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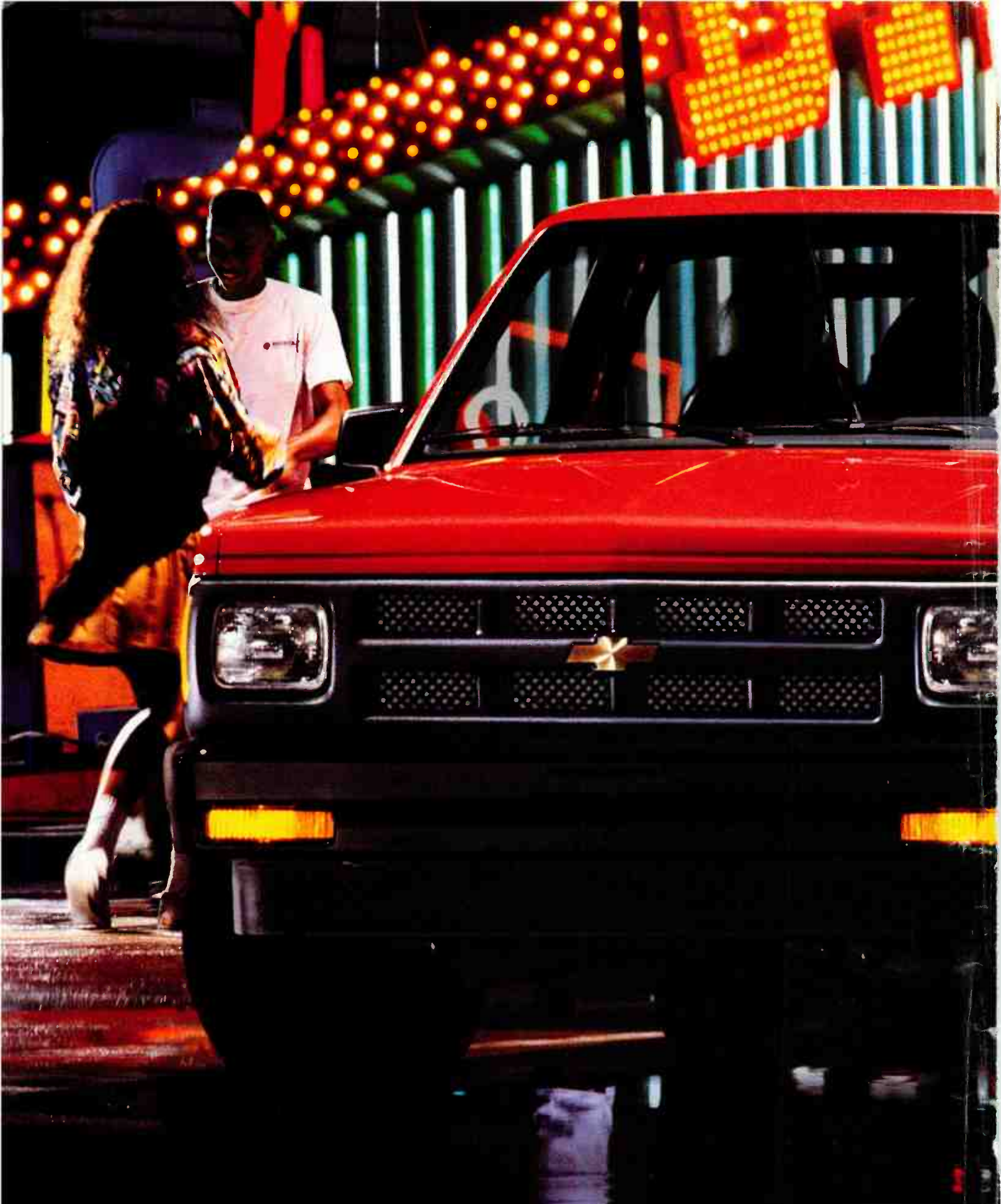
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Marty Brown
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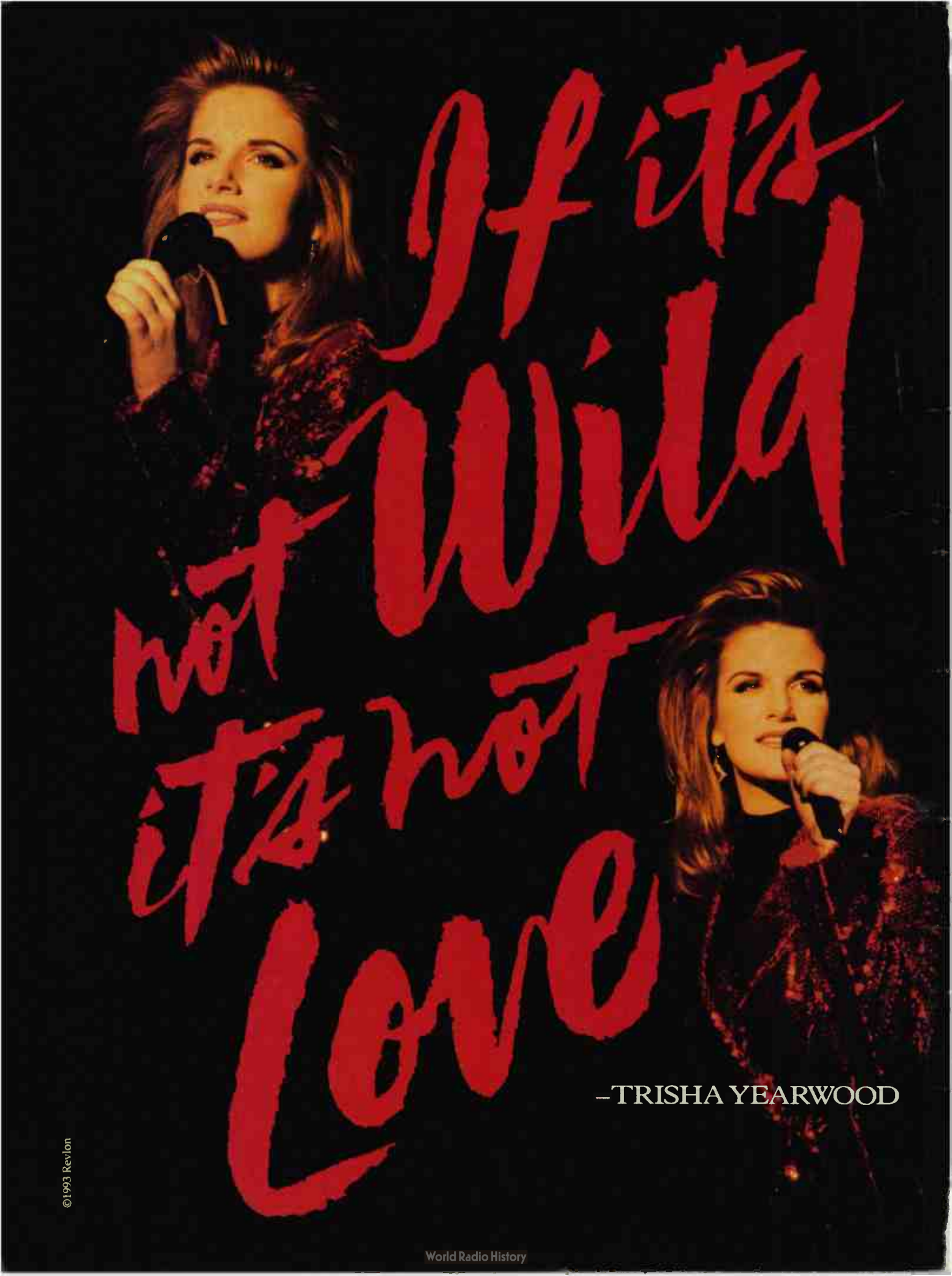
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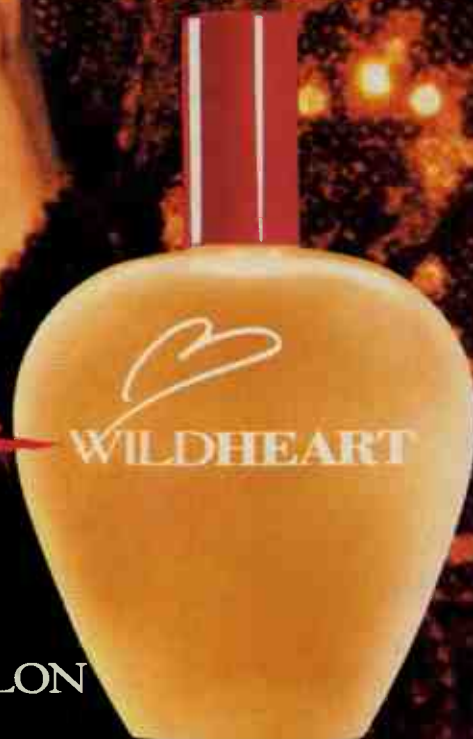
A photograph of Trisha Yearwood performing on stage, holding a microphone. The image is overlaid with large, stylized red text that reads "It's not wild not it's not Love". The text is arranged in a vertical column, with "It's" at the top, "not" on the left, "wild" in the middle, "not" on the left, "it's not" on the left, and "Love" at the bottom. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the performer.

It's
not wild
not it's not
Love

-TRISHA YEARWOOD



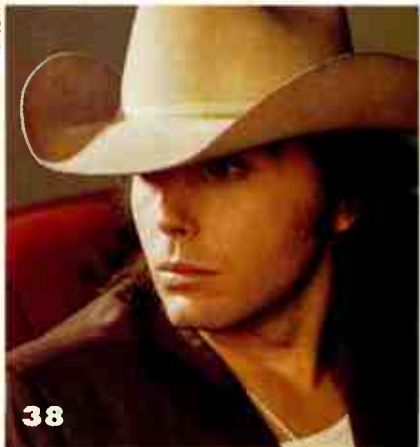
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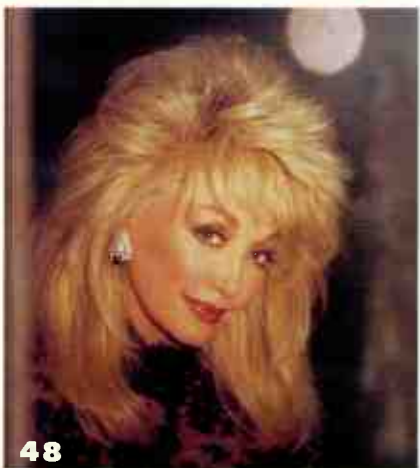
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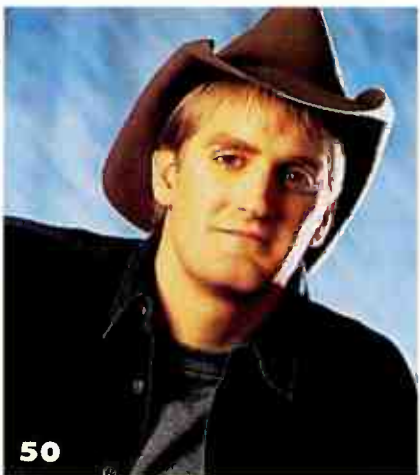


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DEPARTMENTS

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

When the Circle Is Unbroken

Back in 1987 Dwight Yoakam made a trip to Bakersfield to play at the Kern County fair. Knowing he was on Buck Owens' home turf, he decided not to take no for an answer, barged his way into Buck's Bakersfield offices, and asked to see the great man. It worked. That night a semi-retired Buck appeared on stage with Dwight. In 1988, they recorded "The Streets of Bakersfield" together, and Buck began a brief but satisfying comeback.

This month Dwight's the subject of our cover story, and Buck's featured in Leg-

ends of Country Music in the CMSA *Newsletter*. Buck first appeared on our cover back in 1973. Dwight made it in 1988. Our first feature on him was in 1986. Each time we've covered the hillbilly cat from the banks of the O-Hi-O, it's been a) our pleasure and b) as Editor-at-Large Patrick Carr, who did a lot of the covering, would say—"a hoot." Never one

to make much hay in Nashville, Dwight is nevertheless steeped in his heritage, one of the Class A, prime number one examples of a breed that this magazine has always looked on kindly—the artist steeped in and in love with and endlessly forever loyal to his tradition. This man is a child of Appalachia, and he knows it. The music he comes from is, as he says, "innate." So what's he doing shooting the breeze with Contributing Editor Morthland out in Hollywood? What a lot of country mavericks have done over time: planted his feet and stayed planted outside of establishment circles, "establishment" and "steeped in tradition" often seeming not to mix too well in this business of ours. Dwight's always liked Hollywood, and he's playing with the big kids now: Sally Kirkland and Peter Fonda, and hoping to make a film, "kind of a *Tender Mercies*," one day soon. Meanwhile he's still delving into his hillbilly roots and his late-20th century soul in his songwriting. Results of same checked out by said Patrick Carr in his review of Dwight's latest album, *This Time*, in Record Reviews. Gorgeous anguish, sez P. C.



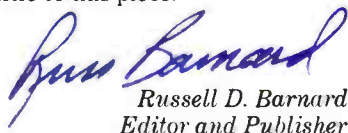
Dwight and Buck closed the circle.

When Dwight hears the music of his roots, he can't help himself: He picks up a guitar. Which brings us to another son of a long line of forefathers, Marty Brown. CMM's own Road Warrior, Michael Still-Riding-On-the-Original-Uniroyals Bane, tests out the rumor that Brown cannot be interviewed without singing and finds it true. Brown taught himself to yodel off of Jimmie Rodgers records, and he thinks Hank Williams picked up the phrase "I'm so lonesome I could cry" from Rodgers. Brown is still very close, literally, geographically, to his roots, but his music

may belong to the ages. Morthland, reviewing Brown's latest album, *Wild Kentucky Skies*, last issue, said: "Brown is a complete throwback, just like his rep says he is, but there's also something very modern about how he uses his Hank Williams/Jimmie Rodgers heritage."

This magazine has always been fascinated by the men and women who can do that—be both ancient and modern. Two more examples in this issue: Miss Dolly Parton, chatting up 20 Questions, and Randy Travis, marching through the centerfold the second time around. "Forever and Ever, Amen." The relationship of tradition or the traditional to Nashville commerciality has always been an on-and-off thing. Sometimes the two mesh, sometimes they don't. But there's rarely been a "traditional" artist who wasn't successful with the fans, and if you don't believe it, stay tuned for our next issue. Meanwhile, it's no accident that it's Randy's voice or the words to his songs we hear woven into commercials for cars or Cokes or long-distance phone service. People vibrate to a sense of connection.

P.S. Someone likes our "traditional" 20th Anniversary Calendar. See Letters to the Editor. And see Buried Treasures for the title to this piece.


Russell D. Barnard
Editor and Publisher

COUNTRYMUSIC



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Record Reviews

Dwight Yoakam

This Time

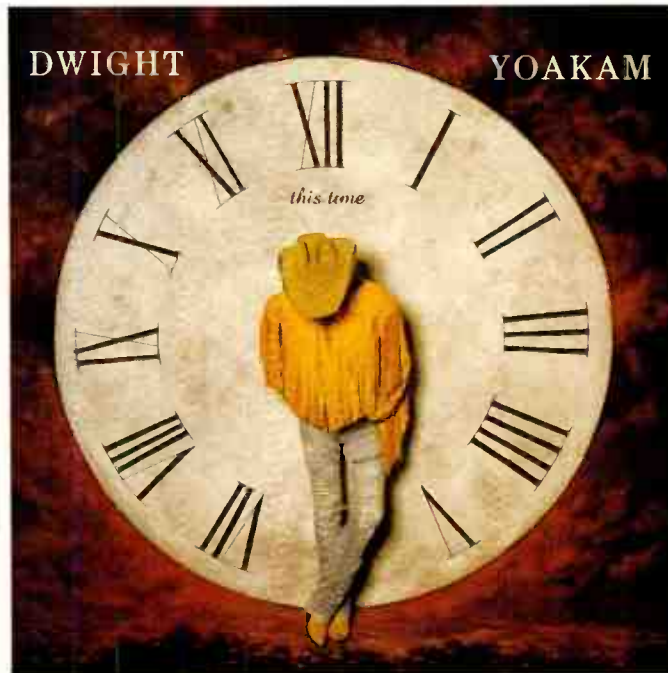
Reprise 45241

When a new Dwight Yoakam album goes on sale these days, there's no doubt it's worth its price. Not that there ever was, really; right from the start our honky tonk man in Hollywood has represented that great rarity and comfort to the consumer, a consistently reliable source of first-rate goods.

I don't think I'm exaggerating, either. Dwight's methods, most significantly his commitment to very high creative standards and very low levels of interaction with the Nashville mainstream, have produced a combination of most uncommon delights: a body of work at once supremely adventurous and utterly classic, and an almost uniquely natural progression from album to album. Only Emmylou Harris, I think, can match him as an innovator-preserved of the country form; only Rosanne Cash's auteur odyssey has progressed with such undistracted momentum; and there's nobody at all who has combined talent, vision, stamina and business support into such an unbroken string of wonderful records.

This new one is number five (number two, Dwight says, in the trilogy he began with *If There Was a Way*), and it's a gem. Thematically it's another step further into the dark—the mire of loneliness, heartbreak, distrust and abandonment Dwight has been exploring with increasing intensity ever since *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.*—and that's a trip; what we have here is cover-to-cover anguish rendered just gorgeously, with great style and skill and even greater taste.

What's going on, I think, is



that Dwight is getting to the heart of the matter. Having fully understood the deepest truth of the music of his Appalachian-exile raising, which is that pain can be transformed into beauty via certain song forms and harmonies, Dwight these days is celebrating that process almost to the exclusion of any other, and doing it brilliantly. At his best he's approaching Hank Williams as a writer (yes!) and George Jones (yes!) as a singer.

Check out "Home for Sale" if you doubt it. The imagery, the language, the phrasing, the vocal control, the chording, the interplay of Al Perkins' beautifully lonely dobro and Skip Edwards' positively sacramental Hammond B-3 organ: The track is well nigh perfect in every respect. So's "Two Doors Down," an all-time-classic broken-hearted drinking song (co-written by Kostas, as were four other *This Time* cuts) which, one more time, testifies to the power of Dwight's depressive imagina-

tion—the man's a lifetime teetotaler, for goodness sake; the only barstool with his name on it is in his mind! Which might, come to think of it, explain why he just keeps getting tighter and better instead of sloppier and worse, like most of country's other great and/or late genuine bluesmen.

I could run through *This Time* track by track and have myself a ton of fun—I hardly ever get to write about a work this well-conceived and beautifully executed—but I don't want to gust for pages, and I'm sure you get the point by now. I'll just mention some highlights and leave it at that:

Buck Owens, Dwight's mentor, kicking in with a wonderful curly-billy bang on "This Time"; an Andrews Sisters sound-alike chorus singing a perfectly happy-vamping echo to the irony at the heart of "The Pocket of a Clown"; Paul Buckmaster, the veteran pop-rock string arranger (and a new addition to Dwight's team) adding the most atmo-

spheric of accents just so; Pete Anderson, Dwight's creative partner (to the extent that Dwight says "we," not "I," when he talks about making records), producing masterfully throughout and also playing a great and eclectic electric guitar, his range here suggesting everyone from Chet Atkins in the Studio B days to Keith Richards driving the Mick Taylor-era Stones—"Wild Ride" being the number which gives him the latter opening and also, incidentally, reminds me to inform you Young Country readers that while Dwight does indeed wear a big cowboy hat and possess a photogenic bottom, he doesn't sound like a middlebrow folkie fronting a half-assed late 70's soft rock band. He sounds like a hillbilly, and when he gets frisky, as on "Wild Ride," he sounds like a hillbilly fronting an early 70's hard rock band, and a damn good one at that. Which of course is exactly how Hank would have wanted it.

...And all this, don't you know, from a health food fan who lives in Hollywood, hangs out with Peter Fonda, dates (excuse me, dated) Sharon Stone, possesses the ability to debate Plato and Nietzsche and the gang for as long as anyone can stand it, and has more pure, natural, God-given get-up-and-go than a whole squad of high school cheerleaders. It's a wonderful world.

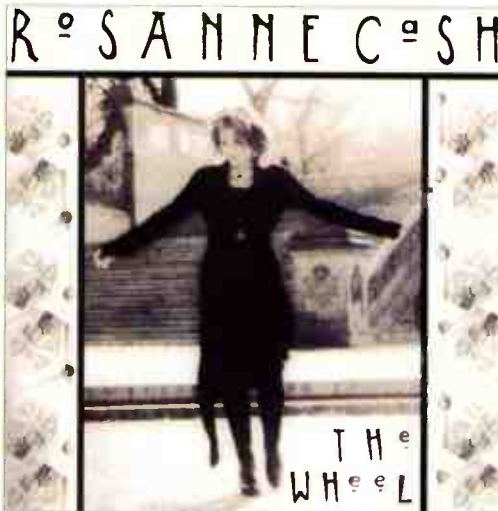
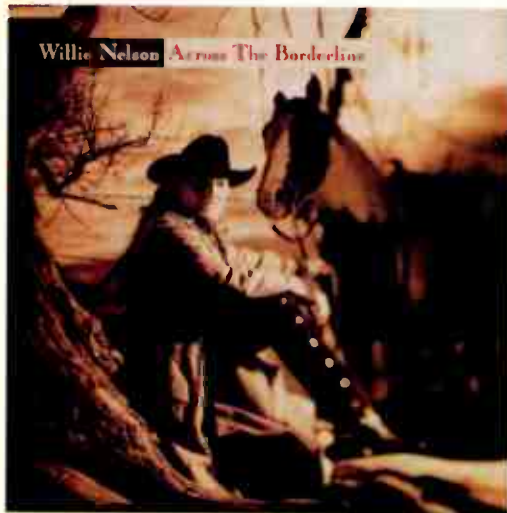
—PATRICK CARR

Willie Nelson

Across the Borderline
Columbia CK 52752

It's been a good while since we've had anything new from Willie, largely due to circumstances (including IRS problems) beyond his control. Since he last made a new

Record Reviews



record, things have changed; a new generation of singers, for better or worse, have generated the current unprecedented country music boom. Whether some of that music is as connected to past traditions as Willie's has been is debatable.

One warning: Don't mistake this as a comeback or all-star tribute. Those types of records are usually doomed to fail. The very nature of the word "comeback" indicates the artist is a memento of a bygone day. All-star tributes featuring cameos by everyone and anyone usually generate much media attention and provoke high expectations of the music within. Fact is, it might look good to have certain artists participate by overdubbing a background vocal or two, but if the chemistry between singers isn't there, the results are bound to disappoint.

This album avoids either trap. Willie wouldn't let that happen, and the choice of producer Don Was made it even less likely. Was may not be a well-known name in Nashville, but he's well established in the pop field since he not only produces Bob Dylan, but genuinely revitalized rock and blues singer Bonnie Raitt's stagnant career a few years ago and leads/led his own bizarre satirical band, Was (Not Was). He's not some pseudo-country producer who is grinding out cowboy-hatted rock, and simply set out to produce a good record.

His creativity and skill at bringing out the best in singers, combined with Willie's eclecticism, worked to everyone's advantage. The few duets aren't gimmicky, and some rank with his best. In most other cases, the "guests" play instruments or sing backup.

Willie sings the title song with fellow Highwayman Kris Kristofferson. Willie and Bob Dylan perform their composition, "Heartland," dealing with the plight of the farmers Willie has championed for years through FarmAid. Tackling Dylan's own tension-filled ballad "What Was It You Wanted" himself, Willie gives it the right amount of drama. Though Lyle Lovett didn't participate on the two numbers that Willie recorded, "If I Were the Man You Wanted" and the conventionally country "Farther Down the Line," Willie handles the Lovett songs well. One wonders what he and Lyle would sound like singing with Lovett's band.

Two of the most powerful moments are duets with female vocalists. "Getting Over You" is sung with Bonnie Raitt (who also plays slide guitar). And his collaboration with controversial Irish singer Sinéad O'Connor on rock vocalist Peter Gabriel's "Don't Give Up" (originally sung as a duet between Gabriel and Kate Bush) is dramatic and as moving as anything he's recorded in many years.

He also makes John Hiatt's "(The) Most Unoriginal Sin" soar. With Paul Simon playing guitar, Willie tackles two Simon standards: the sparsely arranged "American Tune" and Simon's more recent "Graceland." Everyone's not from the rock field, however. On "I Live the Life I Love" he's backed by two of my favorites: legendary jazz pianist Mose Allison (who should have sung along) and 82-year-old bassist Milt Hinton. Three Willie originals, the simple, heartfelt "Valentine," "Still Is Still Moving to Me" (with Willie's regular band) and his old chestnut, "She's Not For You," all fit the concept.

Willie's 1973 Atlantic album, *Shotgun Willie*, served as one of the Outlaw Movement's early salvos, revealing his eclectic approach, shattering the Nashville formulas of the day and, in the process, reaching a wider audience. Twenty years later *Across the Borderline* resoundingly reaffirms that versatility.

—RICH KIENZLE

Rosanne Cash
The Wheel
Columbia CK 52729

If the truth be told, I have mixed feelings about the newest Rosanne Cash album, which, I realize, puts me in an incredibly small minority. The

main line on Rosanne Cash is that her interior monologues represent the zenith of songwriting, a woman struggling to shake off shackles, coming to grips with life without a man, struggling to break out of meticulously constructed interior walls.

I'll buy that. Rosanne Cash writes songs like a watchmaker makes Rolexes—intricately constructed miniature machines, wheels and gears and cogs and springs that all work perfectly together. Angst and pain and betrayal and lust. Wind it up, and it bleeds: *If there's a God on my side/Why don't she show me her face?/If there's a God on my side/Could she live in this place?*

The Wheel is supposed to be the redemption album, following her grinding first effort after the much-publicized breakup with Rodney Crowell. There is damn little redemption here, and everything is tempered, hedged: *I'm not looking for your answers/Oh darlin', don't you see/That just to know the question/Is good enough for me.*

Is the songwriting flawless? Yes.

Is the instrumentation a textbook of good taste? Yes.

Are the production values right up there with good chardonnay? Yes.

Is Rosanne Cash's delivery right on the money? Yes, yes and yes.

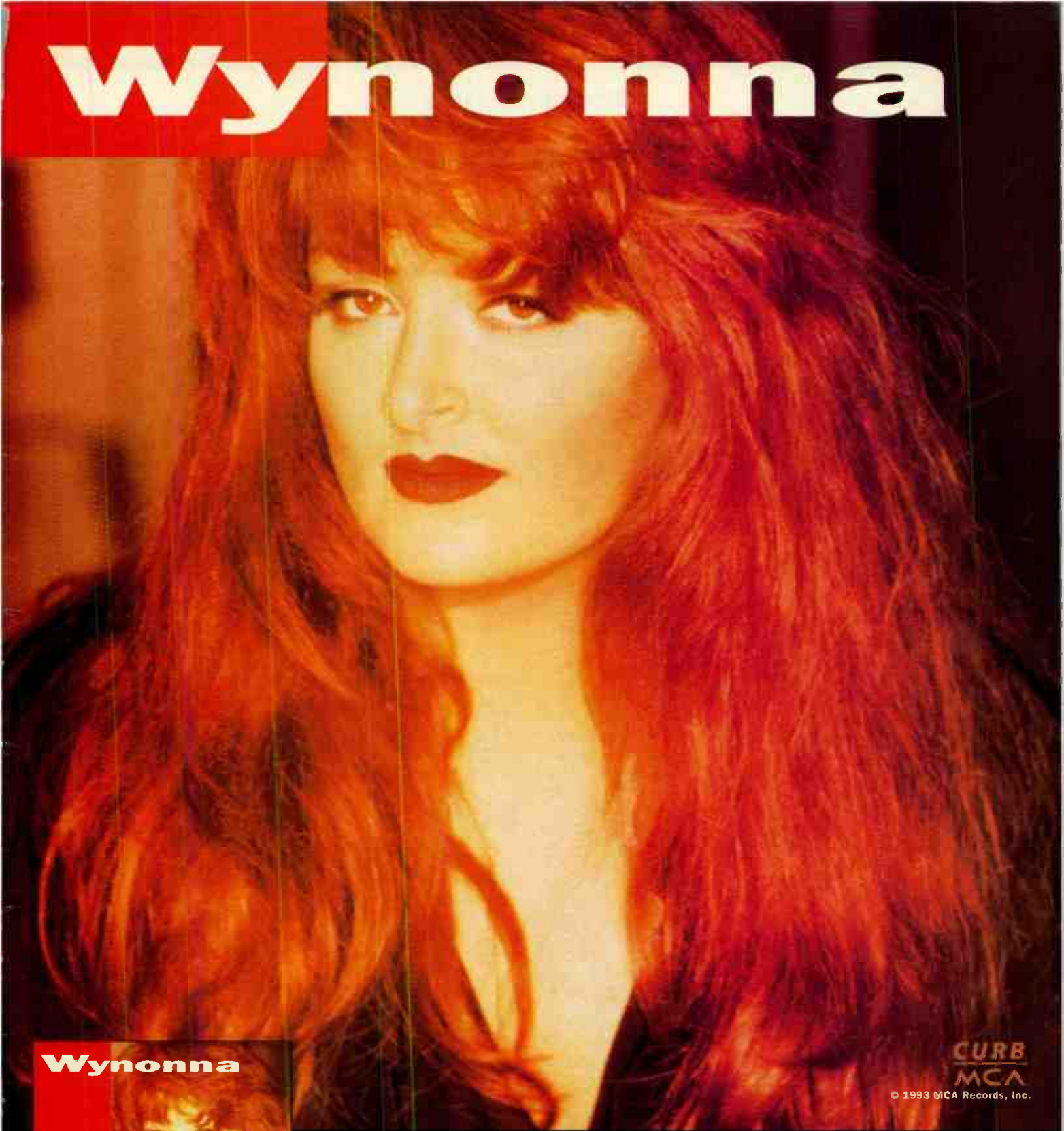
Will I ever listen to this album again? No.

The Wheel is like all those 12-step programs, maybe great things for some people, but, to me, joyless visions of a world where, to borrow a phrase from ancient Kenny Rogers, "the best that you can hope for is to die in your sleep."

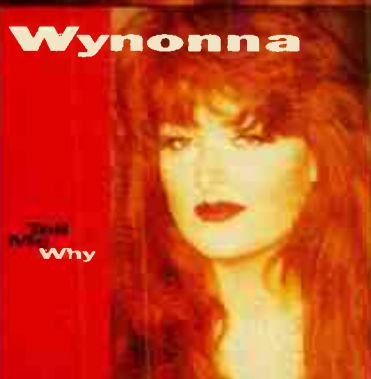
In my heart, I believe that there has to be more to life than breaking even. I suppose it's the mark of powerful music that it can elicit powerful responses. Sometimes, those responses are negative. "I know no man I can trust," she sings in "Roses in the Fire." Sad.

—MICHAEL BANE

Wynonna



Wynonna



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Record Reviews



Vern Gosdin
Nickels and Dimes and Love
Columbia CK 52994

When you think back, Vern Gosdin's had a pretty amazing career, rising to prominence as a member of a crossover-bluegrass group (The Hillmen), dropping out of the business entirely for better than a decade, then returning to rack up a string of hits for both major labels and indies. And he's been so low-profile about it all along that it's been easy to take him for granted.

Yet the Gosdin voice, which echoes pristine mountain hollows and gritty honky tonks simultaneously, remains one of the most distinctly country vehicles around. The way he uses it—modulating effortlessly from mid-range to a high whine and back, all that vibrato—is no small thing, and this is not a man to be taken for granted. This latest prepossessing effort certainly reconfirms that—but again, in such an unflashy way that it virtually guarantees Gosdin will remain the kind of journeyman star who continues to do well without drawing a lot of attention to himself. That's just his nature, I guess, but if anyone in country music today can be said to speak softly while carrying a big stick, it's Gosdin, and I'll always admire him for that.

Johnny MacRae's opening title song, expressing nostalgia for the bad old days, sets the tone for an album that is preoccupied with separation and with a sense of good-things-having-gone-bad. That theme is continued with "Back When" and later stated outright on "Two Good People with a Love Gone Bad," a duet with Janie Fricke. Vern proves adept on a pair of certifiable Jonesers in "Where the Tall Grass Grows" and "Any Old Miracle," while on "What Are We Gonna Do About Me," a mournful harmonica envelops his voice while the steel emphasizes loneliness and isolation. On the extra-twangy "Bury Me in a Jukebox," he pulls off the oft-difficult feat of referring in the lyric to other song titles without showing any affectation. For a change of pace, "I Like My Country Music Kinda Rock" rides along on a thumping beat, jolting guitar, Jerry Lee piano, and fat fiddle and steel breaks that reinforce that sentiment, with a high harmony voice aiding Vern as his own phrasing splits the difference between Jones and Hank Jr.

Want final proof? Just check out the closing, "A Better Way to Say Goodbye." This is a showcase ballad for Gosdin, one of those "singer's songs" with a tricky meter that requires some fancy phrasing, and Vern handles it masterfully. It's as untrendy as hard



country gets, but solid through and through—dramatizing the simple, undeniable truism that Vern Gosdin was country when country wasn't cool, when it was, and at all times in between.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Dolly Parton
Slow Dancing with the Moon
Columbia CK 53199

There are two Dolly Partons: the Nursery School Teacher and the Eccentric Aunt. The Nursery School Teacher wants everyone in the classroom to feel happy and involved, so she wears a perpetual grin and leads simple, upbeat sing-alongs. By contrast, the Eccentric Aunt takes her favorite nieces and nephews aside at the wedding and delights them with uncensored stories about the family history and gives them the straight dope about desire, heartbreak and true love.

It's impossible to claim that one is the real Dolly Parton and the other isn't, for she seems genuinely committed to both roles. It is possible, however, to say that the Eccentric Aunt makes much better music than the Nursery School Teacher. Unfortunately, someone convinced Parton in 1977 that the Nursery School Teacher was the key to cross-

over pop success, and she has let that half of her personality dominate her career ever since.

Oh, there have been times when the Eccentric Aunt has gained control again and created such brilliant (and underappreciated) albums as 1980's *9 to 5 and Odd Jobs*, 1982's *Heartbreak Express*, 1983's *Burlap and Satin* and 1987's *Trio*. More often than not, though, her post-crossover career has yielded such Nursery School Teacher embarrassments as 1979's *Great Balls of Fire*, 1985's *Real Love*, 1987's *Rainbow* and 1989's *White Limozeen*.

On her new album, *Slow Dancing with the Moon*, Parton's two warring sides reach a stand-off. The already-famous video for the album's first single, "Romeo," features Parton and her girlfriends (Tanya Tucker, Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Kathy Mattea and Pam Tillis) lusting after a cute young cowboy (Billy Ray Cyrus) in a dance hall. This would seem like an example of the Eccentric Aunt, but the giggly vocals, the sing-song melody and the overall jokiness render it as silly and harmless as a nursery rhyme.

In "I'll Make Your Bed," a young wife confesses that she's not much good in the kitchen or sewing room but is real good in bed. Unfortunately, Parton is too transparently sweet to be a convincing sexpot, and her vocal seems out of sync with her lyrics and catchy melody. In "Full Circle," an older wife expresses relief and satisfaction that she and her husband are still friends after so many hard times and troubles. Parton's vocal, though, is so overly cheerful, and Steve Buckingham's production is so excessively punchy that the lyrics' sense of exhausted triumph gets lost entirely. Maybe Whitney Houston, who had such great success with Parton's "I Will Always Love You," will record these songs with the lust and weariness they deserve.



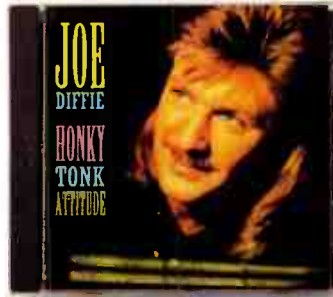
Dolly Parton
"Slow Dancing With The Moon"
• Columbia



McBride & The Ride
"Hurry Sundown" • MCA
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Tracy Byrd
"Tracy Byrd" • MCA
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Record Reviews

By contrast, Parton the Eccentric Aunt is at her honest best on "(You Got Me Over) A Heartache Tonight," a ballad duet with Billy Dean. She sings the part of a woman who has latched on to a stranger as a way of distracting herself from a recent, painful breakup. Both the vocals and the production are understated enough that you can hear her ambivalence about what she's done. Her vocal slowly gathers its power during the grand melody until it climaxes in a high flourish, claiming that whether the new relationship lasts or not, it has already served its purpose.

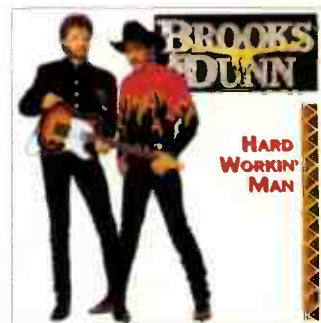
The dominant instrument on that song is the steel guitar, and it's no coincidence that Parton the Eccentric Aunt is most comfortable with the most traditional country and folk arrangements. The album's best performance comes on "What Will Baby Be," Parton's tribute to the Scotch-Irish folk songs she learned as a child in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The mandolin and Irish pipes and Maura O'Connell's Irish harmonies complement Parton's sad, fatalistic vocal about the way children absorb their parents' worst habits.

Almost as impressive is "More Where That Came From," an energetic country two-step fueled by Jo-El Sonnier's accordion and Marty Stuart's mandolin. Perhaps the most old-fashioned country song is "Cross My Heart," a marvelous ballad co-written by Dolly's brother, Randy Parton. Vince Gill and Ricky Skaggs sing harmonies, but it's Dolly's vocal that captures the anguished frustration of someone trying to convince a doubting lover of her sincerity.

Slow Dancing with the Moon may be Parton's best album since *Trio* six years ago, but it's still a frustrating experience. It's so obvious that the Eccentric Aunt is still one of the best singers and songwriters (of either gender) in Nashville, and yet the Nursery School Teacher so often be-

trays that talent with cutesy cheerleading (as on the title tune and the two tracks with a church choir) that the listener ends up frustrated as often as satisfied.

—GEOFFREY HIMES



Brooks & Dunn
Hard Workin' Man
Arista AR 8716

After listening to *Hard Workin' Man*, Brooks & Dunn's second album, I'm just as confused as ever about where this spirited duo fits into the great C&W scheme of things. Their music is hard-driving, good-timey and as slick as a million-dollar beer commercial. Though no one's ever going to accuse them of utter originality, just try and sit still when they start layin' down one of their catchy "Boot Scootin' Boogyn'" beats.

Brooks & Dunn more or less came out of nowhere a little while back with *Brand New Man*, their debut album, which went on to sell a few million copies and generate a raft of hit singles like "My Next Broken Heart," "Neon Moon," and, of course, the old "boot-scootin'" anthem. And now they're back with a follow-up album, cleverly called *Hard Workin' Man*. (Catchy, huh!?)

Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn (who are, of course, Brooks & Dunn) wrote most all the songs this time around—eight of them, anyway. And golly-gee, do they know how to write 'em! Glancing through the lyric sheets that came with my advance copy of *Hard Workin' Man*, I don't think

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there's a single neo-country buzz word or cliché that they missed, or a culture-laden name they haven't managed to somehow drop. (Suffice to say, they write a lot of songs about people sitting around drinking and listening to George Jones and George Strait.) And, boy, there's some real deep thematic stuff here, too: real clever hook lines about girls in tight blue jeans, riding around in four-wheel-drive vehicles, getting smashed on tequila, and driving around in four-wheel-drive vehicles getting smashed on tequila with girls in tight blue jeans. Yes, indeed, these two Calvin Klein cowboys sure know how to tell it like it is. This is real manly, male-bonding type music to kick your oversized tires to while you chew the worm in the bottom of the tequila bottle.

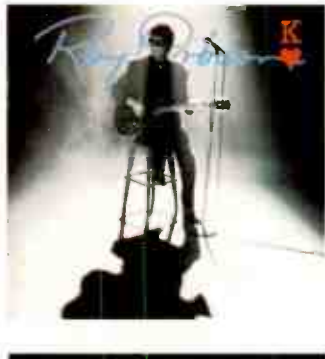
Brooks' & Dunn's musical allure sounds to me like it's a mile wide and an inch deep. Yet—this said—it's also an allure based on a sharp lyric hook and a big beat that not only works, but is downright irresistible at times. The title tune, for instance, has a real kick-slam bottom end to it, even if lyrically it sounds like a pale echo of one of Merle Haggard's great working man's anthems from the 1960's. (We've come a long way, baby!) Indeed, I hear at least three or four potential smash singles on here. One real stand-out is "Rock My World, Little Country Girl," (by Bill LaBounty and Steve O'Brien) about a nightclub cowboy with two left feet who's being worn out by his underage girlfriend and loving every minute of it. And as a special CD bonus, that red-hot, rap-dance remix of "B-b-b-b-boot-scoot-t-t-t-tin" is included here, too—as if we haven't been boot-scooted to death already! (If Max Headroom were reincarnated as a country music potato head, this would surely be his theme song.)

Everything on *Hard Workin' Man* sort of flows to-

gether seamlessly. There's nothing really deep, nothing challenging. The hook, the beat—and the buzz words—are everything. The only exception is "Our Time Is Coming," a Brooks-Dunn composition that's such a heartfelt testimony to the strength of the human spirit amidst hard times that it sounds woefully out of place amidst all the other slick, good-timey sounds. "Our Time Is Coming" gives the impression that these guys maybe have a little bit more depth and dimension than they're actually letting on.

But, whoa! Pardon me for gettin' so heavy, podnah! Break out the double-platinum certification, pass the tequila, kick your Michelin off-road tires, and let the good times roll. Go tell all the gals in their tight blue jeans that Brooks & Dunn done got a new one out.

—BOB ALLEN



Roy Orbison
King of Hearts
Virgin V-86520

When he died in 1988, Roy Orbison was finally getting the recognition he long deserved as one of America's greatest singers in any style. "Only the Lonely," "Blue Bayou" and "Oh Pretty Woman" were becoming standards beyond musical category. His records with The Traveling Wilburys (Bob Dylan, Jeff Lynne, Tom Petty and George Harrison) were selling and, combined, all this made his death that much harder to take. Orbison's last album, *Mystery Girl*, com-

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Record Reviews

pleted just before he died, brought him added recognition as an artist from the past still able to compete in a contemporary market as a modern artist, not a golden oldie.

Like most others, Orbison left behind a few unfinished and incomplete vocal tapes, and his widow, Barbara, assembled some of Roy's friends and admirers to complete several unfinished tracks, mixing them with other previously released numbers to create this new Orbison work. Such posthumous albums are longshots to succeed. Remember the geniuses who overdubbed new accompaniment on Elvis' already-classic version of "Guitar Man" or slathered contemporary accompaniments onto Jim Reeves' records? Remember *Hank Williams with Strings*? That kind of stupidity should be a Federal offense.

Though this one is far from perfect, and had to be filled out with previously released material ("by popular demand," says the accompanying press handout that Virgin included with the record), it's better than most similar projects. That's partly due to the quality of Orbison's vocals and partly because Barbara Orbison recruited quality people like Don Was, who produced Willie Nelson's new album (see the review in this section), to produce most of the leftovers. These songs were finished off by sensi-

tively chosen musicians including Robbie Robertson (of the 1960's rock group, The Band, more recently a solo artist) and Clarence Clemons (former Bruce Springsteen sax player).

"You're the One," "We'll Take the Night," "After the Love Is Gone" and "I Walk Alone" aren't on a par with his best material, but though there's no telling how Roy meant them to sound, they're far from mediocre. The demo recording of "Careless Heart" works, as does "Love in Time," which opens with a moving, sensitive guitar solo from Robertson.

Jeff Lynne produced "Heartbreak Radio" from the leftovers; and the previously released hit, "I Drove All Night," combines drama with production that conjures up (for me at least) flying down an interstate at 4 A.M. Included to fill things out are his 1987 remake of "Crying," sung with longtime admirer and former country singer k.d. lang, and the mediocre "Coming Home" from the dreadful Johnny Cash/Jerry Lee Lewis/Carl Perkins/Orbison collaboration, *Class of '55*, recorded at the Sun studios in 1985.

Any album like this is still a mishmash. Yet despite the padding, *King of Hearts* could serve as a model of how to do a posthumous project right.

—RICH KIENZLE

Deborah Allen *Delta Dreamland* Giant 24485

I've always hated it that Deborah Allen didn't get to be a big star. Of course, it doesn't hurt that she's a homie, a Memphis girl. Grow up in Memphis, and you get all this music by osmosis, sort of a musical stew of blues and R&B and country and Elvis and plain ole ugly bar music. As it happens, Allen not only got the music, but she got a voice to deliver it with. So when she broke away from schlock with her *Let Me Be the First* album in 1986, I had nothing but praise. Forget the come hither liner photo (still one of my favorites, Deborah); she could sing, and she wasn't afraid to let go.

Unfortunately, she got caught in a record company mousetrap a couple of years later, and I figured she was, as so many others, lost in space.

She's been beamed back, courtesy of Giant Records, and, yes, she can still sing. The most striking cut on the album is the Roy Orbison-tinted "Two Shades of Blue," including a great percussion line by husband/co-writer Rafe VanHoy. But what I really liked was how she almost pulled off that trademark Orbison full-voice ending. Damn, Deborah, that was a neat trick. I'm about worn out with all the faux folkie

women singers and the endless number of pop-tart cowgirls. I missed that gritty, grimy Memphis sound, hanging out there on the edge somewhere, something that doesn't sound like it was manufactured.

I like the way she plays with her voice—"Chain Lightning," for instance, or parts of "Rock Me." "Delta Dreamland" has a real nice dreamland feel to it, too.

There's still some sludge on this album ("Long Time Lovin' You" and "Emotional Moon" didn't work for me; too much of a "Jeez, where's the hit?" feel to both of them). And "Undeniable" is a definite barker. But, on the whole, if you're looking for an antidote to creeping cowgirlism or folkie fever, look no further.

—MICHAEL "HOME-BOY" BANE

Tracy Byrd *Tracy Byrd* MCA 10649

On the surface, Tracy Byrd could be another George Strait clone, which is completely unnecessary, since Strait is hardly ready for retirement. Byrd comes from the Beaumont area, the same end of East Texas as George Jones. Clearly inspired by Strait, Byrd differs greatly from Mark Chesnutt, for whom he used to work. His voice has a slightly sharper edge and more depth than Chesnutt (though less than Strait), yet has an immediacy and the native's feel for Texas music.

Byrd is not really a songwriter. He was involved with only one number here: co-writing the excellent and catchy "That's the Thing About a Memory" with co-producer Keith Stegall and Lewis Anderson. However, the other songs were expertly chosen. The Buddy Cannon-Vern Gosdin-Dean Dillon "Back in the Swing of Things" romps along, buoyed by romping George Strait/Bob Wills



JOSHUA

by FayZah Spanos

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Doll shown smaller than actual seated height of approximately 10" including his hat.

Record Reviews

swing. "Why," "Hat Trick," the rocking, Bakersfield-flavored "Talk to Me Texas" and "Edge of a Memory" all succeed, as does the ballad "Why Don't That Telephone Ring" because Byrd's vocal command easily puts them across.

Even a casual listener will note a difference between the seven Stegall-produced songs and the three harder-edged numbers produced by MCA's Tony Brown, which move into a slightly more contemporary vein. The 1972 Johnny Paycheck hit, "Someone to Give My Love To," the upbeat "Holdin' Heaven" and "An Out of Control Raging Fire," his duet with Dawn Sears (written by Melba Montgomery and Kostas), reflect this shift. But Byrd's not thrown by the transition and sounds as good as he does on the other numbers.

There's nothing revolutionary or earthshaking here, but I like Byrd's mix of the dancehall sound and the three Brown-produced numbers—a sensible extension of tradition that doesn't come off like rehashed Garth-rock aimed at the same audience. For that, Tony Brown and Keith Stegall deserve credit, and as for Byrd, he could be a strong contender in the future.

—RICH KIENZLE

Hank Williams Jr. *Out of Left Field* Capricorn/Curb 45225

These past few years Hank Williams Jr. has just about worn everybody out with his endless musical allusions to his dead father and his interminably self-referencing songs about what a tough, rowdy Southern chauvinist he is. Gradually, he turned his once inspired "whiskey-bent-and-hellbound-stoned-at-the-juke-box-all-my-rowdy-friends" shtick into a stale formula and damn near beat us all to death with it.

In listening to *Out of Left Field*, Junior's latest album, I can't help but think that the



"Ol' Bocephus" himself finally figured out he was going to have to cool it with all the macho man stuff, and that either he was gonna change, or his audience was gonna leave. Which is to say I've played *Out of Left Field* at least a half dozen times now, and—amazingly!—there is not one single fleeting reference to Hank Sr. And that in itself is a start.

Perhaps it's going a little bit too far to say that Junior has hit a new plateau of maturity on *Out of Left Field*. But, damn, something's sure going on here. There are songs here—like "Everything Comes Down to Money and Love," a wistful ballad about hard times and loneliness written by Dave Loggins and Grove Scrivenor—in which he actually betrays a little humility. On others—like "Both Sides of Goodbye," about a heartbroken man who somehow finds the strength to console the woman who's leaving him by assuring her that she's only doing what she's got to do—he reveals a little empathy. And for once in Hank Jr.'s songs—like the title cut, and even the delightfully risqué "Dirty Mind"—women are treated as equals, or at least as something more than hood ornaments or bowling trophies.

I won't say that *Out of Left Field* is a remarkable album. Junior made his classic albums like *Hank Junior and Friends*, *The New South* and *Whiskey Bent and Hell Bound*—back in the 1970's, and it's safe to say he'll never again match their intensity. He was in his 20's then; he's 40-something looking back at 20 now. Just like a lot of us are.



What is different about *Out of Left Field*, though, is that Williams has indeed shaken free of his stale formula. Which is good, since there's something sadly comical about a middle-aged man still trying to play the part of the post-adolescent hellraiser. This time, he's dared to be reflective, and, at times, even humble. He's also mellowed as a singer. He imbues the title tune, a 1960's Percy Sledge soul/R&B oldie, with a gospel fervor, replete with a churchy-sounding organ, piano fills and swelling gospel harmonies. His moving performance here makes the discovery of love and true companionship sound like a quasi-religious awakening.

There are still a few vestiges of the old "rowdy friends" routine. But now on songs like "(Sonofabitch!) I'm Tired," a blistering, good-timey tune about a hard-working man who's being bled to death by his high-rolling, spendthrift wife, and "Diamond Mine," a tongue-in-cheek ditty about a goofy guy who gets laughed at by all the rich country club swells at the same time he's secretly making time with their lonely wives, there's a redeeming sense of humor at work behind his bluster.

This wouldn't be a Hank Jr. album without one of his almost trademark social commentaries. On "Hide and Seek" his heart is in the right place as he lambastes everything from the Rodney King beating to the S&L bailout and the Anita Hill hearings. But his commentary cuts too wide a swath to leave a deep impression, and the righteous

anger that fueled his early protest songs like "A Country Boy Can Survive" has now cooled into a droll cynicism.

But so what if Junior does have a couple of relapses? The main thing is that on *Out of Left Field*, he's revived his music not with flash or a higher decibel level, but with a touch of heart and soul. And for most of us, it comes just in the nick of time.

—BOB ALLEN

Billy Burnette *Coming Home* Capricorn 42007

Billy Burnette has always had a way of falling between the cracks, or, perhaps more accurately, of working between the cracks. Look at his pedigree and his track record so far. He is the son of Dorsey Burnette and nephew of Johnny Burnette, who as two-thirds of The Rock 'n' Roll Trio were responsible for some of the rawest and most exciting Memphis rockabilly of the 1950's—burners like "Tear It Up" and "Train Kept a-Rollin'"—before moving to Los Angeles to become country-rock singer-songwriters of the early 60's. (Johnny had "Sweet Sixteen," while Dorsey had "Tall Oak Tree" as an artist and several Ricky Nelson hits as a writer.) So Billy grew up in L.A., but went to Memphis himself in the early 70's. He then enjoyed a successful run as a Nashville songwriter, a two-year stint as singer/guitarist for Roger Miller and a pretty sharp country-rock album of his own in 1980, followed by three middling country hits in 1985-6. In 1987, he put everything aside to join faded L.A. pop-rock superstars Fleetwood Mac.

You can hear all those influences on *Coming Home*, an album of countrified pop singer-songwriter music with a 70's feel that could prove right up the alley of all those boomers who put Fleetwood Mac at the top of the charts nearly two

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decades ago and Bill Clinton in the White House a few months back. Burnette's music is undeniably catchy—catchy rhythm figures, catchy melodies, catchy hooks in the lyrics and in the crisp acoustic/electric guitar interplay. Unfortunately, it's catchy in a transient sort of way, agreeable at the moment but not exactly something that might stick to the ribs. The instrumentation is country, but the effect is rock—fiddle and steel are used frequently, for example, but with a beefier, more rock-like feel. Still, there's no doubting the country credentials of someone who opens a song ("Into the Storm") by singing, "I just got over getting over her."

Billy recorded the set live in the studio, with no overdubs except some of the backing vocals. This approach gives the songs a loose, spontaneous air that, unlike much of what's released today, sounds like it's coming from real mortals sorta like you and me. What the set really lacks is voice, both literally and figuratively—Billy's actual voice is not distinctive, and neither is his songwriting.

For me the greatest pleasure is "Sugar Babe," which has an intoxicatingly sensual feel thanks to the shimmering guitar (accented by tambourine), pillow-like bass line and reverential vocals. The combination makes for a wonderful update of that early 60's Dorsey/Johnny country-rock

sound. The rest is a mixed bag of small pleasures and minor irritations. "This Love (Ain't Long for This World)" recalls the 70's L.A. country-rock Fleetwood Mac often drew on (right down to equating the country with clean livin'). "The Bigger the Love" is a hurting ballad with an evocative sway, while "Walk with Me" draws on effectively gospel motifs for both the music and lyric. But "Tangled Up in Texas" comes off as a contrivance in search of easy airplay, and "I Recovered, I Survived" builds melodramatically in an ersatz attempt at more gospel. Mixed bag, indeed.

But in the current anything-goes radio environment, that alone won't necessarily hurt Billy Burnette; what might is his inability to come up with something truly indelible, as opposed to catchy. But when he sings, "I love my jukebox/ And I love my country songs" on the aforementioned "This Love (Ain't Long for This World)," well, I certainly don't doubt him.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Tracy Lawrence

Alibis
Atlantic 82483

Tracy Lawrence's feathery mustache is a bit darker than Alan Jackson's, but it's just as cute, and Lawrence's

George Jones imitation is just as good as Jackson's, too. Lawrence's sophomore album, *Alibis*, contains enough old-fashioned pleasures that it nearly matches the triumph of Jackson's recent release, *A Lot About Livin'*.

Like Jackson's album, *Alibis* is crammed full of hooks built around puns so corny they make you wince before you grin. When Lawrence sings, "We still live in the same house, but we don't love here anymore," for example, you have to admire a committee of songwriters (Kenny Beard, B. Alan and Jimmy Darrell) who could come up with a play on words so dumb, so obvious and yet so memorably perfect for marriages that have gone stale. It wouldn't be nearly as effective, however, if Lawrence didn't deliver the authentic tears-in-the-beer ballad vocal.

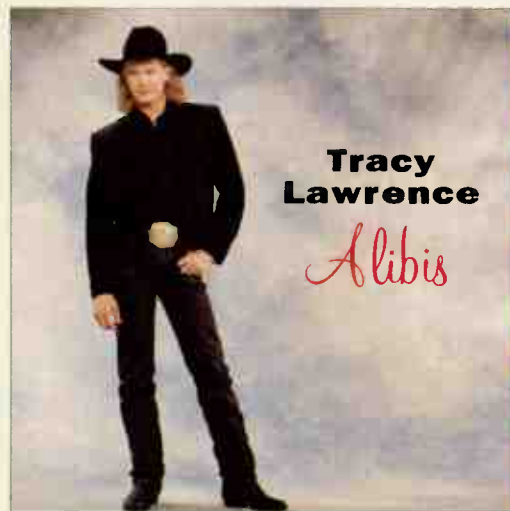
Lawrence's rural Arkansas tenor is so convincingly honky tonk that he sounds country even when the arrangement is the kind of Southern-rock boogie you'd expect from Travis Tritt—or .38 Special. The album's opening cut about money problems has that kind of sound, but Lawrence's drawl is so genuine that even the most conservative country fan will have trouble resisting the punchline, "Some was spent on gambling; a lot was spent on women ... I hate to admit it, but I threw the rest

away." The album's closing cut has an even harder Southern-rock feel, but Lawrence gives that old mischievous Possum twang to the comic chorus, "If the good die young, mama's little boy...gonna live forever."

The album's first single is the title track, which brings the waltz back to country radio with a punchy chorus pushed along by internal rhymes like "Alibis and lyin' eyes and all the best lines" or "Cheated on and pushed arou' and left alone." Another classic head-shaking pun number is "It Only Takes One Bar (To Make a Prison)."

The album's best song, though, is "My Second Home," an unvarnished honky tonk tune about a saloon that has become the singer's home away from home. Producer James Stroud, who performed the same services on Lawrence's debut as well as on Clint Black's catalogue, creates a hard-swinging drinking-song feel; the songwriters (Lawrence, Beard, Paul Nelson and Mike Dunn) pack the chorus with one good joke after another, and Lawrence belts it out with gusto: "Now the jukebox is my alarm clock; I wake up in a corner booth. I don't have a tab, don't need no cab, 'cause the dance floor is my living room. Well, I might die from a broken heart, but I'll never die of thirst, now that my second home has become my first."

You might say it's corny; you might say it's genius. I say it's both. —GEOFFREY HIMES



Robert Ellis Orrall

Flying Colors
RCA 66090

The first single off *Flying Colors*, Robert Ellis Orrall's first country album, is "Boom! It Was Over." If its jingly-jangly guitar sound and punchy momentum remind one of Foster & Lloyd, that shouldn't be surprising, for the singer co-wrote the song with Bill Lloyd, whose history closely parallels Orrall's.

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Top Female Vocalist

GARTH BROOKS

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"The Chase"

Top Male Vocalist

Entertainer of the Year

Top Vocal Duet
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BILLY DEAN

Top Male Vocalist

CHRIS LEDOUX

Top Vocal Duet
(With Garth Brooks)



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World Radio History

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Lloyd, if you remember, released a new-wave pop album on a small Boston label before teaming up with Radney Foster to create the Rodney Crowell-meets-The-Beatles sound of Foster & Lloyd. Orrall, who grew up near Boston, made three new-wave pop albums (two of them in England) for RCA between 1981 and '84. Like Lloyd, Orrall moved to Nashville and wrote some hits (Shenandoah's "Next to You, Next to Me" and Carlene Carter's "The Sweetest Thing") before coming up with his own Beatlesque take on country music.

John Hiatt also went through his Elvis Costello phase before landing on Music Row writing songs for Rosanne Cash and Suzy Bogguss. Hiatt, however, retained the quirky world view of his new-wave years as he mastered the songcraft of traditional country music. Orrall and Lloyd took the opposite approach; they retained the buoyant guitar-pop of rock 'n' roll and married it to mainstream country's themes of adorable children, innocent victims and pure-hearted suitors.

As a result, Orrall's new album, like its Foster & Lloyd predecessors, quickly catches your attention with its Eagles-like rhythms and guitar licks, but eventually disappoints that initial enthusiasm with feel-good themes so universal as to be impersonal. *Flying Colors* may have more commercial potential than any Hiatt album, but it also has far less substance. It's strange, for Orrall's new-wave albums bristled with a genuine edginess.

Orrall "borrows" the melody from Hiatt's "Georgia Rae" for his song, "I'm Ready When You Are," and it's quickly obvious that Orrall has a much better voice, a full-throated tenor that sails effortlessly through the pop melody. It's also soon clear that the new song isn't about much of anything. Orrall promises an oth-

erwise occupied female that he's ready for romance when she is, but there is no hint of the frustration or impatience you would expect in such a situation.

Orrall is at his best on simple, uptempo songs where his attractive tunes and friendly voice are big assets and his shallow lyrics are minor liabilities. "Boom! It Was Over," the best thing on the album, is a fast and funny number about getting dropped by a girlfriend without warning; pushed along by a reverberating heavy snare drum, the song boasts not one but two catchy hooks. In the same vein are infectious numbers like "It's My Lucky Day" and "True Believer." Unfortunately, the album is dominated by slow, sentimental songs where Orrall's triteness is unprotected by snare patterns and guitar harmonies.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

Run C&W *Into the Twangy-First Century* MCA 10727

Boy, I'll tell you, I thought I knew a thing or two about country music history until I listened to Run C&W's (a.k.a. The Burns Brothers) major-label debut, *Into the Twangy-First Century*.

Into the Twangy-First Century is one of those history-in-the-making, legend-in-a-lunchtime, once-in-a-fortnight breakthrough albums: an extraordinary fusion of bluegrass and Motown soul that's perhaps one of the most important moments in musical history since Elvis discovered fudge-sicles and Hank Snow got his first toupee.

I mean it never crossed my mind until now that soul/R&B greats like Sam & Dave, Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye and Smoky Robinson may have indeed been influenced by the likes of warbling Bill Monroe and raspy-throated old Ralph Stanley. It never crossed my



mind just how much "Walkin' the Dog" and "Salty Dog" have in common. At least not until I heard The Burns Brothers.

Fat chance, you say? Well, I wouldn't have believed it either until I heard The Burnses (the world's only non-identical quadruplets) playing great soul hits of yesteryear like "Stop in the Name of Love," "My Girl" and "I've Been Loving You too Long" the way God intended them to be played: flat-out bluegrass style.

It seems that, unbeknownst to me, The Burns Brothers (Rug, Side, Crashen and G.W. "Wash" Burns, who are, I understand, first cousins to the legendary Will Burns) have been a headlining act on the world-wide Rhythm & Bluegrass circuit for years. They hail from Harlan County, Kentucky, by way of Detroit; and along the way, they've soaked up some mighty strange musical influences. Suffice to say, if James Brown or Otis Redding had been born in eastern Kentucky and ended up in The Stanley Brothers' road band, they might have sounded something like this.

As odd—and appealing—as they are, The Burns Brothers came by their musical licks the honest way: at the knees of their old daddy ("Dad" Burns). Every Saturday night, the Burns family would huddle around their little crystal radio set in their little log cabin just south of Detroit, listening to the clear-channel signal of the Motown sounds. From these humble origins, they went on to fame and fortune. In fact, *Into the Twangy-First Century* even includes a live track

or two from their triumphant performance (67 encores!) at England's legendary Isle of White Bread Festival, where they astounded audiences with an eight-hour, fiddle-banjo instrumental rendition of James Brown's "Papa's Got a Brand-New Bag."

It's a testimonial to The Burns Brothers' sheer musical wizardry that it took no fewer than four producers three years of hard labor to get this incredibly minimalist album down in the studio. (I guess they took a lot of lunch breaks.) And I have a sneaking suspicion that the esteemed producers—Russell Smith, former lead singer of The Amazing Rhythm Aces; Bernie Leadon, a former Eagle turned Nashville session man; Vince Melamed, a former Jimmy Buffet and Bob Dylan sidekick turned Music City picker; and Jim Photoglo, a country songwriter of repute—do a lot more pickin' on here than some Rhythm & Bluegrass purists might want to give them credit for. In fact, if I didn't know better, I could swear that's Smith singing on "Itchy Twitchy Spot," a heart-felt ballad about getting eaten up by chiggers, ticks and mosquitoes on a camping trip. This swelling, itching, aggravating slice of romantic realism is said to have been the original inspiration for Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart." (But don't tell Billy Ray I told you.) In fact, that may be him you can hear in the background laying down subtle percussion licks, pounding on a can of Off.

Nashville is, of course, stunned in the aftermath of this album's release. "What's next," everyone wonders. The most exciting (though still unconfirmed) news so far is that, after hearing this album, Bill Monroe has booked these producers to cut his next album, to be called *Bill Monroe & The Supremes*. What can I say, boys, except I love it, and I'm sure Otis and Marvin would be proud of you, too.

—BOB ALLEN

Classic Record Reviews

Classic Record Reviews continues, presenting major reviews from the last 20 years, in honor of our 20th Anniversary. This time up it's Kelly Delaney's review of Merle Haggard's Serving 190 Proof. It appeared in the July/August 1979 issue of Country Music Magazine. Hag was 42 years old at the time, and CMM was seven.

Merle Haggard Serving 190 Proof MCA 3089

As a recording artist, Merle Haggard can pretty much do what he wants. Only someone with such immense talent as Haggard's could successfully record an entire album of train songs, as well as albums dedicated to the music of Elvis Presley and Jimmie Rodgers. Haggard has few peers as either a singer or writer. There are a few who are as good, but

there's nobody better.

His new release, *Serving 190 Proof*, demonstrates that Haggard still records that he wants in his own inimitable style. He is still singing about the same subjects he's chosen in the past—lost love, drifting, drinking too much and working too hard. Yet his treatment of the same topics is always refreshing. As the old joke goes, “Merle Haggard could sing the Yellow Pages and have a hit on it.” Fortunately he doesn't resort to such hyperbole on this album.

Hag wrote nine of the songs on this album, including “Roses in the Winter,” which is destined to become a Haggard classic. It is as moving as anything he has ever recorded. For the most part, this is a solid album with other outstanding new Haggard-penned tunes, including “Footlights,” a well-worn theme dressed in new imagery; “Driftwood,” simplistic, acoustic with unassuming, self-scrutinizing lyrics; “I Can't Get Away,” bluesy, marked with the urgency of Haggard's vocal; and “Sing a Family Song,” a relative to “Daddy Frank” which still manages to hold its own. By comparison, the hit single off the album, “Red Bandana,” is not the strongest cut. Of the two songs Haggard didn't write, Red Lane's “I Must Have Done Something Bad,” could be another hit, due to Hag's superb interpretation.



The musicianship and production of this album is re-

served yet tasty, mixed with Haggard's resonant voice. His voice is indeed an instrument, and it is to somebody's credit, presumably his long time friend and producer, Fuzzy Owen, that it is recorded as such. Assisting on production chores for this album was Jimmy Bowen.

While most LP's usually contain ten songs, this one includes 11, which should be a welcome bonus for Haggard fans. While the album does have its less spectacular moments, it still contains enough of Haggard at his best to live up to its title—Merle Haggard is still serving 190 proof music.

—KELLY DELANEY

Long a favorite of Country Music Magazine's Editors-at-Large and Contributing Editors, Haggard appeared on many 20 Who Mattered lists. Serving 190 Proof was Number Three in the tally of editors' picks for 20 Best Albums.

MARTY BROWN

WILD KENTUCKY SKIES

“A Once-In-A-Generation Talent”

“The Very Heart And Heartache Of
A Timeless Tradition”

IN STORES NOW

MCA

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People

THE THING CALLED LOVE

The new movie from Paramount Pictures, which we mentioned last issue, will be hitting the screens this summer. Recall that the comedy/drama follows the hearts and dreams of four aspiring songwriters in Nashville. **River Phoenix, Samantha Mathis, Dermot Mulroney, Sandra Bullock** and **K.T. Oslin** have starring roles. **Trisha Yearwood, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Kevin Welch, Pam Tillis, Deborah Allen** and **Katy Moffat** are among those with cameos. **Peter Bogdanovich** directs. K.T. plays the owner of the legendary Bluebird Cafe, where the film's characters participate in open-mike nights. Look for it in mid-July.

CMA'S BIG DAY

The 27th annual CMA Awards Show will be telecast live from the Grand Ole Opry on CBS-TV on September 29, 1993. For your info, 1992's CMA show was viewed by 48 million people.

TNN'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to everybody at The Nashville Network on TNN's 10th anniversary. Imagine where country music could be today without this wonderful network and its focus on the Sounds of Music Row. So I salute you, TNN, for a job well done. You are partly responsible for **Garth Brooks, Billy Ray Cyrus, Alan Jackson, Reba McEntire, Trisha Yearwood, Randy Travis, Travis Tritt, Alabama** and all the other Gold and platinum stars in the atmosphere. Those videos have kept the artists before the fans eyes while they were busy elsewhere. Special credit to **Ralph Emery** and *Nashville Now* for reaching down to give new artists that proverbial push.

MARTY PARTY WITH LORRIE MORGAN

Marty Stuart and **Lorrie Morgan** hosted the TNN/*Music City News* Songwriters Awards Show from the Grand Ole Opry stage. The ten honored songs included "I

Still Believe in You" (co-written by **Vince Gill** and **John Barlow Jarvis**), which won top honors and was a Grammy winner as well; "Look at Us," penned by Gill and **Max D. Barnes** and performed by Gill; and "Keep It Between the Lines," co-written by **Kathy Louvin** (daughter of the late **Ira Louvin** and the only female winner of the night) and **Russell Smith** and sung by **Ricky Van Shelton**. Three-song winner **Alan Jackson** performed "Someday," which he wrote with **Jim McBride**, and "Midnight in Montgomery," co-written with **Don Sampson**, while **Randy Travis** performed "Forever Together," a song he and Jackson co-wrote, via tape. Perennial faves **Norro Wilson** and **George Richey** were awarded for "A Picture of Me (Without You)," a recent hit for co-host **Morgan**; **Billy Dean** and his trademark song, "Billy the Kid," were awarded along with co-writer **Paul Nelson**; **Ronnie Dunn's** "Best Song" was his self-penned "Boot Scootin' Boogie" that he sang with his partner **Kix Brooks**, and **Billy Ray Cyrus** sang and danced through his monster hit, "Achy Breaky Heart," while **Don Von Tress** got the award as writer. The great **George Jones** received a standing ovation for his part of the segment honoring the late **Roger Miller**. **Marty Stuart** and **Roy Clark** joined him in the tribute. I must say, **Marty** and **Lorrie** did a good job hosting the show. They dressed well, too.



Tillis, Oslin, director Bogdanovich, Welch at left, Yearwood, Mulroney and Mathis, right, at work on *The Thing Called Love*, due out this summer.



Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman



THE 28th ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS BROUGHT TO YOU BY DODGE TRUCK



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Clint Black



Suzy Bogguss



Garth Brooks



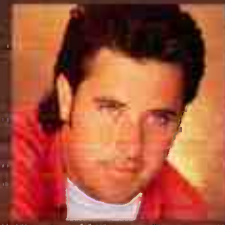
Mary-Chapin Carpenter



Brooks & Dunn



Billy Dean



Vince Gill



Alan Jackson



Kenny Loggins



Patty Loveless



Delbert McClinton



Doug Stone



Travis Tritt



Tanya Tucker



Wynonna



Trisha Yearwood

THE NOMINEES

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- Brand New Man-Brooks & Dunn
- Come On Come On-Mary-Chapin Carpenter
- Some Gave All-Billy Ray Cyrus
- The Chase-Garth Brooks
- Wynonna-Wynonna

SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

- Achy Breaky Heart-Billy Ray Cyrus
- Boot Scootin' Boogie-Brooks & Dunn
- Love, Me-Collin Raye
- Straight Tequila Night-John Anderson
- Two Sparrows in a Hurricane-Tanya Tucker

SONG OF THE YEAR

- Boot Scootin' Boogie-Brooks & Dunn
- I Feel Lucky-Mary-Chapin Carpenter
- I Still Believe in You-Vince Gill
- Something in Red-Lorrie Morgan
- Two Sparrows in a Hurricane-Tanya Tucker

TOP NEW VOCAL GROUP OR DUET

- Confederate Railroad
- Great Plains
- Little Texas

TOP MALE VOCALIST

- Garth Brooks
- Billy Dean
- Vince Gill
- Alan Jackson
- Doug Stone

TOP VOCAL GROUP

- Alabama
- Diamond Rio
- Little Texas
- McBride & The Ride
- Restless Heart
- Sawyer Brown

TOP VOCAL DUET

- Brooks & Dunn
- Mary-Chapin Carpenter/Joe Duffie
- Chris LeDoux/Garth Brooks
- Patty Loveless/Dwight Yoakam
- Travis Tritt/Marty Stuart

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

- Mary-Chapin Carpenter
- Lorrie Morgan
- Pam Tillis
- Tanya Tucker
- Wynonna

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

- Billy Ray Cyrus
- Tracy Lawrence
- Collin Raye

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

- Martina McBride
- Joy White
- Michelle Wright

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

- Garth Brooks
- Billy Ray Cyrus
- Alan Jackson
- Reba McEntire
- Travis Tritt



TUESDAY, MAY 11 AT 8 PM (7 CENTRAL) LIVE ON NBC



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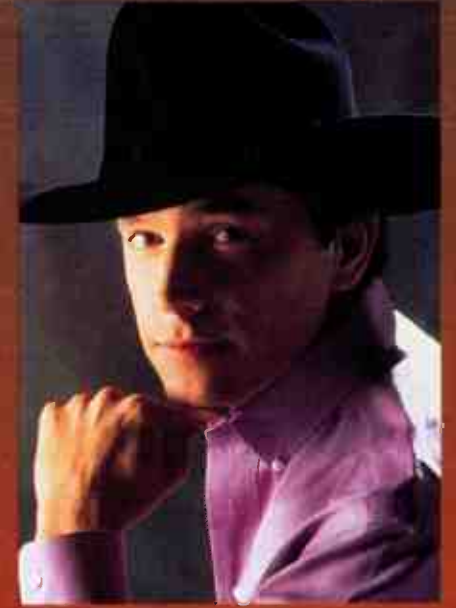
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People



Taco Bell contributed big bucks to Farm Aid VI. Willie's doing ads for the Bell.

MAY 15TH

Mark your calendar, friends... May 15th is a red letter day for all fans of country music, because the great **Willie Nelson** will host *Saturday Night Live*. The star with the biggest heart in show biz, Willie continues to record hits and to look after the farmers with the Farm Aid concerts. And, thank God, he's settled up with the IRS. Willie's new Columbia music features everybody except me and God. Titled *Across the Borderline*, it's his best since *Stardust*, which stayed on the charts ten years. Wonder if **Sinead O'Connor**, who duets with Willie on the new album, will be invited to sing with him on *Saturday Night Live*?

WILLIE RUNS FOR THE BORDER

Willie Nelson's currently appearing in Taco Bell's "Run for the Border" commercials, and his new sponsor wanted to help him get Farm Aid VI off to a good start, so they presented him with a check for \$20,000. The 3,700-store fast food chain is a large buyer of meat, dairy products and fresh produce, and says the company "is interested in maintaining the strength of farming in this nation." A sponsorship that makes sense. Those tacos just wouldn't be the same without the work of the American farmer.

As we went to press, plans for Farm Aid VI were being finalized, with **Marty Stuart, Travis Tritt, Tammy Wynette,**

the rest of **The Highwaymen, Ricky Van Shelton, Delbert McClintock, John Conlee, John Mellencamp, Neil Young, Paul Simon** and a slew of others from the country and rock worlds ready to join Willie on the bill. There's a toll free number set up for donations: 800-FARM-AID.

BOGGUSS DOES VIDEO IN EUROPE

Suzy Bogguss was in London, England, performing, and while there, she shot a video for her new single, "Heartaches."

By the way, **Eye Saw Suzy** and **Chet Atkins** dining at Mid-Town. And if you saw it, you know Suzy and Liberty labelmate **Chris LeDoux's** TNN special was titled *Ropin' and Rockin'* and turned out to be quite entertaining.

25 YEARS FOR JOHN AND JUNE

"It's been a piece of cake," said **The Man in Black**, referring to how easy it's been for his wife, **June Carter Cash**. What with all the doping, pill-taking and rabble-rousing **John R. Cash** was into at the time of their first hello and for plenty years down the line, the man who "walked the line" didn't for a pretty long spell way back when. June laughed at her husband's piece of cake remark. Attending the party along with their best man of 25 years, **Merle Kilgore**, were **The Carter Sisters, Mark Collie, Cowboy Jack Clement, Earl Scruggs, Bill Monroe, Tom T. Hall, Skeeter Davis, Lee Roy Parnell, Mrs. Billy Graham**, former son-in-law **Rodney**

Crowell and others. **Johnny Cash** has always been **Russell Barnard's** hero. I know Russell (who owns this magazine) wants to send his love and congratulations to **Johnny and June**, for 25 years in a business such as ours is dadgum near impossible. Let me add, it's people like the great **Johnny Cash** who make me so proud to be a small part of this business. By the way, I hear the food at the **Cash** do surpassed anything, anywhere, anytime. **Kilgore** told me so, and he don't lie. I love the great **Merle Kilgore**.

COUNTRY RADIO SEMINAR

The annual **Country Radio Seminar** came and went, with glitches here and there, especially at the **New Faces Show**. It was reported to me, since I was very ill and could not attend, that **Radney Foster** was by far the best new act. Radio was on hand from across the country, and my ears tell me some of the new acts were dull. Come on, record labels! You know radio deserves the best show in town.

Country Music Magazine's Associate Editor, **George Fletcher**, came down for the seminar and reported to me that **George Jones** got the best response of anybody at the showcases. A well-deserved response, he added. Among those **George** conversed with at **CRS** were **Marty Brown, Emmylou Harris** (she's won a Grammy and was hosting a show for **Asylum**, her new record label), a couple of **The Kentucky HeadHunters** and **Stacy Dean Campbell**. **George** talked biz with **Jim Della Croce**, who has his own PR firm these days called **The Press Office**, representing **John Anderson, Radney Foster** and **Steve Wariner**. He said hello to publicist extraordinaire **Evelyn Shriver**, the great man of radio **Mr. Charlie Douglas**, and some other radio friends, including **Mike Casey** of **WCAV** in Massachusetts. Last but not least, the best overall performance of the week can be chalked up to the lady under the blonde wig, **Dolly Parton**, who performed everything from classics like "My Tennessee Mountain Home" to the current "Romeo." The best food and best company **George** had was at week's end at **Mere Bulles** with me... I swear, that's what he swore. And **George** did say that **Charlie Monk** was in rare form as host of the **New Faces Show**.

Topping off the week was the power outage at the **Opryland Hotel**. Seems some lady driving her very ill 2-year-old to the hospital hit a pole and knocked out all the lights in the area near the hotel the night of the welcoming reception. With thousands schmoozing in the ballroom

they gave their all.



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DUO OF THE DECADE



Duo of the 90's, of the decade, of the hour. Call it what you may, just call it stupendous. When it comes to labelmates Vince Gill and Reba McEntire, well, you just can't beat their singing. Like angels. Shown are Vince and Reba in action during the video shoot of their duet, "The Heart Won't Lie," included on Reba's MCA record, platinum and rising, *It's Your Call*.

and hallways, **Ronnie Milsap** allowed as how the darkness was no big deal. "Just follow me," Ronnie said, "the blind leading the blind." **Suzu Boggus** got caught in the elevator, but fortunately had her cellular phone and was able to contact her publicist, **Cathy Gurley**. The sick child and his mother were rushed to Vanderbilt Hospital where they both recovered, I am happy to report. Can't you just imagine the scene, stars, radio folks and media—and no lights. Don't you know at least six of the two or three thousand present were thinking, drink in hand, "Mama said alcohol would blind me!"

FOR THE BIZ OF MUSIC

As a rule, I write solely for the fans, and pay little or no attention to what the powers-that-be say or think. However, a minor problem has come to my attention concerning **Billy Ray Cyrus**. Watching the Grammys and the Songwriters' Awards, I couldn't help but notice the mere smattering of applause for Billy Ray's performance. And that applause was coming from the fans in the upper balcony. Don't ask me why the peers are not supporting Billy Ray, 'cause I don't know the reason. But I know one thing...he is one of us, he is ours, he is mobbed by fans wherever he goes, and he has sold over nine million albums world-

wide. One last item that we "big shots" need to give some thought to—according to his record label, Billy Ray gets more requests and letters from terminally ill children than any other artist on the label. Don't know about you, but I am really impressed by this fact.

TANYA SELLING OUT

No, the Texas blast is not going pop, and wouldn't if she could. **Tanya Tucker** is one of us and always will be. She is, however, regularly selling out concert venues. As fast as they put the tickets on sale, fans are grabbing them up and laying the money down. Also, her current album, *Can't Run from Yourself*, went Gold after just one single was released, and by the time you read this will no doubt be platinum and then some.

LYNN ANDERSON UPDATE

An appeals court in Louisiana has ruled in **Lynn Anderson's** favor in her battle with ex-husband, multi-millionaire **Harold "Spook" Stream**. Stream must honor their 1982 divorce settlement and continue to pay the singer \$3,500 a month in alimony "until she dies or re-marries." The appeals court decision ends years of legal battles, accusations and charges between the two parties.

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MORGAN HONORED

Lorrie Morgan celebrated on Music Row at the trendy Toucan Restaurant in honor of her Gold album, *Watch Me*. Her producer, **Richard Landis**, was let go as head of A&R at BNA. It was reported, however, that he will continue to produce her records.

JIM BEAM WANTS YOU

If you're an aspiring country star, bourbon maker and *Country Music Magazine* advertiser Jim Beam is giving you your shot at the big time with The Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search. Unsigned country music performers can enter an audio tape of their talents. Tapes will be screened and judges will narrow the competition down to five finalists. Finalists will then be flown to Nashville to perform before a panel of music industry professionals and a live audience. This "battle of the bands" will be judged, and the winner gets the opportunity to open a show on the Jim Beam Country Caravan Tour. Artists included on the Caravan are **Joe Ely** and **Lucinda Williams**. For complete details on entering, send a legal-sized, stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search, c/o ARS, 43 North Canal St., Chicago, Illinois 60606. Entry deadline is July 31st.

LINDA DAVIS

Linda Davis, who formerly recorded for Liberty Records, is no longer affiliated with a record label and is presently singing backup for **Reba McEntire**. Linda is managed by Reba's Starstruck Entertainment.

THE OTHER GARTH

Those great recordings on RCA by the late **Keith Whitley** were produced by **Garth Fundis**, and you've read that here before. Garth also produces **Trisha Yearwood**. Lately Garth has been hanging his hat daily at RCA Records, where he was named VP of A&R by label head **Tom Schuyler**. Good choice, I'd say. I look for great music to flow from RCA again. Listen for it, fans.

TRIPLE PLAY

The most exciting promo going on out of this hillbilly town in a blue moon is Mercury/Polygram's Triple Play performances starring new acts **John Brannen**, **Toby Keith** and **Shania Twain**. Hailing

People

from Charleston, Brannen's matinee-idol looks and edgy music is stirring up hearts and ears on CMT and TNN as well as out on the road. Look for his single, "Moonlight and Magnolias." Keith, an Oklahoma cowboy, is scooting up the charts with his song "I Could've Been a Cowboy," and Twain's video vocals and good looks have the guys a-humming. She hails from Canada and is asking the musical question "What Made You Say That?" with her hit single. Leave it up to **Steve Miller**, **Sandy Neese** and all of Prez **Luke Lewis'** team to come up with the greatest ideas on making great music greater.

SUMMER LIGHTS RENAMED

Nashville's annual June festival has been renamed Summer Lights in Music City and aptly so, I say. The event features musical sounds to fit everybody's taste. If you don't like music, don't come, but, if you do like music, I'll see you there on the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th of June.

CAA SNAGS RANDY TRAVIS

After years of "in-house" booking, it's been announced that **Randy Travis** has signed with the mighty CAA (Creative Artists Agency). Travis, who plans to hit the concert trail later on in the year, is enjoying a much needed rest in Hawaii. Lord knows, I need a much-needed rest in Hawaii. Someone, please.

JOE IS NOT REGULAR

Joe Diffie is a great singer and a real good guy. You working people need to know just how good a guy Joe is. Appearing in Wichita, Kansas, Joe learned that the local Boeing plant had just laid off 7,800 people. A few years ago Joe was laid off work at a foundry in his native Oklahoma. Knowing the plight of the unemployed worker, Diffie put out the word through mighty KFDI radio, "If you're laid off work, come to the show free." Joe Diffie is not a regular Joe. He's more. Joe Diffie is a good, caring human being. Everybody that's ever been laid off ought to buy a Joe Diffie record.

ATTENTION OPRY FANS

To you longtime Opry fans who have wondered about the whereabouts of **Marion Worth**, I received a letter from Marion. She's living in Selma, Alabama, and she tells me she's doing fine and hopes someday to be able financially to move back near Nashville and the Opry where her friends are.

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MCA'S NEW HOME

MCA Records has designs on further changes on the face of Music Row. They're gonna slide a new building between Polygram Publishing and Belmont Church, where there is a parking lot today. One question, though. Where we gonna park?

EYE SAW

Eye saw **Dave Gibson** and **Blue Miller** at Danzo's. They are the Gibson/Miller Band on Sony Records. Danzo's sure got a good buffet. Me and the **Kennedy** boys know good food.

CHAPIN DOINGS

Mary-Chapin Carpenter is on a roll. Earlier this year, she picked up her second Grammy in as many years, taking home the prize for Best Country Performance, Female. Then she tied **Garth Brooks**, **Billy Ray Cyrus** and **Brooks & Dunn** for the most Academy of Country Music Awards nominations—four each. (The show airs May 11th—watch for it.) Next she toured with **Vince Gill**; and was set to headline an April benefit concert for the W.O. Smith-Nashville Community Music School, which provides low-cost music



A second Grammy for Mary-Chapin.

lessons for students. And last but not least, The Fourth of July holiday will be a homecoming for the Washington, D.C.-based Carpenter. She'll be performing there on the live PBS-TV special, *A Capitol Fourth*, along with **Johnny and June Carter Cash**, **Rita Moreno**, **Peter Nero** and the National Symphony Orchestra. With sold-out shows, platinum sales figures, critical acclaim and hits a-plenty, Mary-Chapin is fast joining the ranks of the superstars.

STRAIT OUT ON THE ROAD

After a four-month hiatus, my pal, **George Strait**, is out on the road picking and singing for the fans. Since it's been written in this magazine that someone needs to find me a man, I suppose I cannot tell all you girls just how jeans were invented to cover the pretty backside on Mr. Strait. George loves for me to say how well he fits into his jeans. Now, where was I???? Oh, yes. The last weekend former **President Bush** was in the White House, he and **Lady Barbara** went to Camp David, where their house guests were **George**, **Norma** and **George Jr.** I hear from George—Strait, not Bush—that his first movie, *Pure Country*, has been released on home video. I will buy a copy, and I will see how great those jeans fit every night. Last but not least, girls, you can see Mr. Strait on May 11th, co-hosting the Academy of Country Music Awards Show with **Randy Owen** of Alabama and the great Miss **Reba McEntire**.

PRESIDENT TONY (WOW) BROWN

I'll have you all know that **Tony (wow) Brown** has been named President Brown, by God. Talk about having friends in high places, that's where I got 'em, but I still keep those in low places, too. I do know how to have fun. Anyway, handsome Tony is now the President of MCA/Nashville. Besides being president, Tony produces **Reba McEntire**, **Vince Gill**, **Wynonna** and **George Strait**. Am I proud of Tony? Don't ask. Does he look good in jeans. Hoooo. I've got friends in tight britches.

OVER THERE FOR THE BELLAMYS

The German Country Music Federation named **The Bellamy Brothers** as Duo of the Year. The brothers have toured Germany regularly for the past 10 years and are very popular there.

WHERE ART THOU, JULIET?

If **Billy Ray Cyrus** is "Romeo" for **Dolly Parton's** self-same titled single and video, then I assume Dolly is Juliet. Titled *Slow Dancing with the Moon*, Dolly's new Columbia album is on the shelves. She looks stunning and still sings like the angel she is, and is as flirty as she dares to be, claiming in the single/video to be in heat if she isn't in love. A little risqué for East Tennessee, unless it's said away from the microphone.

TRAVIS CUTS OUT



It's a cutout of Travis Tritt, but the Number One plaque is the real thing. **Paul Worley**, Travis cutout, **Stewart Harris**, Sony/Tree CEO **Donna Hilley** and Warner/Nashville VP/GM **Eddie Reeves** are gathered around to celebrate the Number One single penned by Harris and Tritt, titled "Can I Trust You With My Heart."

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People

PHOTO WORTH 50 YEARS



This photo is one of the sweetest I've ever chosen for this magazine. Seated are Beau and Juanita Tucker with their lovely daughter Tanya Tucker and TV hostess Lorianne Crook. The occasion is the Tuckers' 50th anniversary celebration, which was held aboard the SS Norway, a luxury liner that featured Tanya along with George Jones, Collin Raye and Marty Haggard for musical entertainment. The cruise was the anniversary gift from Tanya to her parents. Crook wasn't just along for the ride, she was videotaping the cruise for TNN's *Celebrities Offstage*.

ALABAMA ON THE ROAD

Artists of the decade and superstars for more than a dozen years, **Alabama** is on the road this season and selling out venues, of course, as reported by *Billboard Magazine*. Opening for the superact for 20 dates is **Michelle Wright**.

I DO AGAIN

Louise Mandrell and Opryland's Head of Entertainment, **John Haywood**, have been an item for some time now. Four-time-wed Lousie and Haywood plan a summer wedding. This is Haywood's first marriage.

GEARING UP AT DOLLYWOOD

Country music sounds lined up for the summer season at Dollywood will be superstar **Dolly Parton** herself with superstar pals **Clint Black**, **Billy Ray Cyrus** and **Kenny Rogers**. Others include **Doug Stone**, **Sammy Kershaw**, **Conway Twitty**, **Oak Ridge Boys**, **Lorrie Morgan**, **Restless Heart**, **Little Texas**, **Aaron Tippin**, **Statler Brothers**, **Billy Dean**, **Diamond Rio**, **Charlie Daniels**, **Crystal Gayle**, **Eddie Rabbitt**, **Vince Gill**, **Hal Ketchum**, **Sawyer Brown**, **Tanya Tucker**, **Joe Diffie**, **Patty Love-**

less, **Marty Stuart**, **Collin Raye**, **Mark Chesnutt**, **Waylon Jennings**, **Kathy Mattea**, **Stella Parton**, **Louise Mandrell**, **Conway Twitty**, **Tammy Wynette** and **Jerry Clower**. I will see you there. With a showcase of stars like this, I know all you fans will be heading for Music City and East Tennessee to see the stars who make up the country music charts. There's nothing as great as a country music show live.

BRANSON, USA

Branson kicked off their new season with a Festival at the Grand Palace. **Kenny Rogers**, **Louise Mandrell** and **Jim Stafford** hosted the three-day event. Stars on hand were **John Davidson**, **Tony Orlando**, **The Osmonds**, **Mel Tillis**, **Box Car Willie**, **Moe Bandy**, **Mickey Gilley**, **The Branson Brothers** and the two acts who are the reason there is a Branson, USA: (the originals) **The Baldknobbers** and **The Presleys**. The brand new Americana TV Network filmed the event for future showing. I bet this jam session will take an encore.

KERSHAW NAMED

One of my faves, **Sammy Kershaw**, has been named by the *Los Angeles Times* as one of the "ten new faces from the enter-

tainment field to be reckoned with in '93." Kershaw's first album for the Mercury folks, *Don't Go Near the Water*, is approaching platinum status, while his new music, titled *Haunted Heart*, is currently in my CD player rocking this room. The *Times* critic allowed as how Sammy has a character-rich voice that surpasses all the new Nashville breed. Not a bad statement for a dude who resides that close to Hollywood.

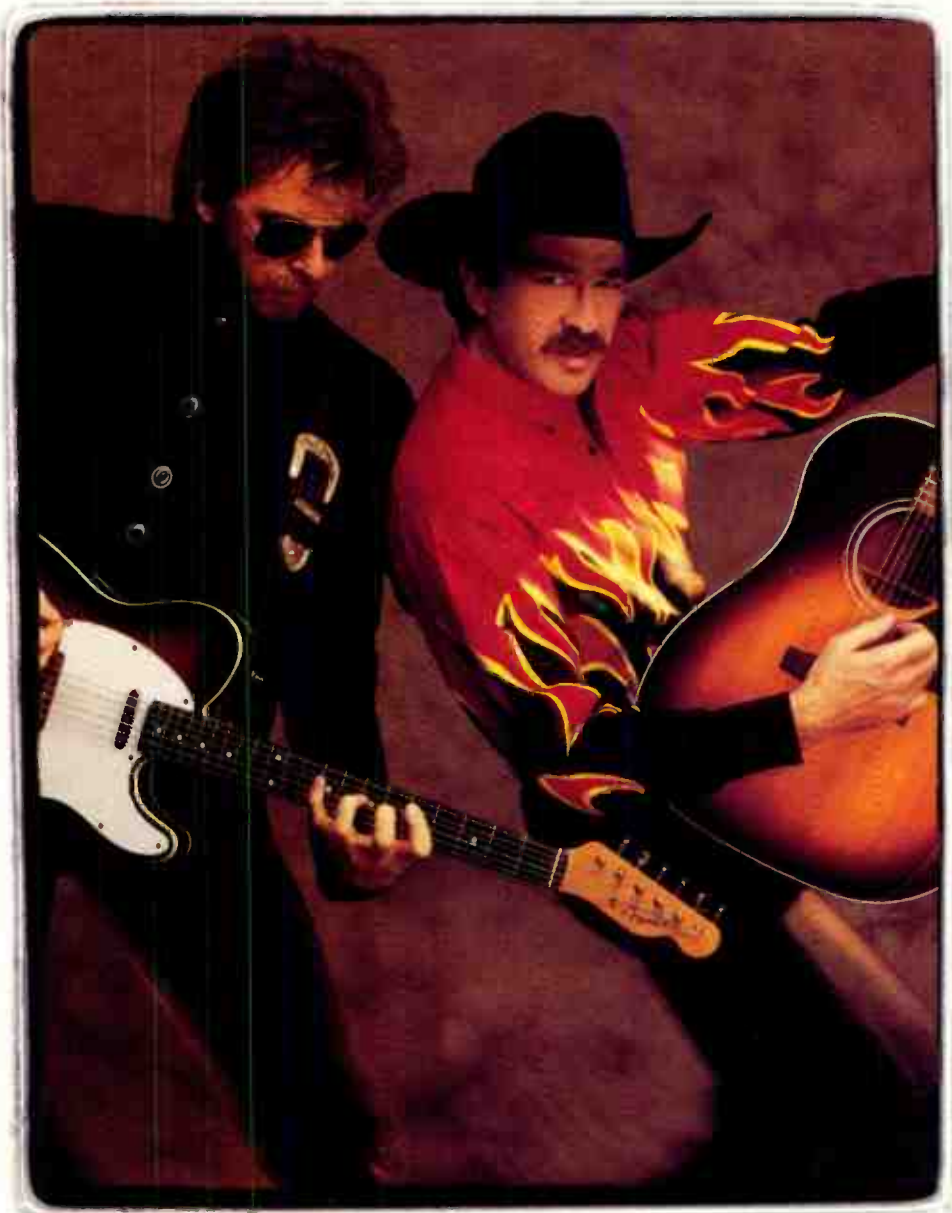
SOUTHERN ROCK LOSES A FOUNDER

One of the architects of the Southern rock movement, **Toy Caldwell**, died in his sleep at his home in Spartanburg, South Carolina. It was well known among his peers that Toy suffered with a chronic bronchial condition. He is survived by his wife of 23 years, **Abbie Caldwell**, and two daughters. The 45-year-old Caldwell's late brother, **Tommy Caldwell**, was killed in a car accident in 1985. Toy will be long remembered as a musician/songwriter having penned the standard recorded by both pop and country acts, "Can't You See." He and his brother were founders of **The Marshall Tucker Band**. Toy's fiery guitar work was legendary.

WAYNE RANEY: 1921-1993

Wayne Raney, singer, harmonica player, disc jockey and record label owner, died January 23rd at the White River Medical Center in his hometown of Batesville, Arkansas, at age 71. Raney was attracted to the harmonica as a boy, and as a teenager in the 1930's, began working on the Mexican border radio stations. From 1938 on, he learned many harmonica skills from veteran performer **Lonnie Glosson**, who worked with him on the border stations. Raney met **The Delmore Brothers** in Memphis in 1945 and with them helped develop the pre-rockabilly style known as country boogie. He played on many of **The Delmores'** King recordings, including their biggest hit, "Blues Stay Away from Me" in 1949. Raney's biggest hit, "Why Don't You Haul Off and Love Me," came the same year. In the 50's, he performed and recorded with **Lefty Frizzell**, and from 1956 to 1961 Raney worked as a disc jockey over **WCKY** in Cincinnati, where he sold thousands of mail-order harmonicas. Eventually he returned to Batesville, where he opened his own recording studio and founded **Rimrock Records**.

—RICH KIENZLE



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People



Giving the shirt and coat off his back for charity—Billy Ray with Buddy Killen for the annual Easter Seals benefit at Killen's Stockyard Restaurant in Nashville.

Along with **Charlie Daniels**, **Lynyrd Skynyrd** and **The Allman Brothers**, **The Marshall Tucker Band** were forerunners for country-rockers like **Hank Williams Jr.** and **Travis Tritt**. We send our sympathy to the family and friends of **Toy Caldwell**.

EASTER SEALS NETS 100,000+

Buddy Killen's annual Easter Seals benefit was a whopping success, netting over a hundred thousand big ones. Previously announced performers **Diamond Rio**, **Shenandoah**, **Mark Collie**, **Restless Heart**, **Six Shooter**, **Ronnie McDowell** and **Michelle Wright** were joined onstage by surprise guests **Pat Boone** and **Billy Ray Cyrus**, to the delight of those attending. Killen sold the coat off of Billy Ray's back for an unbelievable \$3,500. On a roll, Billy Ray removed his T-shirt, which went for an additional \$2,000. (Russell, would you please reimburse me \$5,500? Kidding. Just kidding.)

MARTY INJURED

While in Greenwood, Mississippi, shooting the video for his new single, "Hey Baby," **Marty Stuart** was required to jump up. When he jumped, the top of his head hit the overhang and knocked him flat on his back on a set of steps. The back of his head hit the steps. Rushed to the

hospital, Marty required six stitches on the top of his head and four in the back. No concussion, they said at the hospital. That night Marty performed in Greenwood, then traveled to Owensboro, Kentucky, where he performed the following night. The next day at home in Nashville, he started feeling dizzy and weak. He went to Vanderbilt Hospital to discover that he did, in fact, have a concussion and was ordered to rest a week, which he did. The only cancellation of any major consequence was his first Gold record party at Rio Bravo. We put that on hold and will celebrate at a later time.

TRACY LAWRENCE, ON THE VERGE

Tracey Lawrence's debut record for Atlantic, *Sticks and Stones*, has surpassed three quarters of a million in sales and his second effort, *Alibis*, is out of the chute and stirring up dust chartwise. The 24-year-old young man is currently on the road opening shows for his hero, **George Jones**, and has a great big Stetson hat sponsorship either under his belt or on his head. The title track looks like another hit for Tracy. The young honky tonker co-wrote four songs on the new album, showing another one of his talents.

ON THE ROAD WITH HANK

Hank Williams Jr. has hired the good right arms of **Aaron Tippin** and **Lee Roy Parnell** as special guests for this year's spring/summer tour. *Out of Left Field* is Hank's new album on the Capricorn label.

AT THE ROXY, AT THE RYMAN

Average, everyday, hillbilly girl **Kathy Mattea** presented music from her eighth Mercury album, the wonderful *Lonesome Standard Time*, from the Roxy Theater in Los Angeles. Entertainment Radio Network "fed" the live, 90-minute show to some 160 country stations via satellite. Let me ask a question. Come 1994, we here in Nashville may be able to do the same thing. The Ryman Auditorium (former home of the Opry) is set to undergo major renovations (to the tune of \$8 million). It will reopen as a concert hall, dubbed "the Carnegie Hall of the South."

MILLARD'S LOVE

Bob Millard, sometime writer for this magazine and others, sometime songwriter, sometime bookwriter and all-time friend, has a love besides wife, attorney **Lucinda Smith**. Matter of fact, Bob has a love that Lucinda isn't even jealous of.

SKAGGS AND WHITE LOSING IT



Ricky Skaggs and his wife **Sharon White** are "losing it" these days and nights. Their loss is probably Nutri/System's gain, I'd wager. He lost 38 pounds and she 20 pounds. As a result, the Nutri/System folks hired the star duo for TV, print and radio commercials. Ricky talks about the "done-lap" syndrome, how his belly "done-lapped" over his belt. Hmmmm.

People

For months I've been meaning to write about Millard's perfect love. It is the kind of romance that we wish we could write our feelings about. The perfect romance? **Anna Millard**, Bob and Lucinda's eight-month-old angel daughter.

A NIGHT OFF, CAN I PLAY WITH YOU?

Playing in the sand....no, that's another story. This story goes, when the foursome that make up **The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band** reached their gig in Ventura, California, they were met by a guitar player who allowed, "I'm off tonight, can I play with you?" "Yes, yes, yes, yes!" the four answered **Vince Gill!** And he did play, and it was awesome.

SUN DOESN'T SET ON BROOKS' FAME

Ropin' the Wind by superstar/superperson **Garth Brooks** has just been certified Gold in Australia. Garth was also named Best Country Artist in Ireland. Not to be outdone, the Germans named Garth "International Artist of the Year" and named *The Chase* Album of the Year. Our Canadian neighbors to the north nominated Brooks for a Juno Award. Back in the USA, Garth was presented an Environmental Grammy for using 100% recycled paper in the packaging of his recordings, along with pals **Vince Gill** and **Wynonna**. GLAAD-LA presented Garth and co-writer **Stephanie Davis** the Outstanding Recording Award from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation-Los Angeles for the message presented in the song, "We Shall Be Free." And he was named Favorite Male Country Artist at the American Music Awards. He also made the cover of *Rolling Stone Magazine*, something only a handful of country performers have done. While taking time off to be with wife **Sandy** and daughter **Taylor**, Garth also takes time to appear on the Grand Ole Opry to the delight of TNN subscribers, radio listeners and those who are lucky enough to buy a ticket. Garth told me he'd never been as nervous as he was when he sang for a billion people at the Super Bowl, to which I allowed that the man upstairs always looks after him. Garth said he knew it and never forgot it. By the way, just so you will know, Garth will be at Fan Fair come June. He told me so. And five days after his Super Bowl appearance, Garth showed up at BMI for **Kent Blazy's** Number One party for co-writing "Somewhere Other Than the Night." This was after the Number One party ASCAP threw for Garth for co-writing the song. Garth is still one of us.



Hirsute Brooks at American Music Awards.

GEARING UP FOR THE SUMMER AT OPRYLAND

Once again this summer Opryland will feature stars in the park at the GEO Theater. This summer's lineup includes top of the line **Tracy Lawrence**, **Conway Twitty**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Lorrie Morgan**, **Sammy Kershaw**, **Marty Stuart**, **Marie Osmond**, **Patty Loveless**, **Holly Dunn**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Hal Ketchum**, **Joe Diffie**, **Lee Greenwood**, **Doug Stone**,

Crystal Gayle, **Tammy Wynette**, **Jerry Clower**, **Eddie Rabbitt**, **Shenandoah**, **Collin Raye**, **Mark Collie**, **Mark Chesnutt**, **Louise Mandrell**, **Tanya Tucker**, **Sweethearts of the Rodeo**, **Paul Overstreet**, **Gary Morris**, **Lee Roy Parnell**, **McBride and The Ride** and **The Forester Sisters**. I will see you there.

SAVE THAT BEAUMONT WATER!

Listen, friends, forget Evian and Perrier, the water I'm syphoning into **Billy and Terry Smith** henceforth is Beaumont water! Why hadn't somebody thought of bottling up the water and selling it to wannabe stars?? After all both **George Jones** and **Mark Chesnutt** drank of the Beaumont springs, and listen to them boys sing. Lo and behold, now Beaumont sends us young **Tracy Byrd**, who sounds mighty like **Johnny Paycheck** singing the Paycheck chestnut, "Someone to Give My Love To." Penned by the former songwriting team of **Bill Rice** and **Jerry Foster** a couple of decades ago, the song still stands on its own as all standards do. In the meantime, wanna buy some Beaumont water?? Dollar a quart.

FLYING COLORS

It looks like **Robert Ellis Orrall** is gonna become a household name. His first RCA single, "Boom It Was Over," charted well. His album, *Flying Colors*, received rave reviews, and I tell you what, I listened and it's a real winner. I'd never lie to you.

PATTY RETURNS



The very talented **Patty Loveless** is shown in the recording studio, with her producer/hubby **Emory Gordy**. After a bout with vocal chord trouble, she's completed her first album for Sony, titled *Only What I Feel*.



DWIGHT YOAKAM

Ramblin' Man



When he was eight years old, Dwight Yoakam wrote his first song, "How Far Is Heaven." It was, as he describes it, "a hill-billy waltz about watching newsreels from Vietnam, about a kid whose dad gets killed in Vietnam. My dad's been in the service half his life, ten-year career as a sergeant, so I was aware of the military; he got out just shortly after I was born.

"And I remember I felt like, well, I'm making this up, so it can't be real. And I realized later on that songwriting, or writing generally, is not something that you literally have to live. For a long time I didn't write because I felt like, if I didn't literally live an experience, well, I can't write about it, or you can't take any poetic literary liberty to create. But that's what creative writing is. And ultimately, you are creating, maybe only unconsciously, the inner self."

The subject is songwriting, and I'm relieved to have this succinct, precise little anecdote from Dwight—mainly because this interview, to my mind, has thus far been the exact opposite. The first and only time I ever spoke to Dwight previous to this was early in 1986, when he was visiting Austin as an ambitious and passionate new act who'd just made the jump from a tiny L.A. indie label to Warner Brothers. In a sense, it was easy to see why his detractors complained that he had a bit of an attitude—but look back at the moribund state of hard country at that time, and it's hard to see how anyone who cared about the music could have felt otherwise. I found him then to be straightforward and down-to-earth, a real straight shooter who stood for something important and could articulate it convincingly. On this rainy January

◆
*On his new album, **This Time**, Dwight takes his listeners on a musical journey. In this interview, he takes John Morthland on a meandering journey through his mind. The path he travels is often filled with twists and turns, but always worth the trip.*

◆
By John Morthland

1993 afternoon in Los Angeles, he meanders all over the place, wandering away from the subject and never returning but likewise not offering much in its place, using long, convoluted sentences to inadvertently make the simplest of ideas more confusing, even getting downright cosmic about fairly mundane subjects. A recent appearance on Whoopi Goldberg's TV interview show had followed a similarly discouraging course—indeed, this is a very common syndrome among celebrities who feel like their status obligates them to try to sound more profound. But, frankly, I'm having such a hard time keeping him on a subject that I wonder whether Yoakam, who's been off the road for about four years now, spent too much of the time in his house up in the Hollywood Hills inside his own head—or, simply, if, to paraphrase Hank, when the Lord made Dwight, he made a rambling mind.

To be sure, it's not been the easiest of days for Dwight. Los Angeles has spent the last 48 hours trying to make up for several years of drought, and the city reacts to this much rain by essentially shutting down. Yoakam arrives at his offices—mostly still in boxes, in the hallway—high over the Sunset Strip an hour behind schedule for the first of two in-person interviews (after a healthy regimen of phoners). Thinning hair down below his shoulders, dressed in black turtleneck and leather biker's jacket and tight blue jeans, he bustles in all gracious and apologetic, sets a huge wad of keys down on the conference table, and informs his manager that in order to save time he'd stolen someone else's reserved parking space downstairs. Then he runs into another room to be measured by his tailor's assistant; to-

morrow is the photo session for the album cover, and a new one of those snazzy, customized DY Western jackets must be shipped overnight from Nashville in time for the shoot. Dwight is, as usual, playing catch-up. Just as characteristically, when he finishes with his first journalist and ushers me into his darkened private office—desktop containing little more than an empty Evian bottle, leather coat now dumped unceremoniously on the floor—he winds up allowing more time for the interview than was originally budgeted.

So, hey, my inclination is to sit back and let the man ramble. Besides, I'd been driving around Texas the last couple weeks listening to an advance tape of *This Time*, and there's no doubt in my mind that the music speaks well for itself. The new album is an impressive piece of work, a bold expansion of the fresh sound Dwight broached on 1990's *If There Was a Way*. Which is to say that while it contains some ultra-hard hard

"If There Was a Way is where this album began," he begins. "*Buenas Noches from a Lonely Room* was the final chapter of, not by design, but kinda by coincidence, what turned out to be a trilogy of albums, I guess the first segment of my musical statement. *Buenas Noches* was like the completion of the first sentence of that statement, if you will. *If There Was a Way* was the opening chapter in this next volume of musical statements by me. It illustrated the various influences I've had musically in my life, from the Memphis soul stuff...there are obvious things that you hear there, and the title track is illustrative of that, I think.

"And Pete Anderson"—Dwight's guitarist/producer/bandleader—"and I were very consciously aware that we didn't want to confuse an audience after the first album or even the second album by abstracting from the cornerstone of what I am musically—which is coming from rural Appala-

chia to Ohio and the Ohio Valley, especially from the late 50's to late 60's, that area was just enveloped in classic hillbilly music. So this musical journey that the listeners join me in, I begin the journey articulating where I came from, in a mapping sense, and starting to move forward from that place of origin. I feel you can dangerously confuse your audience if you start to do things without a perspective of origin. Pete felt similarly. So I couldn't start out doing *If There Was a Way* or *This Time*. It's my own clarity or confusion I'm dealing with first.

"At the same time, I've been asked, Don't you feel

I'm prone to want based on familiarity.. go off into my head in

trapped by the confines of traditional country music?, and my absolute answer has always been, No, because I have embraced the parameters. It's innately a part of my cultural and literal personal past that I have a love

for. Ironically, it was after I moved to the West Coast that I turned around and wrote most acutely about my people, my family, my heritage. But that's not unusual when you think that sometimes you need to get out of the woods, get up on a clearing and look back, to know that you're not looking at tree bark, you're looking at a forest. And the perspective I have is because I moved away.

"This album, perhaps more than others," he concludes, "is solely my musical voice."

Most of the album was written and recorded as a five-year relationship was finally ending for good, so that figures into the equation. So does the fact that for the first time ever, he



country, it's not so much a country album as an album of the kind of music played where bare-bones country is also normally played—it's American music of the honky tonks and roadhouses, Saturday Night music, with a swirling Hammond organ that somehow echoes, without sounding much like, both the carnival midway and Bob Dylan's mid-60's rock. It's surprising even if its predecessor should have prepared you, and when I ask him to characterize it, Dwight snickers gleefully and answers, bluntly: "Uncharacteristic." And then proceeds to put it in the context of its forerunners, distinguishing carefully between the similarly-eclectic *If There Was a Way* and the three more conventionally country albums before that.

was collaborating with a mainstream Nashville writer, Kostas, on four songs, including the title tune (plus there's a fifth written by Kostas and James House without Dwight). But what comes through most on *This Time* is a sense of estrangement, of alienation, much deeper and stronger than on previous releases, a sense that is simultaneously smack in the country tradition from way back (even if often couched here in untraditional ways) and utterly contemporary. And this is why his earlier point about inadvertently revealing the "inner self" becomes more telling.

"I see that more with this album than anything I've ever done, maybe," he admits. "'Lonesome Roads,' I thought I'd written as maybe the third person view of some other people I'd known, and then I was listening to it in the car recently, and I realized I was thinking about myself. It was a real kind of revealing moment for me, personally. Kinda the Luke the Drifter approach." The basic idea for the song came after watching Andy Griffith in *A Face in the Crowd*, "with Andy Griffith gone nuclear." Andy once left a fan note for Dwight at the Hollywood store where they both buy antique clocks, and the two struck up a phone friendship with a vague idea that they might try some joint project when the time was right. Meanwhile, "I'd written this song just stimulated by that film performance, just as kind of a thesis, that title. Then I got those verses—it doesn't have anything to do with the movie, obviously, if you listen to those lyrics and you know the movie—and I realized I was just writing from the perspective of someone outcast, any segment of society, whatever. Then I was



Dwight's latest venture is *Southern Rapture*, a play he's co-starring in with Sally Kirkland. Peter Fonda (right) directs, in L.A. Future projects include a film.

Southern Rapture

By JOSEPH G. TIDWELL III



acter in "Two Doors Down," like those in the other alkic death-wish laments written by this noted teetotaler, is drawn from memories of playing the clubs, watching from the bandstand as people try desperately to drink away their miseries. But on tunes like the striking "The Pocket of a Clown"—with its Mills Brothers harmonies, "Singin' the Blues" feel and incredible guitar break by Anderson—Dwight plays a role brilliantly and probably drops a few hints about himself at the same time. And on the longing "Try Not to Look So Pretty," a ballad about "somebody at the Palomino I was kinda interacting with a little bit," he writes, for the first time ever, "in a very direct fashion."

But it's also worth noting that "Lonesome Roads" and "Two

Doors Down" are the only real hard-country on the album. There's no need to reiterate here—again—the many ways Dwight has, intentionally or not, gotten himself into hot water with country music's powers-that-be, but it's hard not to speculate as to whether or not there might be another payback on the way. Is country radio, in particular, going to be very responsive towards music so difficult to pigeonhole instantly, especially when it's coming from someone saddled with a rep as a rebel? Well, *If There Was a Way* wasn't much different, and it produced four Top Tennessees, so there's hope. Moreover, from his perspective somewhat on the sidelines the last few years of relative inactivity, Dwight has perceived the industry moving closer to him (and to the audience, I should add, since Dwight, with no small amount of help from his polished videos, was an arena-and-album act almost from the be-

to be in a very consistent environment. I like continuity...I tend to function best because it frees me emotionally when I know everything's cool, and then I can to the unknown stuff that I wanna deal with, and I'm comfortable.

writing about personal alienation for me. And I think that's very revealing, because I drop myself into a place of role-playing when I write, or that's what I think I'm doing. Maybe that's why psychologists or psychiatrists use role-playing as a means to address the self. Because what you do is you think you've disguised yourself from reality for the purposes of articulation, and in reality you've probably exposed yourself.

"I mean, I'm a very indirect person. It's been said," he laughs, somewhat uncomfortably, "by various females that I've been involved with that I'm indirect to the point of dispassion. Not unpassionate, but emotionally, I can be a very solitary person. So I think that has a lot to do with how and why I write. These songs are literally all autobiographical, but indirectly so, and like I said, I think sometimes that the most literal description and depiction of someone comes from an indirect vantage point."

It helps that "Lonesome Roads," with its Drifting Cowboys-derived sound, evokes the archetypal Worried Man moving across the American landscape. And some songs are less autobiographical, even indirectly, and more journalistic—the char-

ginning, regardless of more erratic success with singles). I wonder if he could get country airplay at all with music like this if it hadn't been preceded by those three albums of the hard stuff which firmly established him as country.

"Well, a radio format might have been difficult, had radio not progressed in the last seven years. See, country radio has changed enormously, dramatically, just since I had 'Honky Tonk Man' as a hit. It's become much more like pop, which is a positive and a negative, a double-edged sword there. It's much more prone to disposing of artists, such a fickle climate. But at the same time, it can be a home to this kind of music.

"I think we've had a problem with our formatting; we eliminated the cross-pollination that's healthy for music. I mean Joe South, we couldn't have had Joe South in 1981; a format wouldn't allow Joe South, it wouldn't allow a Tony Joe White to do 'Polk Salad Annie,' we could never have had a Roger Miller from 1981 through the middle and late 80's. And now in the last couple years with this explosion, the pipeline that TNN and CMT have made available for country music com-

That hillbilly music, it happened to me at such a young age, the exposure to those guys, it'll always be innate.

mercially to market itself through, and Soundscan being a more accurate picture of who actually does buy country music, and its ability to transcend boundaries as a commodity for giving pleasure to the population base, you're starting to see this kind of pluralizing of formats again. I think if we'd had Soundscan in 1986, you'd have seen Randy Travis have a Number One pop album with *Storms of Life*." (Soundscan, for you non-industry types, is the sophisticated new measure by which *Billboard Magazine* compiles its charts based on actual sales, as opposed to the old method of surveying both airplay and representative stores.)

But why the long layoff in the first place? After noting that he toured 33 of the 48 months following the success of "Honky Tonk Man," Dwight goes for the quick, self-effacing joke: "I'm lazy," he laughs, but swiftly adds, "and I was also very concerned about...I mean, there's honesty about that, and that's why I shot it out there...but I'm lazy because it gets in the way of thinking. Pushing yourself to go on the road, that gets in the way of thinking. Now recording, getting up in the morning and going to make records, that doesn't get in the way of thinking. Cuz you're at home. I'm prone to want to be in a very consistent environment. I like continuity. And touring 33 out of 48 months is very debilitating to me personally, because I can't write in that environment of motion. I tend to function best based on familiarity; that's when I function best because it frees me emotionally when I know everything's cool, and then I can go off in my head into the unknown stuff that I wanna deal with, and I'm comfortable."

Though a brief liason with actress Sharon Stone made him, for the first time ever, gossip-column fodder, Dwight got his share of work done while he was off the road. He did hone his



new musical direction for example, and also staged some mini-tours of a few days each in specific regions like Texas. He duetted on "Carmelita" for Texas Tornado accordion man Flaco Jimenez's solo album, *Partners*. He sang on the soundtrack of John Mellencamp's *Falling From Grace* movie. And Dwight—who, let us not forget, studied drama in college and acted a bit when he first came to L.A.—got a small part as truck-driver under Dennis Hopper and Nicholas Cage in John Dahl's *Red Rock West*. In April in Los Angeles, he stars (opposite Sally Kirkland, that lucky guy) in *Southern Rapture*, a play he's producing (with Peter Fonda directing) that Dwight describes as "in the style of Tennessee Williams or William Faulkner, about the last remaining patient in a sanitarium in Mississippi in 1962." Playwright Joe Tidwell also has a filmscript called *Pecos Moon* Dwight hopes to sell and star in. "It takes place in L.A.,

Houston and Pecos, Texas. A down-and-out singer-songwriter ends up back down there trying to piece together his life, kind of a *Tender Mercies*," as Yoakam explains it.

And yes, he'll be back on tour soon, too—80 cities between mid-May and Labor Day. It will be interesting to see how his new music plays onstage, but rest assured that some things won't change. "That hillbilly music, it happened to me at such a young age, the exposure to those guys, it'll always be innate," declares Dwight Yoakam. "Soon as I hear it, I pick up a guitar."

Postscript: A week or so after our interview, Dwight's publicist phoned to say he wanted to clarify some points, and a few days after that Dwight himself called. Saying he'd been "a little scattered" the day of the interview, he made the point that even if his new sound has trouble getting airplay, that would be nothing new. "The thing is, the old hits were tough to get played, too. If we'd calculated to get on the air back then, we'd have had to do things different. I've never had a Number One record. I've had lots of Top Tens, but the Top Five is where the politicking begins. *Hillbilly Deluxe* had no Top Five singles, but four Top Tens, and it sold 800,000. 'Long White Cadillac' went only to Number 34 off the *Greatest Hits* package, didn't get much play at all, but live audiences respond to it like a hit single because it was a hit video. When we started out, we were maybe too aggressive, too twangy, too rock-edged, but video has always counterbalanced lack of acceptance from radio. So when you look back, you think maybe that music was more acceptable to the country industry than this music will be, but it wasn't really. We've never approached our music by calculating its possible impact, or by trying to figure out the current climate of the industry, or the pulse of radio. And it's important to me that that point get across." Point taken, Dwight, and quite clearly at that. ■



Dwight sang "Lonesome Roads" on Whoopi Goldberg's talk show.

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

And The Boom Continues

Over the past year or so, we've talked about the explosion in country music's popularity. Since that trend continues unabated, there's even more to tell. Here, then, are a few facts that CMSA members may find interesting: Country album sales have more than doubled in the past four years. Garth Brooks was the Number One, top-selling recording artist in 1992. In 1992, more country albums were certified platinum (for sales of 1 million copies)

than albums of any other format. *Billboard's* Top 200 Album chart for January 30, 1993, included 52 country albums—more than one in four of the nation's top-selling albums were country. Last but not least, *Country Music Magazine's* circulation has reached an all-time high, experiencing growth of 38% in the last year. What's more, 1993 looks like it'll be just as good a year for the industry. We'll keep you posted.

Concert Comments

If the amount of material we get on him is any indication, Marty Stuart is a big favorite of CMSA members. He's certainly a favorite of Debbie Gallion of Elyria, Ohio, especially after the concert she saw. Flushing, Michigan, member, Virgie Warren, meanwhile, writes in about a concert she saw by her favorite performer, Opry legend Jean Shepard.

MARTY STUART

The place was Ashtabula County Fair in Jefferson, Ohio. The date was August 15th. It was a night I'll treasure always. To get to the fair, we drove two hours in a steady downpour. The temperature was predicted to reach 68. Definitely not one of Ohio's more beautiful days.

We arrived at the fair and went to the grandstand to find good seats about two hours before showtime. Marty was scheduled to perform at 7:00 and 9:00. At about 6:00, it was rumored that the electrical hook-ups on the stage were out of commission due to the rain that had fallen all day. Marty's bus and lighting equipment were already there. Well, we were disappointed, to say the least, in thinking that both shows would have to be cancelled.

But Marty and his band would not let us down. They came right into the grandstand and proceeded to make everyone forget how cold and miserable it was. Without the aid of any electrical equipment of any kind, they put on a show that will always rank as one of the best performances they have ever done. Marty completely enraptured the audience with his style, personality and humor. There is no doubt he truly loves what he does so well, and that is sing the best country music around.



When heavy rains knocked out electricity at an outdoor show in Ohio, Marty Stuart and band performed "unplugged," right in the grandstand. Left to right, they are drummer John Sturdivant Jr. and guitarist Brad Davis, fiddler Dale Morris, Marty and bassist Larry Marrs, playing acoustic guitars.

After the show, Marty and the band so very kindly met with everyone and signed autographs. This took quite a while as by this time everyone wanted to meet them. But, through it all, these guys smiled and truly made all who approached them feel welcome and special. I hope to see Marty and his band many more times in the future, but I will always be thankful for this special night.

Debbie Gallion
Elyria, Ohio

JEAN SHEPARD

I had the chance to see my all-time favorite country singer, Grand Ole Opry legend Jean Shepard, this past summer in Brooklyn, Michigan. Since I've been a fan of hers for so many years, I was so glad to see her! She sang many of her hits, like "Second Fiddle" and "Many Happy Hangovers to You," plus a gospel medley and more. Jean gave her best as only she can sing them.

One thing for sure, when you listen to this country music legend, you know you'll be treated to pure country music. Growing up, she was influenced by yodeling country singers Jimmie Rodgers and Elton Britt. She began her career at age 14, when she formed an all-girl band, The Melody Ranch Girls, and played at local dances and radio stations near her Visalia, California, home. A record deal came next, then a Number One hit duet with Ferlin Husky, "A Dear John Letter." As her fame grew, she moved to

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Editor: George Fletcher

Executive Editor: Helen Barnard

Art Director: Katheryn Gray

Missouri and appeared on Red Foley's *Ozark Jubilee*. She was made a member of the Grand Ole Opry in 1955, and has been there since. I've been her biggest fan every one of those years.

Also appearing was Faron Young, who did a number of his hits, including "Hello Walls," "Four in the Morning" and others. Two local acts opened the show, The Taylor Brothers from Flint, Michigan, and Casey Clark of Detroit.

For me, the highlight of this concert was when Jean dedicated "Second Fiddle" to me and my two-year-old granddaughter, Kayla, who tries to yodel like Jean! Thanks for all your great music, you are truly an original! And congratulations on your recent award! In September, Jean was honored with a Golden Eagle Award in recognition of her achievements on behalf of women in country music.

**Virgie Warren
Flushing, Michigan**



Virgie Warren and Jean Shepard.

Seven Shows in a Year

Last year was a busy one for Dennis Devine. He caught the Johnny Cash Show seven times, doing a lot of traveling from his home in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

In March of 1992, I got on a plane to fly to Las Vegas to meet members of the Johnny Cash Fan Club and see his shows at Riverside Resort and Casino in Laughlin, Nevada. In our group were Loren Gano, Pat Katz, Carol Hulet, Karman and Charles Calkins and myself.

We met at the airport when Loren and I got off the plane. There was to be a show in Sun City, Arizona, the night before we were to see the four shows in Laughlin. We took a vote to see if the group wanted to go the 290 miles to Sun City to catch that show. We all voted yes! We made it to the Sun Dome in time for John's manager, Lou Robin, to give us free tickets to the show. He said anyone



Cash performs, June and Johnny duet, Dennis catches up with Earl Poole Ball.



coming that far deserves them!

Next morning we got up and started back to Laughlin—over the Hoover Dam and past cactus and lots of desert. We checked into the hotel and prepared for the first show at 7:00 P.M. Our seats were so close to the stage, my arm was resting on it. The curtain opened, and John came out, and he was three feet away from me. He looked good. After a while, he looked down and said, "This song is for Dennis Devine and the fan club." We went wild!

The show was over before we knew it, but the good part was we had three more to go. Between shows, Lou Robin told us we would all meet for breakfast Saturday

morning. The second show was just as good as the first, with songs from John and June, John Carter Cash, Helen and Anita Carter, fine piano playing from Earl Poole Ball and good work from W.S. Holland, John's drummer for 34 years.

Before we knew it, Saturday came, and we had breakfast with John, June, John Carter, Lou Robin and his wife and Terry and Sharon Graves, fan club members from Grand Island. In all, there were eight fan club members in heaven! John told us that when he is on stage, he feels like he is 21. I asked him what his favorite song was, and he said, "The one I'm singing at the time." It was over too soon, and John paid for breakfast.

Soon 7:00 came, and we took our seats for the show. Again my arm was on the stage. Cash came out, and after a couple of songs, he looked down at me and before starting "Ring of Fire," he said, "This is for Dennis Devine." When he was done, he handed down the pick he had picked the song with. It was heaven! Before it was over, Loren, Pat and Terry got picks. What a show!

I saw a lot of the United States going to Johnny Cash shows in 1992 and had a lot of good times with friends I have gone with or met at the shows. Johnny and family leave you with a special feeling you take with you. The Man in Black has been my friend for 32 years—may we have 50 more. See you at the next concert.

**Dennis Devine
Council Bluffs, Iowa**

MARCH 1993 POLL

Album and Single of the Month

Vince Gill — *I Still Believe in You*
Lorrie Morgan — "What Part of No"

Vince's *I Still Believe in You* and George Strait's *Pure Country* switch places this time—Vince moves from third in the last poll to first in this one, George does the opposite. Alan Jackson's *A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)* takes second (just as it did last poll). Rounding out the Top Five are Lorrie Morgan's *Watch Me* (fourth) and Brooks & Dunn's *Brand New Man* (fifth).

Lorrie's also a favorite in singles. Her "What Part of No" is your Number One pick. It's followed closely by Vince Gill's "Don't Let Our Love Start Slippin' Away," with Reba McEntire's "Take It Back" in third. Fourth place goes to Doug Stone and "Too Busy Being in Love," while Randy Travis' "Look Heart, No Hands" holds Number Five, just as it did in the last poll. Get your vote in for the May Poll!

Readers Create

A Tribute to Patsy

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the death of Patsy Cline. In true testament to her talent, her legacy lives on, her voice still touches people today and she still serves as an inspiration for aspiring artists. Kathy Brashears of Baltimore, Maryland, is one who is inspired by Patsy. Kathy wrote this in tribute to her.

Ladder of Dreams

Ladder of Dreams
I'll climb that Ladder of Dreams
That Ladder of Dreams
Until I make it mine.

Ladders are made to reach the stars
Dreams are there to take us far.
Many have walked this road I find
To reach the line of Patsy Cline.

Patsy, why couldn't you stay?
You're missed each and every day.
You've paved the path, the steps for success.
You've showed us we can be the best.

Small and meek, but really unique
A temper that flared, a sound she shared.
I see in my mind, I know I will find.
You're in our hearts, oh Patsy Cline.

I won't give up
I won't give in.
Until I climb that Ladder of Dreams.
—Kathy Brashears

Best Friends to the End

"After 10 years of real, true friendship, my best friend passed away in the nursing unit of a nearby hospital," says Joyce M. McNair of Candor, North Carolina. The poem she wrote for her best friend is below.

Goodbye to a True Friend

You stood by me so faithfully to the end.
Those precious days are gone for evermore.
I long for your call each and every day.
No matter how sick you were, you'd ask,
"Hi, how's my favorite girl?"

You never failed to end a conversation with,
"I love you, Joyce, and I really do miss you,
be good and don't forget to pray for me."
Your voice so sweet and dear
I will hear no more.

The little memories you left behind,
I sit and think of all the little things
that we shared since the day we met.
You always proved your friendship
in every way.

The affection in our friendship grew and grew.
Everything I started,
no matter how large or small,
you'd advise me with all understanding.

We were so close over the years.
Now who can I call the friend
that you have been to me?
A friend who's been
so understanding, kind and true.



Owen a Favorite

Amy Koch of Canton, Ohio, is a big fan of Alabama's Randy Owen. She contributes this likeness of the man she calls her "favorite singer/songwriter."

Today I sit and think of all we shared.
It's true that you are gone
and I forever more will miss you.
But I have deep satisfaction
that you are with the angels now
and all your suffering is gone.

I prayed for one faithful friend.
And God answered that prayer when we met.
The only think I have left to say is,
If I was the first to go,
would you miss me as much as I miss you?
—Joyce McNair

You Rocked My World

Jeff Edmundson of Pendleton, Oregon, says that he's only recently taken to lyric writing. Here's a sample of his new hobby.

Aftershock

The big one it's been coming,
you've quit coming 'round.
Things are getting scary,
what'll happen I can't tell.
My poor heart's a shakin'
clean off the Richter scale.

Everyday's an aftershock
since you went away.
Earthquakes happen everywhere,
not just in L.A.

Sifting through the rubble
of a heart that's torn apart.
Put the pieces back together,
try to make a brand new start.
Cataclysmic damage
ripped my heart in two.
Picking up the pieces
won't be easy without you.

Everyday's an aftershock
since you went away.
Earthquakes happen everywhere,
not just in L.A.
—Jeff Edmundson



Jackson and Diffie Have Appeal

Newark, Delaware, is home to member Robin Noel, who contributes her takes on Alan Jackson and Joe Diffie. The appeal of these country boys, says Robin, is "their traditional country sound, proven songwriting abilities and their own unique styles."

Collecting the Magazine

Members help each other complete their magazine collections.

*Wanted: Feb. 1975 issue of *Country Music* for my collection. **Joan Gusick Box 368, Ft. Benton, MT 59442.**

*Does anyone have any copies of *Country Music Magazine* with Johnny Cash on cover? Also interested in purchasing other issues with articles on Cash. I'll buy Cash albums, CD's, photos, VHS videos, at reasonable prices. Like to hear from fans interested in trading or selling. **Scotty Hypes, Jones Branch Rd., Box 965, Summersville, WV 26651**

*Wanted: *Country Music Magazine* Mar. 1975. Will pay any fair price and shipping. **Bob Vogel, 80 Beaver Grade Rd., McKees Rocks, PA 15136.**

*Anyone have a copy of Jul/Aug 1991 issue of *Country Music Magazine* with Ricky Van Shelton in centerfold? Also, other issues featuring RVS and photos of RVS at Fan Fair and VHS copy of his TNN special, *From Grit to Gold*. **Kathy Buyer, R.R.#1, Otley, IA 50214.**

*For sale: *Country Music Magazine* from Jan. 1973 (Jerry Lee Lewis cover) to Nov/Dec 1992. All or any part. **R.S. Feauqua, HC 74 Box 11, Effie, LA 71331**

*For sale: various issues of *Country Song Round-up*; *Music City Newspaper*; *Music City News*; *The Journal*; *Country Music Magazine*; *Country America*; *Hee Haw Magazine*; plus scrap books, concert books, other books. \$1.00 per copy + postage. Send want list. **Frances Skpoek, 1133 Mill St. Ext., Belton, SC 29627-8841**

Information, Please

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

*For sale: LP's and 45's, 1950's-90's. Acuff, Dolly, Reba, Jones, Reeves. Rare collectibles. Send want list. **R.J. Cunningham, 134 Berwick St., Berwick, ME 03901-2702.**

*LP's for sale: Dolly, *I Wish I Felt That Way at Home*, *Here You Come Again*, *In the Beginning*; Hank Sr., *A Home in Heaven*; Conway, *I Already Loved You in My Mind*; Sons of the Pioneers, *Cool Water*; Roy Clark, *Come Live with Me*; Sonny James, *Only the Lonely*; Kris Kristofferson, *Jesus Was a Capricorn*; Bill Anderson, *Scorpio*; Carlene Carter, *Musical Shapes*; Loretta, *One's on the Way*; Sgt. Barry Sadler, *Ballad of the Green Berets*; Kitty Wells, *They're Stepping All Over My Heart*; George Jones, *Alone Again*; Lynn Anderson, *Keep Me in Mind*, *World of Lynn Anderson*; Johnny Rodriguez, *Introducing J.R.*; Donna Fargo, *My Second Album*, *Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.*; Bobbie Gentry, *Ode to Billie Joe*; Glen Campbell, *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*. **Jane L. Irwin, Downs Rd., Box 210, Peru, NY 12972.**

*Trying to locate a Grand Ole Opry picture book from the 1940's. Interested in buying photos of Cowboy Copas, Lefty Frizzell and Clyde Moody. **John Bell, 2520 Valarie Dr., Zeeland, MI 49464.**

*Wanted: videos on Nanci Griffith, Tish Hinojosa, Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Reba McEntire. **Phillip Fortune, Box 411, Pawhuska, OK 74056-0411**

*Dolly albums wanted: *I Wish I Felt This Way at Home*, *In the Good Old Days*, *My Blue Ridge Mountain Boy*, *As Long As I Love*, *Once More*, *Golden Streets of Glory*, *Two of a Kind*, *Together Always*, *Dolly Parton Sings*, *We Found It*, *Love and Music*. **Jimmy Wallace, P.O. Box 898, Winnsboro, TX 75494.**

*For sale: more than 60 LP's and CD's by both Roy Orbison and George Jones. All mint. Will furnish lists on other artists. **Bob Weber, 8602 Standing Rock, San Antonio, TX 78242.**

*For sale: onstage/offstage photos of Alan, Clint, Garth, Marty, Suzy, Crystal, Barbara, Dolly and all your favorite country artists. Also, magazines and LP's. **Galen Duncan, 3517 Grier Nursery Rd., Street, MD 21154.**

*Wanted: any or all George Strait items. Will accept copies of photos and articles and will reimburse postage. Send list and prices. Also want information on George's fan club. **Brandi Ashe, Rt. 1 Box 2830, Juliette, GA 31046.**

*For sale: over 200 LP's, everything from Acuff to Young. Send two stamps for list. **Jim Martin, 2333 Ramada, Houston, TX 77062.**

*Looking for anything on George Fox: VHS tapes CTV's *Country on Campus* (10/15/92) and *Canada Country Music Awards Show* (9/20/92). **Jayne Austin, 1418 N. Cedar, Nevada, MO 64772.**

*Wanted: B.J. Thomas' book, *Home Where I Belong*. Will pay reasonable price. **Helen Franklin, 1513 CR 39, Waterloo, IN 46793-9713.**

*Looking for articles, pictures, tapes of Vince Gill and Pure Prairie League. Also looking for *Randy Travis Live*. Reasonable price paid. **Chris Losurdo, 1717 W. Crystal Ln., #208, Mount Prospect, IL 60056.**

*Wanted: anything on Reba—records, cassettes, CD's, magazines, newsletters, articles, videos, photos at Fan Fair and fan club parties. Also want VHS copy of TV movie, *Gambler IV: Luck of the Draw*, aired 11/3-4/91. Will pay reasonable price. **Darlene Williamson, 5901 Claus Rd., Riverbank, CA 95367.**

*Looking for 45 by Chris Austin, "Lonesome for You" b/w "The Reason" (Warner Bros. 7-27815) released in 1988. Also, can anyone supply me with Doug Stone's videos of "Warning Labels" and "Too Busy Being in Love" and his appearances on *Circus of the Stars*. **Vicki L. Siegrist, 3939 Russell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110-3709.**

*Wanted: Emmylou Harris' *Light of the Stable* (second cover) and *Duet* vinyl LP's (U.S. or other), VHS videos, photos, Marcia Ball's Capitol LP, *Circuit Queen*. Also collect Glen Campbell and Sonny James. **Kevin Allen, Box 8535, Reno, NV 89507-8535.**

*Wanted: VHS tapes of any Vince Gill appearances before April 1992. Especially *Christmas in Washington* (12/91), and 1991 TNN/*Music City News Awards Show*, or Opry induction. **Carole Hall, 9 Maplewood Ave., West Boylston, MA 01583.**

*I'm trying to get a copy of each cassette that Barbara Mandrell has made. So far I have 30. If you have any to sell, please send name, condition and price. **N.B. Caldwell, 3451 Cornell Terrace, Deltona, FL 32738-1250.**

*Country trading cards, buy/sell/trade to complete my sets and yours. **Kelly Showalter, Rt. 1 Box 500, Penn Laird, VA 22846.**

*Wanted: onstage/offstage photos of Garth Brooks from following Pennsylvania locations: Richland (7/14/90), Hughesville (7/17/90), Whitneyville (8/6/90), Centre Hall (8/24/90), York (9/17/91), Bloomsburg (9/26/92). Please write if you have any. **Frank Carey, RR#1 Box 169, Pittston, PA 18643.**

*Wanted: Aaron Tippin's first appearance on *Nashville Now* and *Crook & Chase*. Also, appearance on *Video P.M.* week of 1/11/93 with his father. Will supply VHS tape and/or pay reasonable price. **Connie Ann Miller, Rt. 4 Box 617, Apperson Rd., E. Bend, NC 27018.**

*Wanted: VHS tapes of 1991 CMA and ACM awards shows. Will provide tape for copy and pay reasonable price. **14609 Colony Way, Poway, CA 92064.**

*Country albums for sale. **Melba Waller, 224 N. Covington St., Hillsboro, TX 76645.**

*Looking for anything on Loretta, Conway and Jerry Lee. **Thelma Johnson, Rt. 4 Box 284, Corinth, MS 38834.**

*Wanted: Becky Hobbs items—cassette of *Hottest 'Ex' in Texas* (Beckaroo 549) and singles of "I Can't Say Goodbye to You" (Mercury 55062), "Just What the Doctor Ordered" (Mercury 57010), "I Learned All About Cheatin' from You" (Mercury 57033) and "Little Hunk of Heaven" (Curb NR-76758). Also looking for other memorabilia on Becky. **Rick Berry, P.O. Box 102, Kane, IL 62054.**

*Photos for sale: 1970's-1990's collection of personally-taken country stars off-stage. Must sell. Very inexpensive. **Nancy, Box G, McKenna, WA 98558.**

*Wanted: Loretta Lynn memorabilia. Looking to buy EP's, photos, fan club material, records, etc. Also need older cassettes on Decca label. Serious collectors, please write. **Lenny Mattison, Hong Kong Rd., Parish, NY 13131**

*VHS tapes for sale: CMA awards '82-'84, '90-'92; TNN awards '90-'92; Grand Ole Opry anniversaries '91 & '92; interviews with various artists; Travis and Marty's "No Hats Tour," Randy and George, Garth, Dolly in England concert. All tapes are 6 hrs., \$25 includes shipping. **June E. Miner, 517 Edward Rd., W. Melbourne, FL 32904.**

*Wanted: Conway Twitty memorabilia—candid photos, rare recordings, tour books, etc. Send list/prices. Have photos to sell. **Leslie Gardner, 7533 Madora Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91306.**

*Wanted: Anything and everything on Ricky Van Shelton—photos, posters, magazines, etc. Also videos, including Ricky's appearance on *Austin City Limits* (1-22-91). **Ruth Ann Bostick, P.O. Box 254, North Branch, MI 48461**

*Wanted: Country Classics Series I trading cards #'s 33 & 58, to complete my set. Have extras to complete yours. Interested in anything on Reba and Cher. Looking for Reba's *Heart to Heart* on cassette and old LP's on Cher or Sonny and Cher. **Caroline L. Lips, 765 S. Orange, Turlock, CA 95380.**

*Wanted: Holly Dunn memorabilia. Photos, articles, video clips. Send list, prices, condition. **Doug Hendricks, 21692 T.R. 175, Mt. Blanchard, OH 45867.**

*Looking for gospel album by Eddie Nickleson. Includes "Precious Memories" and "I Remember Billy Sunday." Can anyone help? **Mrs. Edward Parnell, 11200 Seaglares Dr., Pensacola, FL 32507-9160.**

*Trying to respond to a request made a while back for songs of Big Al Downing. I've made a tape for you, a lady from New Hampshire or Vermont, but don't know your address! Please contact me so I can send the tape! **Jeanne Indoe, 2 Armstrong Ave., Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1E 5W8.**

*Looking for the *Emmylou Harris Songbook*, published by Cherry Lane Music of New York. Will pay your price for a copy in excellent condition. **Bill Fox, 27 Third St., Webster, MA 01570.**

*Wanted: anything by Paulette Carlson with Highway 101, or as a solo artist, that was recorded before 1987 or not included on the albums by Highway 101 with Paulette. I'll send blank cassette or pay for your cassette. **Jerry Wipe, P.O. Box 101, Martinsdale, MT 59053.**

*For sale: 2,000 country albums (many autographed), T-shirts, autographed photos, videos and memorabilia. Sell and trade. Three stamps for list. **Tom Weaver, 406 Winston Ave., Wilmington, DE 19804-1855.**

*Wanted: anything on Randy Travis. I'm a serious fan and big collector. Please help me in expanding my collection. **Darcy A. Dahl, 22153 Pico St., Grand Terrace, CA 92324.**

*Interested in anything and everything on Willie Nelson, Hank Sr. & Jr., Merle Haggard, Billy Ray Cyrus, George Jones—autographed photos, posters, photos on stage or off. Send list, prices. **The Leopard Inn, Shirley Holden Gillett, 6402-04 Holmes Blvd., Holmes Beach, FL 34217.**

Pen Pals

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

*Hi. My name is Roni. I'm 47 years old, and I'm looking to correspond with a gentleman who loves to country dance, go to concerts, fish, camp and hike. Send photo, and I'll do the same. Please, no inmates. **Roni Delao Lucero, 3838 N. 30th St. #135, Phoenix, AZ 85016.**

*Hi. My name is Pat. I'm a 61-year-old young country fan. Favorites are Ray Price, George Jones, Faron Young and Gene Watson. Also like Alan Jackson, Mark Chesnutt, Vince Gill, Neil McCoy and others. Love to read, sew, watch football and soaps and get letters. Age makes no difference. No inmates, please. **Patricia Downs, 426 Palm Ave. N. #6, St. Petersburg, FL 33703.**

*I am a 33-year-old, single gal who would love to correspond with country fans, ages 31-38. Favorites are Judds, Clint, Alan, Trisha and many more. Enjoy writing, reading, walks, mountains, nature and animals. **Cheryl Cornell, 105 Gordon Ave., Mattydale, NY 13211**

*38-year-old, single male would like to hear from country girls, 25 and up. Presently incarcerated. Favorites are Hag-



RANDY TRAVIS

COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE MAY/JUNE 1993

gard, Jones, Twitty and others. I'm not related to Billy Ray. **Robert Cyrus 205-707, P.O. Box 56, Lebanon, OH 45036.**

•Hi. My name is Carol Steele, and I'm a 23-year-old, single woman. My favorites are Tanya, Randy, Alan Jackson, Alabama, Crystal Gayle and Loretta Lynn. Hobbies are reading, camping, hiking, playing pool, bowling and poetry. Looking for pen pals, guys or gals. Please write and send photo. Will answer all. **Carol Steele, 305 C Jayce Manor, Martins Ferry, OH 43935.**

•Hi. I'm Linda, and I'm looking for a few good people who love to write, enjoy music, life, reading, movies and down-to-earth living. Favorites are Marty Stuart, Travis Tritt, Tanya, Hank Jr., Alan Jackson, Tracy Lawrence and Davis Daniel. Will answer all. **Linda Pumphrey, 311 Ridgmont Dr., Industry, PA 15052-1937.**

•Hi! I'd like to correspond with fellow female singers who'd be interested in forming a duo or group or just anyone who'd like to write. Will answer all! I'm 18 and like singing, playing guitar and true good ole country boys. Music is my life! **Darla Chasteen, Rt. 1 Box 234, Rock Island, OK 74932.**

•Hello. My name is Kevin. I'm 25 and divorced. Currently incarcerated for defending myself. I love to listen to Doug Stone, Alan Jackson, Travis Tritt, Clint, George Jones, Joe Diffie, Trisha, Tammy and Loretta. I'd like to correspond with ladies 18 and over. I love to fish, play softball, swim, read and write country songs. **Kevin Allen 903977, P.O. Box 473, Westville, IN 46391.**

•Hi! I'm Lisa! I'm 23, married and a mother of one. I'd love to hear from people, 21-26, who love Garth, Reba, Wynonna, Billy Ray, Hal, Aaron, Lorrie, and Trisha. Please, no inmates. Include photo if possible. **Lisa R. Custen, P.O. Box 214, Springs, PA 15562.**

•Hi! My name is Brenda, 32, from Michigan. Would like to hear from pen pals around my age, male or female. I'm a fan of Alabama, RVS, Alan Jackson and others. Interests are traveling, camping, fishing and spending time with family. **Brenda Sackman, 5072 W. Grand Blanc Rd., Swartz Creek, MI 48473.**

•I'm a single male, 53. Love country music. Favorites include Billy Ray, Aaron Tippin, Alan Jackson. Also enjoy Asleep at the Wheel. Would like to hear from other fellows, any age, and Native Americans also. Like writing letters and making friends, among other interests. Photo gets mine. Please, no inmates. **Leigh Hornbeck, 1260 N. Harper Ave., Apt. U, West Hollywood, CA 90046.**

•Howdy. My name is Bill. I am a 52, single and currently in prison. Would love to correspond with country ladies, ages 40-55. My country music favorites are Merle Haggard, George Jones and Mary-Chapin Carpenter, to name a few. I'm an animal lover and love to camp and fish. **Bill Fallon, D20454 L-336, P.O. Box 600, Tracy, CA 95376.**

•Hi! My name is Kristi, and I'm 24 years old. Love country music. Favorites are Marty Stuart, Reba, Garth and George Strait. Love to hear from cowboys, ages 25-35. Will answer all. **Kristi Vella, 1091 Roewill Dr. #1, San Jose, CA 95117.**

•Hi. My name is Laura. I'm a 20-year-

old cowgirl looking to correspond with a cowboy, 20-23. My favorite singer is Travis Tritt. I'm in love with Marty Stuart. Favorite hobbies are fishing and playing pool. **Laura L. Green, 5415 S. Everett Ave., Sand Springs, OK 74063.**

•Hi! My name is Queena. I'm 25 and love country music. I'm a big fan of Marty Stuart and collect photos of him. Also like Travis Tritt, Aaron Tippin, Tracy Lawrence, Mark Collie. Interests are going to concerts, horseback riding, bowling, fishing, watching TNN. Would love to hear from anyone who loves country music, especially Marty Stuart. **Queena Goretzki, 2651 Church Ave., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494.**

•Howdy! My name is Jacy, and I'm 19. Love rodeos, trail riding, country dancin', and country music. Favorites include George Strait, Chris LeDoux, Red Steagall, Brooks & Dunn and Garth. Please fill up my mailbox here at college! **Jacy L. Nyren, 204 Hagemann Hall, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50613.**

•Hello! I'm a 21-year-old, single female. Favorites include Sawyer Brown, Steve Wariner, Diamond Rio, RVS and Vince Gill. Hobbies are horseback riding, traveling, dancing and cruising in my '66 Mustang. Love to hear from ladies and gents, 21 and up. No inmates, please. **Heather R. Burgett, 85484 Jasper Park Rd., Pleasant Hill, OR 97455.**

Notice of New Policies

Pen Pals requests from readers age 16 and under must be OK'd by a parent. Requests sent without parents' OK will be discarded. Also, we will not accept third party Pen Pals requests. Remember, all Collections page requests must be accompanied by a valid membership number.

•Hi! I would love to correspond with country music-loving ladies, ages 40-50, from anywhere. I love all country, but especially oldies, such as stars of the Opry. Also love outdoors, walking, watching sports, collecting postcards and T-shirts, reading, corresponding with pen pals. I'm 45, divorced. Send photo, if possible. I'll send mine in return. **Larry E. Keltgen, P.O. Box 3, Duluth, MN 55801.**

•Hi. My name is Steve. I'm 41 and love country. Some favorites are Reba, Williams, Jones, Strait, Garth, Clint, Mac Wiseman, Jim Reeves, Patsy Cline and more. Hobbies are horses, travel, tinkering and cooking out. **Steve Frazier, Rt. 2 Box 224, Culpeper, VA 22701.**

•Hi. My name is Bobbi, and I'm a 40-year-old country music lover. Favorite is Travis Tritt. Would love to hear from guys and gals of all ages. **Bobbi Wade, Rt. 10 Box 2141, Lexington, NC 27292.**

•Hi. My name is Bill. I am 37 and single. I love all country music. I like dancing, hiking and going to the movies. Would love to hear from cowgirls. **Bill Beggs, 629 W. Olive, Monrovia, CA 91016.**

•I like Kitty Wells, Garth, Johnny Cash and the rest. I am 67 years old, and I'd like to hear from other people who like country and western music and are close to my age, male or female. Will answer all. **M.E. Ehrheart, RR 2 Box**

235, Pittsfield, IL 62363.

•Hey—hey you—over here! My name is Janell, and I'm a 17-year-old high school senior. I like to read, write, travel and listen to country music. Guys and gals, 16-25, please write. I'll do my best to write to everyone, but please, no prisoners. **Janell Keyser, Rt. 3 Box 79A, Broken Bow, NE 68822.**

•Hi. I'm 42 years old. I sing, play guitar and write songs and poetry. Would love to write to anyone who loves country music. Will answer all. **Jerry Conway, P.O. Box 51, Comstock, NY 12821.**

•Hi! My name is Sandy. I'm 49 years old. I love country music. Favorites are Ralph Emery, Shotgun Red, The Geezinslaws, RVS, George Strait, Marty Stuart and Travis Tritt. Would love to hear from people 50-65 who like the same. Send photo, please! **Sandra Kay Williams, 2712 W. Delmar St., Springfield, MO 65802-5107.**

•Hello. I'm a 66-year-old widow. Love country music. Favorites are Conway Twitty and Billy Ray Cyrus. Like to write and receive mail and make new friends. I'm active and an animal lover. Come on now, write! **Fayne Burke, 709 Old State Rd., Johnstown, NY 12095.**

•Hi! My name is Sherri, and I'm 17. I'm a big fan of George Strait. Also like Tracy Lawrence, Billy Dean, Travis Tritt and Clint. If you share the same interests, drop me a line. **Sherri Fullen, 118 Bluffview Dr., Willis, TX 77378.**

•Hi! My name is Sherry Ray Kerr. I'm a 24-year-old country girl from Maryland. I'm a country fanatic. Favorites are Alabama, Reba, Marie Osmond, Mark Chesnutt, Ronnie Milsap and The Foresters, to name a few. Would like to hear from any country guys or girls, ages 20-50. Photo gets mine. **Sherry Ray Kerr, P.O. Box 875, Millersville, MD 21108.**

•I'm a 33-year-old male who's incarcerated in Florida. Girlfriend left, dog died, need to hear from country music fans. Reba is my favorite. **William Borfield, 119995 A-66, Century Correctional Institution, P.O. Box 248, Century, FL 32535-0248.**

•Hi! I'm Mary, age 22. I was raised on country music. Favorites are Reba, Billy Dean, Billy Ray, Clint and Garth. I love meeting new people. Would like to hear from male and female. Send photo if possible. **Mary Brown, P.O. Box 164, New Lisbon, IN 47366.**

•Hello. My name is Lisa. I'm a single, 21-year-old female. I love country music. Favorites are Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, Tanya and many more. Would love to hear from all single guys, 21-30. **Lisa Holland, 274 Honeysuckle Rd., Madison, NC 27025.**

•Hi! All my rowdy friends ain't comin' over tonight, so I'd love some pen pals! I'm Carmen, 29, married to an ex-marine. Favorites include: Marty, Alan, Vince, Doug, Mary-Chapin, Trisha, Reba, Garth and more! I enjoy baseball, football, photography, cooking, baking, reading and movies. Would love to hear from anyone (especially military) with similar interests. No inmates, please. **Carmen Madary, 9250 W. Noel Ave., Des Plaines, IL 60016.**

•Hello! My name is Sandi. I'm 30 and enjoy listening to male vocal groups. Favorites are Oak Ridge Boys, Ken-

tucky HeadHunters and Pirates of the Mississippi. Would love to correspond with anyone and everyone who enjoys these groups. **Sandi Howard, 6632 S. Dixie Hwy., Glendale, KY 42740.**

•Hiya! My name is Jeff. I'm 20 and single. Love country music and theatre. My goal is to be an actor. Favorites are Judds, Reba, Randy, Dolly, Patsy Cline, Vince, many more old and new. Interests are reading, plays, singing, acting, recycling, bowling and volleyball. Love to hear from guys or girls, age 20 and up. Please, no inmates. **Jeffrey Adams, 409 Oak Rd., Lamar, CO 81052.**

•Hi. My name is Ron, and I'm 40 and single. I'm a professional country lead guitarist. I love it all, old and new country. I'd like to correspond with females who sing and play an instrument, pro or amateur. Hobbies include guitar, snowmobiles and gold prospecting. I live in a log cabin I built myself. Please send photo. Will answer all. **Ron Wise, Box 1013, Willow, AK 99608.**

•Hi! My name is Lisa. I'm 20 and single. I love Garth, Travis Tritt, Billy Ray and others. Interests are movies, concerts, fishing, animals, reading, writing, cooking. Will answer all, especially guys ages 20-28. **Lisa M. Snyder, 301 Roberts St. Apt. 1-E, Lexington, SC 29072.**

•Hi from Southern California. My name is Stacey. I am a 20-year-old college student who loves country music. Some of my favorites are Garth, Reba, Brooks & Dunn. I'd like to correspond with sincere, honest guys, 21-27, who like to write! No inmates, please. Photo gets mine. **Stacey Toelle, 950 N. Quince, Rialto, CA 92376.**

•Hi. My name is Joan. I'm a 55-year-old, divorced, active lady who loves country music. Some favorites are Randy Travis, Vince Gill, Lee Greenwood, Alan Jackson, Clint Black. I love to dance, travel, collect post cards, badges and ceramic state coffee mugs. Would love to hear from nice, honest gentlemen (50-60 yrs old). No inmates, please. **Joan Black, 3 Glenwood Ave., Williamston, SC, 29697.**

•Incarcerated! Goal-oriented male, 24, seeks honest, sincere, and interesting correspondence from males and females. I love country music and a few other types. I'm very open-minded and will answer all who write! **Bill Burgess, #A-210-448., P.O. Box 740, London, OH 43140-0740.**

•Hi. My name is Thomas. I'm a 27-year-old country boy who is incarcerated in Texas. I'd love to correspond with folks who love country music. Some favorites are George Strait, Mark Chesnutt, Alan Jackson, Lorrie Morgan, Reba, and more. I'm from a small town and love country living and all animals. **Thomas E. Parker, #585941, Rt. 2 Box 20, Midway, TX 75852.**

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By Rich Kienzle



The statistics speak for themselves: Buck Owens had 15 consecutive Number One records between 1963 and 1967, a total of 20 between 1963 and 1974. And 26 other singles made it to the Top Ten, including both sides of his 1964 single, "My Heart Skips a Beat" and "Together Again," which switched Number One and Number Two positions at one point. He epitomizes the "Bakersfield Sound" of the 1960's, a form of honky tonk music that developed from the Texas and Oklahoma refugees who relocated to California during the Depression.

Bakersfield produced other stars aside from Buck and fellow Bakersfield giant Merle Haggard. Rose Maddox, Ferlin Husky, Tommy Collins and Wynn Stewart were among them, but Buck's guitar-driven music helped define country in the 1960's.

Alvis Edgar Owens Jr. was born outside Sherman, Texas, not far south of the Red River, on August 12, 1929. He was the second child and first son of sharecropper Alvis Owens and his wife Maicie. Their life was not easy. The Depression was on, and they were literally living in the Dust Bowl chronicled in the John Steinbeck novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. "Buck" was a mule on the Owens farm, and after young Alvis Jr. announced his name was "Buck," the name stayed with him.

Doing farm work in the midst of all this left its impact on Buck, who vowed as a boy that he'd never be poor, hungry or without decent clothes when he grew up. Everything he became stemmed from that resolve. In November 1937, the Owens family and other relatives (ten in all) piled into a 1933 Ford pulling a trailer and headed west. They settled just outside Phoenix, Arizona, started working on local farms and on occasion traveled to California to harvest fruit.

By this time a teenaged Buck soaked up bluegrass, Western swing and the music of artists like Eddy Arnold, Cowboy Copas and others. His mother showed him some guitar chords, and he was soon playing in local honky tonks, first in a duo with a friend, then with a band called Mac's Skillet Lickers. There he met Bonnie Campbell, whom he married in 1948. His parents disliked the idea of Buck playing honky tonks (he drove a truck to make a living), but Buck saw clubs as a training ground.

In 1951 when Buck and Bonnie moved to Bakersfield, California, the Owens family soon followed. There he became

Buck Owens

Born the son of a sharecropper, Owens became a musical innovator, a shrewd businessman and a music industry giant.

BUCK OWENS: RODUE UN

lead singer and guitarist in Bill Woods' Orange Blossom Playboys, the house band at the popular Blackboard Club. Guitarist Joe Maphis wrote the honky tonk anthem, "Dim Lights, Thick Smoke (and Loud, Loud Music)," after watching Buck in action at the club.

Bakersfield-based singer Tommy Collins used Buck as his lead guitarist on his 1954 hit, "You Better Not Do That," on Capitol, and Capitol producer Ken Nelson liked Buck's playing enough to use him as a studio musician on various country, rock and pop recording sessions from then on. Buck never took all his cues from country; he admired Elvis and Little Richard, incorporating both hardcore honky tonk and rock in his music. Buck's first recordings for the Pep and Chesterfield labels were honky tonk, except for one rockabilly record done under the name Corky Jones. But Ken Nelson, feeling Buck lacked a vocal style, resisted signing him as a singer until 1957.

When his early Capitol releases didn't sell, Buck moved to the Tacoma, Washington, area in 1958. He played clubs, owned part of a radio station and hosted a local TV show that gave an local amateur named Loretta Lynn her first exposure. In 1959 he scored his first successes with the single "Second Fiddle," which made the Top 30. That fall, "Under Your Spell Again," another Texas style shuffle of the sort Ray Price made popular, became his first Top Ten. Buck returned to Bakersfield. Soon he was touring the country with a young guitarist and fiddler he met in Washington: Don Ulrich, better known as Don Rich.

By 1963 Buck connected with Jack McFadden, who remains his manager today. That same year Buck had his first Number One record with "Act Naturally" and expanded his backup band, which one of the bass players—Merle Haggard—dubbed "The Buckaroos." The driving sound of "Act Naturally" was part of its success: Buck called it the "freight train" sound, because of its churning speed. His twanging guitar style gave his records a spare, stringing trebly sound that he and Ken Nelson deliberately emphasized to cut through on AM radio.

Buck was hitting a peak by the mid-60's with a near-unprecedented string of Number One's: "Love's Gonna Live Here," in 1963; "Together Again," "My Heart Skips a Beat" and "I Don't Care" in 1964; "I've Got a Tiger by the Tail," "Before You Go," "Only You" and "Buckaroo" in 1965; "Waitin' in Your Welfare Line,"

"Think of Me" and "Open Up Your Heart" in 1966; "Sam's Place" and "Your Tender Loving Care" in 1967. He was on top; The Beatles' recording of "Act Naturally" affirmed the appeal of his work beyond the country audience. Buck raised some eyebrows among country fans and music business types by praising The Beatles' music at a time when few others agreed.

Buck also became an astute businessman even while concentrating on his music. He'd taken over the tiny Blue Book music publishing company in the 50's. Founded by his friend, songwriter Harlan



Boyle Holly, Willie Cantu, Buck, Don Rich, Tom Brumley.

Howard, it published Buck's and fellow Bakersfield star Merle Haggard's biggest songs. He had a booking agency, bought a Bakersfield radio station and started another, and later bought two stations in Phoenix and opened his own recording studio. In 1966 he started hosting *The Buck Owens Ranch Show*, a syndicated show seen in over 100 markets.

His professionalism was legendary, with stage shows going on longer than his contract specified; drinking and drug abuse were nearly nonexistent in The Buckaroos. Don Rich became his alter ego, handling problems on the road and contributing immensely to Buck's music. In 1966 they played Carnegie Hall, with Capitol recording the show. In '68 he and Roy Clark started co-hosting CBS's *Hee Haw*. Buck and his red, white and blue guitar became one of the show's symbols.

Through the late 60's and early 70's, the hits continued, including "Tall Dark Stranger" (Number One in 1969) and several Top Tens that marked the end of the "freight train" sound, including "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and two bluegrass numbers: "Ruby" and "Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms." His final Number One, "Made in Japan," came in 1972. With *Hee Haw* in syndication after CBS canceled it,

Buck was still riding high. He signed his last Capitol contract, this one giving him ownership of all his recordings after 1980. But bad times were looming.

The death of Don Rich in a 1974 motorcycle crash devastated Buck. When his Capitol contract ended in '75, he signed with Warner Brothers, producing albums in the country-pop sound he always disliked; few of them sold. He added fiddler Jana Jae to The Buckaroos, and in 1977 married her, only to leave her days later. Always proud of his straight-arrow reputation compared to other stars, Buck suddenly found himself facing embarrassing publicity. The couple divorced.

By 1980 he was at a crossroads. Unable to take the pain and stress that began with Don's death, he quit touring except for a few appearances. Though *Hee Haw* paid well, he began feeling that the show overexposed him and that he'd allowed the its comedy to overshadow his reputation as a master honky tonk singer. He finally quit in 1986 and concentrated on his businesses. At times he was wistful about his career, wondering if his music would ever be noticed again.

The New Traditionalists of the mid-80's answered that question. His influence on Dwight Yoakam, Marty Stuart and the late Keith Whitley was immense, as it on the first New Traditionalist, Emmylou Harris. The Desert Rose Band and Highway 101 also acknowledged Buck's influence. One day in 1987, Yoakam showed up in Buck's Bakersfield office when he came to play the Kern County fair. The two later sang "Streets of Bakersfield," a song Buck first cut in 1972, on a TV special in 1988. Response was so strong that they recorded it. The duet reached Number One that fall. He toured briefly, and recorded two underrated albums for Capitol and a mediocre country-pop album for Curb.

Today, at age 63, Buck takes it easy. He still does a few selected show dates and spends the rest of the time overseeing his companies, which are run by his family, including his sons, Buddy Alan and Michael Lynn, his sister Dorothy and his nephew Mel. His music, his records, business empire and 160-acre ranch outside Bakersfield, all stand as proof that a poor farm kid from Texas had the guts, determination and vision to realize his dream.

Albums Available
See For CMSA Members Only page.

Members' Top Album Picks

JEAN H. HOPKINS
Gretna, Louisiana
TOP TEN ALBUMS

Dwight Yoakam
If There Was a Way
I admire his dedication to his family.



Dwight Yoakam
Buenas Noches from a Lonely Room
"Hold On to My Heart"—what a tribute to his mother.

Various Artists
Honeymoon in Vegas Soundtrack
Smashing album! Includes Dwight's cover of "Suspicious Minds."

Vince Gill
I Still Believe in You
His voice and projection touch hearts.

Ricky Van Shelton
Don't Overlook Salvation
The only gospel album that really touched my heart.

George Strait
Pure Country
Beautiful and sincere young man. Great movie!

Alan Jackson
A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)
A natural hunk.

Dolly Parton
Eagle When She Flies
A true artist.

Billy Ray Cyrus
Some Gave All
A real stimulant to country and pop. A hunk, too!

Kevin Welch
Western Beat
Unique, soulful delivery.

GRACE R. CARR
Lakehurst, New Jersey
TOP TEN ALBUMS

"Here's a list of my 10 favorite albums, although it was hard to stop at 10. They are in no particular order, except for Gail Davies."

Gail Davies
The Best of Gail Davies

The Statler Brothers
The Statler Brothers, Live and Sold Out

Hal Ketchum
Past the Point of Rescue

Tanya Tucker
Tennessee Woman

Hank Williams Jr.
Lone Wolf

Chet Atkins & Mark Knopfler
Neck and Neck

Lacy J. Dalton
Survivor

Dwight Yoakam
If There Was a Way

Johnny Cash
Rainbow

Ricky Skaggs
Waitin' for the Sun to Shine



NORMA JEAN BROWN
Woodburn, Oregon
TOP TEN ALBUMS

Billy Joe Royal
The Royal Treatment

Billy Joe Royal
Greatest Hits

Ray Charles
Greatest Hits, Volume 1

Waylon Jennings
Greatest Hits

Willie Nelson
Red Headed Stranger

Kris Kristofferson
Songs of Kris Kristofferson



Roy Orbison
Black & White Night Live

Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt
Trio

Vern Gosdin
Alone

Ronnie Milsap
Stranger Things Have Happened

BILL FOX
Webster, Massachusetts
TOP TEN ALBUMS

"Here are my 10 favorite albums, ranked in order of impact and importance on me."

Emmylou Harris
Ballad of Sally Rose

Gram Parsons
Grievous Angel

Emmylou Harris
Pieces of the Sky

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Volume 2

Suzy Bogguss
Somewhere Between

Keith Whitley
Don't Close Your Eyes

Emmylou Harris
Roses in the Snow

Vince Gill
When I Call Your Name



Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt
Trio

Carlene Carter
I Fell in Love

PATRICIA HERRING
Strong, Arkansas
TOP TEN ALBUMS

Steve Earle
Guitar Town
What can I say? An ax-buff's dream.

Stevie Ray Vaughn
The Sky Is Crying
See comment above!

Gregg Allman
I'm No Angel
No, he ain't! But his voice is heavenly!



Marty Stuart
This One's Gonna Hurt You
This one's gonna be around for a long, long time!

Led Zeppelin
Led Zeppelin IV
Jimmy Page wrote every riff there is.

Lynyrd Skynyrd
Gold & Platinum
Gary Rossington's '59 Les Paul does the talking!

Kiss
Alive
Speaking of smoking Les Paul's...

Eagles
Greatest Hits Volumes 1 & 2
'Nuff said.

Chet Atkins & Mark Knopfler
Neck and Neck
Works for me.

The Honeydrippers
Volume 1
The slide guitar solo on "Sea of Love" is one in a million. (I'd love to hear Lee Roy Parnell do a cover of that song.)

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Dolly's first time on our cover—February 1973.

20 Questions with **DOLLY PARTON**

by Michael "Do-Rag" Bane

She's done everything, at least twice. Look up "star" in the dictionary, and you'll probably find Dolly Parton's picture. Of course, you'll also find that same picture in better tabloids everywhere, as well as on the cover of numerous other magazines (this one included—first time back in February 1973). Yet after the hits, the movies, the television shows, Dolly Parton is amazingly unchanged. She still talks a mile-a-minute, still pulls no punches and still is one of the smartest people in the business. 20 Questions' crack stalker caught up with Ms. Parton on an early morning in Los Angeles, where she was tired from fielding "Romeo" questions....

1 Okay, what is this deal with Billy Ray Cyrus, anyway? 'Splain this to me...

Well, there's nothing to 'splain! I wrote this song several months ago when I was working on the new album. And I wrote the song originally about my little nephew, Brian, and he's kind of a little Romeo. So I've been calling him Romeo for several months; he don't keep up with his school work, and he's in love with all the girls, and all the girls are in love with him. So one morning I started writing this song, and since I knew my nephew didn't sing, I thought of Billy Ray singing the part on the album. So I called him up, and I said, "Lord, you're the best Romeo I know in this business, so would you like to play the part of Romeo in my video?" So then I gathered up Kathy Mattea and Mary-Chapin Carpenter and Tanya Tucker and Pam Tillis, and we donated the money from the single to the Red Cross. We just wanted to do something that was tongue-in-cheek and fun.

2 You can't fool me, Parton. I know how you women are—looking at buns and stuff. I was talking to a woman singer a couple of weeks ago about that video, and she said, "Hey, Michael, didn't that guy have a great butt?"

3 I don't know, Dolly, what about those Billy Ray stories...

Well, I only met him a few times; of course, the tabloids had us romantically linked, which is a compliment to a woman my age. Anyway, I met with him back in the sum-

mer, and we did some concerts. That was right when "Achy-Breaky" was right at its peak, and he was just as cute as he could be, so impressed to be working with Dolly Parton, who'd been in music for 100 years. So he was asking my advice, pretty much like my brother or a nephew. He reminded me a lot of the people back home. I found him a very kind and generous soul, so it worked out real well.

4 So what did you think of Oprah's interview with Michael Jackson?

I found it very interesting, really. I didn't know what to think when they started talking about his illness, but now maybe he'll go back to what he does absolutely great—his music and videos. Maybe he won't feel like he has to explain anything more. Maybe when it's all said and done, he's like a flying little angel, and he needs to be out there flying around.

5 Do the tabloids just drive you crazy?

Well, they don't...they hound you. Those people are more like stalkers than reporters, that's for sure. I'm on the cover of the *National Enquirer* this week.

6 What are you doing this week that's sleazy?

Well, I went in for a little bit of plastic surgery, and they caught me coming out of the clinic, and they made a big thing of it; there was many things they said I had done that I didn't. But I did have some things done, just a little nip and tuck here and there. But they caught me. It's a good thing with me that I always talk about it—I never deny it. But, for somebody like Michael, who's more private, I guess it would get after you. I don't let it drive me as crazy as it does some of them.

7 It never has, over the years, seemed to have bothered you that much.

It does roll off me, because there's nothing you can do about it, first of all. And the public has a right to know, and they definitely do have an inquiring mind. (Laughter.) People don't want to hear all the good all the time. People live for gossip. And so I just try to, you know, roll. And it takes too much time and energy to sue, and I don't have that kind of time to spend. They've always called me the Tabloid Queen, and I guess I've gotten some kind of pride in just being the queen of anything! I just want to be the queen.

8 *Okay, the question is, what little nip did you have tucked?*

Awwww, Michael! I just had, you know, I had a little something around my eyes, a little liposuction from my chin and under my eyes. It wasn't like I had the Texas Chainsaw Murderer after me! But, anyway, the tabloids made a big thing about it. I just said I went in for my 100,000 mile maintenance checkup before my warranty ran out.

9 *C'mon...everybody knows you're not as old and beat down as you come on being...* Well, I'm 47, and I feel like I owe it to myself and my fans to look as good as I can. Like I said, if I have to go in for anything at all, whatever it is, I just say, "Well, while I'm asleep, you might as well do that work. I have gone in for a little bitty female thing, and I said, hey, while I'm asleep, get them other doctors over here and get this stuff done. (Laughter.)

10 *What's the difference between Hollywood and Nashville people?*

People are the same all over the world. In respect to celebrities, I think people in Nashville are generally country people, like my people, raised in fundamental churches. And I think there's a sweetness and a tenderness in people that you don't get in a big city. But I think people's hearts are the same.

11 *So let's talk about your next movie.*

I'm developing some things now, but I don't have a movie in the works. The rest of the time I'm doing television and promoting this new album and doing concerts. I'm working on a TV movie called *High and Mighty*, about gospel, where I play the part of a female evangelist. I'm hopeful that if it works, I'll do a couple of more.

12 *Are you drawing from what you remember growing up in Tennessee?* Well, she's really not a fundamentalist like that. It's more about a woman, very much

like my own life. She's a star, famous, and she has a sort of close encounter with death, and she makes a promise to God that if she lives, she'll try to be a little better and be a little more helpful. More of a positive attitude, and positive music. It's not a heavy duty religious experience, healings and that. It's just the attitude and confidence and the feeling that she's giving a little back.

13 *Are you writing the songs for it?*

Oh, yes, and there's some great ones, too. I get really inspired about gospel music. It's fantastic, you know what I mean. It lives inside you more than any other thing. I guess it's a chance to let everything out; all you hear, all your feelings. It's a way to sing praise. And when I write them gospel songs, I get into it. And I've got some good ones...

14 *How do you keep yourself writing?*

First of all, writing is my first love. I love to sing and I love to write, but writing is the most fascinating. So, because I'm such a living and passionate person, I'm very sensitive, and writing is my way of expressing myself. That's my doctor. That's my therapist. Through my words, through my writing, I kind of relive everything and sort of work things out. So I always make the time—it's just natural for me. When I'm traveling, sitting on a plane, what else am I going to do sitting on a plane? You can only watch the movie so long, and you can only eat so much. So I write. I say, "I'm not going to sit here five hours—New York to L.A.—and do nothing." I write like crazy on planes and on buses.

15 *Willie Nelson once told me that songs were a gift, and it was his responsibility to get them down...*

That's exactly it. I could not have put that better myself, but I'll bet I've said similar words. It's exactly how I feel. It's my responsibility. Because not everybody has the gift of writing, but they all do have the gift of feeling. And I think

that's what's so wonderful about music—music speaks with the voice of the soul. And if you are able to write...like "I Will Always Love You," the song Whitney Houston has out, that I wrote 20 years ago, the way that song has touched people, six million copies, because it's something simply said. Everybody wants to say that to somebody, whether it's your children going away to college or you've broken up with a partner or you're breaking up with a lover or a husband or a wife. You want that person to say that they hope you have a good life and you get everything you want and, "I will always love you." Simple words, but people don't know how to say those things. So I'm like Willie; it's a privilege and an honor to put those words down.

16 *I saw The Bodyguard with a non-country music fan, who said it was a really good song and asked if Whitney Houston wrote it. (Laughter.) I thought it was a pretty good arrangement.*

My arrangement is totally different, though, as far as emotion. But then, I wrote the song from a real place in my life. I wrote the song about my relationship and my leaving Porter Wagoner. That was in the very early 70's, and I was trying to leave his show, and he was suing me and we were having lots of trouble. I was heartbroken, and so was he. And I was trying to say, "Hey, look—if I was to stay, I'd just be in the way. I've got dreams. I want to go to other things. But I'll always love you, and I'll always appreciate you." So I thought, well, this was my way of saying this, in a song.

17 *Of them all, this incredible catalog, do you have a favorite song?*

That is one of them, and was, even before this version. What I meant to say was mine was more of a sappy thing, because it came, organically. Hers was more of a bigger production for the movie. And I loved hers. I'd have to be sick not to, she's made me rich. (Laughter.) I don't mean that in a

cocky sense of the word. It's done so well, I could basically retire on that song.

18 *Are there any other ones you like?*

"Coat of Many Colors" is a song I've always loved, but that's for very personal reasons; I don't think just anybody could sing and make sense of it. But I always thought "Jolene" had a broader appeal. I always thought somebody else could record it and have a big, big hit. There's a song I wrote with Mac Davis, "Here's to Wildest Dreams," that I think somebody could have a hit on. See, I have different ones I love as a singer and as a writer. It's like having a houseful of kids. You're partial to all of them. You know some of them are pretty, but that doesn't make a difference.

19 *A favorite movie?*

Well, I think *Nine to Five* was special, because it was the first one and it was a big success. I thought that all movies would be that easy. But they are not. I think my very personal favorite right now is *Straight Talk*, which kind of summed up my personal thinking. I think if anybody didn't know me in my lifetime, nieces and nephews and younger ones, if I should die or something, they could see that movie and see more about who I really am than in anything else I've done.

20 *What dreams do you have that you haven't done?*

You know, Michael, I've got many dreams. I wake with new dreams every day, so it's really hard for me to say exactly what's left. I know one thing I've wanted to do for a long time that I'm finally doing—I'm starting my own cosmetic line. I've always wanted to do that, and I've always wanted to finish my Broadway Southern musical. And I've got my first book coming out this next year. It seems like I'm always busy, but it seems like I always have time, too, to do the things that make me happy. So I guess as long as I'm okay doing it, I'll keep working.

Marty Brown: **THE ROAD WARRIOR**

by Michael Bane

Ouuuu-weeee! says Marty Brown. *Ain't it fun, ain't it fun?*

But first, how about a song? Jimmie Rodgers? Hank Williams? Naw, let's do "The Great Speckled Bird." Then we'll do "Wreck on the Highway." Then we'll do the one I wrote on the way over here.

What was the question again?

The hat. First, he'll make it crystal clear. He doesn't have to have the hat to play. It's a ratty hat, all battered from the road. More a hobo's hat than a cowboy hat. Not the kind of hat George Strait would even handle, much less wear. Paid \$80 bucks for it when he was only making \$90 a week working in a grocery store. Blocked it himself with the help of steam from a teakettle, his grocery store tie and hair spray. But understand this: It's not like it's a hat he has to have to get out there on stage, you know, like a good luck charm or something like that. It's a hat, see, that's part of him. Like the songs. Or the guitar. It's been with him on the road, sleeping behind dumpsters, hobo'n, peddling for enough gas money to get the truck back to Maceo, Kentucky.

Tell you about hobo'n? Let me sing you a song, yodel some. Sling that guitar back there. No, nobody taught me to yodel, see. Maybe Jimmie Rodgers. Listening to those old Jimmie Rodgers records. I just opened my mouth and yodeled, like it came from here, my heart. Maybe I add a little to it, sounds like this...

Marty Brown yodels, a yodel that goes on and on echoing up and down the halls of his record company. Nobody sticks their head in while Marty's yodeling, because Marty always yodels during interviews. He also sings during interviews. In two hours, he will sing 12 songs, two more than on his first album.

The hat. We was talking about the hat. Well, like I said, I made money with that hat. I made \$226 in this hat. To the penny.

Get this—you talk about someone's dreams. I get up in the morning, and I think, what the heck's going to happen next? I'm going to be playing this Saturday at the Executive Inn, and that's the place I got kicked out of, two-and-a-half, three years ago! I was peddling, playing out by the revolving doors, thinking I'll make money, my hat on the ground. But they come out and say, "Boy, you can't do that!"

Golly! And now I'm playing there. Isn't that funny? That's funny. I wonder if they remember. Heck, I'm sure they do! What's this cat doing here? Heck, we threw him out of here!

But first, another song, this one about myths. Music is about myth, and myths are about us. We look at our idols, people, say, who play music, and we see pieces of ourselves, part of the way we define ourselves lying in our beds in the dark, just before the alarm goes off.

Sometimes mythology and the real world run right along, side-by-side, trains whipping along parallel tracks. In popular music, that's important, because you and I don't just buy records and tapes. We buy into a mythology. On some gut, absolute basement level of his soul, Marty Brown understands that connection. He understands that he is the true carrier of the honky tonk flame. Forget those pretenders in the Hats; forget those singers who studied American Folk Music 101 in college; forget that manufactured angst and public relations hardships. Marty Brown has slept in the street, panhandled for nickels and dimes, bent his back in the sun for less money than the cost of one of those blue drinks at a Music City fern bar and received a personal message from On-High, scrawled onto a Nashville sidewalk, that sent him to his musical destiny. He has sung in Wal-Marts and made heavy women in polyester pants suits

Make no mistake, although you may not hear him on country radio, Marty Brown's The Real Thing. His music, as well as his story, is undistilled, pure country.



DEAN DRON

swoon, and he can sing Hank Williams sad enough to make a grown man, if not cry, at least sniffle a little bit.

See, Jimmie Rodgers was this great influence on Hank Williams. Great! Really big! Listen to this:

Break for a song, probably the best version of "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" I have ever heard.

Isn't that pretty? That's a pretty song.

See, I got no problem with interviews, because I like talking to people. It's just like a conversation. Sometimes I might say something I shouldn't, but that's me! That's me! I don't want to step on nobody's toes or nothing like that, but I'm honest. I hope somebody doesn't get offended if I'm laughing at them or singing about bulls or whatever, and they hear themselves in that song. It all boils down to being myself. I'm being myself, and people can see that.

No, really, I believe that Hank Williams got the phrase "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" from Jimmie Rodgers. What was that song? Lullaby...lullaby something. "Prairie Lullaby." Right, right. Now listen to this one I wrote.

Marty Brown wishes more than anything that he could have met Hank Williams, and he'd like to talk to him about rock 'n' roll. Because, see, Marty Brown can't sit still, and, by golly, bet you neither could Hank Williams. Because Hank had the drive, the rhythm and the blues and the power to make people stand up and dance. Marty Brown has that power. Always has. Up there in Maceo, population 300, counting the dog, about as close to nowhere as you can get. Knew he had the power, even when he was picking up scrap aluminum for a living, watching the trains. See, a train track runs right through Maceo, and Marty Brown, who'd never been outside Maceo, would sit on his back porch with this old mutt, kind of a German shepherd, and watch that freight train. Hear the whistle. Imagine he could feel the ground moving, that ole train going somewhere. Anywhere. Out of Maceo. So he'd play his junk guitar for that dog—got hit by a car later, dontcha know, but he was a good old dog—and sing about where that train had been and where it was going. Like it was the 1930's instead of the 1980's, like the jet contrails in the sky were only wisps of clouds instead of the sharply ruled lines to a world Marty Brown saw only on television. He wrote a song about it, *Ouuuuwee*, the sound of that old train.

You know, I've just always been fascinated by trains.

I mean, the train was almost in our backyard, it's just right there. See Santa Fe and New Orleans written on the boxcars, and I'd never been nowhere, so when I wrote the song, that's where I got the names for places. I just took 'em off the boxcars. I used to count 'em, count the

cars and stuff. Me and my buddies used to make bets how many cars were on the train. My buddies, they're all real proud of me now. My sister is the president of my fan club. And my daughter and son. You know, my first, Crystal. I was up at the hospital all night, and then I went home to grab a shower. I came out of the shower, you know, had on a towel, and I sat down and wrote a song, because I wanted to get my feelings down, you know. Just capture the feeling.

Here's how Marty Brown became the next big thing for the first time: He got on television.

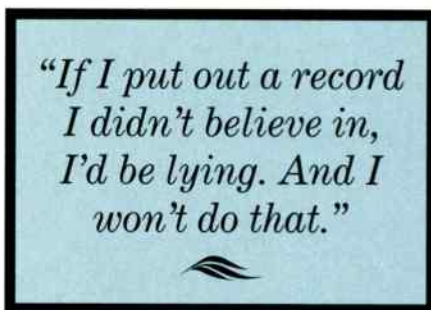
Before he released his first record, the newsmagazine *48 Hours*, doing a special on Nashville, picked up on Marty Brown as the Genuine Article, the Real Thing, and they told his Story: Nothing is working. Marty has been working for a plumbing service, but has been laid off. He's been travelling back and forth to Nashville for years, but he can't even get the doors cracked. Just another hillbilly, thinking he's Hank Williams Come Again. So he's lying in bed, out-of-work, and he prays. Then he gets up, it's about 9:30 at night, gathers up his guitar and his tapes, and asks his wife to drive him to a bar in nearby Owenboro, where he hopes to scrape up enough money to head for Nashville one more time.

I went in the bar there and sat on the pool table. I played about five songs and they got about 40 bucks together for me. I paid a guy 20 to run me down to Nashville. He got me there about midnight, one o'clock. Here I was in Nashville, the big city, and I didn't know what to do. It was dark, and I had about 15 dollars left from driving money. I didn't have no money left for a hotel, so I just found an alley. I'd slept there like five or six times in an alley, but on this night I found a cozy little place. There was a restaurant that's got a brick wall around it, and there's a space between the restaurant and that brick wall where there's an air conditioning unit. Leaves had fallen in there, and plus nobody could see you. I slept in that alley on top of the air conditioner.

The next day, nothing happens. Secretaries slam doors in his face. Nobody cares about a raggedy man with a guitar and a handful of tapes. Hey, they've seen it all before, a dozen, a hundred, a thousand times. About 3:30 P.M., Marty Brown decides to call it quits, find a pay phone and invest a dime in finding a ride home. So he's walking down 16th Avenue, looking for a phone, when he sees this graffiti scrawled on the sidewalk, chalklike. It says "Trust Jesus." A sign, he thinks. A genuine sign. The building closest to the sign is the BMI Building. He remembers that Kurt Denny of BMI had listened to him once, a few years back, and liked his music. So Marty Brown marches in as big as you please, asks for

Mr. Denny's office, and before anyone could really object, rips through about eight songs. Then he stops, watching the dice roll with his life. Kurt Denny spots him a hotel room and a meal. By the end of the week, he is signed to a publishing deal. Then he went home, only to get a call to come back. By the end of the second week, MCA Records had won the bidding mini-war. Just like a storybook, like a country song.

You know what's still good about country music? You can polish somebody up—you can paint an outhouse red, but it's still an outhouse. Let's face it. And there's a lot of people out there saying they're something they're not. I just get up every day and thank God for what's happening to me. I want to be doing that eighth album—I got the songs for them.



And I'm going to be the same person I am now. I mean, I got some clothes now, and I can buy my kids clothes and my car runs. And, hey, that's all anybody needs. They don't need no diamond rings. They don't need that stuff! That's why I don't get in trouble. My daddy taught me the value of a dollar. You don't need five Cadillacs! It amazes me how people can do that and still call themselves country music singers. I mean, here's some guy says he's milked 15 cows since sun-up, and he's got a 15-carat diamond ring on his hand! Oh, Lordy! I got Maceo mud on my boots, gully mud!

High and Dry was proclaimed as one of the top country albums of 1991. "Not merely the best country album of the year," wrote the *Washington Post*. 'It's also the unveiling of a once-in-a-generation talent.'

"At its core stands a ferocious talent..." wrote *Musician Magazine*.

"The most heartfelt wild man since Gary Stewart," wrote the *Village Voice*. "He's the sweetest surprise to ride the train in a long, long time, and so authentically country he probably still has a tick in his navel," wrote *Entertainment Weekly Magazine*.

Marty Brown waited for the next step, the radio hits. And waited. And waited. And waited.

But radio was cool to the Next Big Thing. Caught up in a Garth Brooks bring-us-the-next-hunk frenzy, radio was a little unsure about what to do with the

High Lonesome Sound, somebody who burned for the music, not for the image.

I just don't know.

I just don't know how to answer a question about radio without stepping on some toes.

I'm not being nobody other than who I am. My dad put that in me a long time ago.

Sure, I want a radio hit, just like everybody else. But more than that, I want to be remembered. I want to be remembered as a man who didn't sell out. Look at Hank Williams! Look at Jimmie Rodgers! You can put out a record halfway, or you can put one out you believe in. You work nine-to-five, you don't have a lot of money to buy records. You buy a record, you want a record that somebody's poured their heart and soul into. People can tell! People can tell! You can't fool people.

It's like this: I was raised not to lie, not to deceive people. And if I put out a record I didn't believe in, I'd be lying. And I won't do that. Won't do it.

Marty Brown doesn't take anything for granted. Like, he can turn the knob on his stove, and it heats up. Not like when he had the power turned off for two months and had to cook in the back yard. He's got a new pick-up and a three-bedroom house, not sleeping on air conditioners anymore. He's got a new album, as high and wild as *High and Dry*, stretching a little, playing the songs he sang for me. Some changes, like adding Indian music on the haunting "She's Gone," written for the death of his grandmother. He was touring out west and saw sequoias for the first time. "Never seen trees like that before," he says. "I felt like a pilgrim or something." The bus driver was playing a collection of Indian flute music, and surrounded by the trees, Marty Brown felt his hair rise, scary like. When he got back to Nashville, he found the artist, Bill Miller, a full-blood Cherokee, and asked him to contribute to his grandmother's eulogy.

Marty also made good on his promise to his buddies, made picking tobacco, that when he was famous and had a record, he'd let all the guys play on it. All the guys are billed as The Maceo River Rats, and you can hear them whooping it up on "No Honky Tonkin' Tonight."

So I played with this whole orchestra, and I never done anything like that before. I come into the studio, and I'd just come from McDonald's where I had the Number Three dinner. So I walk in, and this head guy, the one with the little wand, taps it on his little stand and says, "Here's the artist." And they all stood up. I said, "Hey. Let's make some music."

What it comes down to is real simple, what Marty Brown told the head of the record company when they signed him. Please, Marty Brown said, don't try to turn me into a rodeo-riding cowboy.

It's not me.

It's not me.

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Diamond Rio Faces the Challenge of Popularity

— by Bob Allen —

The boys in Diamond Rio have been hitting it pretty hard lately, trying to seal their place in a crowded field of competitors.

It's around six o'clock on a chilly, drizzly evening in Salisbury, Maryland, a small city in the heart of Chesapeake Bay country and the Delmarva (Delaware-Maryland-Virginia) Peninsula. At the Wicomico Civic Center, Diamond Rio, the Country Music Association's 1991 Vocal Group of the Year, is running listlessly through a pre-show sound check, trying to give themselves a wake-up call for their 7:30 curtain time as Alan Jackson's warm-up act.

Diamond Rio, currently one of the most popular bands on a contemporary scene overcrowded with pretty-boy ensembles with catchy names, is nearing the end of a very successful, high-profile and thoroughly exhausting tour schedule. Slouching around the stage in their T-shirts and tennis shoes, they tune their instruments and sing bits and pieces of their hits. They yawn and stare vacantly out into the empty auditorium as their sound man adjusts the monitors and

checks the sound levels. The six bandmembers look and act like they've just come back from a weekly encounter session of Hypochondriacs Anonymous as they grouse about a litany of minor ailments: sore throats, headaches, stomach cramps, muscle pulls, and various and sundry other aches and ains. Lead singer Marty Roe sighs wanly and glances curiously up at a large marquee draped with an American flag that hangs just above and to the right of the stage:

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11

Doll Miniature Toy Show and Sale.

As he shrugs and slouches wearily against a huge amp, a look of exhaustion floods into his droopy-lidded eyes. "Uhm," he mumbles softly, clutching his side. "I feel like something's *growing* in me. Like 'The Alien.' And it's gonna pop out when I get on stage."

"Don't worry," drummer Brian Prout, one of the more bright-eyed and bushy-tailed of the weary musicians, assures me as he bounds backstage where a catered turkey and dressing dinner is being prepared for the musicians and their road crews. "It all comes together at show time... We hope!"

"Popularity... It's a great problem to have," Marty Roe concedes with a sleepy grin moments later as he fills his paper plate with food at the buffet line and grabs a seat at a long cafeteria-style table with several members of Alan Jackson's band and Jackson himself, who also looks very tired, and is practically incognito in a thick blond beard.

"But anybody who's never been through this can never understand the work load that comes with it," Roe assures me as he recites some of the unexpected pleasures and high points of his band's fledgling recording career—like singing the National Anthem at an Atlanta Falcons football game and getting to meet the Falcons' cheerleaders, and having their pictures taken with former President George Bush backstage at the CMA Awards show. "Out here, it never ends. And when we finally do get back home to Nashville for a day or two, there's a hundred phone messages waiting. The last time I was home, my wife told me, 'When you're gone, the phone never rings. But as soon as you get here, it never stops!'"

"We've even thought of penciling in fictitious dates on our itinerary just so we could sneak back home for a day or two and nobody would know we were there," Brian Prout confesses with a mischievous grin.

As *Close to the Edge*, Diamond Rio's second album, moves on the charts, the band finds its collective career moving into an enviable but nonetheless still precarious position. True: the band recently made history when "Meet in the Middle," their debut single, hit Number One—it was the first time a country group had ever managed such a feat with their first single. And *Diamond Rio*, their first album, has, thus far, almost but not quite climbed to the coveted million-sales plateau. Though they've had a half dozen or so Top Five hits since "Meet in the Middle"—"Mirror, Mirror," "Mama Don't Forget to Pray for Me," "Norma Jean Riley," "Nowhere Bound" and "In a Week or Two"—they're still waiting for their

second Number One, and for that first album to hit platinum. Having earned Vocal Group of the Year awards not only from the CMA, but also from the Academy of Country Music and The Nashville Network/*Music City News* polls, along with two Grammy nominations, Diamond Rio has certainly proven its immediate short-term appeal. The challenge now is sustaining their newfound popularity and enlarging upon it over the course of several years and several albums—something that is never assured in a field so crowded with competitors. Early in 1993, the band got yet another opportunity to move up a notch in the superstar sweepstakes when they took the giant step from opening act to star attraction, co-headlining a tour with Alabama.

But, as the Diamond Rio gang has found out, being in a hit band not only means a gruelling schedule and a requisite amount of homesickness (practically all the guys are married; Roe, Truman and Johnson have kids); it also means innumerable little unanticipated ordeals and challenges. Like being roused from a deep sleep in your tour bus bunk to do a phone interview from somewhere along road when the only available telephone is in a crowded Stuckey's restaurant right next to the ringing cash register. Like

*"Everybody got to take
an instrumental ride
on the song, and we ended up
with a kind of layered effect.
We all knew right away
we were on to something."*



trying to spend a few hours with your wife and kids once every couple of weeks. Like trying to grab a few hours fitful sleep between a show on the East Coast and another in western Ohio as the tour bus ka-womps ka-womps ka-womps all night long as it bounces across the rough seams of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Or like trying to figure out why somebody in your organization months ago turned down a song called "I'm in a Hurry" that was pitched to you before you got to hear it, and before Alabama got hold of it and turned it into a Number One record.

But just as Brian Prout promised, as showtime in Salisbury approaches, all such concerns get swept aside. If only for a while, the boys from Diamond Rio brush aside their fatigue and forget their gas pains, sinus headaches and lack of sleep. And happily, it *does* all come together as

they quickly use their tour bus as a dressing room to change into their semi-fancy stage duds, then hit the boards running.

Their opening show is a brief 45 minutes, but it's fast-paced, extraordinarily animated, and it features an exceedingly high level of musicianship and old-fashioned, crowd-pleasing chutzpah. ("Hey, Salisbury, how'ya doin' tonight! We're here to have a party!")

As they run briskly through their ever-expanding repertoire of hits, the five bandmembers (sans Prout who stays put behind the skins) leap around the stage with more controlled abandon and changing formations than the Atlanta Falcons on a 50-yard-line scrimmage. Just as there is a slight hint of glitziness to the group's name (it was chosen for them on the eve of their signing with Arista Records after the label vetoed the best name they themselves were able to come up with: The T-Town Mavericks), there's also a fair amount of flash to Diamond Rio's live show. But it's all backed by some masterful picking and singing as well as some pleasant musical surprises, like a dazzling medley of bluegrass standards featuring sparkling three-part harmonies from Roe, bass-player/vocalist Dana Williams and mandolin-player/vocalist Gene Johnson. Johnson, a veteran newgrass

musician who did previous stints with Eddie Adcock's Second Generation and with J.D. Crowe & The New South back when Keith Whitley was the lead singer, crackles on the mandolin. And Jimmy Olander, whose background includes tenures with Rodney Crowell and The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, underpins the band's intricately layered sound with some fabulous lead guitar and electric banjo-playing.

"Our sound has just kind of evolved over the years," Roe explains after the show as the band signs a few autographs and poses for a few pictures before loading up the bus and setting off on the five- or six-hour drive to their next venue in Hershey, Pennsylvania, Chocolate Capitol of the Western World. "Whoever came into the band, we'd just let them incorporate their strengths. So the sound would change every time the members would change. Like when Gene came along, we were looking for a baritone singer and we got a bluegrass tenor who plays mandolin and fiddle! I never even sang lead until fairly late in the process."

The roots of Diamond Rio go back to the early 1980's when Marty Roe was in a country copy band that performed at Opryland and was occasionally featured on The Nashville Network. At first, they were named The Grizzly River Boys, after the amusement park's famous ride. Later, they became The Tennessee River Boys.

"How-dee!"



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Members—more than 30 in all, Roe recalls—came and went. Greg Jennings and Paul Gregg, currently of Restless Heart, played in The Tennessee River Boys for a while. By 1984, keyboard-player Dan Truman and Jimmy Olander had come on board with Roe. These three were soon joined by drummer Brian Prout who, previous to that, had been playing in a Nashville club band called Heartbreak Mountain that also included Marty Raybon, now the lead singer of Shenandoah. In 1988, Gene Johnson threw in with The Tennessee River Boys. The current lineup was rounded out early in 1989 when Dana Williams, a nephew of the famous bluegrass duo, The Osborne Brothers, and a former sideman for everyone from Cal Smith and Jimmy C. Newman, to Jeannie Pruett and Trisha Yearwood, came on board.

“It just seemed like a buncha guys I needed to be with,” Williams recalls. “They believed in their hearts this was going to happen, and whatever the sacrifice, they were willing to make it.”

And there were sacrifices a-plenty to be made. Via their exposure on TNN, The Tennessee River Boys (they later discarded the name because it sounded too much like a gospel group) kept busy playing bottom-dollar road shows throughout the U.S. and Canada while simultaneously making ends meet with similarly bottom-of-the-barrel day jobs like lawn-mowing, substitute teaching, flower delivery, piano lessons and driving “homes of the stars” tour buses. It was not unusual for them to pull back into Nashville from a weekend show at seven or eight in the morning, just in time to drag themselves of the tour bus and go punch in at their respective daytime places of employment.

“These guys are all great musicians, and they could have easily been making good money playing behind somebody like Alan Jackson. But they didn’t, and we were able to keep this band together,” Roe recalls. “At times, the only thing that kept us going was they we believed we had something special.”

When the group (then still The Tennessee River Boys) set about making its first demo records, they were, at first, hampered by their sheer versatility: they could more or less play absolutely anything. “We’d play demos for producers, and each song would be a totally different sound,” Prout remembers. “They’d say, ‘Well, which one do you want to be?’ And we’d say, ‘Wow! We’ll be whatever you want us to be! Bluegrass rock! Straight country! Country-pop power ballads! Just pick one!’”

A couple of years before they got their current deal with Arista, the band worked briefly on a production deal and cut some demos with producer Keith Stegall, who got side-tracked producing Alan Jackson before he could put anything together with The Tennessee River



1992's rewards—CMA Vocal Group of the Year and a Gold record for their first album. Celebrating the Gold were Diamond Rio and friends: manager Ted Hacker, Brian Prout, Jimmy Olander, Dana Williams, co-producer and president of Arista Records Tim DuBois, Gene Johnson, Mike Dungan, Marty Roe, co-producer Monty Powell and Dan Truman.



Boys. Nonetheless, the experience with Stegall enabled the band to forge its present musical identity.

“On those demos with Keith we did all these different things, trying to capture what we did live, and on most of them we didn’t,” Roe recalls. “But we did do one song called ‘Breaking New Ground’ where we did capture it. That track was the birth of Diamond Rio’s present sound. The song ended up being a hit for Brian’s wife’s group, Wild Rose—his wife’s their drummer. But Jimmy Olander had found that song on a bluegrass album, and we all learned it. Dana and Gene were both from a bluegrass background, so that bluegrass harmony sound was already in place. When we recorded the song, Dan came in on piano after a couple bars and doubled Jimmy’s guitar licks, and did a sort of Dixie Dregs thing. Everybody got to take an instrumental ride on the song, and we ended up with a kind of *layered* effect. We all knew right away we were on to something.”

Years earlier, when he’d first come to Nashville to attend David Lipscomb University, one of the first people Marty Roe met was another young musician/songwriter named Monty Powell. He and

Powell eventually became college roommates, then best of friends. But for years, Roe avoided pitching his band to Powell simply because Powell’s connections in the music business were as tenuous as his own. But then, Powell co-wrote some hits with Tim DuBois, Restless Heart’s long-time producer, who went on to head Arista Records’ new country division. Shortly thereafter, Powell made some demos on Diamond Rio and pitched them to DuBois at Arista. DuBois came down to Alabama and saw Diamond Rio open a show for George Jones and more or less made a handshake deal with them on the spot. The band’s two albums were jointly produced by DuBois and Powell.

“Thinking back to this band’s early years, there were times when a lot of members were coming and going, and we had some real power struggles over just what sort of direction our music was going to take,” Jimmy Olander recalls after the Salisbury show as he and his bandmates load up the bus for the late-night right to Hershey. “Fortunately, with our present line-up we’ve been able to do what we do best, which is stick close to our roots. And we’re also managing to have a lot of fun doing it.” ■

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Letters

Thanks Clint and CMM

I really want to thank you for the great article on Clint Black in the March/April issue. Thank you, Clint, for your openness and willingness to fight back and keep going. I really love Clint's music—he, along with George Strait and Alan Jackson, are what country music is all about in my opinion. I became a die-hard country music fan because of George Strait. I would get weird looks in high school for listening to George Strait when Van Halen was cool. Clint Black came along to give me a bunch more great songs that I could really relate to. I took an inventory of my favorite singers—every one is a New Traditionalist and a "Hard Hat." May they continue to make their kind of music.

Michael Bailey
Lolo, Montana

Hooked on Clint

Thank you, thank you, thank you! Just received my March/April issue of *Country Music*, and who else but Clint Black was on the cover! I was so excited I could hardly wait to read the article. I don't think Clint gets the recognition and credit due him due to all the "Garthmania" and "Cyrus-virus." When I listen to Clint's albums, I can't imagine why more people aren't hooked on Clint. I still get goosebumps whenever he sings. Clint is still the best there is, and in ten years we will just see who's still around. Thank you again for not forgetting about Clint.

Kathy Abbott
Greeley, Colorado

Lookin' for Clint

Thank you for the great article on Clint Black in the March/April issue. It's too bad Clint has to deal with so many problems caused by other people. I have been a fan of Clint's since the first time I heard him sing. I've never had the pleasure of seeing him in concert, and I can't wait until I do. Good luck to you, Clint. I hope everything turns out for the best. Oh, by the way, are you ever coming to Binghamton for a show?

Donna Shelp
Vestal, New York

Reba Still the Best

I can think of no better way to kick off a new year than with Reba McEntire. The cover of the January/February issue looked the best it has since November/December 1990. My opinion that Reba is



the strongest, most enduring artist to grace the entire country music scene has only been fortified in the past several years. While most felt that Reba had reached her pinnacle of success in 1986 with her "conquering" the CMA's Entertainer of the Year award (awarded only to three other women in the history of the award), I believed she had much more to offer to the world—indeed she did!

Shane Tarleton
Marshville, North Carolina

Reba Queen of Country

What a terrific story on the "Queen of Country," Reba! She is a true inspiration to every woman with her courage and strength. She sings from the heart, and her songs always send a message. I have so much "Respect and Admiration" for a woman who makes it in a man's world.

Sheila Forbes
Wilson, North Carolina

Reba an Inspiration

Thanks so much for the wonderfully inspiring and insightful article on Reba McEntire in your January/February issue. Marjie McGraw truly captured the real Reba—a talented, caring, intelligent and beautiful woman who conveys love and emotion in her music and in her life. I must also add that the photos of Reba were definitely among the best that I have ever seen. Keep up the good work!

Michael F. Cudak
Plainville, Connecticut

Recognition for Wariner

Thank you so much for the great centerfold of Steve Wariner in your March/April issue. Steve has been around such a long time and has not received the acclaim and recognition he deserves. I've seen him several times, and he puts on a fantastic show! He always has time for his fans, and he's so sincere.

Again, thank you! Now, how about a centerfold of Lorrie Morgan?

Todd Fussy
Royalton, Minnesota
Never, ever, satisfied.—Ed.

Acuff Is The King

I was raised on country music, so I have listened to Mr. Roy Acuff all my life. He was the King of Country Music while he was alive, and will remain king now and always. He gave his all to us, and I know that he will always be remembered and loved. And one day I know that when I pass over to the other side, it will be on the wings of the Great Speckled Bird, and I will be able to hear the horn of the Wabash Cannon Ball calling me home.

So, thank you, Lord, for Mr. Acuff, and thank you, Mr. Acuff, for being who you were—The King of Country Music.

Robert Hill
Brickeys, Arizona

Tribute to Roy Acuff

Today I received my March/April *Country Music Magazine*. I was happy and also sad to see the great tribute you gave the late Roy Acuff. I am blood-related to this great man. My mother had the maiden name of Acuff. I got to see this great man in the early 80's in Portland, Oregon. I even got to talk to him. When he found out we were related, he asked my husband and me come to Nashville to see him, but we never got to make the trip.

We will always remember him balancing his bow on his nose. He said that night that true country was instruments used without the electric. I truly believe him on this, and today's young stars don't really represent the true country music to me. Sex appeal and swinging hips are not true country. Maybe that is the reason so many country music fans go to Branson, because that is where the true country music is, now that Roy Acuff has passed away.

Mrs. Wilfred Pultz
Buxton, Oregon

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QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the July/August 1993 issue.

1. Dwight Yoakam wrote his first song at age eight. Name the song.
2. How many Farm Aid concerts have there been?
3. What classic Dolly Parton song was recently a huge hit for Whitney Houston?
4. Name Randy Travis' current hit single.
5. What is Marty Brown's hometown?
6. What CMA award did Diamond Rio win in 1991?
7. America's top-selling first truck is also Chevy's lowest price truck. What model is it?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:

1. "A Better Man" 2. The Smoky Mountain Boys 3. Johnny Cash 4. Noblesville
5. Atlantic City 6. Marty Raybon
7. More than 98%

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Kathy Mattea Strikes a Chord

Just a note to thank you for your article about Kathy Mattea in your March/April issue. Kathy is not only one of my favorite singers, she is also a hero of mine. We should applaud Kathy for attempting her range of styles—she is a great singer who can perform a variety of music. Also I admire her work in raising money for AIDS research. Kathy also strikes me as one of the brightest women in music today and should have a long career. I will be listening to her for years and years. Finally, Kathy has an excellent fan club. I'm pleased to be a member.

Tige Dickinson
White Cloud, Michigan

Willie's Earring

In your March/April 1993 issue, in Willie Nelson answers 20 Questions by Michael ("The Gray Headed Stranger") Bane: Did your picture flip-flop? Because in the photo Willie's earring is in his right ear.

Bob Zablocki
Dundalk, Maryland

The winner of the fine-tooth eye award for 1993 (remember RVS' jacket in '89).—Ed.

Shenandoah a Fave

I want to thank you for the article about Shenandoah in the March/April issue. They are one of my favorite groups, and I really enjoyed reading about them.

Last August 1992, my sister and I went to see them at the Castle Rock Fair in Castle Rock, Colorado. When we got to the fair grounds and gave the gentleman our tickets, he looked at us and asked how we got our tickets. When we asked why, he said to follow him. We did, and he took us to two front row center stage seats and said, "Here you go, ladies! Enjoy the show." I was flipping out! We were up close and had the most perfect seats you could want. Shenandoah came out, and Marty introduced himself along with the rest of the band to us. We were the only ones in the arena at the time, and we had them all to ourselves. It was wonderful!

That night was one of the best evenings of my life! Every time my sister and I see one of their videos or hear one of their songs, we say, "That's my friend Marty!" We really are glad they are back.

Sara L. Hooper
Colorado Springs, Colorado

"The Other Alabama Band"

It must be flattering to Shenandoah, but, please, can we leave Alabama in a class of their own. You may refer to Shenandoah as "the other Alabama Band," as you did in the article in the March/April issue. But in my eyes (and in my heart) Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry, Jeff Cook and Mark Herndon will always be the *only* Alabama Band.

Leah Weatherford
Lonoke, Arkansas

CMM Takes the Cake

I just received the March/April 1993 issue of your magazine, and it is absolutely terrific! There were so many great articles and pictures, it was almost unbelievable! First, there was a preview of the Patsy Cline postage stamp in the Letters section. Next, there was John Morthland's cover story on Clint Black, which is destined to become a classic. The Roy Acuff tribute article and Michael Bane's 20 Questions with Willie Nelson were added pluses. Special kudos to Rich Kienzle's level-headed, objective review of Scott Faragher's controversial book, *Music City Babylon*, in Essential Collector. Best of all, though, was the fabulous color photo of Skeeter Davis (with Mark Chesnutt and Kathy Mattea) in the People section.

Greg Kipp
Cincinnati, Ohio

Kershaw Fever

The article in the January/February issue on Sammy Kershaw was great! Being born and raised in Louisiana made it even better. I've listened to country music all my life. Before I saw Sammy in concert, I had really never had any favorites. We've seen him in concerts seven times so far. After the first concert I joined the fan club—a first for me. Guess you could say I've had Kershaw Fever ever since. Would love to see Sammy on the cover and as a centerfold. Keep up the great music, Sammy.

Shelia Hughes
Estes Park, Colorado

First Class Billy Dean

I just received my January/February issue of CMM and couldn't wait to read the article on Billy Dean, and now to respond! To put it short and sweet, Billy is first class. My family and I had the opportunity and pleasure of seeing Billy perform at Penns Landing, Pennsylvania, last September. I was told by someone, and I quote. "He is one of the nicest guys in the business." Well, they didn't exaggerate! As guards accompanying him to the stage pushed people away, a young boy said, "Billy, can I please have an autograph?" Despite the guards, he did. The crowd loved him for this. He let it be known that without us fans there would be no need for guards. While on stage he shook my hand and several other fans' hands and threw out guitar picks as he flashed that famous, beautiful, dimpled smile! You're first class, Billy.

Linda Grasselli
Cranbury, New Jersey

Talented Tritt

Thank you, *Country Music Magazine*, for the January/February issue. You have a great magazine, and the pull-out poster of Travis Tritt was wonderful. After seeing Travis Tritt on *Nashville Now* the other night, we realize again what a gifted and

talented person he is. We would love to see him on the cover of your magazine along with a story about his 1993 tour and movie with Kenny Rogers. *Country Music* is number one. Keep up the good work.

Eula F. Walton
Licking, Missouri

Give New Guys a Break

It was with reluctance that I renewed my subscription to *Country Music* this past year. I won't have any qualms about cancelling the next time my subscription comes due. I get so tired of taking the cover wrap off and staring at Clint Black, Reba McEntire, Garth Brooks, George Strait, Randy Travis. Aren't there any other individuals involved in country music? Perhaps I don't know the reasons for their appearing on the cover time and time again—to my way of thinking, there are many others who deserve the right to appear on your covers! Hooray for: Mark Chesnutt, Tracy Lawrence, The Kentucky HeadHunters, Diamond Rio, Travis Tritt, Brooks and Dunn, Radney Foster, Billy Dean, only to name a few who never make your cover. Oh, well, I still like country—even without your magazine.

S.R. Ziller
Divernon, Illinois

Last Word on Marty

I have just read "20 Questions with Johnny Cash" in the January/February issue of *Country Music*, and the question on a "slip of the tongue" remark made by Marty Stuart on the Grand Ole Opry. I do think we've heard too much already. Too many overly sensitive people are offended by just getting up in the morning. Every time I have seen Marty with fans, he seems to enjoy the older ones as much as the younger ones. I really feel that, judging him by the look on his face and tone of his voice that night, he only meant the remark in a very affectionate manner. It should be taken that way, and the matter dropped.

Sandy Durst
New Creek, West Virginia
Well, alright.—Ed.

Steve Earle Fans

Thank you very much for the short note on Steve Earle and his problems in the People section in the March/April issue. I am a fan of Steve Earle's and had often wondered what had happened to him. I will certainly pray for his recovery.

Eva A. Trevino
Bay City, Texas

In Defense of Hot-Blooded Hazel

I rarely write to magazines, but in defense of Hazel Smith's column, I am. What has she said that you have not heard before? Her opinions, in jest or serious, only add to her column. You could always skip her column, if only curiosity

didn't set in. Hazel always treats the artists and business fairly. I always get a laugh from her column and always read it first. Where's your sense of humor? She is there to see and hear things we can't. She describes people or places so well, you feel as if you are there. Keep it going, Hazel! I'll be waiting for the next issue. A fan of country music men and Hazel Smith!

Shelia Trent
Whitesberg, Tennessee

Ricky Van Gets Her Vote

Hats off to Ricky Van Shelton for standing up for all country stars, as he did while taping the CMA anniversary special, as reported in your People section in the March/April issue. It took courage, and Ricky should know that his fans are behind him 100%. Every time these stars get on a stage, they are putting their careers and lives on the line. They are committed to providing their fans with the very best they have to give, and at no time should they be expected to give a second-rate performance. Thanks to Waylon Jennings for supporting his decision, and I agree wholeheartedly that the entire cast should have walked out with Ricky. It is disappointing to know that they wouldn't support someone who was making a stand for all of them.

Diana Ganske
Oelwein, Iowa

Official State Songs

On page 29 in the People section of the March/April issue, you say that "Blue Moon of Kentucky" is Kentucky's state song. On page 30, same section, you state that "Rocky Top" is the Tennessee state song. According to the *1993 World Almanac*, the state songs for Kentucky and Tennessee are still "My Old Kentucky Home" and "Tennessee Waltz." No disrespect intended for fellow Kentuckians, Bill Monroe and The Osborne Brothers, but facts are facts.

Ralph G. Clark
Albany, Kentucky

It's that moonshine George has been slipping into our morning coffee. Thanks for the correction.—Ed.

Kentucky Kids

I was reading the People section in your March/April issue and noticed that Hazel Smith stated that "Blue Moon of Kentucky" is Kentucky's state song—it is not our state song. The official state song is Stephen Foster's "My Old Kentucky Home." My home state has produced many of country music's greatest acts, such as Bill Monroe and Exile, Marty Brown and The Kentucky HeadHunters. Marty is one of the best new artists in country music. I would love to see an article on him in *Country Music Magazine*.

Jaime Davis
Princeton, Kentucky
This issue soon enough?—Ed.

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In Search of Country Gold Cards

I recently picked up a January/February issue of *Country Music Magazine* and noticed on page 23 the article about Country Gold Trading Cards. I have checked out the city I live in and have been unsuccessful in finding a business that carries this line of cards. Where can I purchase a complete set?

Sandra L. Sterns
De Witt, Minnesota

The cards are now available at Wal-Mart stores. If that doesn't help, call Sterling Cards at 615-256-5063. They'll tell you the dealers in your area.—Ed.

Legends Old and New

Thank you very much for a very informative magazine. Some people call me a pack rat, but I have kept all my *Country Music Magazines* since I first started my subscription, way back when—I can't remember. My main favorites are Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Reba McEntire, and Randy Travis—there are others, but these are the tops in my book.

I also have a subscription to *The Journal*, and because I grew up on country music, I thank you for the article on Carl Smith in Legends in the CMSA Newsletter. I enjoy Hazel Smith's column, also.

Jean Daniels
Jackson, Mississippi

Anxious for Alison Krauss

I was pleased to see the "member review" of Alison Krauss and Union Station's latest album in your CMSA Newsletter, but I was also disappointed. I indeed agree with every point made in the review. My main concern has to deal with her publicity. I just don't see enough of her. Isn't her style of music considered the backbone of country music? The review just doesn't do her enough justice. I feel she needs a cover story.

Jimmy Howson
New Marshfield, Ohio

Where's Ned Miller?

Do you have any information on the status of singer-songwriter Ned Miller? (No relation.) He wrote such classics as "Invisible Tears," "From a Jack to a King," "Snowflakes," "Dark Moon," etc., but seems to have just dropped out of the recording business over 20 years ago. TNN Viewer Services say they have no information on him.

Jack M. Miller
Louisiana, Missouri

Miller is basically retired, but Bear Family Records has released a single CD collection of his top hits.—Ed.

True Grit

Thanks for the Tompall Glaser albums reviewed in Buried Treasures in the January/February issue. I just sent my order for those CD's. Tompall and His Outlaw Band has to be one of the best country albums every made. Years ago all I found

was a cassette which I wound tight for sure.

I buy mostly off the Record Reviews, Loved the new Joe Ely *Love and Danger* reviewed in the November/December issue. I immediately went looking for it and picked up *Del Rio, TX 1959* because of what I had read about Radney Foster (blown away). This has such tight, smooth, classy production I searched all over the paper work—couldn't believe Jack Clement's name wasn't there. Best album I've heard since Johnny Cash did *Rockabilly Blues* back in 1980.

I'm just the gritty kind of guy who could soft shoe all the way through Guy Clark's *Boats to Build*. Fantastic, that's American music at its best. While I was out to get this, I picked up Ray Kennedy's *Guitar Man* mostly because Rich said he got away with doing that cover, but you blew it, Rich, the fillers on this album are "Love Won" and "Back in My Cowboy Days." "All She Ever Wants Is Most" is one of the best songs on the album. It's the kind of music Nashville constantly wants to ignore much the way it wanted to ignore Elvis and The Killer in the 50's, and Willie and Waylon in the 70's.

G.R. Neveitt
Palmyra, Indiana

"Don't Tell My Achy Breaky Heart"

My name is Sam Young, and as you can tell, I am in the U.S. Navy. I want to say first that your magazine is tops with me. Now to a question that I know only the folks there could answer. This concerns the song "Achy Breaky Heart" by Billy Ray Cyrus. I think his music is alright, but ever since that song came out, I felt that I had heard it before only could not remember. Then not long ago I was going through some of the CD's in my collection, and, lo and behold, I figured it out. Wasn't that song recorded by The Marcy Brothers on their first album, only the title was "Don't Tell My Heart"?

Just thought I would give you all something to think about even though I know you all have a lot already on your minds. Well, thanks for the time, Ed. and Staff. As we say in the Navy, "It's not just a job, it's an adventure."

Samuel A. Young, USN
USS Wasp FPO A.E.

You're right. It is the same song. It went nowhere for The Marcy Brothers.—Ed.

Byrd's Eye View

Thanks for a truly wonderful, up-to-date magazine. I love country music! Its youthful new stars have given it so much appeal. I'm back to country music listening "for good"! Please feature Tracy Byrd in an upcoming issue. What a gorgeous voice.

Joy Eklund
Moundsview, Minnesota

See Record Reviews in this issue for a review on Byrd's debut.—Ed.

CMM + Marty = Wow

I recently purchased my first copy of *Country Music Magazine*, and I have to say I was really impressed. I think you have a true winner. I'm looking at the January/February issue trying to figure out what I like the most. Well, let's see, I enjoyed the Record Reviews, the People section, the CMSA Newsletter, the centerfold (please do one of Marty Stuart), the stories on the artists, the Editors Choice, and of course the Letters. Wow, looks as if I enjoyed the whole darn book.

Could you please tell me how to get a copy of the November/December issue? Marty is my absolute favorite, and I don't want to miss anything written about him, especially something he wrote himself. Keep those articles on Marty coming. He is truly a gifted musician, and a gorgeous man.

Patricia Franklin
McLean, Virginia

Centerfold already done, July/August 1992. Back issues of it and November/December available for \$3.00 each. See address at the end of this section. Mark envelope, Attention: Back Issues.—Ed.

I'll Buy Anything...

I thoroughly enjoy your magazine, mostly with little complaint or argument. This changed when I received my March/April issue. George Fletcher's scathing commentary on Reba McEntire's new album, *It's Your Call*, in Record Reviews is too far off for words to say. I do not care how much "greeting card drippiness" a Reba album has on it, or how many songs are "radio ready but not great." I'll always be in line to purchase it.

Don Allen Young
Irving, Texas

Here Comes the Bride with Reba

As an avid Reba McEntire fan, I was naturally disappointed in George Fletcher's review of her latest album, *It's Your Call*, in the January/February issue. One point he made made me wonder, does he even listen to the entire album before reviewing it? He suggested that "He Wants to Get Married" will be sung off-key at millions of weddings by some third cousin of the bride. Not at my wedding, since the song's last line is "...but not to me." Mr. Fletcher may not appreciate Reba's albums being full of ballads, but as for this Reba fan, I say "Keep them coming."

Wendy Chace
Davis, California

On the Job with George

This is in response to George Fletcher's review of Reba McEntire's album, *It's Your Call*. Obviously he has never suffered a loss. Why else would he be so cold and insulting in his review? If Reba wants to use her albums as a vehicle of healing, so what? She does it well.

As for the "insufferable cuts," did he ever listen to all of "He Wants to Get Married"? Or did he just tune it out after deciding it was "sticky sweet"? It's a beautiful song, but I wouldn't have anyone sing it at my wedding—the subject does not want to marry the singer. What was he doing with his comments about "For Herself"? Trying to offend every woman who identified with it?

Karma Hurworth
Woodinville, Washington

From "insufferable cuts" on down: Yes, yes, just doing his job and no.—Ed.

Put George out to Pasture

I am writing this letter to let you know I just renewed my subscription to your great magazine. I never renew on anything, but your magazine is so informative that I just can't let it pass me by. I don't want to miss a single issue, please keep up the great work, and, by the way, isn't it time to put George out to pasture!

Chris R. Young
Canal Winchester, Ohio

Instead of the raise?—R.D.B.

Running with Tanya

I've had a copy of Tanya Tucker's album, *Can't Run From Yourself*, since its release, and with a daily commute of two hours, I've had plenty of review time myself, and, believe me, the only thing uneven about this CD is Mr. Morthland's review in the March/April issue.

In his song critiques, Mr. Morthland rather suspiciously omits "Tell Me About It" (Tanya's duet with Delbert McClinton), which will undoubtedly be the next single charttopper released. He then writes that "Half the Moon" is a "forgettable piece of material." This cut is far from forgettable; in fact, I wouldn't be surprised to see it released as a single after "Tell Me About It."

Jim Ellis
Durango, Colorado

Kudos for Kershaw

I just received my March/April issue of *Country Music Magazine*, and I wanted to thank Bob Allen for a great review of Sammy Kershaw's *Haunted Heart*. He really deserves it. I went out and bought two more magazines so I could send Sammy a copy. Your magazine is great. Too bad it took me so long to get it.

LeeAnn Waldo
Des Moines, Iowa

Those CMM Boys

Come on now, *Country Music Magazine*, is this the 90's or the 50's? When are you going to publish more record reviews from intelligent, concise women as opposed to petty, vindictive and—although "sight unseen," I'm sure deservedly—jealous men (as exemplified by Bob Allen's rambling diatribe on Billy Dean's

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Fire in the Dark in Record Reviews in the March/April issue)? When comments are chosen such as "pretty hair" and "light-to-middle-weight talent," tell me, Bob Allen, when was the last time you walked away with both the ACM's Song of the Year and *Music City News'* Songwriter's Award for one of the Top Ten Songs of the year?

Put your insecurities aside, wake up and turn the page on your calendar. The 1990's and everybody's country is here.

Lori Wilkerson
Boulder City, Nevada
I dunno, the boys aren't bad...—H.B.

If You Can't Say Something Nice...

I have waited too patiently, too long. You never, but never, give Lorrie Morgan credit for anything. The review of her album, *Watch Me*, in your January/February 1993 issue was a disgrace. George Fletcher ran on about the terrific album she did called *Something in Red* but only after it went platinum. Why couldn't your magazine have given it at least a good review when you first reviewed it? You did the same thing to her *Leave the Light On*. Now you've shot her latest one down. Can't you ever say a nice thing until it is forced?

You aren't fair to any female singers (except McEntire, whom you always butter up). No wonder some of them decide it's not worth it—some like Rosanne Cash,

Paulette Carson (Highway 101) and a few others.

Lorrie works extremely hard for perfection and will never perform any material unless it's darn near on the line. She has a voice that is so warm, full and vibrant and strong. Come on, guys, give the girl a break. Don't make me cancel my subscription!

AnneMarie Smith
Antioch, Tennessee

Looks like some of you readers have been dipping into the moonshine too. Re-read the November/December 1989 and July/August 1991 issues. Both of Lorrie's earlier albums received rave reviews.—Ed.

Who Was That Guitar Man?

I've just read your review of Ray Kennedy's new release, *Guitar Man*, in the January/February issue of *Country Music*. I thought your review was right on the mark in pointing out both the strengths and weaknesses of this album.

However, there was one glaring error in your article that I feel compelled to point out. The "rip-roaring" lead guitar, which both of us so much appreciated, was credited to the wrong man. This fabulous lead guitar work was not played by Ray Kennedy, but is the distinctive sound of Bob Williams (the second name listed in the liner notes).

I enjoy reading your reviews, and ap-

preciate their accuracy and honesty. It is for this reason that I write to you now. In the competitive recording industry, I feel it is essential to give credit where credit is due.

Andy Talbot

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

We've got Jules Wortman of Atlantic Records, Ray's label, on the trail for this answer. We'll let you know.—Ed.

Jumping for Joy

My first thought after reading John Morthland's review of Joy White's *Between Midnight and Hindsight* (in the January/February issue) was that it sure lacked enthusiasm! The first three songs turned out to be worth the price of the tape alone. To me a singer is like an actor: A good one doesn't have to have lived every word in every line, they just have to make you believe they did—as Joy does with ease. That no-nonsense voice of hers makes you turn it on, turn it up and get lost in it! Often!

Roxanne Johnston
Hibbing, Minnesota

Jackson Minds the Fire

Thank you, *Country Music Magazine*, and especially Bob Allen for the review of Alan Jackson's *A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)* in the January/February issue. It's great.

Mr. Allen, you did a beautiful job describing Alan Jackson. He is refreshing, uncomplicated and, may I add, a beautiful person. What talent this young man has. He will be around with the greats like Merle Haggard, Eddy Arnold and George Jones when the guitar-smashing, rope-swinging other person is gone, amen. Country music is in capable hands with Alan Jackson minding the home fires.

Shirley Hale
Lakeside, California

Jivin' with Jones

Rich Kienle was on target again with his review of George Jones' album, *Walis Can Fall*, in the January/February issue. What a great CD. I was so happy to see George get into the Hall of Fame. He's great. That voice is/was super. He gets greater and greater. Love the videos George does—they are super. "I Don't Need Your Rocking Chair" should win him a video award as well. I would like to see George's video hits on VHS for sale and Randy Travis' HBO special as well.

Raymond F. Arthur
Frankfort, Indiana

Homing In on Wade Binson Landry

In response to Mrs. Margaret Porter's letter in the March/April issue, Wade Binson Landry left Cajun Country in 1986 or 1987. He was with Tammy Wynette's band and then joined Dottie West's band, but that's the last I'd heard of him. Legendary Cajun fiddler Rufus Thibodeaux is

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back with Jimmy C. Newman's Cajun Country band. (He was with Jimmy C. Neuman for over 20 years before; now he's back with Jimmy C. and is sounding better than ever!)

Being a Cajun fan-atic, I try to keep abreast of the Cajun music world, but it's not easy when you refuse to acknowledge that it even exists! In case you haven't noticed, Cajun music is hot now! Part of it is Jimmy C. Newman's doing! So, a pox on you for forgetting to give Cajun music and its performers credit where it's due!

Karen Lynn Vidra
Mansfield, Ohio

A pox? Oh, no. Thanks for the info on Landry.—Ed.

Tracing Rodman's Trail

In your March/April issue I was glad to see a letter titled "Where's Judy Rodman?" I too would like to catch up on Ms. Rodman. I do know she's living in Nashville because on *Crook & Chase* she's been mentioned a couple of times as appearing with others at charity events. Maybe you could explore what happened to a very successful former country star.

Mrs. H. Davenport
Tupelo, Mississippi

Covering Ms. Carpenter

I enjoy your publication very much. I am somewhat amazed, though, that a multi-award winning performer and superb songwriter/singer like Mary-Chapin Carpenter has gone virtually unnoticed in the print media. Ms. Carpenter has twice been a Grammy winner, is CMA Female Vocalist of the Year and has just had a platinum album, not to mention having hosted many TV shows, so why is it I have yet to see a feature article in any magazine on this innovative and multi-talented performer? Enough is enough, let us have the scoop on Mary-Chapin.

Beth Satterfield
Little Rock, Arkansas

Tsk, Tsk. CMM's first feature on Mary-Chapin appeared back in July/August 1990. Update coming soon. Meanwhile, see People in this issue.—Ed.

Vern "The Voice" Gosdin

I'm a very big fan of Vern Gosdin. I would like to read something about him in your magazine. I know he's not young and so good-looking, but that doesn't matter, because he's one of country music's great singers. That's why he's called the "voice" of country music.

I'm 25 years old, and I've been a fan of Vern's for 10 years. I have everything that I can collect of Vern Gosdin. I go to all his concerts when they're close. I've been to his home in Ardmore, Alabama, but I didn't meet him. Please let me read something about Vern in CMM.

Gina Robbins
McDavid, Florida

Wants/Needs Nanci Griffith

Your March/April magazine was good as always, but ever since I've read this mag over the past couple of years, not once has her name appeared. As an avid fan I'm surprised very little, if any, is said of her music/talent. I'm sure there are a lot of folk/country fans out there who know/enjoy that she is keeping the folk/country music alive. Growing up with the likes of Bob Dylan/others, her music has kept it alive for us all for years to come. Please give credit where credit is due.

Ken Rante
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Now, now. Nanci was featured in November/December 1987, and all but one of her albums have been in Record Reviews. Her new one will be there soon.—Ed.

McCoy and Chesnutt Firestarters

Where's Neal? I've enjoyed reading your magazine, but unfortunately, I've seen very little about one of my favorite singers, Neal McCoy. I haven't seen him in concert because he hasn't been to our area that I know of, but I've heard he puts on a super show. Can't wait for his new album. I also think that if Mark Chesnutt had stayed in Idaho, he would have found plenty of "new flames" that would make his "old flames" seem cool in comparison. Keep up the good work, and let me see more of both Neal and Mark.

Beckett Hamilton
Jerome, Idaho

Why Not Wy?

We have heard and read about Billy Ray, Garth, Travis, Lorrie, Reba, Kathy and Clint. Don't get me wrong, they are all great artists. But I think that it is time that we hear something about Wynonna. I know she is doing well. Her album sales will tell you that and so will her last four single releases that all went to Number One. So how 'bout it—maybe an article or even the cover of the magazine?

Tammy Britt
Diamond, Ohio

Feature on Wynonna coming soon.—Ed.

Pure and Natural Clinton Gregory

When is Gregory Clinton going to get the attention and acclaim he deserves? I'm not a starry-eyed teenager or a "swinging single." I'm a wife, mother and grandmother who's listened to a lot of country music over the last 50 years. I think Clinton has one of the most beautiful, pure, natural voices I've heard. I'm not an expert but I've been around music all of my life and heard good and bad singers—believe me he is one of the best.

The Statler Brothers had Clinton on their show a week ago, and I thought, how appropriate that the greatest singing group would be among the first to recognize Clinton's talent. Some of these so called "stars" of country music are trying

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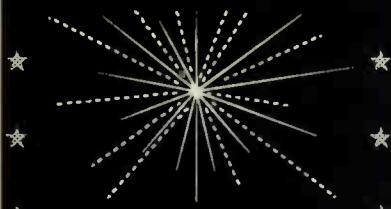
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to make it big in country and pop-rock at the same time. This kind of thinking almost destroyed country music a few year back.

Pat Wallace

Indianapolis, Indiana

Back to Basics with Billy Ray

I am a great country music fan and have been all my life. I have watched several "one hit" artists come through the country music industry, and every time I hear someone say Billy Ray Cyrus is another one, I laugh. I attended his concert in Wheeling, West Virginia, and there is no true country music lover who can say that he is not a great singer. His physical attributes are only a little bonus. I was also a fan of Travis Tritt, but his unprofessional attitude displayed towards Billy Ray really turned me off. I feel that Billy Ray Cyrus and Sammy Kershaw could out sing Travis any day of the week! They are, in my opinion, the *best* country music has seen since Randy Travis!

I love *Country Music Magazine* and cannot wait to receive my next issue. Thanks for the great coverage!

Lori Cheek

Wind Ridge, Pennsylvania

Hate Is a Four-Letter Word

I feel that Garth Brooks' video and song "We Shall Be Free" is one of his best. Every time I hear that song playing, I wish that everyone would stop fighting, like white and black people, different countries, families, etc. A real Christian likes people whether they are white, black, speak a different language, have a handicap of some kind or even if the person is gay. Garth, you are Number One and you have my support. Keep up the excellent work.

Cynthia A. Kowalczyk

New Bedford, Massachusetts

Calling for Carlson

One of the reasons I subscribe to *Country Music* is to keep up to date with my favorite Paulette Carlson. I was really disappointed not to see a story about her when she went solo. I go to many concerts, but I enjoy hers the most. She is not only a great singer and entertainer, but is one of the nicest, sweetest people I've ever met. Other than the lack of Paulette information, I really do enjoy your magazine.

Linda Whitman

Hibbing, Minnesota

Best Man Merle

We write this as a public thank you to Merle Haggard and his band, The Strangers. We have been long-time friends of Merle and The Strangers, and they really showed their friendship and support on September 6, 1992, when Jean and I were married in Branson, Missouri. Merle was my best man, while Biff Adam was gracious enough to give Jean away in our wedding. Several other members of his

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GET LISTED FREE! New Pen Pal Directory, Box 821-CM, Tucker, GA 30085-0821.

NICE SINGLES with Christian values wish to meet others. Free magazine. Send age, interests. Singles, Box 310-CM, Allardt, TN 38504. Or: 1-(900) 990-0021. \$1.25 per minute.

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LONELY? Free Singles' Magazine: Hotline, 720-5d Morrow, Clayton, NJ 08312-2101.

MEET 100's nice singles. Send stamp: Down Home Singles, Box 323-CM, Rogersville, TN 37857.

BEAUTIFUL RUSSIAN WOMAN matchmaking club. Send 29c stamp. Free photo brochure. CountrYekaterina, 430 S. Main, Shiloh, IL 62269.

SINGLES. MEET OTHERS. Write: Club, Box 11434-CM, Fort Worth, TX 76110.

Moneymaking Opportunities

ASSEMBLE OUR DEVICES at home. We pay up to \$600 weekly. No experience. Send self-addressed envelope: Technix, 4173 Main Street, Suite 300, Bridgeport, CT 06606.

Music/Instruments

ACCORDIONS, CONCERTINAS, button boxes, new, used, buy, trade, repair. Catalogues, \$5.00. Castiglione, Box CM, Warren, MI 48090.

SING-ALONG KARAOKE ACCOMPANIMENT cassettes. Available for the amateur or professional singer. All styles of music. Free catalog! Chartbusters, Dept. CM, 400 Ensley Drive, Knoxville, TN 37920-9115. Call toll free: 1-(800) 347-5504.

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Of Interest To All

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1993 PLYMOUTH VOYAGER promotional give-away. Details \$1.00. Voyager Country, 430 S. Main, Shiloh, IL 62269.

FREE ADULT OR CHILDREN BIBLE study courses. Project Philip, Box 35-M, Muskegon, MI 49443.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL ELVIS legend poetry contest. Prizes, free details. Send 29c stamp: Reviews, 430 S. Main, Shiloh, IL 62269.

MAKE FRIENDS IN ENGLAND! Free details: Trans-Atlantic Penfriends, Box 2176-CM, San Pedro, CA 90731.

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ACTUAL COLOR PHOTOS - 2,000 celebrities. \$3.00 - catalog, sample. SStars, P.O. Box 720793, Pinon Hills, CA 92372.

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NASHVILLE'S OLDEST RECORD COMPANY interviewing country singers to record. Free literature. (615) 391-3450.

RECORD WITH DJ FONTANA (drummer for Elvis Presley). Contact offices: (615) 731-6620.

TOP NASHVILLE PRODUCER looking for artists and songs. Box 218014, Nashville, TN 37221.

16-TRACK DEMOS - Midi Magic, 7553 Old Harding, Nashville, TN 37221. (615) 646-7440. Demo: \$2.00.

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COUNTRY SING ALONG TAPES. Thousands! Free country hits list! Full catalog package \$5.00. Singing Source, 12055 124th Avenue N.E., Dept. CM, Kirkland, WA 98034. 1-(800) 262-4487.

COUNTRY GOLDEN GOSPEL. Top stars. Quality music cassettes. Free catalogue. Royal, P.O. Box 39246-E, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33339-9246.

C/W LP's. Several thousand, nice used. 1950's - 80's. Catalog \$1.00. Martin, RR 1, Box 333, Amboy, IN 46911.

WE HAVE THE RECORDS you're looking for! Send requests plus 4 29c stamps for catalog: U.K.-U.S.A. Records, Box 6164, San Rafael, CA 94903.

HANK WILLIAMS "The Boy From Alabama" a 40th anniversary cassette with biographical pamphlet - \$11.95 complete. Jimmur Productions, 104 Colonial Drive, Brick, NJ 08724.

TAPES BY MAIL. Country western favorites \$5.95 each, post-paid. Free catalog. Warehouse Sales, P.O. Box 550, Angels Camp, CA 95222.

Songwriters

SONGWRITERS! LYRICS needed for recordings! Royalties possible. NWC Studio, Box 171101, Nashville, TN 37217.

SINGERS, SONGWRITERS needed. Free! Applications: United Agency, Box 862-D, New York, NY 10009.

Songwriters

POEMS, SONGS WANTED. \$100,000 - recording contract possible! Free appraisal. Majestic Records, Box 4256, Linden, TX 75563.

LYRICS, poems for musical setting and recording. \$1,000 for best poem. Satisfaction guaranteed. Talent (CM), P.O. Box 31, Quincy, MA 02169.

WANTED COUNTRY GOSPEL song poem hits! \$1,000 cash advance royalties information! Top Records, Box 23505-K, Nashville, TN 37202.

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AWARD WINNING SONGWRITER/recording artist, credited with 8 chart records, offering co-writing on accepted material. Send best song lyrics to: Ramsey Kearney, 602 Inverness Avenue, Nashville, TN 37204. (615) 297-8029.

COUNTRY MUSIC'S OLDEST independent record company. Interviewing country singers to record. (615) 883-5349.

URGENT! SONGS, POEMS NEEDED. Radio, TV, royalties. Hollywood Records, 6000 Sunset, Studio M, Hollywood, CA 90028.

CALL FREE 1-(800) 354-2694 Nashville's singer/song-writer information service. Tip sheets, free song production, artist development, recording stars addresses. 24 hours.

CUSTOM SONG DEMOS - Free information, sample \$1.00. Hollywood Records, 603 First-CM, Oceanside, CA 92054. (619) 757-7446.

ATTENTION ENTERTAINERS that need professional management to jump start their career. Call toll-free: (615) 883-5349.

NASHVILLE NUMBER SYSTEM, charts and instructions \$5.00, SASE #10: Youngwood, P.O. Box 101423, Nashville, TN 37224.

PRODUCER - Accepting songs, poems, lyrics! Studio 3, P.O. Box 120145, Nashville, TN 37212-0145.

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LEARN TO DANCE COUNTRY: line dances, 2-step, swing, and others. Free video catalog. (714) 846-7722.

LINE DANCE BASICS. Achy Breaky, Tush Push, six more country line dances made easy. Send \$32.95 ppd to: Salt Creek Productions, Route 1, Box 386, Depew, OK 74028. (918) 367-6063.

LEARN TO DANCE COUNTRY WESTERN style ballroom from world champions Barry Durand & Dawn Blorstad & other top teachers. Send for free catalogue. Over 75 instructional videos in stock. Image Maker's Video Service, P.O. Box 442-M, Rockland, MA 02370. (617) 871-0400; Fax: (617) 878-6178.

Classified Information

Country Music classifieds target your perfect market --- every issue is read by more than 7 million country music fans who are proven mail order buyers. Don't miss our July/August issue. The closing date is Thursday, May 20th.

The advertising rates are: regular word classified ads \$5.90 per word, minimum ad 10 words. Classified display is \$340 per column inch. All classified advertising must be prepaid with order. For display advertising, please include your camera ready artwork.

Mail copy, payment and any artwork to: Country Music, Classified Department, P.O. Box 570, Clearwater, Florida 34617. Telephones: National 800-762-3555 • Int'l 813-449-1775 • Fax 813-442-2567.

group were in attendance for our very special day. They not only play the best country music after all these years, but are a great bunch of people.

John W. Kolaja, M.D. and Jean Houston, Texas

Kudos for Calendar

Please let me take this opportunity to thank you for the 1993 Calendar. Just love it. I'm more than happy—especially with that very different picture of George Jones, and one of my favorites of Merle Haggard. Merle is my all-time favorite, anyway, and I can't imagine a calendar without him or George. Thanks!

Louise Wikle
Traverse City, Michigan

Dallas Fan Jam Correction

The line-up for Dallas' Fan Jam (People, page 32, March/April issue) is incorrect. That was last year's roster. Among those appearing this year are Joe Diffie, Tracy Byrd, Chris LeDoux, Jason D. Williams, Michael Martin Murphey, Earl Thomas Conley, Marty Haggard and many more. The event, a benefit for St. Jude's Children's Hospital, occurs May 21-23, 1993. Call 214-373-1601 for further information.

Our Favorite Subscriber

I've just subscribed to your magazine, and I just love it. When are you going to do an article on Tracy Lawrence? I love his music. Also, I think Travis Tritt and Marty Stuart are a great duo, as they are great alone.

I feel sorry for the Editor. At the end of the magazine a lot of letters yell at you for misspelling a name. Well, I forgive you. There are probably millions of letters that have spelling errors all through. Keep up the good work.

Carol Brown

Harrisville, New York
Actually, it's reading those letters that's doing it to us. That and George's moonshine. CMM's first feature on Tracy appeared in July/August 1992.—Ez.

CMM—Couldn't Be Better

I am a recent subscriber to your magazine and absolutely pleased with the results. I am a big fan of country music, and to me no other kind of music is better.

I would like to thank all of you for your share of work in creating a great magazine. From your cover stories to your pull-out poster, *Country Music Magazine* couldn't have been made better. Keep up the good work.

Jennette Randles
Richfield, Utah

Even George?—Ed.

Send Letters to the Editor to George at Country Music Magazine, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. He'll try to decipher 'em. Mark your envelope. Attention: Letres.

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

REBA MCENTIRE BIOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Reba McEntire is unquestionably one of the most beloved performers in country music. Her millions of fans have made her last nine albums national bestsellers—she is a true superstar. She has embarked on an acting career; she sang for former President Bush; she runs her own corporation; and she is a successful mother and wife. Yet not all of Reba's life has been so glamorous. An Oklahoma native, she was a rancher's daughter and spent much of her early life on the rodeo circuit, where her real talent as a singer was first discovered. Success did not come overnight, however—she had to work hard, travel far, listen to a lot of bad advice and overcome a series of setbacks, including the

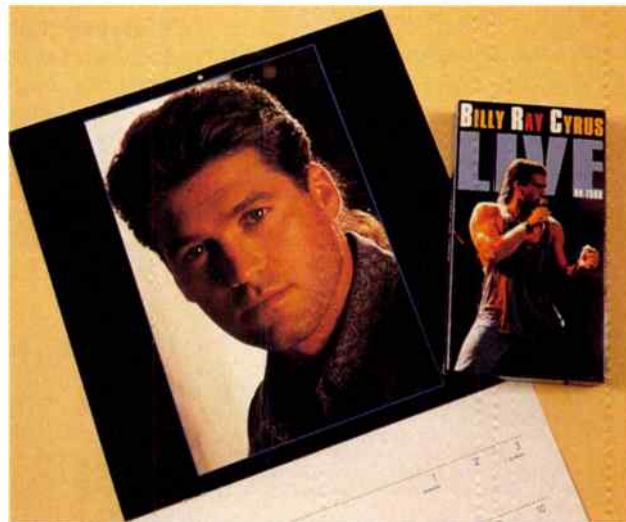


end of her first marriage. It was not until the early 1980's that she began to find success. And when success did come for her, it came in a major way. Even the tragic loss of her band in an airplane crash failed to slow her pace. Along with Dolly Parton, Loretta Lynn and the late Patsy Cline, she has joined the ranks of country music's legendary performers. *Reba McEntire: The Queen of Country* is the story of her life and career as it has never been told before. It sells for \$10.99, #B2T.

And if you haven't seen Reba in person, I advise you to buy her spectacular video, *Reba in Concert*. This video was shot live and includes many of her popular Number One hits. Included are: "Whoever's in New England," "One Promise Too Late," "Walk On," "Rumor Has It," "Respect," "Little Rock," "Oklahoma Swing," "Fancy," "Cathy's Clown," "You Lie," "Sweet Dreams," "Let the Music Lift You Up," "Love Will Find Its Way to You," "Can't Even Get the Blues" and a medley of her other popular songs. *Reba in Concert* costs only \$19.95, #V3E. When you buy both the biography and the video, #B2T/V3E, your cost is only \$27.94—a savings of \$3.00!

BILLY RAY CYRUS VIDEO AND CALENDAR

With the success of his debut single, "Achy Breaky Heart," Billy Ray Cyrus' career has taken off like a rocket. Playing to sold-out crowds across the country and consistently staying at the top of the charts, Billy Ray is a true phenomenon. In his video, *Billy Ray Cyrus Live On Tour*, you not only get to hear him sing, but see this hunk in real action! You don't want to miss the hip-thrusts so many women have been screaming about (a little Elvis-maneuvering)! *Billy Ray Cyrus Live On Tour* naturally includes his Number One song, "Achy Breaky Heart," in addition to "Could've Been Me," "Some Gave All," "Should I Stay or Should I Go," "These Boots Are Made for Walking," "She's Not Cryin' Anymore," "Wher'm I Gonna Live?," "Someday, Somewhere, Somehow," "I'm So Miserable," "Never Thought I'd Fall in Love With You," "Ain't No Good Goodbye," "Only Time Will Tell," "It Won't Be the Last" and "The Star Spangled Banner." For only \$29.95, #V2B, you get 60 minutes of enjoy-



ment with Billy Ray.

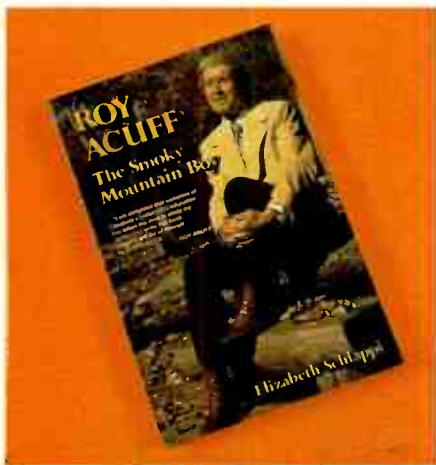
I decided a video of Billy Ray just isn't enough! You'll definitely want him "hanging around" the office or in your home. The *Billy Ray Cyrus 1993 Calendar* is hot off the press! Think of how wonderful it will be to have a different 12" x 12" photo of Billy Ray for every month of the year. This calendar opens up to 12" x 24" and has plenty of space for jotting down notes. The *Billy Ray Cyrus 1993 Calendar* costs only \$9.99, #G3G. Save \$5.00 and order both the video and the calendar, #V2B/G3G—your cost is only \$34.95!

ELVIS PRESLEY GOLD RECORD PLAQUE

I am ecstatic about this brand new *Elvis Presley Gold Record Plaque*. It is gorgeous! Each plaque is framed in an attractive oak wood and features The King's gold record hit, "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" The special 24kt gold-plated 45rpm is mounted beneath the elegant, matted record jacket, and the gold plate in the upper corner reads: "This Special Edition Gold-Plated Record Is In Recognition Of The Prestigious Achievement In Reaching Million Seller Award Status." This collector's item measures 12" x 16". Won't your friends be impressed when they see this 24kt gold-plated collectible hanging in your home! The *Elvis Presley Gold Record Plaque* sells for

\$99.00, #G4D. And, to top that off, for a limited time only, we're giving you a FREE 1993 *Elvis Calendar*, #G6F—value price is \$10.95! Elvis' calendar is filled with 12" glossy, close-up pictures.





ROY ACUFF: THE SMOKY MOUNTAIN BOY: 2ND EDITION

Roy Acuff was the first living performer to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. The heart-warming story of this long-time symbol of the Grand Ole Opry and premier figure in the growth of country music is told through interviews with friends, family and fellow performers with the help of Elizabeth Schlappi, a dedicated Acuff historian and personal friend of the star for well over 20 years. Schlappi creates a chronicle of Roy's life from his origins as the son of a small-town Baptist preacher to his steady climb to the pinnacle of a fabulous musical career. Nothing is left out. This is an especially fitting tribute now that Mr. Acuff has passed away. *Roy Acuff: The Smoky Mountain Boy* is illustrated with rare photos, includes a bibliography and discography, and sells for \$14.95, #B2P.

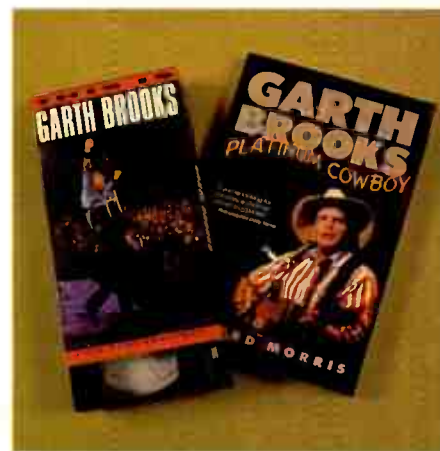
OFFICIAL ELVIS STAMP DESIGN - KEY CHAIN, LAPEL PIN AND MAGNET SET

I know you can't pass this one up! Here are some sensational keepsakes and limited edition collectibles depicting the most famous U.S. commemorative stamp in history. The striking, full-color energy of the stamp's design has been vividly captured in an exclusive "photomagic" process, with intricate brass borders and a protective epoxy dome to protect the finish. This officially licenced issue marks the first use of a front-side cancellation of a stamp on a limited-edition set of *three* items: lapel pin, key chain and magnet. Receive *all three* Elvis stamp collectibles for only \$15.95, #S1S.



GARTH BROOKS BIOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Everything you've ever loved about Garth is included in this 90-minute video, *This Is Garth Brooks*. Many of you have probably seen his NBC-TV special. That's great! This video captures that super-rated special plus much more! The tape also includes a live performance of Garth in Texas, plus plenty of interview and backstage footage. You'll listen to Garth talk about his songs, concerts, fans and family, and you get inside opinions from the people who know him best: Sandy (his wife), Betsy (his sister), Pat Alger (a songwriting partner), his band



members, record producer and others. *This Is Garth Brooks* includes his best-ever songs: "Not Counting You," "Rodeo," "Two of a Kind," "We Bury the Hatchet," "The Thunder Rolls," "The River," "Much Too Young (To Feel this Damn Old)," "What She's Doing Now," "Papa Loved Mama," "If Tomorrow Never Comes," "Shameless," "Friends in Low Places," "The Dance," "You May Be Right" and "Keep Your Hands to Yourself." For only \$29.95, #V3H, this is one video you can't afford to miss!

And if you're looking for something to read on Garth, here's the brand new biography, *Garth Brooks Platinum Cowboy*. It's an interesting and lively portrayal of all that has happened to Garth. You'll read about a boy's big plans growing up in a small town; the dreams he chased; his college years; his excursions to Nashville; his record deal; his life touring; what he is singing about; and his life today, as a superstar. Loaded with photos, plus a discography and bibliography, *Platinum Cowboy* sells for \$10.95, #B4S. Save money and order both the video and book, #V3H/B4S, for only \$36.90—\$4.00 off!

COUNTRY MUSIC ACCESSORIES

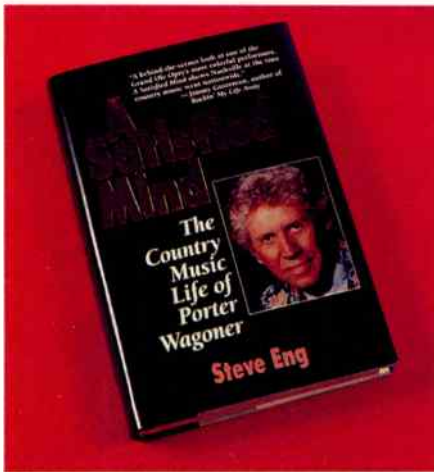
Look at these gorgeous belt buckles made out of genuine pewter, with vibrant enamel colors highlighting the words "Country Music." These buckles will look so handsome on your belt—the publisher of *Country Music Magazine* loves his! The "I Love Country Music" buckle (G6J)



is nicely accented with a bronze fiddle and guitar; the "Country Music" buckle (G7L) shows off a banjo and fiddle. Each belt buckle costs only \$9.95, or save money and buy two (G6J/G7L) for \$17.95. And to accent your beautiful belt buckles, here is a fabulous watch! Move over, Gucci! This gorgeous, 24-karat, gold-layered watch has a *real diamond!* We have proudly displayed our *Country Music Magazine* logo in gold, contrasting nicely with the black face and pebble-grain, genuine leather strap. The diamond and gold-color hour, minute and second hands add a handsome touch to the highly accurate quartz electronic analog movement. The *Country Music* diamond watch is for both men and women and only costs \$19.95, #G4L. Or save money and buy both buckles and the watch, #G6J/G7L/G4L, for only \$34.95—a \$5.00 savings!

SATISFIED MIND: THE COUNTRY MUSIC LIFE OF PORTER WAGONER

Porter Wagoner. With the name comes a blur of images, facts and snatches of gossip. Behind Porter's glitter and showman's big grin lies a complex personality whose life story, until now, has never been told in detail. *A Satisfied Mind* cuts through the tabloid gossip to show the complex, adventurous, enormously methodical man behind the image. Reflecting more than three years' research, the pages come alive with authentic dialogue from more than 160 interviews with Porter himself, with Chet Atkins, Dolly Parton, Norma Jean, Si Siman (his first manager), his school teachers and members of his first bluegrass band. *A Satisfied Mind* in hardcover, filled with many rare photographs, costs only \$19.95, #B1K.



EXPRESS TRAX

SING-A-LONG TAPES

Now you can step into the country spotlight with the *Express Trax Sing-a-Long* tapes. These high quality, chrome tapes are recorded by top studio musicians in the songs' original keys. The back-up band plays real instruments, such as the fiddle and steel guitar—no synthesizers! One side of the tape is all instrumental so that you can be the lead singer; the other side includes both instruments and vocals. These tapes are great for parties, talent competitions, night club performances or just having fun. Both amateurs and professionals will enjoy singing with the background tracks—each song is a big hit in country music. Package #17 includes: "Here's a Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)"/Travis Tritt, "Shameless"/Garth Brooks, "Dallas"/Alan Jackson, "Born Country"/Alabama, "Love Me"/Collin Raye, "Forever Together"/Randy Travis, "Lovin' Blind"/Clint Black, "Look at Us"/Vince Gill, "Anymore"/Travis Tritt, "What's She Doin' Now"/Garth Brooks, "Keep It Between the Lines"/Ricky Van Shelton and "Somewhere in My Broken Heart"/



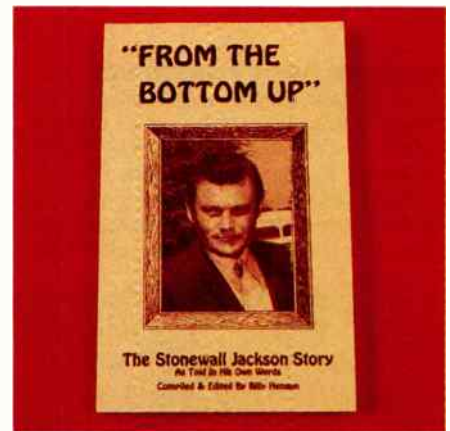
Billy Dean. Package #29 includes: "Maybe It Was Memphis"/Pam Tillis, "Except for Monday"/Lorrie Morgan, "Is There Life Out There"/Reba McEntire, "Eagle When She Flies"/Dolly Parton, "Jealous Bone"/Patty Loveless, "For My Broken Heart"/Reba McEntire, "What Do I Do With Me"/Tanya Tucker, "She Is His Only Need"/Wynonna Judd, "Like We Never Had a Broken Heart"/Trisha Yearwood, "That's What I Like About You"/Trisha Yearwood, "I Can't Make You Love Me"/Bonnie Raitt and "Down at The Twist & Shout"/Mary-Chapin Carpenter. Each package gives you 12 hit songs on two cassettes. Only \$19.95 for each package, #PKG17 or #PKG29—please specify which when ordering.

CHET ATKINS: GET STARTED ON GUITAR VIDEO

Just think, Chet Atkins teaching you how to play the guitar! Do you know how many people would love to have that opportunity? With the *Chet Atkins: Get Started on Guitar* video course, beginners can have fun learning the basics, and advanced players will discover a goldmine of helpful hints and ideas. *Chet Atkins: Get Started on Guitar* includes a one-hour videocassette, a 112-page instruction book and a 40-minute

audio-cassette—all three components cross-referenced to each other and packaged in a handsome case for easy carrying and access.

The instruction book will guide you through the music Chet plays in the video. Each tune has its own chapter complete with advanced tips and basic information. There are also special reference sections on "Playing Chords," "Finger-picking Chords," "Playing Melodies" and "Playing by Ear." The video shows split-screen close-ups so you can see exactly how the techniques are done. Also included are on-screen chord symbols that let you play along as you watch and an on-screen clock to help you locate specific places in the video. You receive the video, audio-cassette, the instruction booklet and the binder case all for only \$69.95, #B2G.



FROM THE BOTTOM UP: THE STONEWALL JACKSON STORY

From the Bottom Up is a biography of Stonewall, very simply produced, using his own taped comments. His grit and determination come through on every page. Though his rise to fame was storybook-like, much of his early life was a gothic horror story. His interest in combating child abuse came from first-hand experience. As down-to-earth as his music, he's candid about his temper, his stubbornness and his wilder days touring with George Jones. A fascinating, honest portrait, it sells for only \$12.95, #B2R.

Nashville Warehouse

FREE ALBUM!



DOLLY PARTON DOLL

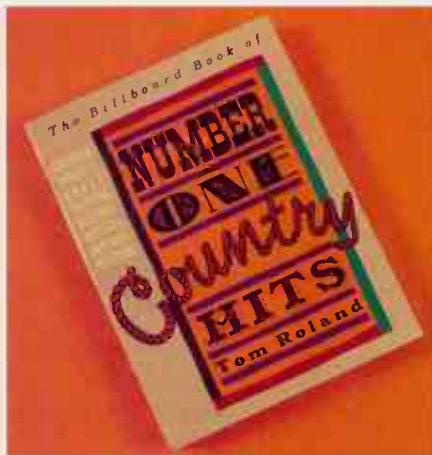
Look what's new! This gorgeous replica of Dolly Parton stands one-and-one-half feet tall and displays Dolly's beautiful figure and elegant costume. Dolly's wearing a red-leatherette dress adorned with gold and white lace, and her gold belt is accented with a red ruby—she even has on a gold necklace! In addition, her fabulous blonde hair is decorated with a red lace bow. The Dolly Parton Doll is a great gift for both young and old—plus an invaluable collector's item! And if you order right now, we're giving away FREE an old collector's album of Dolly's earlier recordings. The Dolly Parton Doll costs only \$49.95, #D1A, and includes a stand. The FREE album is #R4A. When ordering, include both codes. We have been selling a phenomenal number of dolls, so get yours while they last!

THE SHANACHIE HISTORIC COUNTRY MUSIC VIDEO SERIES

From 1954 through 1956, filmmaker Al Gannaway produced a series of color films in Nashville featuring Grand Ole Opry stars singing one hit song after another. Shanachie, a record and video company, has compiled three videos, each with 24 to 27 performances from the Gannaway material. First there's Webb Pierce with Chet Atkins, (#V2I). You'll see Webb, clad in some amazing costumes, in 17 energetic performances of his biggest hits, including "There Stand the Glass," plus Chet at his best, picking nine songs. The video closes with Webb, Carl Smith and Marty Robbins doing "Why Baby Why." Next there's Ray Price with Jim Reeves and Ernest Tubb (#V1S). Ray does some of his best honky tonk, including "Crazy Arms." Reeves per-



forms early hits like "Bimbo." The third video has Marty Robbins with Ernest Tubb (#V2G). This one combines more of Tubb with some of Marty's big hits. Tubb sings 14 numbers, including "Walking the Floor Over You." Each video sells for \$39.95, or SAVE \$30.00 and buy all three for only \$89.85!



THE BILLBOARD BOOK OF NUMBER ONE COUNTRY HITS

The Billboard Book of Number One Country Hits details the stories behind the recordings that reached Number One on *Billboard Magazine's* country charts from 1968 to the end of 1989. An unbelievable 848 recordings are covered. Each is profiled in the order it hit, from Merle Haggard's "Sing Me Back Home" to Ronnie Milsap's "A Woman in Love." Author Tom Roland has combined biographical information on each artist with stories of how and why each song was written, and how it reached the artist if it was written by someone else. The stories are fascinating and sometimes funny. *The Billboard Book of Number One Country Hits* sells for \$19.95, #B3C.

NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE

050693-1

Mail to: Nashville Warehouse, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, TN 37229

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TOP 25

Albums

1. Billy Ray Cyrus *Some Gave All*
2. Brooks & Dunn *Hard Workin' Man*
3. Reba McEntire *It's Your Call*
4. Dolly Parton *Slow Dancing with the Moon*
5. Garth Brooks *The Chase*
6. Brooks & Dunn *Brand New Man*
7. Tracy Lawrence *Alibis*
8. George Strait *Pure Country*
9. Mary-Chapin Carpenter *Come On Come On*
10. Vince Gill *I Still Believe in You*
11. Wynonna *Wynonna*
12. Garth Brooks *No Fences*
13. Alan Jackson *A Lot About Livin' (And a Little 'Bout Love)*
14. Garth Brooks *Ropin' the Wind*
15. John Anderson *Seminole Wind*
16. Alabama *American Pride*
17. Lorrie Morgan *Watch Me*
18. Alvin & The Chipmunks *Chipmunks in Low Places*
19. Billy Dean *Fire in the Dark*
20. John Michael Montgomery *Life's a Dance*
21. Travis Tritt *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*
22. Tanya Tucker *Can't Run from Yourself*
23. Garth Brooks *Garth Brooks*
24. Kentucky HeadHunters *Rave On!*
25. Aaron Tippin *Read Between the Lines*

Singles

1. Clint Black *When My Ship Comes In*
2. Tanya Tucker *It's a Little Too Late*
3. George Strait *Heartland*
4. Pam Tillis *Let That Pony Run*
5. Garth Brooks *Learning to Live Again*
6. Mark Chesnutt *Ol' Country*
7. Brooks & Dunn *Hard Workin' Man*
8. Mary-Chapin Carpenter *Passionate Kisses*
9. Alabama *Once Upon a Lifetime*
10. Billy Ray Cyrus *She's Not Cryin' Anymore*
11. Reba McEntire & Vince Gill *The Heart Won't Lie*
12. Radney Foster *Nobody Wins*
13. Lorrie Morgan *What Part of No*
14. Sammy Kershaw *She Don't Know She's Beautiful*
15. Tracy Lawrence *Alibis*
16. Restless Heart *Mending Fences*
17. Alan Jackson *Tonight I Climbed the Wall*
18. Hal Ketchum *Hearts Are Gonna Roll*
19. Mark Collie *Born to Love You*
20. Aaron Tippin *My Blue Angel*
21. Collin Raye *I Want You Bad (And That Ain't Good)*
22. Kathy Mattea *Standing Knee Deep in a River (Dying of Thirst)*
23. Little Texas *I'd Rather Miss You*
24. Trisha Yearwood *You Say You Will*
25. Doug Stone *Made for Lovin' You*

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

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

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 3 8 13 18 23
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I want to join the CMSA and get Member's price. I'm adding \$16 for membership which includes an extra year's subscription to *Country Music Magazine*. 050693T

A 25% Discount For CMSA Members Only

Here it is, folks! Your quick and easy order form for your choice of the Top 25 **Albums** currently on the country music charts. Everyone may order, but members of *Country Music Magazine's* own Country Music Society of America get 25% off list price.

Albums listed on this page are available on CD or cassette. **Sorry, no singles, LP's or 8-track tapes available.** To order, fill out coupon on this page and include your check or money order. Be sure to specify format. Allow six to eight weeks for delivery. To join the CMSA and save 25% on every CD or cassette you buy, send \$16 to cover membership dues and use member's prices. Dues entitle you to an additional year of *Country Music Magazine*, the CMSA *Newsletter* with every issue, membership card, discount coupons, other merchandise discounts and more.

FOR CMSA MEMBERS ONLY



Buck Owens Special

For years no Buck Owens recordings were available, and the original Capitol LP's began going for extremely high prices. Buck owns his Capitol sides, so few were reissued. In 1988, Buck permitted the Country Music Foundation to reissue *Buck Owens Live at Carnegie Hall* (CMF012) on LP, cassette and CD, with some additional material that was recorded at the show but left off the original 1966 release, including a comedy routine of the sort The Buckaroos commonly did onstage. Making up the disc are 12 selections: "Act Naturally," "Together Again," "Love's Gonna Live Here," two medleys of various Buck hits, full versions of "Waitin' in Your Welfare Line," "Buckaroo," "Streets of Laredo," "I've Got a Tiger by the Tail," a comedy spot with Don Rich and bassist Doyle Holly, including their good-natured Beatles imitation on "Twist and Shout" (not included on the original album) and a closing medley of more Buck hits, literally the only way he could squeeze them all in. Regular price \$12.95 cassette or LP, \$18.95 CD. Members' price \$9.95 cassette or LP, \$15.95 CD.

In 1992, after several years of negotiation, Rhino Records released *The Buck Owens Collection* (R 71016), a three-CD or cassette, 62-song compilation of all his big hits from "Second Fiddle" to the 1988 hit recording of "Streets of Bakersfield" with Dwight Yoakam (Buck's original 1972 solo recording of "Streets" for Capitol is included as well). All the obvious ones are here, "Act Naturally," "Tiger by the Tail," "Love's Gonna Live Here," "My Heart Skips a Beat," "Buckaroo," "Waitin' in Your Welfare Line," "Open Up Your Heart" and all the rest. Also here are some songs that weren't chart hits but were long associated with Buck, including "Hello Trouble." One Warner Brothers track, "Play Together Again," again with Emmylou Harris is

also here, as is his 1988 remake of "Hot Dog" and the 1989 duet with Ringo Starr on "Act Naturally" (Ringo sang The Beatles' hit version). The set comes with an 80-page, full-color booklet written by Rich Kienzle, based on extensive interviews with Buck. The biography covers more details of his life than have ever been previously revealed in print. The second section, also by Kienzle, is a song by song listing with complete sessionography (recording session information) and comments from Buck on the songs and how he came to record them. Rare photos, many of them color shots from Buck's archives, are scattered throughout. Available on cassette or CD. Regular price \$39.95 cassette, \$49.95 CD. Members' price \$35.95 cassette, \$45.95 CD. To order, see details at the bottom of this page. Be sure to include product code, specify format, and include membership number for discount.

Buried Treasures Special

Members get a discount on all items features in Buried Treasures. Pay just \$109.95 for Bear Family's Wanda Jackson box (a \$10.00 savings). On their Roy Acuff 2-CD set, pay just \$44.95 (a \$5.00 savings). On Bear's Hank Snow set, pay just \$124.95 (that's \$15.00 off!). On all other items, deduct \$2.00 off regular price. This includes The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's original *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* and the Bear Family discs on Merle Travis, Western themes and Billy "Crash" Craddock. Include membership number for discount. See ordering instructions on the Buried Treasures page.

Essential Collector Special

CMSA members may deduct \$2.00 off the price of each item covered in this section. Check out books on Roy Acuff, Elvis and Patsy Cline; videos on Roy and old-time rural music with rare footage (including Jimmie Rodgers' 1931 film short, *The Singing Brakeman*); and the Asleep at the Wheel compilation. Include membership number when taking discount. See instructions on the Essential Collector page.

How to Order

To order items listed on this page, send your check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 050693N, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional. Canadian orders add \$3.00 additional postage.

VOTE

MEMBERS POLL/MAY 1993

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

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records, cassettes or compact discs) in the last month? Yes No
How many records? _____ cassettes? _____ CD's? _____

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

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

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

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

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

Do You Buy Blank Tapes?

5. a. Do you buy blank audiocassette tapes? Yes No

b. If so, how many? _____ per month

6. If yes, which brands do you buy? (Check all that apply.)

Memorex BASF Sony
 TDK Scotch/3M Maxell
 Other (_____)

7. a. Do you buy blank videocassette tapes? Yes No

b. If so, how many? _____ per month

8. If yes, which brands do you buy? (Check all that apply.)

Memorex BASF Sony
 TDK Scotch/3M Maxell
 Kodak Polaroid Other (_____)

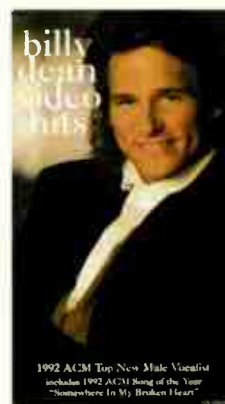
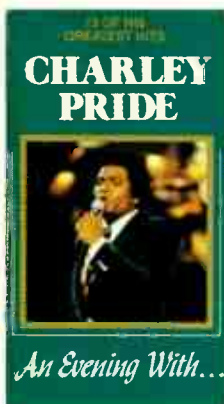
Who Can Vote

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

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

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

COUNTRY MUSIC



CHARLEY PRIDE An Evening With... - 48 mins.

Listen to the rich baritone sounds of Charley Pride, the Country Music Association's 1971 Performer of the Year. Included in this noteworthy live performance are: *Kiss An Angel Good Morning/Kawliga/So Afraid Of Losing You/Oklahoma Morning/It's Going To Take A Little Longer/Crystal Chandelier/My Eyes Can Only See As Far As You/Me And Bobby McGee/Louisiana Man/Cottonfields Back Home*. **AND MORE!** Item No. VIC - \$19.95

THE JUDDS Their Final Concert - 90 mins.

This spectacular finale features all their greatest hits as mother and daughter raise their voices together for one last memorable event. You'll hear them sing all your favorites: *Born To Be Blue/Give A Little Love/Mama, He's Crazy/Don't Be Cruel/Grandpa/Guardian Angel/Why Not Me/Love Is Alive/Love Can Build A Bridge*. **AND 10 MORE!** You'll also hear them reminisce about those memorable moments in their past. Item No. V7H - \$29.95

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

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

COUNTRY VIDEO HITS OF THE 90'S 15 Great Performances - 56 mins.

Here are the best of the best, including: *A Better Man* by Clim Black/*I Watched It All* by Lionel Cartwright/*Simple Man* by The Charlie Daniels Band/*Give A Little Love* by The Judds/*Out Of Your Shoes* by Lorie Morgan/*Crazy For Love* by Conway Twitty/*It Ain't Nothin'* by Keith Whitley/*Don't Toss Us Away* by Patty Loveless/*Cry, Cry, Cry* by Marty Stuart/*When I Call Your Name* by Vince Gill. **AND MANY MORE!** Item No. V6E - \$19.95

HALL OF FAME COLLECTION 4 Full Tapes - 120 mins. - Special LOW Price - SAVE \$5.00!

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

JOHN ANDERSON Seminole Wind - 28 mins.

Enjoy the complete *Seminole Wind* experience from John's comeback #1 smash hit - *Straight Tequila Night* - to the hauntingly beautiful *Seminole Wind*. Listen as John recounts his personal life and experiences. Watch behind-the-scenes footage of his famous *Seminole Wind* video shot in the Big Cypress Reservation of Florida. And finally, come to know the man and his music as never before. Item No. V9I - \$19.95

CHARLIE DANIELS Homefolks And Highways - 90 mins.

Go behind the scenes with Charlie in the recording studio, on the road in his touring bus, on his ranch in Tennessee, at The Cowboy Hall Of Fame, even at his high school reunion. Watch and listen to Charlie perform hits like *The South's Gonna Do It/What This World Needs Is A Few More Rednecks/The Devil Went Down To Georgia/Simple Man/Long Haired Country/It's My Life/In America/Old Rock And Roller*. **AND MORE!** Item No. V5B - \$19.95

MARTY ROBBINS Super Legend - 120 mins.

This memorable video features 18 performances: *El Paso/White Sports Coat/Devil Woman/Ribbon Of Darkness/Singing The Blues/I Can't Keep From Cryin'/Don't Worry Bout Me/This Time You Gave Me A Mountain*, and many more, including Marty's Grammy winning song, *My Woman, My Woman, My Wife*. It also includes rare appearances from early television shows and the big screen. **PLUS A LOT MORE!** Item No. G2A - \$39.95

MARTY ROBBINS A Man And His Music - 55mins.

This additional Marty Robbins video was recorded live at the Opry in 1980. "Funnin' around" was what he called it. And that's precisely what this video is all about. It includes his version of Elvis' *That's All Right (Mama)*, plus these other great selections: *Ribbon Of Darkness/Devil Woman/Big Iron/Among My Souvenirs/Don't Worry/A White Sports Coat/My Woman, My Woman, My Wife/El Paso*. Item No. G1G - \$39.95

MARTY ROBBINS The Best Of His TV Show - 55 mins.

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

MARTY ROBBINS Best Of His TV Show Vol 2 - 55 mins.

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

BILL ANDERSON Video Scrapbook - 60 mins.

Here are 60 minutes of fascinating memories, hosted by "Whispering Bill" himself. It starts off with a home movie revealing an infant with a strong sense of rhythm, and takes us through his early singing career, time as a D.J., start with Decca Records, days hosting the Bill Anderson Show (meet some truly entertaining guests), even videos from his game show. It's great music, fun and the unmistakable personality of "Whispering Bill" himself. Item No. V1B - \$19.95

COUNTRY LINE DANCING Featuring Achy Breaky - 35 mins.

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

JOHNNY CASH The Man And The Music - 90 mins.

Here is a long-overdue reissue of one of the best documentaries ever made on a country singer. Its timing is particularly opportune, for it was shot at the very moment that Johnny burst beyond the world of country into the national mainstream. You'll see him on the road, in the studio, traveling back to his roots, mingling with friends and fans and performing hits like *Ring Of Fire* and *Orange Blossom Special*. It is a must! Item No. V9D - \$19.95

WAYLON JENNINGS Waylon - 60 mins.

Hallway Productions is right on the money again, with this true story of this renegade, outlaw, legend. From his early days as Buddy Holly's protege to his battles with the Nashville system, good times and bad, this is a memorable portrait featuring rare never-before-seen footage and over 20 classic songs and performances. Included: *Honky Tonk Heroes/Cold Hearted Woman/Luckenbach, Texas/The Eagle/Amunda*. **AND MORE!** Item No. V3Q - \$29.95

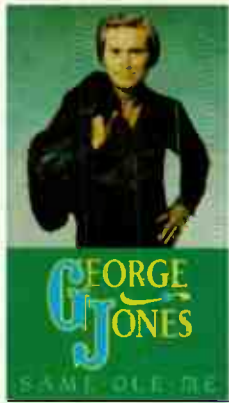
WAYLON JENNINGS Lost Outlaw Performance - 60 mins.

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

WILLIE NELSON My Life - 60 mins.

Here is one more in the growing list of excellent home videos produced by Hallway Productions in Nashville. You should not miss this riveting, close-up portrait of Willie's days as a starving songwriter through his struggle to superstardom. It's a story of hardship, courage, love, friendship and music as told by Willie himself, with 20 great hits, and some help from friends like Johnny Cash, Waylon and Kris Kristofferson. Item No. V5L - \$29.95

VIDEO BONANZA



GEORGE JONES
Same Ole Me - 60 mins.

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

HIGHWAYMEN LIVE
Willie, Waylon, Cash, Kris - 98 mins.

Here, captured on this memorable 98-minute video, is one of the truly historic country music tours to ever take place. Four of the greatest talents of our time performing 26 great hits, including: *Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys/Trouble Man/Ring Of Fire/Folsom Prison Blues/Always On My Mind/Silver Station/Last Cowboy Song/Desperados Waiting For A Train/Luckenbach.* **TEXAS. AND MORE!** Item No. V2A - \$39.95

MERLE HAGGARD
The Best Of - 60 mins.

"I have selected some of my favorite songs for this video...and I hope they will be your favorites too." - Merle Haggard. You be the judge. *My Favorite Memory/Stay Here And Drink/Mama's Hungry Eyes/Today I Started Loving You Again/Old Man From The Mountains/Kern River/If I Could Only Fly/When Times Were Good/Honky Tonk Night Time Man/Big City/Okie From Muskogee/Footlights.* **AND 7 MORE!** Item No. G3F - \$19.95

TRAVIS TRITT
It's All About To Change - 55 mins.

Here is one of country music's hottest young stars, second only to Garth Brooks for albums sold in 1991. Here's your chance to watch Travis perform all his hit videos. Included are: *Country Club/Help Me Hold On/Put Some Drive In Your Country/Drift Off To Dream/Here's A Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares).* There's also exclusive interview footage and musical excerpts from: *I'm Gonna Be Somebody/All I'll Ever Be/Bible Belt.* Item No. V1V - \$24.95

GEORGE STRAIT
Live - 52 mins.

Now this platinum-selling country superstar is captured for the first time on video cassette. Backed by his famed Ace In The Hole band, he whips up the audience performing all his greatest hits, including: *The Fireman/The Cowboy Rides Away/Amarillo By Morning/All My Ex's Live In Texas/Any Old Time/Hot Burning Flames/Dance Time In Texas/A Six Pack To Go/Marina Del Rey/You Look So Good In Love.* **AND MORE!** Item No. G2G - \$29.95

REBA MCENTIRE
For My Broken Heart - 22:41 mins.

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

ERNEST TUBB
Thanks Troubadour Thanks - 62 mins.

Here is the complete, true story of "America's Troubadour." From his birth in depression-era Texas, the early influence of Jimmie Rodgers, the first recording sessions, early radio shows and Hollywood movies, to the Grand Ole Opry, over 40 years on the road, and sales of over 20 million records. This fascinating video biography features classic performances and Ernest's top hits. It's a must for serious country music fans. Item No. V2N - \$19.95

BILLY DEAN
Video Hits - 23 mins.

Here is one of the hottest new stars on the country music scene today, already voted the 1992 ACM Top New Male Vocalist. This new video features Billy's 1992 ACM Song of the Year, *Somewhere In My Broken Heart*, plus these other important hits: *Only Here For A Little While, Only The Wind* and *Billy The Kid*. There's also live interview footage and additional footage courtesy of the ACM. Don't miss it! Item No. V9G - \$19.95

EMMYLOU HARRIS
Live At The Ryman - 45 mins.

This well received 12-song performance with her all-acoustic band, The Nash Ramblers, showcases Emmylou's traditional roots with some contemporary material thrown in. Just some of the great hits included are: *Guitar Town/Half As Much/Guess Things Happen That Way/Ladi/Hard Times/Abraham, Martin And John/Smoke Along The Track/It's A Hard Life/Wherever You Go/Get Up John/Walls Of Time.* **AND MORE!** Item No. V6C - \$24.95

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN
The Making Of - 87 mins.

Much has been written about *Will The Circle Be Unbroken, Vol. 2*. Among other things, the record was named "Album of the Year." This fascinating video is a documentary of the recording session that produced it. For those fans who've not actually seen how a recording is made, this one was cut live with everyone playing at once, rare in this age of overdubbing. The music and personalities showcased on this video make it one you should own. Item No. G5D - \$19.95

COUNTRY MUSIC ON BROADWAY
Filmed '64, New York City - 96 mins.

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

LEGENDS OF COUNTRY MUSIC
28 Live Performances - 60 mins.

Here is a grand celebration featuring all the great legends. Ernest Tubb - *Tomorrow Never Comes/Ray Price - Crazy Arms/Marty Robbins - Mabeline/The Carter Family - That Ain't The Way I Heard It/Webb Pierce - I'm Walking The Dog/Dim Reeves - Down In The Caribbean/Carl Smith - If You Feel Like You're In Love/Bill Monroe - I Hear A Voice Calling/Stringbean - Little Liza Jane/Chet Atkins - Arkansas Traveler.* **AND MORE!** Item No. V1W - \$39.95

DWIGHT YOAKAM
Just Lookin' For A Hit - 30 mins.

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

CONWAY TWITTY
King Of Hits - 45 mins.

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

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Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

Wanda Jackson: Wanda Jackson was only 17 when she had her first hit record, "You Can't Have My Love," the 1954 hit duet with Billy Gray on Decca. Her early 60's country hits for Capitol, "Right or Wrong" and "In the Middle of a Heartache," and the many lesser hits she had afterward established her there. In 1956, the same year she signed with Capitol, she met Elvis, who encouraged her to start rocking. She did, both onstage and on records,



mixing rock and country. With Joe Maphis, Buck Owens and, later, Roy Clark playing guitar on her records, her rockers pack as much of a wallop now as they did over 35 years ago.

Right or Wrong (BCD 15629), 113 songs on four CD's, covers her 15 1954-1955 Decca recordings (previously issued on a Bear LP), and 108 Capitol recordings from 1956 through 1962. Jackson, an Oklahoma native, had her own radio show as a teenager; Hank Thompson helped her get her Decca recording contract even though her sassy, vocal style contrasted with the era's more demure female singers.

Thompson next got her signed to his label, Capitol, and over the next several years she recorded both country tunes like "Silver Threads and Golden Needles" and "Making Believe" and gut-wrenching rockers like "I Gotta Know," "Hot Dog! That Made Him Mad," "Fujiyama Mama," "Long Tall Sally," her cover of Elvis' "Let's Have a Party" and the hurricane-force "Mean, Mean Man," which may be the

greatest female rockabilly record of all.

Bear also dug up some unreleased Wanda: a 1958 first try at "In the Middle of a Heartache," "I Cried Again" and "Before I Lose My Mind." The accompanying booklet features old advertisements and some fantastic black and white and glamorous color photos of Wanda in her prime, as well as complete notes and a session-by-session discography.

Roy Acuff: We'll probably never see a definitive Roy Acuff collection. The early Columbia material is available on one CD; it deserves greater coverage. Bear Family's notvery-imaginatively-titled *The King of Country Music* (BCD 15652) examines his post-Columbia work on three labels: Capitol, Decca and his 1958 MGM gospel album.

It begins with his 1953-1955 Capitol recordings with The Smoky Mountain Boys, including Oswald, Howdy Forrester and Jimmy Riddle, performing "Tied Down," "Lonesome Joe" (actually a variation on a Cajun number titled "Poor Hobo"), and the aching ballads, "Don't Say Goodbye" and Jimmy Work's "That's What Makes The Jukebox Play." His version of Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper's "I Closed My Heart's Door" is issued here for the first time. The Capitol remakes of Acuff's best songs were excellent, and as annotator Otto Kitsinger points out, deserve more credit than some purists give them.

On the first of two 1955 Decca sessions, Acuff recorded two songs, "Goodbye Mr. Brown" and "Mother Hold Me Tight," with Kitty Wells, and used Johnny and Jack's band instead of The Smoky Mountain Boys, who returned for the second Decca session. This second session featured Acuff singing the stupid novelty, "I Like Mountain Music," but also the outstanding ballad, "Plant Some Flowers by My Grave." One error is obvious on the

Decca discography—the "dobro" is clearly an electric steel. The MGM gospel album included such standards as "Where the Soul Never Dies" and "This World Is Not My Home" with Shot Jackson (now playing in Acuff's band) on electric steel. Don't be confused by the photos; the booklet includes some that predate the music within.

Hank Snow: Any longtime Hank Snow fan knows that his early stardom came in his native Canada in the 1930's and 40's, before he was widely known in the Lower 48. *The Yodelling Ranger: 1936-1947* (BCD 15578), a five-disc, 101-song collection, covers those days when he was known as "Hank, the Yodelling Ranger" and recorded for Canadian RCA. Though some of these sounds were later released in the U.S. on RCA Camden budget LP's, they've never been in one spot until now; many were only ever released on 78's, and four songs were never issued until now.

Like many of his generation, Hank began by emulating Jimmie Rodgers (even yodeling at times), and the flavor was obvious on his first recordings, "Prisoned Cowboy" and "Lonesome Blue Yodel." These 1936 Snow originals



were Rodgers-inspired, sung only with acoustic guitar. Hank added electric steel guitarist Johnny Beaudoin, whose Hawaiian licks remained on Hank's Canadian records through 1947. His first hit, "The Blue Velvet Band" in 1938, established him as a ma-

jour star of stage, records and radio, yet he stuck to his sparse sound, using only Beaudoin and a bassist for the bulk of this material.

Snow generally recorded his own songs, but occasionally covered material like Rodgers' "Gambling Polka Dot Blues," "When My Blue Moon Turns to Gold Again," Ernest Tubb's "Soldier's Last Letter," Bob Nolan's "Let's Pretend" and "The Rainbow's End," and the 1944 "Blue Ranger," a Snow favorite for many years. Though he also sang depressing ballads like the dead-child tune, "There's a Pony That's Lonely Tonight," and the World War II ballad, "Mother Is Praying for You," uptempo 1940's songs like "Can't Have You Blues" clearly pointed the way toward "I'm Moving On."

Lyrics for 74 songs are in the enclosed LP-size booklet, and Snow, deeply proud of this series, discussed the material with annotator Charles Wolfe. Among the old ads and rare photos are one of Hank doing a live radio broadcast and others showing him with his fancy touring trailer. Disc Five reissues a 1966 RCA double LP of Hank telling his life story, plus two 1950's demo tapes of "Marriage Vow" and "I Don't Hurt Anymore."

Merle Travis: Bear Family's *Folk Songs of the Hills/Songs of the Coal Mines* (BCD 15636) reissues on one CD all of Merle's mining songs, many of them based on his boyhood in the coal country of Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. Bear's 1946-1954 Travis boxed set is due later this year. The mining and folk songs began in 1946 when Travis, just having his first honky tonk hits, was asked by Capitol to write and record some original "folk songs." The result was the 78 rpm album, *Folk Songs of the Hills*.

From it came the classics "Dark as a Dungeon," "That's All" and, of course, "Sixteen Tons." Mixed with other tradi-

tional songs like "Nine Pound Hammer," "John Henry" and "John Bolin," the album had little impact with the country audience, but sold modestly to urban folkies. Its beautiful original color cover is reproduced by Bear Family. After Ernie Ford's hit version of "Sixteen Tons," the Travis album was reissued on LP as *Back Home* with added material in 1956. The added songs are here as well.



Travis returned to mining songs in 1963 with his less well-known album, *Songs of the Coal Mines*, again sung with just acoustic guitar. These songs dealt more specifically with the miner's life in tunes like "Miner's Strawberries" (a term for beans), "Black Gold," "Pay Day Come too Soon" and "Bloody Brethitt County." This album's excellent original notes, inexplicably omitted from the CD, were written by Merle's brother John. Vintage shots of Muhlenberg County's coal country provide atmosphere. Sadly, new notes by Professor Archie Green, an expert on labor songs, are dry, overinterpretive and occasionally incorrect.

Western Themes: TV and movie themes have plenty of commercial nostalgia value. Many record stores carry CD's of the original movie and TV themes. And though Bear Family isn't known for worrying about commerciality, *My Rifle, My Pony and Me* (BCD 15625) will appeal to more than just collectors. The 26 numbers consist of songs from classic TV and movie westerns, sung by both country music stars and, occasionally, actors.

Dean Martin and Rick Nelson sing "My Rifle, My Pony..." from the film *Rio Bravo*, while Dino does the

movie's theme. Also from the movies is Merle Kilgore (now Hank Jr.'s manager) singing "Nevada Smith," Jimmy Stewart reciting "The Legend of Shenandoah" from *Shenandoah* and Tex Ritter singing "High Noon" from the movie of the same name. From the classic TV shows are: Johnny Western and "Have Gun Will Travel," Frankie Laine belting out "Rawhide" and Fess Parker performing "The Ballad of Davy Crockett." Kirk Douglas tries to sing "And the Moon Grew Brighter" from the film, *Man Without a Star*. Other performances of themes by Marty Robbins, Johnny Cash and The Sons of the Pioneers round the package out.

Billy "Crash" Craddock: In the 1970's, Billy "Crash" Craddock was known as "Mr. Country Rock," a rockabilly-influenced country singer who had quite a run of hits on Cartwheel, ABC and Capitol from 1971 through 1979. Many were countrified cover versions of songs that were pop hits for other artists (the same formula that worked so well for Sonny James). A North Carolina native whose nickname came from his football skills, Craddock began his career in the mid-50's and signed with Columbia in 1958. His earliest records were formidable rockers. *Boom Boom Baby* (BCD 15610) covers his complete 1958-1960 Columbia and Date singles. Though only one release was a minor hit in the U.S., the single "Boom Boom Baby" wound up as the Number One record in Australia.

Though he didn't really sound like Elvis, the earliest songs, like "Sweetie Pie" and "Lula Lee," along with "Ah, Poor Little Baby" remain excellent performances featuring Craddock backed by Nashville's A-team pickers, rocking his own way. He even recorded "One Last Kiss" from the musical *Bye, Bye Birdie*. Gradually, as rock music lost its edge in the early 60's, his music became more syrupy, and the later songs are boring. For Craddock fans who wonder what he sounded like in the beginning, long before his country stardom, this answers the question.

Will the Circle Be Unbroken: In the summer of 1971, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band (now known as The Dirt Band), known mainly for their 1971 pop hit, "Mr. Bojangles," went to Nashville to record the classic album that in many ways remains their greatest musical achievement. The record almost singlehandedly introduced traditional country to a younger audience. There was nothing like the 3-LP *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* (EMI BDPB 7 46589), widely recognized as the first recording to pair young long-haired country rock musicians with veterans Roy Acuff, his longtime dobroist Oswald Kirby, Mother Maybelle Carter, Merle Travis, Doc Watson, Jimmy Martin, Earl Scruggs and others. Since Acuff, Maybelle and Travis are gone and Scruggs retired, it's all the more significant a document. At the time, young musicians were viewed with deep suspicion by many Nashville

old-timers, among them Acuff (who considered long hair and beards a crime against humanity). Bill Monroe, still feuding with Scruggs (he'd patched things up with Lester Flatt), declined to participate.

Despite Acuff's unease, the in-studio interplay made the recordings a major event. The NGDB clearly respected these older traditions, and other older players, Watson, Mother Maybelle, Jimmy Martin, Merle Travis and Earl Scruggs, were comfortable with younger players. So were fiddler Vassar Clements and guitarist Norman Blake, then working with John Hartford. Most of the music still holds up. Acuff's performances of his classics—"Wreck on the Highway," "The Precious Jewel," "I Saw the Light" and "Pins and



Needles"—were spirited and well done. Maybelle's "Keep on the Sunny Side" and "Wildwood Flower" and "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes" were performed with the appropriate respect for her style.

Scruggs stood out on "Nashville Blues" and the old Flatt and Scruggs banjo showcase "Flint Hill Special," and Jimmy Martin's performances of Jimmie Skinner's "You Don't Know My Mind," "My Walkin' Shoes" and "Sunny Side of the Mountain" still sparkle. Travis reprised "Nine Pound Hammer," "Cannonball Rag" and "Dark as a Dungeon." The Doc Watson performances were equally fine, and his meeting with longtime idol Travis, captured on tape, makes fascinating listening. The reprise of "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" was led by Mother Maybelle with all the participants. The more recent *Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Volume 2* pales by comparison.

How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: Wanda Jackson, *Right or Wrong* (BCD 15629), a 4-CD boxed set \$119.95/Roy Acuff, *The King of Country Music* (BCD 15652), a 2-CD set, \$49.95/Hank Snow, *The Yodelling Ranger: 1936-1947* (BCD 15578), a 5-CD boxed set \$139.95/Merle Travis, *Folk Songs of the Hills/Songs of the Coal Mines* (BCD 15636), CD only, \$29.95/Western Movie and TV Themes by Various Artists, *My Rifle, My Pony and Me* (BCD 15625), CD only, \$29.95/Billy "Crash" Craddock, *Boom Boom Baby* (BCD 15610), CD only, \$29.95/The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band with Various Artists, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Volume 1* (EMI BDPB 7-46589), a 2-CD or 2-cassette set, \$19.98 cassettes, \$39.98 CD's.

Send your check or money order payable to *Country Music Magazine* to Dept. 050693, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item ordered, \$.95 for each additional item. Canadian orders add an additional \$3.00 postage. **CMSA Members, see For Members Only page for discounts on products offered here.**

Essential Collector by Rich Kienzle

■ Books ■

Les Paul: On the heels of Capitol Records' definitive Les Paul boxed set, comes a book that originally set out to be an autobiography. *People Magazine* writer Mary Alice Shaughnessy first connected with Les in 1985. Her interest was piqued, and she began working with him on what was to be an authorized biography. According to the author, Les became upset when she began talking to the family of his late ex-wife and performing partner, Mary Ford. In 1988 he withdrew his support for the project, but Shaughnessy continued, the result being *Les Paul: American Original*.

Though Shaughnessy has no previous background in guitar history or music journalism; her Time-Life training stands her in good stead as she tackles Paul's early life in Wisconsin, his career as hillbilly singer Rhubarb Red and, later, leader of The Les Paul Trio that first gained fame on bandleader Fred Waring's NBC radio show in the 1930's. His recording innovations and marriage to former country singer Ford are also here: Through it all, Shaughnessy seems able to filter through Paul's tendencies to embellish the truth. The clashes with Mary that led to their 1964 divorce are examined, as are the hard feelings and mistrust generated during his collaborations on the Chester & Lester albums with Chet Atkins. There's still room for a Les Paul autobiography, but Shaughnessy did a better and fairer job than I would have expected.

Patsy Cline: 1993 marks the 30th anniversary of the tragic death of Patsy Cline, along with fellow stars Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins, who perished in a plane crash near Waverly, Tennessee. We'll review Hallway Productions' upcoming commemorative video, currently in production, as soon as it's avail-

able. It promises to be even better than Cabin Fever's recent Cline documentary. Meanwhile, Ellis Nassour's Cline biography, now titled *Patsy Cline: Honky Tonk Angel*, has been reissued. All in all, it's the best look at her career so far, with plenty of information about her early days in Virginia, her initial popularity in the Washington, D.C., area, her hit with "Walkin' After Midnight," her marriages to Gerald Cline and then to Charlie Dick and their move to Nashville.

Even in the original work, Nassour didn't sanitize his facts. There's much about Patsy's relationships with men, as well as her friendships with Dottie West, Loretta Lynn and others, and much about her music as well, based on interviews with her fellow artists, friends and producer Owen Bradley, among others. Her temper and wild side, including her tempestuous marriage to



Charlie Dick, is balanced by the compassion she showed for younger performers like Dottie West and Loretta Lynn. Some revisions have been made, and a new afterword deals with the growth of the Patsy cult in recent years and her continuing influence on music.

Elvis: Last issue, we featured two photo books on Elvis Presley. This month, we feature three more substantive

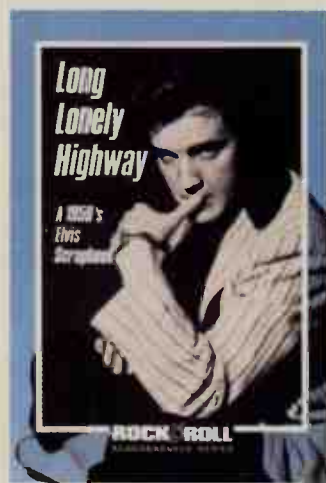
books from the collector-oriented Pierian Press, focusing on his music and his earliest, most important years as a performer. Two of these were originally published overseas by diligent (as opposed to crazy and obsessed) foreign fans. *Elvis: Long Lonely Highway* by Dutch Elvis expert, Ger Rjeff, is a book of newspaper clips, print memorabilia and rare photographs taken exclusively from the first three years of Presley's active performing career: after he first recorded at Sun in 1954 through his first year of mass stardom in 1956 and 1957.

The photos and ads speak for themselves. The early articles, mostly from the Memphis papers, were friendly. Later articles and reviews by older newspaper folk around the country were different. Many of these writers couldn't understand Elvis, or wrote condescendingly about his music. Some barely hide their disgust. That's a powerful reminder that with all the Elvis jokes around these days, and his appeal to older adults, it's easy to forget that in the 1950's, when he looked like his image on the postage stamp, many grandmothers and old folks were scared to death of him. As the teenaged girls screamed, adults were puzzled, intimidated and enraged by his appearance, gyrations and raucous music, and didn't love him. Some of this perspective comes through in the material reproduced, providing an illuminating retrospective of Elvis in his time.

Another book originally published in Europe is *Reconsider Baby: The Definitive Elvis Sessionography* by Danish researchers Ernst Jorgensen, Erik Rasmussen and Johnny Mikkelsen. "Sessionography" is defined as a collection of data on recording sessions listing dates and locations, musicians and songs recorded. Having compiled some, I can tell you they aren't easy, but these

three Danes have unearthed vast amounts of data on Elvis' recording sessions and spiced their findings up with rarely seen (and in some cases, never seen), candid photos taken during the sessions.

Little wonder Jorgensen is now helping to run RCA's worldwide Elvis reissue program. This set runs from Elvis' first session for Sun in July 1954, to the final live recording



done in June 1977, two months before he died. It takes in all his studio recordings and sessions for movie soundtracks (different than the released records). An added section at the end includes details on some of his live 1950's recordings issued by RCA in the mid-1980's. Many fans don't care about these details, but others do. It's no surprise to see The Jordanaires, Scotty Moore and James Burton on Elvis' records, but it is to find Boots Randolph, 1940's pop steel guitarist Alvin Rey, Jerry Reed, Ronnie Milsap and current MCA producer, Tony Brown.

Jailhouse Rock by Howard DeWitt and Lee Cotten is another (aptly titled) volume from Pierian's listings that explains the once-thriving market for illegal, bootleg Elvis albums, albums issued without the permission (or even knowledge) of RCA. Even arrests didn't stop many, both overseas and in the States, from is-

suing such records. The authors clearly don't endorse the practice, but attempt to analyze what's been issued, beginning with a history of the Elvis bootleg market, including the legendary 1980 FBI bust at a Memphis record convention that ended much of it.

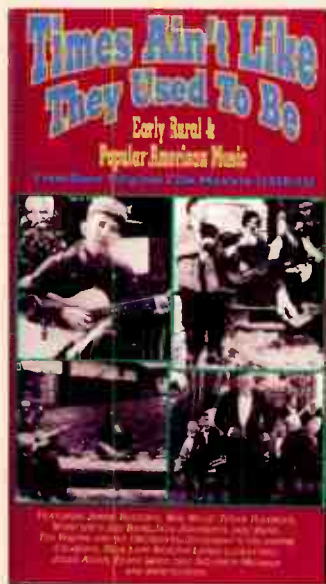
Some sets brought out various live performances that RCA never issued at all, both early and later performances. Others consisted of Sun and RCA outtakes, 1950's concerts and early TV appearances. Some were amateurish, others extremely well done with rare photos and booklets. DeWitt and Cotten cover them all, even one compilation of some of his worst movie soundtrack songs with a bizarre cover (and unprintable title).

■ Videos ■

Historic Rural Music: Little in the way of deliberate, planned film exists to chronicle the early days of country music, when recording was new and the idea of the songs having any commercial potential was as alien as the idea of jet planes. But in the 1920's and 30's, newsreel crews toured the country, documenting all kinds of events including, on occasion, black and white rural musicians. *Times Ain't Like They Used to Be: Early Rural and Popular American Music* contains 22 examples of jug band, old time hillbilly, black gospel, jazz, Western swing, fiddle and cowboy music.

The centerpiece is the complete, eight-and-a-half minute, 1931 Jimmie Rodgers film short, *The Singing Brakeman*, which features him singing three songs. Reproduced from 35 mm film, it alone is worth the price of the video. The amazing banjoist Uncle John Scruggs, a sort of black Grandpa Jones, sings "Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane" in 1928, surrounded by dancing grandchildren and chickens. Virginia fiddler Bela Lam and his wife are seen performing outside in February of 1930, while The Cumberland Ridge Runners (with Red Foley and Karl and Harty) appear entertaining at a Chicago children's hospital in 1935. A 13-minute

clip of Otto Gray's Oklahoma Cowboys is here, and Bascom Lamar Lunsford, composer of "Mountain Dew," performs "Doggett's Gap." The only later selections are two Bob Wills numbers from his 1951 Snader Telescriptions that make one



hunger for an entire Wills video. The black jugband, jazz and gospel music is just as good.

Roy Acuff: Even before Roy Acuff's death, Public Broadcasting was working on a documentary on his life. Nothing else was known to be available on video—or so it seemed. But in the late 1950's, some bookings fell through when Acuff was touring Australia with The Smoky Mountain Boys and Girls, singer June Webb and The Wilburn Brothers. He used the time to produce *Roy Acuff's Open House* there, and four episodes are available on two VHS cassettes.

These black and white shows are low-budget by any era's standards. Yet despite the cheesy painted backdrops and minimal production values, they're a good accounting of Acuff's sound at the time. The Smoky Mountain Boys consisted of Oswald doing comedy and comic vocals (Acuff wasn't using Oswald's dobro since electric steel guitarist Shot Jackson was in the band), Shot, fiddler Howdy Forrester and pianist-harmonica player Jimmie Riddle. The Smokey Mountain Girls were Connie Ellis and future star Melba Montgomery. Acuff himself sang a real variety of music: "Wabash Cannonball," "The Sinking of the Titanic," the pop songs "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby" (which he had recorded in the 1930's) and "There Is a Tavern in the Town." Jimmie Riddle has several featured spots on harmonica and does the "eefing" he made famous on *Hee Haw*.

The other artists each get a turn, with The Wilburns and June Webb singing more contemporary material and Doyle Wilburn singing "Four Walls" alone. The Four Clefs functioned as a vocal quartet and harmonica band. One show's best comedy moment comes when an obscure (possibly Australian) vocalist named Johnny Robson's off-key rendering of "A Fool Such As I" left Shot Jackson with a hilariously pained expression. Acuff followed him with the comment, "Beautiful—not you, the song." These videos aren't fancy; even the "insert commercial" spots are left in.

■ Recordings ■

Asleep at the Wheel: Asleep at the Wheel released their first album, *Comin' Right at Ya*, on United Artists Records in 1973, four years after they first organized, but it wasn't until the youthful Western swing group signed with Capitol in 1975 that they began to take off. They made their best recordings at Capitol, where they also won Grammys and expanded their musical scope to include country, Cajun, Western swing, rhythm and blues and big band jazz. Key original group members like steel guitarist Lucky Oceans, singer-songwriter Leroy Preston, female singer Chris O'Connell and pianist Floyd Domino eventually drifted away, and, though spirited, the current band is but a shadow of what once was.



The ten songs on Liberty's *Route 66* (Liberty 98925) provide a brief chronicle of those early days, with "Take Me Back to Tulsa" from the UA album, "The Letter That Johnny Walker Read" and "Bump Bounce Boogie" from their first truly Capitol album, 1975's *Texas Gold*, AATW favorites like "Route 66," "Miles and Miles of Texas" and a live "Choo Choo Ch-Boogie." Why the bland "Texas Me and You" and "Don't Forget the Trains" were included is beyond me. You can also hear the original "My Baby Thinks She's a Train," sung by its writer, Leroy Preston (Rosanne Cash later made it a hit). Their Grammy-winning rendition of Count Basie's big band standard, "One O'Clock Jump," rounds out this brief collection. A more comprehensive AATW collection is still needed, as this barely scratches the surface.

How to Get These Collectibles

Videos: *Roy Acuff's Open House, Volume 1* (V9E) and *Roy Acuff's Open House, Volume 2* (V8H), each volume \$24.95/*Times Ain't Like They Used to Be: Early Rural and Popular American Music* (V1L) \$29.95. **Recordings:** *Asleep at the Wheel, Route 66* (Liberty 98925), available on CD only \$19.95. **Books:** Mary Alice Shaughnessy, *Les Paul: An American Original* (B1N) \$25.00/Ellis Nassour, *Patsy Cline: Honky Tonk Angel* (B4B), \$22.95/Geir Rjeff, *Elvis: Long Lovely Highway* (B3A), \$26.50/Ernst Jorgensen, Erik Rasmussen and Johnny Mikkelsen, *Reconsider Baby: The Definitive Elvis Sessionography* (B2I), \$26.50/Howard DeWitt and Lee Cotten, *Jailhouse Rock* (B4E), \$29.50. Send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 050693EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, TN 37229. Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional. Canadian orders add \$3.00 extra postage. **CMSA members, see For Members Only page for discounts.**



The War Between the States

Our grand poobah, Russ Barnard, has just asked me to write a column to fill the final page of this and future Country Music magazines with "what-ever's on your mind, Patrick." So howdy, y'all. I hope it's going to be good for all of us.

The problem is, Russell really has just asked me, and now I have about eighteen minutes until deadline time. So what's on my mind is...Ah...Ummm...Ahhhhh...My Day in Country Music!

It starts at breakfast with my friend Kenny, who owns a recording studio where I live (not Nashville) and has yard-long hair but doesn't otherwise remind me of Crystal Gayle. We latch onto the subject of recording equipment, specifically the expense thereof, and I recall something Trisha Yearwood and I talked about a little while back: that 1) upgrading Nashville music to "sound" the same, technically, as pop music, has driven recording costs through the roof; and that 2) the incredible scale of the success achieved by !!!!GARTH BROOKS!!!! has raised expectations in the country music biz. Trisha worried that these factors were combining to the point where, if you were a new act with your first (very costly) new product on the marketplace, and it didn't immediately trigger the kind of consumer feeding frenzy Music Row might regard as its due in this era of gush-down-from-Garth economics, you could find yourself bumped out of your slot in a New York minute. Goodbye to the whole idea of patient artist development, in other words. No more Marty Stuarts.

Hmmm, I think as I drive to my office, that's pretty paranoid—but, hell, Trisha should know, and so maybe Garthmania, in all its great cash-geysering glory, comes with a hidden price tag.

On the bright side, though, I've had my mandatory Country Music Professional's Garth Brooks Thought For The Day nice and early, and now I can get on with my job. Today I'm writing about Ernest Tubb CD's, and I get lost in that happy task until the phone rings: my agent in New York.

We talk about a country music book I've been wanting to write for years now, and we agree that if this isn't the moment to glom onto a big New York publisher, what the hell is? ("Those sales figures," my agent

keeps saying, "Have you seen those Garth Brooks sales figures?") But then I find myself urging, "Do it now, Kevin. Don't wait. We don't have much time, you know."

Ooh. Paranoia again. What I'm figuring, you see—I can't help myself—is that any day now, some poor pinhead over at Newsweek or wherever (probably the same alert trendspotter who happened to be leafing through Billboard the week they started reporting real live bar code sales instead of ludicrously skewed store clerk estimates, and SURPRISE! there was a country record sitting pretty at the top of the pop charts!) is gonna decide

Between The States syndrome, basically, played out as a Northern/Southern conflict and/or plain old class warfare, and it's a real pain. It's 1993, and the ghosts of Sherman and Grant are still haunting the spirits of Garth and Clint and Billy Ray.

But that's not news, I figure, and I return to Ernest: the Live 1965 CD, listening to which is like riding a strong, soul-soothing old trail horse around a circle of all my very dearest friends. But then I need some obscure E.T. info, so I call our man Rich Kienzle, ace chronicler of all the old stuff, and he gives me what I need.

And something I really don't. Talking about the rocky radio road traveled by guys like Marty Brown and even Marty Stuart, he says, "It's all those ex-hippie program directors. They want country radio to sound like old Joni Mitchell and James Taylor records. The Marty's make them uncomfortable"—which explains why M & M have had to soak up so much Artist Development—"and a guy like Haggard just plain scares them. They hear him, they're seeing those rednecks in Easy Rider shotgunning Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper."

Hmm, I think, that's pretty paranoid, too—but, hell, maybe Kienzle also knows what he's talking about. The few program directors I've met over the years have sorta reminded me of the dudes I used to watch selling oregano to high school kids outside the Fillmore East in '68...

But enough. The last call of my day is the one from Russell asking me to do this column, and he puts it all in perspective. When Garthmania goes away, he says (it being time for his mandatory G.B. Thought For The Day), we'll still be here, now won't we? And moreover, there'll be twenty or twenty-five percent more of us than there were B.G. (Before Garth).

That can't be bad, I suppose. The only real question—and here's one that really does worry me—is whether new guys who sound like Marty and Marty and Merle, as opposed to Joni and James (and Trisha and Garth) will still be getting a chance to sing for us.



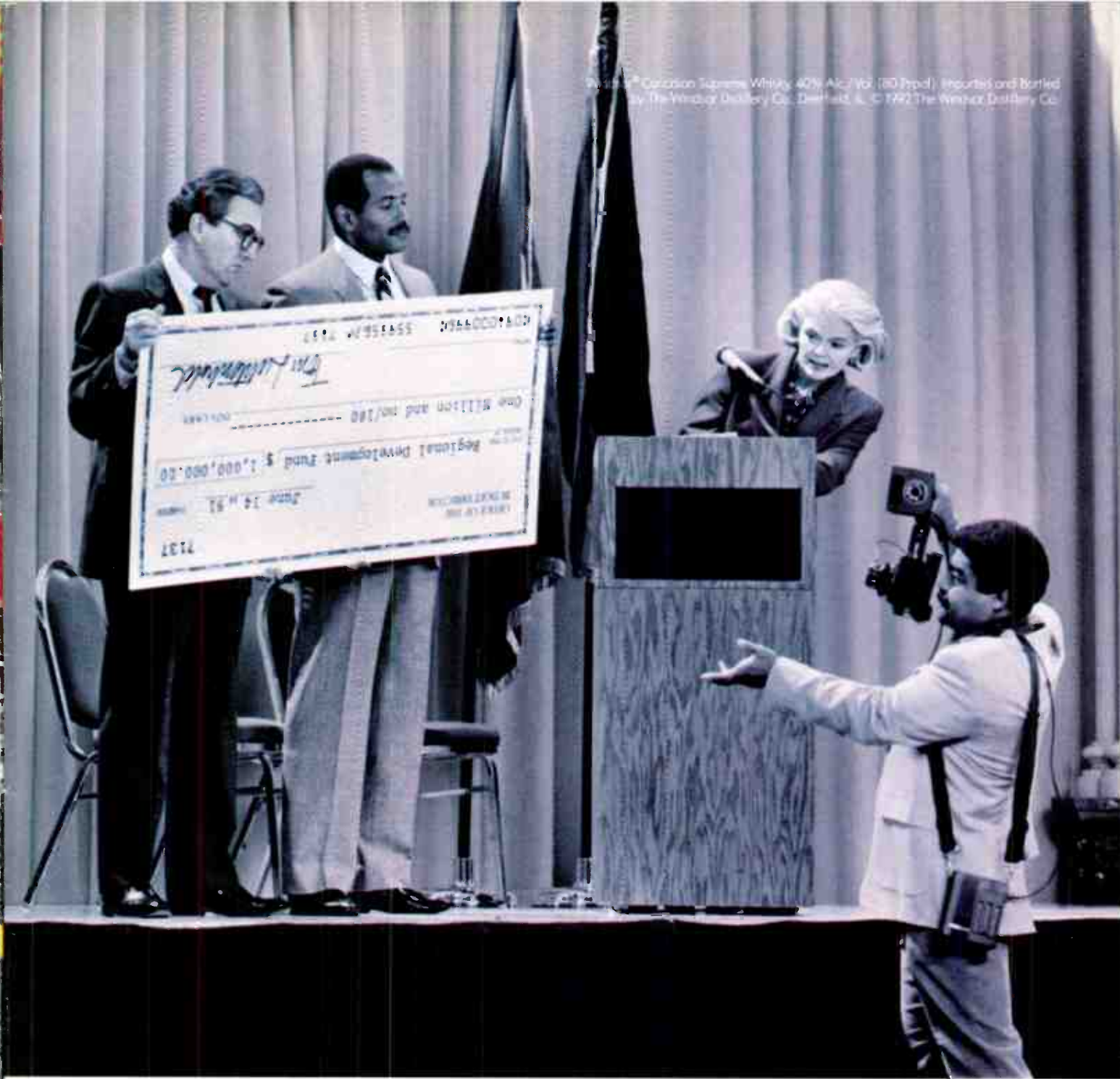
Grant and Garth—famous Generals in the Wars Between the States.

that, what the hell, he's bored with all these heartland hero success stories, so country music must therefore be passé. He could be on his way back home from Zabar's with the cheesecake this very minute, hot to type. Maybe he knows he's just obeying the trendmonger's law of gravity—that which gets hyped up must soon get put down—and maybe he doesn't. Who cares? Gravity works regardless.

The real question, you see, is who decided country was cool this time? Wasn't us, was it? No, it was them, the same people who wrote the script for the Urban Cowboy boom a decade ago, then proceeded to virtually ignore country music's very substantial position in national culture and commerce until the next time around: the folks who populate the Northeastern media and the music business establishment. And the way it goes with them and us is the way it's always gone. They regard us as second-class citizens, and we spend a fair amount of our energy tirelessly trying to get on their good side while simultaneously looking for a chance to take 'em off at the knees. It's the War

Editor-at-Large Patrick Carr has been with Country Music Magazine since Day One—our first issue, September 1972.

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