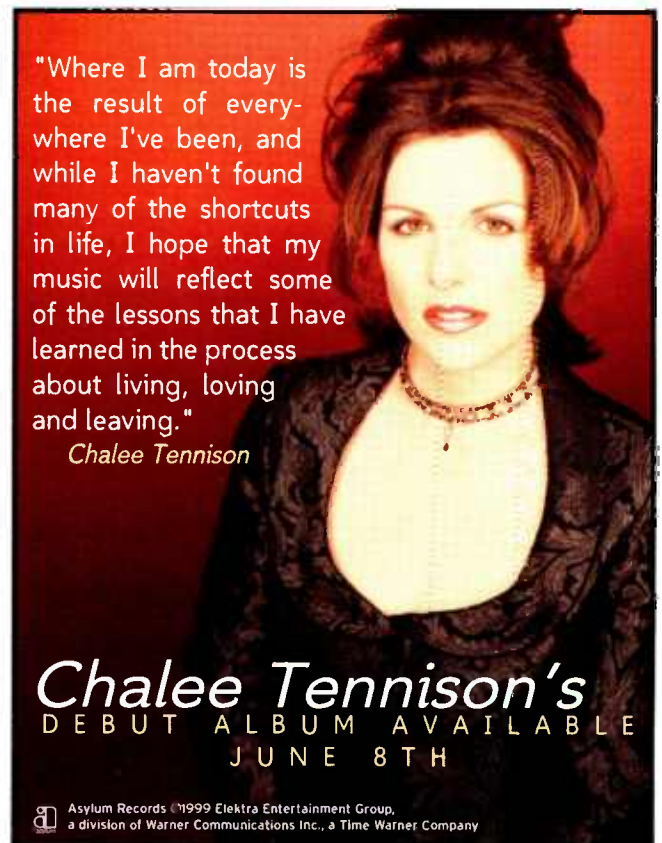
"As a writer, I have found my best songs have always been the songs that I looked on as windows - into or out of my soul. I have never written as personally or honestly as I have for **a stranger to me now**. At first listen, this may sound like an album of heartache. Yes and no - there is sadness but no bitterness, loss but no loss of hope. With this album, I wanted to share with you that even though I have come to know how devastating a broken dream is - I still believe in and love LOVE."

*monte warden*


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"Where I am today is the result of everywhere I've been, and while I haven't found many of the shortcuts in life, I hope that my music will reflect some of the lessons that I have learned in the process about living, loving and leaving."

*Chalee Tennison*



**Chalee Tennison's**  
DEBUT ALBUM AVAILABLE  
JUNE 8TH

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# Going to Extremes

WITH GARY ALLAN

**HE'S PLAYED IN HONKY-TONKS since he was 13, owned a successful construction company, served in the Army, been a daddy to three little girls and made women swoon as one of *People* magazine's "sexiest men alive" in 1998. He also surfs a mean wave. He's native Californian Gary Allan, and with those types of experiences, it's no wonder he sounds a lot older than his 31 years.**

The soul and gravel in his voice on the hit songs "Her Man," "It Would Be You" and "I'll Take Today" isn't just technique—the guy's done some extreme living. Allan was even offered a recording contract at age 15, but declined it at his parents' request. "My dad said, 'You can do this, but you won't have a chance to develop your own sound.' I knew he was right. So I passed and worked and waited." Allan recently worked on answering a few questions for us.

**Do you sell any unusual types of merchandise at your shows?**

Actually, my manager was just over and we talked about having temporary tattoos made up. The tattoos would have the same bucking bronc that's on my guitar.

**How many ties do you own?**

Just one. It's a plain black tie. That way, I always know what tie I'm gonna wear. Will it be the black one, or the black one?

**If you could possess any superhero powers, which would you want to have?**

I'd want to do all the stuff Superman can do. He can do it all—fly, see through things, burn things with laser vision, the whole bit. But then he has

the whole kryptonite thing, too. I guess even superheros have something to worry about.

**Ripe or green bananas?**

Just barely yellow. Partially green, I guess. Can't stand 'em overripe. Too squishy.

**Who's the coolest character from *Star Wars*?**

None of 'em. I never liked *Star Wars*. I think all those characters are duds. I was never into science fiction-type movies; I think real-life things in movies are much more interesting. Space stuff doesn't interest me.

**Let's do a little word association. What is the first thing you think of when I say hockey?**

Contact.

**Grocery shopping?**

Boring.

**Donald Trump?**

Cash.

**Do you use an electric razor or a blade?**

Electric. I don't shave all the way. I use like a beard trimmer type of thing. I don't like to shave close—in fact, I don't like to shave at all. It's probably my least favorite daily activity.

**Which gives you more gratification, cooking a meal or doing yard work?**

Cooking a meal. I don't like yard work; I just don't do it. But cooking a meal, you get to be a little more creative, which I like. Plus, there's food involved, which I also like.

**Have you ever been "in the tube"?**

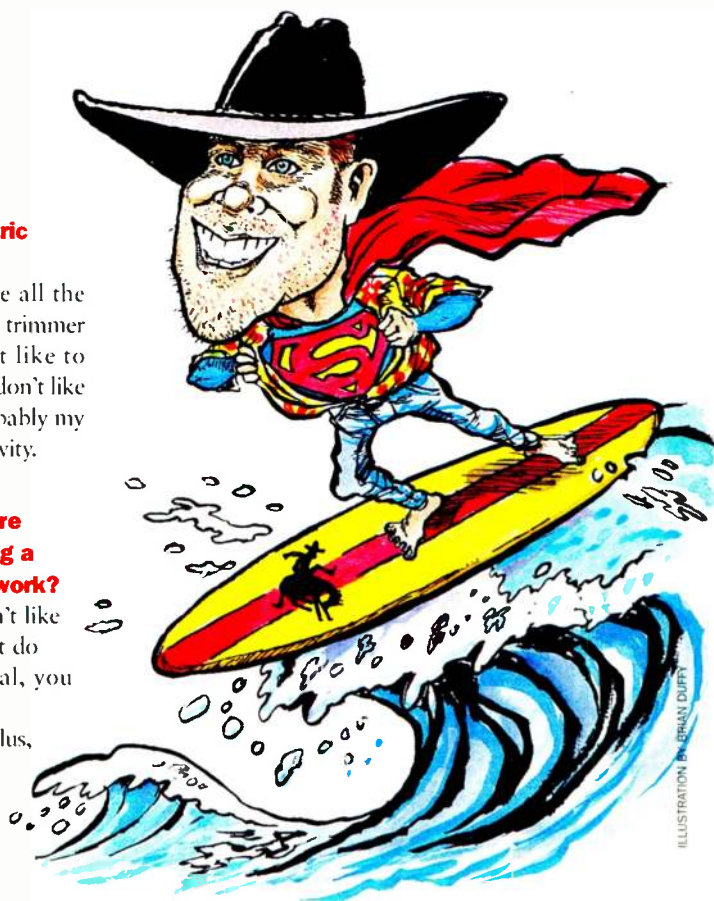
Yeah, I've surfed in the tube. That's the inside part of a big wave. I've surfed all my life, so I'm pretty comfortable with all aspects of surfing.

**Do you use a long board or a short board?**

Both. And all my boards have three fins. I like the way the board handles with three fins. I like the way it responds on the waves a little better than the boards with only one fin.

**Have you ever had your fortune told?**

Yeah. I was like 15, and it was in Las Vegas. The guy looked at my palm, and I think he could tell that I played music. He said he saw music in my future and that I would become a millionaire before I was 30. Well, that didn't happen! \*



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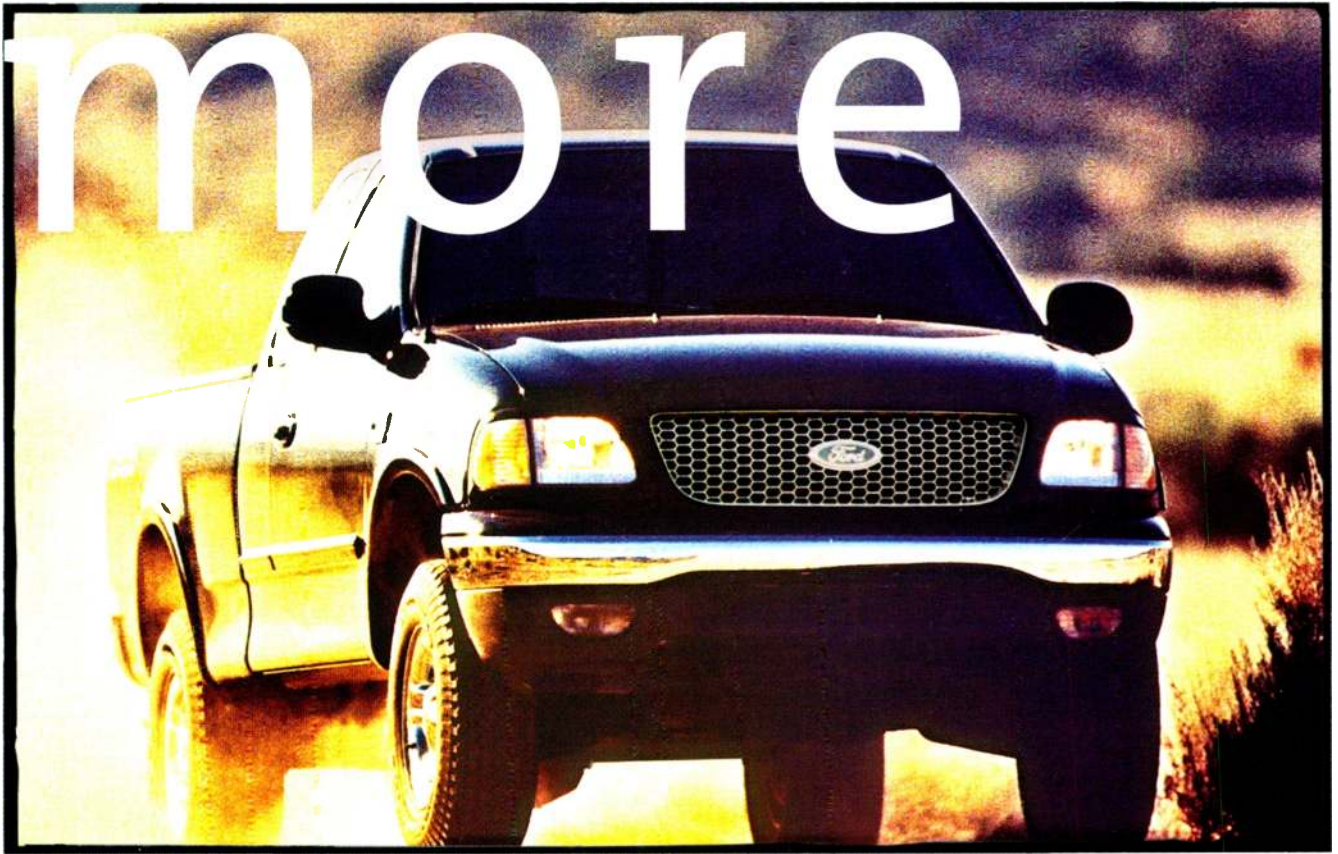


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