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NASHVILLE MUSIC INDUSTRY PUBLICATION

BROOKS & DUNN

MUSICAL MERCENARIES INDEPENDENT SONGPLUGGERS

SPINS BROOKS BOX TOPS CHARTS SONY/ATV TREE ACQUISITIONS THE BUZZ

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Bill Cody of *Country's Most Wanted* will host the Decca show.

Shane Stockton



Gary Allan



Lee Ann Womack



June
16th is **Tunes**

Vince and Jenny Gill will host the MCA show.

8:00 pm

MCA
NASHVILLE



Keith Harling



Big House

Mark Chesnutt



7:00 pm

DECCA
RECORDS

day

**The
Hottest Day
Of The Week**



Chely Wright



The Mavericks



Olivia Newton-John

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World Radio History

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8

THE BIG STORY

8 **MUSICAL MERCENARIES:** Independent Songpluggers

THE STREETS

- 12 **MUSICAL CHAIRS:** Seagram bids for Polygram; Copyright Issues Abound
- 20 **NASHVILLE BEAT:** Timeless Everlys
- 28 **CHRISTIAN NEWS:** CMTA Classifications; Christian Retail Sells Smith
- 30 **FINAL WORD:** Eddie Rabbitt Obituary; Welcome, Morris
- 30 **EVENTS CALENDAR/CLASSIFIED ADS**

FEATURES

- 6 **SPINS:** Sony/ATV Tree Acquisitions; Brooks Box Tops Charts; Shone Stockton
- 19 **ROW FILE:** Independent Promoter Patti Olsen-Garofolo
- 22 **STUDIO REPORT:** Star Struck Fans; International Flavor
- 24 **BOBBY KARL WORKS THE ROOM:** Chapter 103
- 27 **WRITER'S NOTES:** Maverick's Robin Lerner

REVIEWS

- 16 **ALBUM REVIEWS:** LeAnn Rimes, Terri Clark, John Michael Montgomery, Keith Harling
- 17 **EDGE OF THE ROW:** "For years Nashville has looked skyward and chicken danced..."
- 18 **SINGLE REVIEWS:** A Warner/Giont/Reprise sweep...

VIDEO VISION

- 14 **VIDEO REVIEWS:** The Heart Of CMT; A Military Link
- 15 **TNN/CMT TOP VIDEOS**
- 15 **VIDEO DIRECTORY:** Goods & Services For The Video Industry

CHARTS

- 26 **THE SONGPOWER INDEX:** Vince Gill On Radio's Mind



19



27

COVER ARTIST



Artist Name: Brooks & Dunn

Label: Arista

Current Single: "If You See Her/If You See Him" (duet with Reba McEntire)

Current Album: *If You See Her*

Current Video: "If You See Her/If You See Him"

Current Producers: Don Cook, Kix Brooks, Ronnie Dunn (Tony Brown, Tim DuBois for duet)

Hometown: Kix, Shreveport; Ronnie, Tulsa

Management: Tritley Spalding & Associates

Booking: William Morris Agency

Hits: "If You See Her/If You See Him," "Honky Tonk Truth," "He's Got You"

Awards: Seven ACMs for Top Vocal Duet ('91-'97); 6 CMAs for Vocal Duo of the Year ('92-'97)

RIAA Certifications: Platinum: *Brand New Man* (5x), *Hard Workin' Man*

(4x), *Waitin' On Sundown* (3x), *Borderline* (2x), *The Greatest Hits Collection* (2x)

Special TV Appearances: "NASCAR: 50 Years on the Fast Track with Brooks & Dunn" (CBS, July 2)

Birthdate: Kix, 5/12/55; Ronnie, 6/1/53

Birthplace: Kix, Shreveport; Ronnie, Coleman, TX

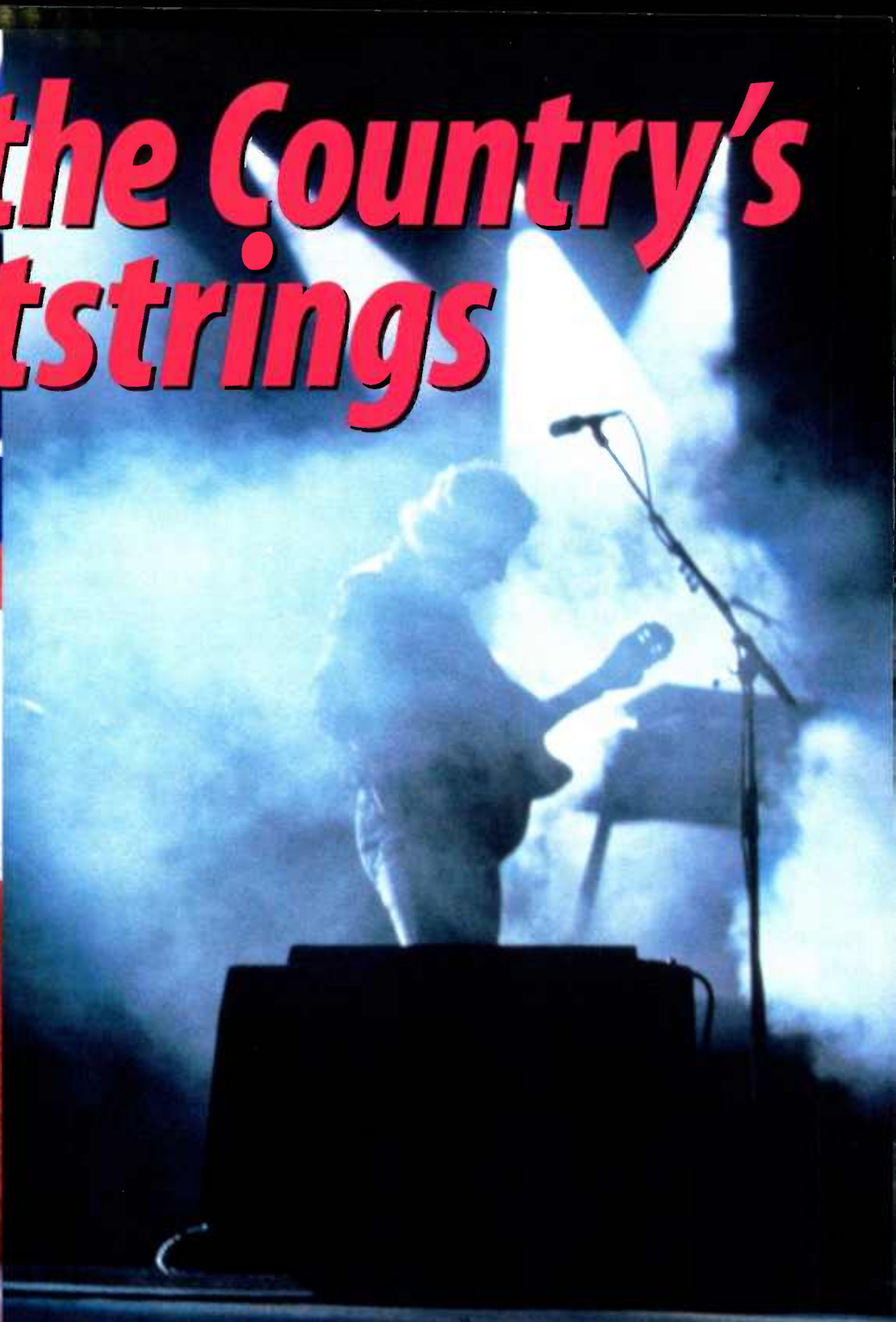

Interesting Facts: Only duo in country music history to hold the honor of Entertainer of the Year (ACM '95, '96; CMA '96). Second highest RIAA certified duo in music history following Simon & Garfunkel. The highest certified country duo of all time with over 19 million albums sold.

Outside Interests: Kix—Legends cars, horses, model train collection; Ronnie—Legends cars, Southwestern art

Influences: Kix—Hank Williams, Sr., Johnny Horton; Ronnie—his father

Favorite Album: Kix—*Loyla*, Derek & the Dominos; Ronnie—*Eagles*, The Eagles

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World Radio History

Sony/ATV Tree Acquires Little Big Town Catalog, Leadership

Little Big Town Music, one of Music City's most successful independent publishers, has been purchased by one of the industry's largest publishers, Sony/ATV Tree. As part of the deal, Sony/ATV Tree has purchased Little Big Town songwriter Bob DiPiero's co-publishing interests. Additionally, the company has acquired the song catalog of writer Tom Shapiro.

With total acquisitions exceeding 4,000 copyrights, Sony/ATV Tree now boasts more than 100,000 copyrights in its catalog. Company President/CEO Donna Hilley says, "The addition of so many tremendous songs at one time literally translates into a gigantic transfusion of creative juices for our song-plugging team. It's a mega shot in the arm for them to know they will have an abundance of new material to pitch to every producer, and every label in Nashville."

Founded in 1987 by Woody Bomar and Kerry O'Neil, Little Big Town has been home to 15 No. 1 hits and songs including "Wink," "Take Me As I Am," "What If It's You" and "I Think About You." All of the company's exclusive songwriters will join the Sony/ATV Tree staff, including DiPiero, John Scott Sherrill, Steve Seskin, Tammy Rogers, Jay Knowles, Dan Colehour, Jon Ims, Tammy Hyler, Gerald Smith and Randy Bachman.

They join a roster that already includes song-writing luminaries Bill Anderson, Bobby Braddock, Kix Brooks, Ronnie Dunn, James House, Terry McBride, Jamie O'Hara, Gretchen Peters and Kim Williams.

With the acquisition of Little Big Town, Sony/ATV Tree has retained a portion of the firm's executive staff, naming Bomar Vice President and General Manager. He will oversee day-to-day operations of the Creative Services Department. "I've never even considered moving to any company other than Tree," Bomar says. "It is such a cornerstone of our industry and has Nashville's most respected catalog. I'm honored to be chosen to lead such a dynamic team. And of course, I'm thrilled to work for someone with Donna's reputation of integrity and leadership."

Don Cook, who had been serving as Sr. Vice President at Sony/ATV Tree, has been elevated to Chief Creative Officer. He has been charged with growing his Sony-affiliated



GROUND ZERO—The winners in the blockbuster deal are (clockwise from bottom right): Kerry O'Neil, Donna Hilley, Bob DiPiero, Woody Bomar, Tom Shapiro and Don Cook.

ed label imprint, DKC Music, to include other labels. Other, as yet unannounced, Sony/ATV Tree staff changes are effective June 1.

The moves position Sony/ATV Tree as the front runner for Publisher of the Year honors this fall. "We have been very successful in aggressively growing our company under the corporate structure through wise acquisitions," Hilley says, "and we feel our new deals will soon speak for themselves."

—Chuck Aly

Brooks Box Tops Charts

Becoming the first box set to debut atop two album charts (Country and Top 200), Garth Brooks' *The Limited Series* generated first week SoundScan sales of 372,410 units. Bruce Springsteen is the only other artist to release a box set that entered No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top 200 album chart.

"This success is shared by many people," says Capitol Nashville President/CEO Pat Quigley. "I would personally like to thank Vic Beretta and everyone at EMI Manufacturing in Jacksonville, Illinois, for their hard work in getting *The Limited Series* out the door on a very tight schedule. The retailers, as always, are a key partner in making a project like this a success, and their efforts are greatly appreciated. And, ultimately, Garth's fans are the ones who consistently put us on the map. Their support is invaluable."

The Limited Series contains Brooks' first six studio albums, each with a previously unreleased bonus track. Because the RIAA certifies each unit of the set, the first week sales figure is the equivalent of more than two million albums sold. Already the best-selling solo artist in U.S. music history with 67 million albums sold (not including box set sales), Brooks intends to reach 100 million in unit sales before the decade is out.

—Chuck Aly



THE BUZZ

CICADA SWARM EDITION

Will MCA and Mercury merge? Can Garth really hit 100 mil? Which label will fall next? These are not the questions flying around the Row. We're actually more interested in how soon we can open our mouth outside without getting an impromptu protein snack.



Cicadas—If we'd been asleep 13 years our eyes would be red too.



Seagram/Polygram—Rumor has it Shania is remixing a song for her potential new boss. It will be called "Any (Bronf)Man Of Mine."



Copyrights R Us—Sony's Tree gets a Little bit Bigger, lest we forget that Nashville is, at heart, a publishing Town.



Fan Fair—As of May 20, it's still not sold out. Calling all stars...



James Cameron, Lee—Uh, King of the World? Have you heard of another Ireland to New York icon by the name of Garth Brooks?



Solefield—We have nothing to say, but didn't want to be the only media outlet on the continent that didn't give a mention.

IMMINENT IMPACT: SHANE SHOCKTON

"He generated these songs between the ages of 16 and 20," marvels Decca Senior Vice President Mark Wright. "It really makes you mad if you think about it," he laughs.

Joking aside, Wright alludes to talent and abilities that are innate—a gift which neither the finest instruction nor years of experience could bestow. At 24, Decca recording artist Shane Stockton is nearing the release of his debut album, *Stories I Could Tell*. Beyond showcasing a powerful and distinctive voice, the offering heralds the arrival of a prodigious songwriter who co-wrote one song, and is the sole contributor of the other nine. Even in talent-rich Nashville, it is a remarkable accomplishment.

Susan Burns, who co-manages Stockton with Erv Woolsey, first heard Stockton when he was 18. She knew she had found something special. "To see him perform live—it was like he had done it all his life," she says. "There was an ability to communicate—and pure joy—in what he was doing. You could tell that was what he wanted to do more than anything in the world." She set up a meeting with Decca Director of A&R Frank Liddell.

"He was saying he was a Merle Haggard fan," Liddell remembers. "You hear that a lot around here." He admits being skeptical. "This guy's twenty years old telling me he's a Merle Haggard and Buck Owens fan?" Liddell called Stockton's bluff. "Well, he sat down and played me a couple of Haggard songs I've never heard in my life. I took him in to see Shelia [Shipley Bidy] and Mark and told them this guy's going to sell a million records one day."

Wright, who ended up producing *Stories I Could Tell*, says, "I

thought he had a lot of potential, but didn't quite know if he was ready. One day I heard 'What If I'm Right' through my office door. I walked into Frank's office and said, 'What the heck is that?'

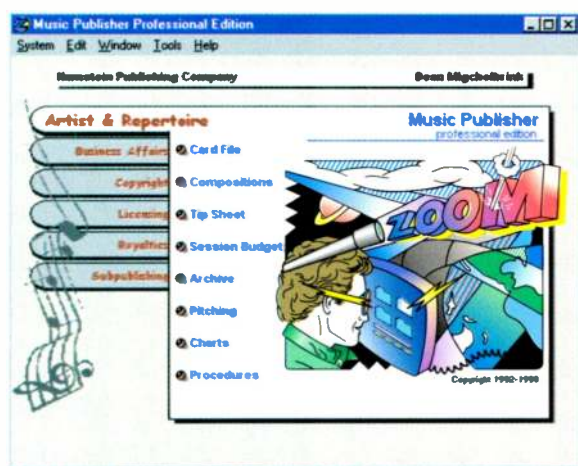
"That song was the catalyst for me to really research and listen to his other material," Wright says. "The deeper I dug, the more I was impressed with his writing ability, and obviously his voice is a gift."

Stockton is not, however, a kid with good pipes and no direction. "We butted heads a few times on things," Wright admits. "He's a very strong willed individual. I didn't flat out argue with him, but I wanted to be sure he strongly believed in something before we recorded it. Being a writer myself, I know sometimes we love our newest song best of all. Our latest work is our greatest work. You need somebody there who can really be objective and that was my role in song selection."

Vice President of Sales & Marketing Dave Weigand details album set up that includes media, radio, retail and distribution showcases, as well as a five-week radio tour. Stockton has also been booked on the Lynchburg Live stage at George Strait's festival dates this summer. "We all know," Weigand says, "that radio is the most important aspect of breaking an artist like Shane."

It will take extra effort on Decca's part to ensure radio understands what Stockton brings to the table. "It's not the kind of thing radio programmers are going to capture immediately," Wright says. "You have to listen two or three times to really grasp it all, it has so much depth. That's going to be our real challenge as a company."

—Chuck Aly



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THE INDEPENDENT SONGPLUGGER:



BLACK SHEEP OR UNSUNG HEROES?

BY CHARLENE BLEVINS

THE INTERNATIONAL Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) released a new economic study last month, *Copyright Industries in the US Economy-1998 Report*, providing details that copyright-based industries are among the largest and fastest growing sectors of the US economy. Core copyright industries—publishing, audio visual, business and entertainment software, and music—accounted for 3.65% of the US Gross Domestic Product. Three and a half million Americans work in these industries, and this creative-based section of the economy achieved foreign sales and exports of \$60.18 billion, surpassing, for the first time, every other export sector. It's this decade of growth in the music industry, and the rise in our city's reputation as being a song mecca, that is breeding the independent songplugger.

One of the first independent pluggers was one Chris Dodson. He was working for Tree in 1979 as a song plugger, mail guy and tape copier (and several other "high level jobs," he laughs), all the while wearing his new attorney hat shopping Michael Martin Murphey for an artist deal. Dodson was helping A&R Murphey's project, and began spouting off songs out of Murphey's catalog that the writer himself vaguely recalled. "I

wish you could pitch my catalog," he mused. So they worked out a deal where Dodson could do just that, and Tree would get a participation in cuts. Thence was born a relative cottage industry that is now beginning to flourish. But not without some growing pains.

IT TAKES ALL KINDS

Independent songplugging is a niche based on need. There are pluggers that handle self-published writers, and represent their entire output. There are pluggers that are hired as support to a publisher's staff. Some represent only back catalog. Still others will go through and pick out two or three or 10 songs from a catalog and go with those. Financial arrangements, which usually consist of a small retainer and bonuses on the back end, are as varied as the deals themselves.

Independent songplugger Sherrill Blackman, explains it thusly. "Some companies have fifty, sixty, eighty writers and two or three pluggers. The big name writers, hot writers in that company, are going to get their songs worked, whereas writers 20 through 80 are left hanging. They're going to have to pitch their own songs. Or they may be getting them pitched, but not as much as they'd like. These guys look to us as help. We're hired guns."

"Publishing companies have become

conglomerates," says Ralph Murphy, ASCAP Assistant VP, songwriter and former publisher. "They've become banks. They're building market share. So someone has to fulfill that one-on-one role with the song, on an individual song basis."

Mark Meckel fills that role with the songs of his clients, songwriters Gary Nicholson, Roberta Schiller, Darden Smith, as well as Pam Rose and Jill Colucci and the writers in their publishing company. Meckel understands that a great song most often just doesn't pop out and make a splash in the world. "Some songs may take seven or eight, ten years to get recorded," says Meckel. "'Safe In The Arms Of Love' (Pam Rose), got cut four or five times before Martina McBride cut it. Paul Worley produced it on three different acts before it came out! So it really takes persistence."

Murphy agrees. "'Talking In Your Sleep' had 23 consecutive turndowns, and ultimately won Song of the Year," he says. "'18 Wheels and a Dozen Roses' took almost four years of pitching. Now, if those songs were in the corporate environment—the really big hits that were a little eccentric that required the extra effort—would never have been cut."

Murphy's point is well taken. It's that attention to the song, and the recognition of the need for it by songwriters, that is the very reason for the job.

WITHOUT MALICE

It's more of a mathematical problem than malicious inattention or favoritism, all agree. "If you have eighty-five writers, and three songpluggers, your copyrights get up into astronomical numbers," says Meckel. "It's almost impossible to keep up with that many songs."

And how does a company get that big, why would a publishing company grow to have 100 writers and four pluggers?

Chris Dodson reminds us that "the music industry is controlled by six multinational conglomerates—not music companies. They're about making money." And from the passionate side he muses, "I don't know how big companies end up with 100 writers and four pluggers. I guess if a writer comes in and blows you away with a song, you can't say no."

NEED MORE INDIES?

"One pluggger can work about 10 writers if he works a lot of hours and stays up late at night listening to catalog," says Dodson. Ten seems to be the cap for most of the full time independents, though some believe even that number is too big. Blackman's cap is five or six writers, and he has a waiting list should one of his clients move along.

"If everybody can handle five, on average, and there's twenty indies, that's a hundred catalogs. There's probably not a lot of writers in town who are successful enough to pay somebody to plug their stuff. Everybody would want you to pitch their stuff for free. But you can't pay your bills that way."

Which brings up another problem experienced by hit songwriter Kent Blazy. "Most of the people that I know that have used independent pluggers haven't had that much success with them." His statement is not as inflammatory as it first seems; Blazy has used six different pluggers over the course of seven years and believes in their value. But even those with whom he's been happy and found success, have not lasted.

"It's been a very frustrating process for me, and probably for the people who've worked for me too. There's a breaking-in period—learning the catalog and such, and by the time that happens, they're either aggressive enough that somebody steals them away, or you've found out that they're not going to be effective, or that they don't have the ear that you'd hoped they had. Or they get tired of it, because it's probably the toughest job there is. You're getting rejection all the time.

"I think the cream of the crop of the independent pluggers are going to rise to the top where big companies are going to steal them away. The only answer is, if you do find a talented young pluggger like that, bite the bullet and pay them enough salary

and incentive to get them to stay. But if you're an independent person like I am, and you've got to pay social security and health insurance and salary and you're into them for \$60,000 a year, that's a lot of money if you're not getting any cuts." It's a troubling catch-22.

Another dilemma, says Blazy, is growth that comes with an independent's success, relative to the cap issue mentioned earlier. "I've had a couple of independent pluggers where when we started out, they had maybe three to five writers, and that's the way I thought it should be. Then they get a cut or two and before you know it, they're pitching songs for fifteen people.

"It's really hard to find a pluggger with all the things you need," Blazy believes. "The go-gettiveness, the contacts, the ear and instinct to pitch the right songs to the right people at the right time."

HAND ME MY HAT. NO, THE OTHER ONE

Those aren't the only qualities successful songpluggers need, according to Blackman. An indie pluggger needs to be a detective, a salesman, a cheerleader, a self-starter. "You've got to love music, love songs. You've got to be likable, professional, persistent, but not annoying."

Definitely don't be annoying, or you'll find your phone calls responded to with orders for drop-offs, or worse, not responded to at all.

Larry Willoughby, Senior Director of A&R at MCA says he has felt "beat up" by independents, in that they had taken advantage of listening appointments by playing too many songs, taking too much time. He believes that inexperience is the cause of this unacceptable behavior, and now limits access to only the most experienced independents. He utilizes *RowFax* to put out a call for songs, and most material gets dropped off at the label. He does take listening sessions, but has "certain people at certain companies that I've had my success with, and I tend to go back to them."

But that very interaction, that one-on-one exchange of information is one of the most valuable things anyone can have in pitching songs, believes Meckel. "It keeps you informed exactly what they're looking for," he says, "and makes the difference in pitching them five songs, or one or two." It's also the best way to fulfill their roles as detectives, as eyes and ears for their writers, and is the quickest conduit to the intuitive memory bank of their catalogs. In other words, five minutes now can save you 10 later.

THE PERCEPTION PROBLEM

So your pluggger has learned your catalog, networked himself (or herself) into a

social frenzy, developed an ear and a detective's skills. But there's one more hurdle.

All independents say their biggest battle is fighting a pervasive belief that independents' product—songs—are not as high in quality as songs delivered from established publishers.

"That perception does exist," says Willoughby, "but perception is not reality. Because I can go to majors and get songs that don't work for me either."

Meckel, who's been plugging songs here for about eight years, still struggles against that perception. "Some record companies or producers, or whoever I'm going to play songs for, are not real receptive to independent pluggers, and view independents as...somewhat of a nuisance, maybe. They think, 'Gee, I've got 500,000 songs over here and they've got every kind of writer conceivable, so why do I need to look anywhere else?' That's a constant battle for independent pluggers to champion their writers and keep their names out there in front of people."

Blackman also finds the preconceived notion of lack of quality frustrating, though is pragmatic about its reality. "I may not face it as much as the other guys because I'm so established," he says. It helps that his writers have sold millions of records. "And it's starting to change now. More and more,

people are beginning to come to me. Psychologically, though, most people are going to think about EMI, MCA, Sony. Most people don't believe that a smaller situation is going to have hit songs, and that's just not the case."

Al Cooley, Atlantic VP of A&R agrees. "There are some independent pluggers that always have good stuff. Steve Pope, Sherrill Blackman, Steve Singleton. They *always* have good stuff. They have access to songs I might not normally hear."

Dodson helps put things in perspective. "I think the hardest part of being an independent pluggger is finding songs as good as what Warner Chappell or EMI has...look at Bob McDill. I've got to go head to head with



RALPH MURPHY



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FOUL BALL!

Inside pitches are becoming more and more prevalent in Music City, though those ramifications are not exclusive to the independent plugger.

"It's something we all have to face," says Blackman. "Artists that are writers that have publishing deals, producers that are signed to publishing deals, producers who don't write that are signed to publishing deals because it gives that publishing company access to that producer's stable of artists. Or, however the deal is worded: they have to cut x amount of songs out of that publishing company. It's nothing new. It's been going on since the Brill building. It's just happening more now." Blackman doesn't let that stop him.

"Being a detective, knowing the political ramifications, I've got to figure out a way around it if I believe I have something special for that artist. I've got to go to the management company or directly to the artist." Fortunately, says Blackman, artists are beginning to rebel against forced cutting. "Some producers have lost acts because they're tired of being force fed songs from only one company."

JUST ADD WATER

Another change in the plugging landscape comes from publishing companies and producers taking over the artist development role—"growing" artists—grooming them and readying them for record deals. When it's the producer or the label bringing them along, it's a natural thing. When it's the publisher, though, suddenly the cut slots shrink considerably, taking it from a pool to a puddle, if you will.

It makes Blackman, ever the proactive plugger, want to do the same. "If these publishing companies are growing their own artists, and place them when they're ready for a record deal, what's to keep me from doing the same thing?"

Nothing, it seems.

Blackman also thinks the indie plugger has a leg up in the ability to take chances on up and comers—something the majors usually won't do—like he did with a young girl from Texas a few years ago. "[Wilbur Rimes] said nobody wanted to pitch LeAnn songs in the beginning, because they didn't think an 11-year-old girl could sing. But we took a

chance, sent her some songs." The ultimate result was Blackman placing four songs on *Blue* and *The Early Years* albums, with sales on those two records now nearing eight million units.

GROUP PLUG

Though the idea is not new, group plugger meetings are again gaining popularity. A group a few years ago called The Young Turks outgrew itself; its success as a time saver and information source was so successful, the group became unmanageable, both as a group and for whom ever might utilize them as a song source. A few new groups have sprung up over the last few years, and their limited memberships have kept them stable, manageable, and successful. It helps get the indie plugger in front of an artist, a producer, an A&R executive, and provides that all-important face-to-face, the next best thing to a one-on-one. "I think people who use those tools are wise, to share information and save time," says Meckel.



AL COOLEY

EGO CHECK

"I'm a big supporter of independent pluggers, being I was one," says Cooley, who appreciates the job both from the plugger's perspective and from the A&R perspective. He feels it's good business to see the true independents who represent writers otherwise unrepresented, but is "not crazy about," he says, the ones he calls "vanity pluggers."

These people come into play, says Cooley, "when successful writers, with multi-hits hire a plugger because suddenly, they're not happy with the plugging services from a company like Tree that has six or seven really good pluggers who are weeding out their stuff and pitching what they think is best. So they hire these other people to pitch the rest of the stuff."

Cooley believes that from a screening process, it muddies his waters. "I meet with many writers, and I kind of miss it, for example, when Paul Nelson, who's had a lot of hits here, suddenly, I don't see him anymore and I meet with his plugger instead. Paul has tremendous instincts, if I tell him what I'm looking for and why this one doesn't fit the project. But someone who's brand new at it doesn't seem to have those instincts, and also seems to be pitching his

B stuff, in a way..." Cooley fears the A material is sometimes being cherry picked by the staff at the publishing company.

Songwriter Kim Williams vows that doesn't happen with his material, and has hired independent pluggers to "try and add to the success I've had." Williams doesn't restrict access to his catalog. "The independent plugger can pitch the same songs the publishing company can."

That's another difficulty, according to Willoughby. "I think sometimes the writers feel like they're not getting their songs pitched when in fact they are, and I get double-pitched that way."

"I do understand the value [of vanity pluggers] to writers," says Cooley, "because the more pitches he gets, the more cuts he gets. But yes, it's the same song comin' at you, and these vanity pluggers—let's not even call them independent, they're clearly being hired for vanity reasons—they are trying almost too hard, because they want to make an impression on the writer, so they're running around creating a lot of chaos."

"On the other hand," says Willoughby, "I've had writers whose catalog, maybe from their first publishing deal, probably doesn't get worked, because of all the new writers that company may now have. In that case, an independent plugger makes a lot of sense."

Blackman is quick to point out that the hired guns may be added to a writer's army not because of any unhappiness or dissatisfaction with his company's plugger, but just to make sure all the bases are covered. Likewise, Williams reminds us that "every plugger brings their own strength."

Willoughby also offers one final word of wisdom to pluggers: "Never curse an A&R person, because you just may become one."

GETTING STARTED

As a producer, Norro Wilson, also a songwriter, has occasion to do business with the independent plugger from the other side, and will listen to those he knows. "I think it's important that a songplugger have some sort of credentials. I think it'd be hard for a young plugger who had no credentials whatsoever to get started."

Scott Lynch and Marc Fortney were songwriters with one cut and a determination to make a living in the music business. Conversations with a couple of industry-ites just a year ago put the songplugging idea into



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their heads, so they had lunch with Sherrill Blackman and soon called songwriter Wayne Carson and asked "If he'd mind if we'd run some of his songs," says Lynch. "Once we got a cut or two, referrals started coming in." The two pluggers now share an office, three companies and 19 clients, two of which are publishing companies.

Lynch and Fortney experienced "the perception," but forged ahead, working within the parameters, calling everybody they knew, speaking to assistants and getting mainly a "drop-off" response. The good news is that every song the duo has placed, including one each on Faith Hill and Randy Travis, has come from dropping off.

"It was a pleasant thing to learn," says Lynch, "that an unknown company can take a great song to a management company or a record label, and that they will listen to the song like they said, and if they like it, you can get a song cut that way."

Wilson and partner Buddy Cannon are very busy producers these days, "just living in the studio now," and don't have time to listen. So they've found another use for the independent plugger—they've hired Dave Mack to do their screening. "He was a promotion man and his whole lifetime in the music business has been listening to songs, so he has good ears. All he has to do is tune them for our times."

GETTING REAL

Independent pluggers no doubt find Al Cooley's office either a truly intimidating place or a respite from the cold hard world. He never feels beat up, he says, "cause I'll beat 'em right back!" Still, he sees almost everyone and in fact, will see anyone who calls and asks for five minutes. "Anybody who wants to play one song is always welcome at Atlantic. That's the way I like to be pitched. Anybody calls me and says they've got lots of hits, I might not call them back for a while." Cooley even continues to see one plugger that does not have good songs and becomes abrasive when turned down. Why? "Because I know sometime within the next five years this person is going to bring me a killer."

"I love writers," he says. "My whole life has been about helping writers. And if I was a writer, I might want to have a hundred people pitching my songs. But I don't think it's necessary."

Wilson acknowledges that the percentage of songs worthy of continued attention is small, but has hired independents to work those he believes in "from time to time, though I only have a few worth listening to," he says with both humility and a developed and pragmatic ear.

"One of the problems today," says Cooley, "is that publishers are not screening material like they used to. Now, pub-

lishers let writers demo everything that comes in, and if it gets demoed, it gets pitched. There are great writers in town, who, if they write 200 songs a year, you could throw away 150 of those. You're going to make a lot of money on the other 50, and you'd do better to concentrate on those, rather than pitching all 200—which could cheapen your writer's reputation."

And in the independent song-plugger's world, reputation and relationship are everything.

WHO DO YOU LOVE?

"Buddy Killen once told me that relationships get songs cut," says Dodson. "Back then I thought, 'that's not true.' But it is." Dodson built his reputation as a song man, in part, by getting songs cut that his publishing company didn't even control. He once got one of his own songs bumped off a project when he took the producer a better one—from another company.

Meckel explains, "If you have a good relationship with the people you're playing songs for, they're going to trust you to bring good songs, regardless of who wrote it or what type it is. So it's my reputation that's on the line when I go play songs for somebody. I've got to have the highest quality song to have the confidence to go play it. And maybe it's not exactly the right song for that particular project, but hopefully they can't deny that it's a great song, and that's what keeps the doors open."

"I don't want to paint a totally negative picture," says Blackman, who stresses that he does what he does because he loves it. "But the bottom line is, we have to try harder. That's just the way it is. I don't mind. I'm willing to work longer and harder. I get up earlier and stay up later. I'm willing to do this because long term, it's going to pay off."

Even with that pragmatism, Blackman acknowledges, "You're only as good as your connections and your catalog. And eventually, it all comes down to the song."

True, but Al Cooley knows there's more to the job than that.

"Writers often don't have the vision that some of the good pluggers have. A good plugger knows talent when he sees it. A true plugger is supposed to spot, develop and sign young talent, cherry pick songs, do demos. It's more than just carrying a tape around."

And yet, carrying that tape around is the final heroic act.

"I think plugging is the most underestimated, underappreciated job in town," says Kim Williams, "and it's the most important job in town. I don't care how many hit songs you've got, if you don't have somebody to make sure a producer or an artist or somebody hears them, they're just going to lay there and rot." ♦



NORRO WILSON



CHRIS DODSON

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MUSICAL CHAIRS

by CHARLENE BLEVINS

Seagram Bids for Polygram; Copyright Issues Abound

NEWS

COPYRIGHT IS BIG BUSINESS—At a press conference held on Capitol Hill in May, the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) released a new economic study, *Copyright Industries in the US Economy 1998 Report*, which demonstrates that copyright-based industries are among the largest and fastest growing sectors of the US economy. Key findings include: 1). In 1996, (the latest year for which complete numbers are available), the core copyright industries accounted for 3.65% of the US Gross Domestic Product, or \$278.4 billion in value added; 2). Between 1977 and 1996, core copyright industries grew nearly three times as fast as the annual rate of the economy as a whole (4.6% vs. 1.6%); 3) In 1996, 3.5 million Americans worked in the core copyright industries—about 2.8% of the entire US work force; and 4). In 1996, US core copyright industries achieved foreign sales and exports of \$60.18 billion, surpassing, for the first time, every other export sector, including automotive, agriculture and aircraft.

SEAGRAM MAKES BID FOR POLYGRAM—Seagram Co. Ltd. has been in negotiations with Philips Electronics NV to purchase Philips' 75% stake in music giant PolyGram NV. The talks have included an offer to the minority shareholders of the entertainment company, a Philips spokesman said.

Seagram's bid is reported to be about \$10.5 billion, with 80% cash and the remainder in stock. Seagram currently owns Universal Music Group, employing 3,500 people while PolyGram has about 12,000 employees worldwide. If the deal is completed, Seagram would become the world's largest music company. One source close to

negotiations said Seagram would consolidate PolyGram and Universal Music operations, and cut about 1,500 jobs in North America, though *USA Today* reported that Seagram CEO Edgar Bronfman had changed plans to put all of a combined Seagram-PolyGram music operation under Universal Music Group CEO Doug Morris. PolyGram's board was to meet to review the deal on May 21.

DIGITAL COPYRIGHT PASSES—The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously passed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that contains the WIPO Copyright Treaties. The Act also incorporates the Internet copyright liability compromise agreed upon by the RIAA, telephone companies and online service providers, and clarifies the legal responsibilities of providers of online services and Internet access for copyright infringements that take place over their systems. "This legislation and the treaties it will implement will help creative work flourish online and make the Internet a better place for education," said RIAA president **Hilary Rosen**.

WHITE HOUSE WEIGHS IN FOR SONGWRITERS—President Clinton weighed in on the side of creativity in the fight for intellectual property rights. In a letter to Senate Judiciary Committee leaders in May, Commerce Secretary William Daley said he would recommend that President Clinton veto the bill if the Copyright Term Extension and the Fairness in Licensing bill (aka the Restaurant Bill), which exempts all but the largest restaurants from paying licensing fees for music usage, were combined and passed in the Senate. (*MR* 5/23)

President Clinton subsequently sent a letter to ASCAP chairman Marilyn Bergman in which he wrote, "As you know, we

opposed the Fairness in Music Licensing Act, which was attached to the Copyright Term Extension Act in the House. We believe that it would weaken the rights of music copyright holders. It may also violate our obligations under international treaties and undermine our effort to protect US intellectual property rights owners.

"My administration will continue to oppose this proposal," the President added, though he did not confirm an intention to veto if the coupled bill passes the Senate.



PAUL BARNABEE

RLG REORGANIZES—RCA Label Group has announced several staff changes. **Paul**

Barnabee has been upped to Vice President of Finance at RCA Label Group. He joined the label in 1995 as Director of Finance and was promoted to Senior Director last year. The RLG artist development team has expanded; **Britta Davis** shifts to Manager, Artist Development, focusing on BNA with Associate Director **Debbie Schwartz**. **Cindy Mabe** remains Administrator, Artist Development, focusing on RCA Records with Associate Director **Jon Elliott**. **Dan Nelson** has moved from *Garvin* Promotion Representative to Southwest Regional Promotion Manager and **Cindy Heath** is named Administrator, RCA National Promotion. **Aubrey Parker** has added Production Administrator to his A&R Assistant duties. Finally, **Tiffany Lauer** has joined the label as Manager of Product Development, RLG Sales, and **Michelle Brown** joins the company as Manager, RLG Media Marketing.

BUSINESS NEWS

MusicWomen International will host its 5th Music Summit and Showcases in Nashville July 8-11. This event, attended by music industry executives from around the world, includes industry seminars and workshops, networking parties and showcases. Scheduled speakers include **Randy Goodman**, **Bob Saporiti** and **Raeanne Rubenstein**. Showcase acts scheduled include **Lucy Bonilla**, **Amanda Wilson**, **Annie Rapid** and **The Keatons**. Both genders are welcome as artists and participants. 615-860-4084 or <MWTBoss8@aol.com>...

TBA Entertainment has agreed to sell its West Coast amphitheater operations to New York-based SFX Entertainment in an all-cash transaction valued at approximately \$10 million. The sale was made in part to help fund

TBA's core entertainment operations and geographic reach the past year through internal growth and acquisitions such as Avalon Entertainment Group, a Time Warner joint venture (Warner/Avalon), the purchase of Eric Chandler Merchandising and the pending acquisition of Corporate Productions, Inc. "We intend to continue to execute our aggressive industry consolidation strategy," said TBA Chairman Jock Weaver. TBA has offices in Nashville, New York, Los Angeles, San Diego and Chicago, and is a diversified entertainment company which produces live entertainment for corporate events, develops and produces integrated music marketing programs, manages entertainers, produces concerts and manages merchandising for concerts and sporting events...

The NFL Players Association has eliminat-

ed its events director position and has selected an advisory committee of Music Row executives to bridge the gap between the music industry and the NFL. Those members are: **Paul Barnabee**, **John Briggs**, **David Corlew**, **Marty Gamblin**, **J.D. Haas**, **Steve Hause**, **Lynn Herron**, **Jake LaGrone**, **Marjie McGraw**, **Denise Nichols**, **Regina Nicks**, **Janet Parr**, **Ted Randall**, **Royce Risser**, **Cindy Hayes Smith**, **Bob Whittaker**, and **Lisa Wysocky**...

Ballots for the TNN *Music City News* Country Awards, to be broadcast live on TNN Monday June 15, can be obtained at True Value stores, part of a national marketing and promotion campaign designed to expand voter turnout. **Jeff Foxworthy** will host the event...

[continued on page 25]

Billboard

MAY 23, 1998

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	WKS ON CHART
1	1	2	13
2	3	4	12

TITLE
PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)

THIS KISS
B. GALLIMORE, F. HILL (R. LERNER, A. ROBOFF, B. N. CHAPMAN)

OUT OF MY BONES
J. STROUD, B. GALLIMORE, R. TRAVIS (G. BURR, S. VAUGHN, R. LERNER)

*** No. 1 ***
2 weeks at No. 1

IMPRINT & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL

(C) (D) (I) WARNER BROS. RECORDS
(C) (D) (I) DEF JAY

ARTIST



GAVIN

LW TW Weeks

RANDY TRAVIS - Out Of My Bones (DreamWorks)
Great start for Randy and DreamWorks!

FAITH HILL - This Kiss (Warner Bros.)



MAVERICK MUSIC

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WRITER ROBIN LERNER FOR TWO #1s
 "THIS KISS" - FAITH HILL - WARNER BROS. RECORDS
 "OUT OF MY BONES" - RANDY TRAVIS - DREAMWORKS RECORDS

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- DON HENRY
- JIM PHOTOGLO
- ANTHONY SMITH
- BENMONT TENCH
- SONNY TILLIS
- LUCINDA WILLIAMS
- RUSTY YOUNG

ARTIST TITLE LABEL(S)
RANDY TRAVIS Out Of My Bones (DreamWorks)
FAITH HILL This Kiss (Warner Bros.)

REPORTS	ADDS	SPINS	TREND
11	199	1	7506
12	199	0	7430 +173

TOTAL STATIONS/ADDS	PLAY RANK	TOTAL PLAYS
204/0	1	7481
204/0	2	7469



VIDEO REVIEWS

by EDWARD MORRIS

Now PLAYING

THE HEART OF CMT

"One Heart At A Time," a new music video designed to raise awareness about cystic fibrosis, is the latest in a long line of socially responsible videos created by groups of country artists. Filmed by CMT and now showing on that network, "One Heart At A Time" stars Garth Brooks, Bryan White, Neal McCoy, Olivia Newton-John, Faith Hill, Billy Dean, Michael McDonald and Victoria Shaw.

Such group-powered and cause-oriented country videos date back at least to 1985 and "One Big Family." That song and clip was country's response to pop music's "We Are The World," which came out earlier the same year. Both aspired to raise money to fight hunger. The ad hoc group performing the song and video called itself Heart Of Nashville and included such luminaries as Roy Acuff, George Jones, Tanya Tucker, Eddy Arnold, Ray Sawyer, Lane Brody, Lynn Anderson, Dobie Gray and the Kendalls.

Other notable multiple-artist clips in this vein are "Tomorrow's World" (1990), which touted environmental concerns and featured 21 artists; "Let's Open Up Our Hearts" (1991), a fundraiser for Cities In School, which boasted more than 30 top-name acts; and last year's "Make A Miracle" promotion for St. Jude Children's Hospital, which spotlighted, among others, Mindy McCready, Baker & Myers, Sara Evans, Kevin Sharp, Kenny Chesney, Kippi Brannon and various members of Alabama, Blackhawk and Ricochet.

RABBIT REMEMBERED

The late Eddie Rabbitt left only a modest music video legacy—six solo clips and, by my count, three more in which he co-starred or made guest appearances. But he did score a significant video first. In 1982, when it was barely a year old and videos of any sort were still in short supply, MTV added Rabbitt's "Step By Step" to its playlist. It was the first country video to be welcomed onto the hip new network. Clips by Ronnie Milsap, Rodney Crowell and other country acts would soon follow.

Rabbitt's most visually interesting video is "On Second Thought," from 1989. Presented in ultra-fuzzy black and white and minutely simulating the amateurish barn dance shows of early television, the video looks so authentic

that it's almost painful to watch. For an infinitely more viewable Rabbitt, see his 1988 "The Wanderer."

MILITARY LINK

Producer Larry Guzy estimates that "four or five million viewers a day" see all or part of the weekly "Video Link" show he assembles for the far-flung Armed Forces Network. The half-hour shows are multi-format, but Guzy estimates that two to three country music videos appear on each one.

"Video Link" is distributed by satellite to individual commands worldwide. Guzy says he has complete latitude in programming and is open to using independent label videos if they're right for his audiences. Since he has room for relatively few videos on each show, he says there is virtually no carryover of titles from one week to the next. The program has no advertising or artists interviews, but it occasionally does run IDs by acts whose videos are programmed.

Guzy can be reached at Producers Post in Burbank, California.

AND NOW...

Reading from top to bottom, here's the best and the rest:

LISA BROKOP "How Do I Let Go"

Columbia • Director: Michael Merriman; Producer: Hunter Hodge; Songwriters: Lisa Brokop, Karen Taylor-Good

Brokop never quite established a solid identity through the six videos she made at Patriot Capitol. But this one should do it for her, coupled as it is with a tsunami of a ballad. Playing the role of a bereaved lover who mourns her loss among shadows and bric-a-brac, Brokop seems more mature, more elegant and more emotionally connected to her material than ever before. And her voice continues to be one of the great glories of the universe.

REBA McENTIRE/BROOKS & DUNN "If You See Him/If You See Her"

MCA/Arista • Director & Producer: Deaton Flanigen; Songwriters: Tommy Lee James, Jennifer Kimball, Terry McBride

Because of her commitment to stories which allow for both drama and character growth, McEntire consistently makes the most involving videos in country music. While this one has neither the operatic emotional surges of "Does He Love You" nor the narrative richness of "Is There Life Out There," it stands up quite well on its own terms. McEntire and Ronnie Dunn are the separated lovers who wouldn't need to stay separated if they each realized how much the other wants to come back. The only one who knows this fact, however, is their common best friend and confidante, played by Kix Brooks. And they each swear him to secrecy. Are you getting the picture? It's another frustrating tale of what might have been. Apart from their

understandably passionate singing scenes, all three performers play their roles convincingly and with commendable understatement.

STEVE WARINER "Holes In The Floor Of Heaven"

Capitol Nashville • Director: Michael Saloman; Producer: Dave Pritchard; Songwriters: Steve Wariner, Billy Kirsch

You've heard of close-captioned? Well this video is shadow-captioned. As Wariner sits in his living room chair singing his saga of four generations, their stories play out in shadows on the wall behind him. It's an enormously effective device, not only because it strips down the stories to their narrative minimum, but also because it underlines the transience of life that Wariner sings about. Both the song and the video are thoroughly sentimental—but that's a virtue in country music. This is Wariner's first solo video since "Get Back" in 1995.

MONTY HOLMES "Why'd You Start Lookin' So Good"

Bang II • Director: Steven Goldmann; Producers: Susan Bowman, Maureen A. Ryan; Songwriter: Paul Davis

What better way to illustrate a life gone to pieces than build and dismantle a set around the unfortunate "victim" as he warbles his griefs to the world? In the midst of all this frantic and sometimes frolicsome activity, Holmes sings on, looking as chastened and downcast as a whipped pup. The video is powered by a song that sticks to your memory like Velcro.

TRISHA YEARWOOD "There Goes My Baby"

MCA • Director: Randlee St. Nicholas; Producer: Mark Fetterman; Songwriters: Annie Roboff, Arnie Roman

Impassive, almost zombie-like, Yearwood steps out of her shower and back into the chill reality of her self-inflicted loss. The darkened interiors and rainy street scenes ratchet up her level of misery. Somewhat puzzling is the tacked-on hint of a happy ending, since the song doesn't suggest there's going to be one. But even in all her cinematic grief, let it be noted that Yearwood is alluringly svelte and, if I may coin an admirism, cleavacious.

GIL GRAND "Famous First Words"

Monument • Director: Michael Merriman; Producer: Hunter Hodge; Songwriter: Byron Hill, J. B. Rudd

Shot in a movie theater and built on the theme of young love-at-first-sight, this clip does a fine job of conveying Grand's good looks and boyish charm. His love interest, however, seems just a tad long in the tooth to be playing a giggling, popcorn-flinging teenager.

LEANN RIMES "Commitment"

MCA/Curb • Director: Chris Rogers; Producer: Jamie Amos; Songwriters: Tony Colton, Tony Marty, Bobby Wood

Rimes looks and acts more mature and sultry in this clip than we've seen her before, which is entirely fitting given the subject matter. But the real attention-holding element is the degree to which she ignores all the glitter and clatter in the streets around her to focus single-mindedly on the ideal of the song's title.



Pictured L-R: Steve Wariner, Michael Saloman (Director), Joanna Carter (Director of Video Development), Dave Pritchard (Producer)

Jeff Foxworthy "Totally Committed"

Warner Bros. • Director: Peter Zavadil; Producer: Joe Ramey; Songwriters: Jeff Foxworthy, James Holliban, Jr.

Foxworthy scores here—as always—with his easy-going goofiness and impeccable timing. His subject of the moment is the eternal battle between the sexes—and why men invariably lose it. In a clear act of gender betrayal, the comic reveals that men have but two thoughts—"I'd like a beer, and I'd like to see somethin' naked." Cameos by baseball players Greg Maddux and John Smoltz.

Linda Davis "I Wanna Remember This"

Decca • Director: Miller Mirano; Producer: Greg Hughs; Songwriters: Jennifer Kimball, Annie Roboff

No video that lingers on the altogether charming Davis can be all bad, but this one is pretty static. No story, just predictable visual allusions to moments of love.

VALIANT EFFORTS

Phillip Claypool "Looking Up From A Long Way Down"

Curb • Director: Michael Merriman; Producer: Bryan Bateman; Songwriters: John Ford Coley, Mark Berger

Clint Black "Cadillac Jack"

RCA • Director: Clint Black; Producers: Greg Hughs.

Charlie Randazzo; Songwriters: Clint Black, Hayden Nicholas

Fred Eaglesmith "105"

Razor & Tie • Director: Steven Goldmann; Producer: Catherine Frisk; Songwriter: Fred Eaglesmith

Earl Thomas Conley "Scared Money Never Wins"

Intersound • Director: Tom Bevins; Producer: Southern Exposures; Songwriters: Earl Thomas Conley, Randy Scruggs, Bat McGrath

Joe Diffie "Texas Size Heartache"

Epic • Director: Michael Oblowitz; Producer: Michael Harvey; Songwriters: Zack Turner, Lonnie Wilson

Collin Raye "I Can Still Feel You"

Epic • Director: Steven Goldmann; Producers: Bowman, Ryan; Songwriters: Kim Tribble, Tammy Hyder

David Kersh "Wonderful Tonight"

Curb • Director: David Abbott; Producer: Hunter Hodge; Songwriter: Eric Clapton

Big House "Faith"

MCA • Director: Jim Shea; Producer: Robin Beresford; Songwriters: Monty Byrom, Scott Hutchison

(Morris is the author of *Edward Morris: Complete Guide To Country Music Videos.*)

OTNN

THE NASHVILLE NETWORK

63.3 million households

HOT SPOT

(May 18, 1998)

Terri Clark • Now That I Found You • Mercury

CMT

COUNTRY MUSIC TELEVISION

42 million households

TOP TWELVE COUNTDOWN

(May 18, 1998)

1. Toby Keith • Dream Walkin' • Mercury
2. Faith Hill • This Kiss • Warner Brothers
3. Shania Twain • You're Still The One • Mercury
4. Tracy Byrd • I'm From The Country • MCA
5. John Michael Montgomery • Love Working On You • Atlantic
6. Tim McGraw • One Of These Days • Curb
7. Michael Peterson • Too Good To Be True • Reprise
8. Mark Wills • I Do (Cherish You) • Mercury
9. LeAnn Rimes • Commitment • Curb
10. Randy Travis • Out Of My Bones • Dreamworks
11. Steve Wariner • Holes In The Floor Of Heaven • Capitol
12. Kenny Chesney • That's Why I'm Here • BNA

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ALBUM REVIEWS

TERRI CLARK/How I Feel

(Mercury 314-558 211-2) *Producer: Keith Stegall*

Prime Cuts: "Now That I Found You," "That's How I Feel," "This Ole Heart"

Critique: "I know this album is a slight departure from my first two projects," Clark writes to her fans in the liner notes of *How I Feel*. "but I just followed my heart and I hope you like what you hear." Those who coughed up the green for another dose of Clark's whup-tail country will be surprised (hopefully pleasantly so), as the familiar sass and attitude have been muted on her first collaboration with Stegall. The result is Terri Clark with softer edges, a production given to warmer shading and a muse tilted towards the introspection of maturity rather than the boisterous facade of youth. The last of course, is the point. If Clark is to be regarded as more than a fad she must grow, but the decision to make a departure isn't as easy as it seems. Leaving her well-defined niche may have been inevitable, but it also moves her more towards the pop side of country where she may find cutting through the clutter more difficult. The transition, however, feels right and vocally she's never been better—besides, could Clark sing *anything* that wouldn't come out sounding country? For safety's sake, a few songs lean on proven success: "You're Easy On The Eyes" is vintage Clark and "This Ole Heart" is a loping gem and smash single contender. For the most part, though, the album offers up good (albeit not phenomenal) contemporary country music. Did Clark need to change directions? Probably. Will this stop on her journey propel her career into the stratosphere? Probably not, but it's a good step towards that goal and, if nothing else, solidifies her stature as an "artist."

—Chuck Aly



KEITH HARLING/Write it In Stone

(MCA 70024) *Producer: Wally Wilson*

Prime Cuts: "Write It In Stone," "Right In The Middle," "Coming Back For You"

Critique: Millions of people can sing, but not many of them can tell you how they feel. It's what separates the contenders from the pretenders, and based on this debut effort, Harling won't have to go around muttering Marlon Brando's famous *On The Waterfront* speech anytime soon. Instead, he's a virtual knockout. His rich voice and the ability to communicate with it make him a certain "contenduh." The production team grasped that obvious fact and put his vocals far up in the mix, while keeping the instrumentation sparse but lively. As far as the material, some could be better, plus a heck of a lot more original. "There Goes The Neighborhood," even though delivered with infinitely more personality than your average mail carrier, sounds borrowed from several sources, mainly "Country Club" with a side of "Bubba Hyde." "Three Words Away" snoozes along, while "I Love What I See" seems overly long at three-and-a-half minutes. But Harling more than compensates with his self-penned title cut, a terrific idea helped along



by some nice little vocal clips and catchy internal sound sense ("Walk away or wait on you"). His co-write with Melba Montgomery, "Right In The Middle," exemplifies that "communication" thing—he sounds happy when he's singing it. Harling also renders fire from the Sharon Vaughn-Bill Anderson contribution, "Afterthoughts," which deftly plays around with contrast ("Should have had these afterthoughts before"). For sheer fun, there's "Coming Back To You," despite

the unfortunate reference to "pina colodas." Good to hear a voice that can excite, for a welcome change. So for you "pretenders" out there? Be afraid...be very afraid.

—Bob Paxman

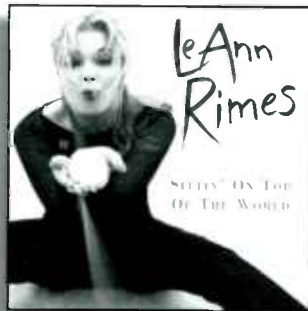
LeANN RIMES/Sittin' On Top Of The World

(CURB 77901) *Producer: Wilbur C. Rimes*

Prime Cuts: "Feels Like Home," "When Am I Gonna Get Over You," "More Than Anyone Deserves"

Critique: Shameless pop is not a problem for me. In fact, I've long had to resist the urge to feel guilty about my affinity for Michael Jackson, one hit wonders, The Monkees and "MMMBop." Here's some music biz heresy for you: my favorite stuff from The Beatles is pre-Sgt. Pepper. So if anyone could warm to this CHR-ready album (which has already fielded some stinging criticism), it's me. And guess what? I like it. There are, however, some glaring problems. Speaking in grotesque generalities, country emphasizes lyrical content, while pop music goes for the overall sound. Unfortunately, this album combines a fairly uniform and predictable—at times even cheesy—instrumental underpinning with less than weighty material. The elder Rimes could have spiced the mix to make the average uptempo songs more palatable, but seems to have made a conscious decision to make or break this album on his daughter's voice. And hey, when your kid is a vocal prodigy, that ain't such a bad call. When offered a ballad with an expansive pop melody—can you say "How Do I Live?"—LeAnn steps up with unparalleled power and grace. Diane Warren (surprise, surprise) penned the first of these ethereal yet spine-tingling songs, "Feels Like Home." But the high point is unquestionably "When Am I Gonna Get Over You," with soaring harmonies provided by co-writer Bryan White (with John Tiro). The combination of those two voices, in an orbit few others would even attempt to achieve, is well beyond stunning. Whatever its shortcomings, fans will probably decide that *Sittin' On Top Of The World* is worth the price of admission for that performance alone.

—Chuck Aly

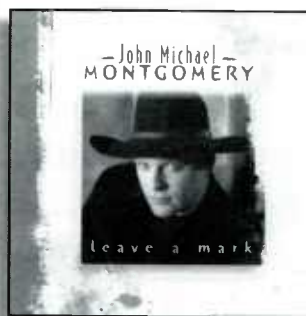


JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY/Leave A Mark

(Atlantic 83104) *Producers: Csaba Petocz, John Michael Montgomery*

Prime Cuts: "Love Working On You," "I Couldn't Dream," "This One's Gonna Leave A Mark"

Critique: On his brilliant 1996 album *What I Do Best*, John Michael Montgomery showed that his style is really rooted in more traditional country sounds. On last year's greatest hits package he displayed another facet of his voice, the falsetto, as on "Angel In My Eyes." Used sparingly, it became a different and surprising color in his palette. And he utilizes it again on *Leave A Mark*, with songs such as "Cover You In Kisses." But also with his latest effort, JMM and co-producer Csaba Petocz offer yet another side of the singer's style. Call it the groove factor with a rocky edge to it. On material such as the clever '70s pop-rock sounds of the album's first single "Love Working On You" and others, including "You're The Ticket," "It Gets Me Every Time" and even "Little Cowboys Cry," with



its borrowed Lynyrd Skynyrd melody, the turf JMM works would seem more familiar to, say, Collin Raye or even Delbert McClinton. That rock edge can rightly be attributed to Petocz, who has worked with such bangers as Quiet Riot. Sonically, the album's overall effect is crisp and clear with JMM's voice warm and buttery as toast. His singing itself has never been better, most notably on the waltz-tempoed "I Don't Want This Song To End" and the title cut. But too much of the material,

at least lyrically, seems lightweight, especially after the great selections on *What I Do Best*—to me his best so far. Make no mistake, this is a good album. But after the standard set by his last studio effort, *Leave A Mark* does in fact leave one. It's just not high enough.

—Ron Young



EDGE OF THE ROW

by RUSTY RUSSELL

"For years, Nashville has looked skyward and chicken-danced..."

Funny how music is so much like sports. Like, you spend a lot more time getting ready to play than you do out there on the field. You wear snazzy clothes that might look silly in any other situation. Plus, people actually pay money to watch you work. (That doesn't happen with, say, accountants. Imagine a guy sitting at a desk in the middle of a big arena, working feverishly to complete a 1040 form as thousands of excited fans cheer him on.) All kinds of things that happen on a playing field are analogous to events in the music world: touchdowns equal number-one singles, strikeouts equal songs that kak somewhere in the 30s, slumps are like, well, slumps.

Most daunting for true fans is when players lose a ball in the sun. I used to go to Denver Bears games pretty often (they—find one of those jerseys at the mall!), and I'll never forget the end of one particular game. Bottom of the 9th, two out, home team leading by a run with the visitors up and a man on second. The batter sends one almost straight up, an obvious, easy out. All of us in the stands start high-fiving each other. Surely our boys, though most of them will be selling used cars or hanging drywall before long, can handle this one. Except this ball is somehow invisible to the left fielder. Lost it in the sun. Likewise the centerfielder who runs to back him up, not to mention the shortstop. All three stare skyward for a seeming eternity, even as the pill drops unchallenged only a few yards away. Mystified, each player finally takes his eyes off the clouds and looks in horror at the others, then starts what looks like a chicken dance, frantically looking around on the ground for the ball. By the time one of them finally locates the thing and pegs it toward home (more or less), the guy from second is trotting toward the dugout and the hitter has a two-bagger. I'm sure you can guess how the game ended, and somewhere out west, I'll bet there's a used car dealer who thinks about that play a lot more often than I do.

Now and then, the same thing happens in the music business. Take the strange case of **Steve Conn**. Without question, he's one of the best singers ever to amble into Music City. A multi-instrumentalist (piano's his main thing), he's done sessions & sideman stints with the likes of Bonnie Raitt, Mark Knopfler, Bill Champlin, John Mayall & Beausoleil (sheesh!). His songwriting is, I believe, on a par with Allen Toussaint, Carol King or Townes Van Zandt. Plus he's an absolute *gas* onstage, and yet, like that baseball sitting on the outfield grass, Conn seems invisible to those who could really make the most of his

talents. He has no deal. For years, Nashville has looked skyward and chicken-danced, searching for the play that would give it *the big win*: real, undeniable pop/rock viability. If someone would just pick up Steve Conn and toss him toward home plate, we could print up the tee-shirts. Hell-ohh?

As for folks already in the pipeline, **Jerry Douglas** is his usual, unbelievable self on *Restless On The Farm* (Sugar Hill). Up in Virginia last winter, I watched a whole busload of all-stars file out of the dressing rooms to stand drop-jawed watching his part of the program. It hit me that Douglas has not only redefined the possibilities for the humble Dobro, he's blurred the boundaries between acoustic music and any number of its formerly-distant cousins. It's downright transcending. This CD opens with "Things In Life," a hyper-trad number that'd be welcomed by even the most staunchly traditional bluegrass festival crowd (with vocals by Tim O'Brien), then careens into "Turkish Taffee," which features our hero sounding positively mystic on lap steel. **Steve Earle** delivers a wistful version of **Johnny Cash's** "Don't Take Your Guns To Town." Now get this: **Erroll Garner's** "Like It Is" and **Johnny Winter's**

"TV Doctor" both get appropriate (and very cool) readings, with **John Cowan** guesting on the latter. On "The Ride" (Douglas & **Bela Fleck**) Jerry shows just how closely-related bluegrass, folk, *funk* and classical musics really are. This isn't a CD, it's a statement. Man, what a player, what a record. Hey! Maybe Steve Conn could do something with Douglas. I'd pay good money to hear that. I'd even buy the tee-shirt. ♦

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DISCLAIMER

by ROBERT K. OERMANN

Peterson, Wilkinsons & Warner Group Win

I don't know if this has ever happened before or not. I am, after all, getting on in years and my memory isn't what it used to be.

But I know for certain that it's unusual. In this issue, the Label, DisCOVERY and top single awards all go to the same record-company family.

The Wilkinsons walked away with the **DISCOVERY Award**, their only serious challengers being a big-voiced alterna-country unknown from Portland, Ore. named Maureen Andrews and the startlingly raw and rootsy sound of Bap Kennedy.

Most people in my position would probably automatically give the nod to Faith and Tim for **Disc of the Day**. And it surely is a monster record. But for Real Country authenticity I have to go with **Michael Peterson's** "When the Bartender Cries." It touched me in all my special places.

Add Chris Cummings to the three Warner/Reprise/Giant products above and you have a strong case for a **Warner** win as **Label of the Day**. Strong enough for me, anyway. Runner-up honors, however, go to Sugar Hill, for its Sam Bush/Jerry Douglas one-two punch.

As has been true for much of the recent past, some of the most creative work on Music Row is being done outside the country format. This listening stack contained an r&b newcomer named Bo, an excellent Christian popster named Chris Eaton and fine pop/rock/Americana work by Pierce Pettis, Todd Snider, Farmer Not So John, Ronna and the afore mentioned Bap Kennedy. I love this town for that.

COUNTRY

MICHAEL PETERSON "When the Bartender Cries"

Writer: Michael Peterson/Hunter Davis; Producer: Robert Ellis Orrall/Josh Leo; Publisher: Warner-Tamerlane/Boat Money/Song Matters/Famous, BMI/ASCAP; Reprise 9242.

Oh so many months ago, long before the album came out, I heard Michael sing this song. It pinned my ears back and I thought to myself, "This guy is a star." I still feel that way about the song and about him. Applause from this hillbilly heart.

RONNIE McDOWELL "My Heart Will Go On"
Writer: Will Jennings/James Horner; Producer: Ronnie McDowell/Lee Bogan/Joe Meador; Publisher: Famous/Ensign/Irving, ASCAP/BMI; Intersound Country CDX.

It's an interesting arrangement and performance. But, thank you, I think we've already heard Celine Dion sing this often enough, often enough, often enough, often enough.

THE BELLAMY BROTHERS "Tough Love"

Writer: Howard Bellamy; Producer: Bellamy Brothers/Randy Hiebert; Publisher: Bellamy Brothers, ASCAP; Intersound Country/Bellamy Brothers CDX.

Lushly melodic and well sung, but the echo chamber and production are way over the top, boys.

THE WILKINSONS "26"

Writer: Steve Wilkinson/William Wallace; Producer: Tony Haselden/Russ Zavitsan/Doug Johnson; Publisher: Golden Phoenix/Kiayisongs, SOCAN; Giant 9322.

I melted. They are just adorable.

FRED McCARTY "Breakfast In Texas"

Writer: Fred McCarty; Producer: Fred McCarty; Publisher: Red Bruin, ASCAP; Red Bruin CDX.

Pure junk.

FAITH HILL & TIM MCGRAW "Just To Hear You Say That You Love Me"

Writer: Diane Warren; Producer: Dann Huff/Faith Hill; Publisher: Realsongs, ASCAP; Warner Bros. 9297.

Art imitates life. Young and in love, who can deny them this warmth, this ardor?

CHRIS CUMMINGS "Til I See You Again"

Writer: Kevin Welch; Producer: Rick Scott/Jim Ed Norman; Publisher: Sony ATV, ASCAP; Warner Bros. 9342.

Two-stepping with a stomp that goes right through the floor. All the snap, crackle and pop a summer single needs and more. Every Kevin Welch tune deserves lotsa spins.

THE MAVERICKS "Dance the Night Away"

Writer: Raul Malo; Producer: Don Cook/Raul Malo; Publisher: EMI-Blackwood/Rumbalo, BMI; MCA 72056.

Groovamatic.

R&B

BO "Make Love Last Forever"

Writer: Bo; Producer: Mike Bohannon; Publisher: Mike Bohannon, no performance rights listed; TMG Records 93981 (track) (615-315-7081)

This is probably the closest Nashville has come to a truly competitive urban record in today's marketplace. Album is titled *Josephus, The Legend* and is well worth your time. Music City label also has the gifted IAYAAALIS and Keith Floyd on its roster. Help 'em grow.

POP/ROCK

TODD SNIDER "I Am Too"

Writer: Todd Snider/Will Kimbrough;

Producer: John Hampton; Publisher: MCA/I Heard Them Songs/Will Kimbrough, BMI; MCA 11726 (track)

Somewhere over there in yelping-at-the-moon Steve Forbert/John Hiatt territory, but with a lot more edge to the guitar electricity and a definite production appeal to the alterna-rock crowd. Sneeringly engaging

FARMER NOT SO JOHN "Rise Above the Wreckage"

Writer: Linebaugh; Producer: Tucker/Martine; Publisher: Visitor Forty-Seven, BMI; Compass 4250 (track)

Clinkety, clankety track and half-spoken vocal sound like midnight among the burning tires out in the junkyard. Different and haunting.

RONNA "Sweet Pretender"

Writer: Chris Pelcer/Ronna; Producer: Peter Cetera; Publisher: Million Suns/Victoria Kay, BMI/ASCAP; River North 1383 (track)

Formerly the country act Ronna Reeves, the mono monickered Ronna has moved aggressively into femme alterna rock (with a nod to The Beatles "White Album" period). Make room on the Lilith Fair package.

PIERCE PETTIS "The Tip of My Tongue"

Writer: Mark Heard; Producer: Gordon Kennedy; Publisher: Ideola, ASCAP; Compass 4252 (track)

Multi hand drum polyrhythms, ghostly electric guitar figures, startling lyrics and a grab-your-throat vocal of passion. Superb in every respect.

CHRISTIAN

ERIC CHAMPION "Natural"

Writer: Eric Champion; Producer: Eric Champion/Mark Quattrochi; Publisher: Bridge Building/Theopolis, BMI; Essential 70015 (track)

Stop it. You're giving me a headache.

CHRIS EATON "What Kind of Love"

Writer: Chris Eaton/Amy Grant; Producer: Chris Eaton; Publisher: Longitude/Eduard Grant, ASCAP; Cadence 2-46897 (track)

Nice bubbling bass line, keyboard trills and chatters, spare snare work, electric guitar filligrees and a sincere pop tenor. I got into it. A lot.

AMERICANA

KATRINA LANDON "River Voice"

Writer: K. Landon; Producer: Gary Winkler; Publisher: Boomerangst, BMI; Encrypted 0004 (track) (540-389-7633)

Approximately as talented as The Singing Nun and just about as tedious.

JERRY DOUGLAS & MAURA O'CONNELL
"Follow On"

Writer: Paul Brady; Producer: Jerry Douglas; Publisher: none listed; Sugar Hill 3875 (track)

These two are frequent collaborators. Here, they trade yearning phrases like twin instruments and create some real audio magic. Most of Jerry's *Restless On the Farm* CD spotlights his brilliant Dobro, but Maura (with Tim O'Brien on harmony), Steve Earle and John Cowan are on board as vocal guests.

MAUREEN ANDREWS "Strange"

Writer: Mel Tillis/Fred Burch; Producer: Marv Ross; Publisher: Cedarwood, BMI: MAC 003 (track)

She's got that early k.d.lang Patsy/retro thing goin' on. Cool.

BAP KENNEDY "Domestic Blues"

Writer: Bap Kennedy; Producer: Tvangtrust; Publisher: Warner-Tamerlane, BMI: E-Squared 1058 (track)

Ragged and right, this finds the place where the spirits of old-time music and alterna-folk meet and mingle. This whole album is a rootsy, righteous joy.

BLUEGRASS**SAM BUSH "Howlin' At the Moon"**

Writer: James L. Ratts/John McEuen;

Producer: Sam Bush; Publisher: James Loyd, BMI: Sugar Hill 3876 (track)

Multi-talented singer/mandolinist Bush goes back to his roots with a straightforward bluegrass outing. Right on the money.

RALPH STANLEY & RICKY SKAGGS
"Shouting on the Hills of Glory"

Writer: Rowe & Vaughn; Producer: Bil VornDick; Publisher: none listed; Rebel 5001 (track)

With the entire world (Hal Ketchum, Patti Loveless, George Jones, Dwight Yoakam, Vince Gill, Bob Dylan, Junior Brown, Alison Krauss, John Anderson, Vern Gosdin, Jim Lauderdale, Kathy Mattea, Joe Diffie, Diamond Rio, Porter Wagoner, BR5-49, etc., etc.) participating in this double-CD Ralph Stanley tribute it was tough to choose a track to spotlight. I picked Ricky's since he got his start in the grand master's band. Plus, it's a sure 'nuff hand-clapping gospel rouser.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Patty Loveless/High On Love/Epic

Diamond Rio/You're Gone/Arista

Don Walser & Mandy Barnett/Are You Teasin Me/Hightone

Southern Rail/Wasting My Time Loving You/Pinecastle

Red Steagall/Big Texas Moon/Warner Western

Bruce Henderson/I Can Drive/Paradigm

Shana Petrone/Heaven Bound/Epic

Garth Brooks/To Make You Feel My Love/Capitol

James R/Someone Besides Me/Serpent

Roland Majeau/Bugs in a Jar/Royalty

Ken Spooner/Sheik of Shboom/Spoonytunes

Crystal Lewis/Lord I Believe/Myrrh

Ray Driskoll/It Starts With a B/Skrunk Bank

Restless Heart/No End To This Road/RCA

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"It's basically where I'm most comfortable," says Patti Olsen-Garafola of independent radio promotion. She first came to Nashville from Chicago in 1982, and has been on both sides of the promotion fence, having alternated between label posts at MCA, Mercury, Atlantic and RCA, and independent gigs. "I've been around a little bit," she jokes.

The independent life, however, suits her best. "When you're inside you're so far away from getting the music played," she says. "There are other things involved—meetings, meetings and more meetings. You get pulled further away, but my expertise is talking, one on one, to program directors."

She counts 16 years in promotion as one of her greatest assets. "When I started in promotion, an awful lot of people I talk to now were start up music directors. Now they're main program directors or general managers of fairly heavily-weighted large market stations." As radio consolidation puts more decision-making power in fewer hands, Olsen-Garafola finds some solace. "The good news is I know a lot of those peo-

ple directing those conglomerates." Additionally, having worked at so many major labels has given her good rapport with promotion departments around town. "I never left on a bad note," she says.

Partner Bobby Young was the promotion VP while she was at Mercury, but both had the desire to return to their roots as independents. "It's a dynamite team," she says. Their philosophy is currently to stay ahead of the changes sweeping radio. "We have the experience to realize we're going to switch a little bit away from just relationships." They've asked themselves, "What can this company do to retain relationships? What can we do to make stations call us back? That's why we're very heavily involved in helping radio stations design their Web sites. You can't go to radio with 'want, want, want' all the time. You've got to give back.

"We're trying to help stations realize the full potential of the Internet," she continues. "Country radio is losing a lot of its younger demos. That's cyclical, always has been. But a very large segment of the younger demo is heavily involved with the Internet."

Olsen-Garafola is troubled by the conservatism in programming brought on by consolidation—what she calls an "A/C or CHR mentality" of playing only the stars and playing them often. "That's not the kind of listener the country music fan is—they want to find a new artist to be excited about. Merle, Dolly and Willie had their heyday, but eventually had to let the next group in. Well, George, Reba and Garth are going to be in the same boat as they were. If we don't cultivate the next stars and they don't help us, where are we going to be five years from now? We can see some of that erosion happening right now."

In the end, it is the personal interaction of her career that drives Olsen-Garafola. "It's that challenge of breaking through and winning someone over, and eventually becoming friends with them."

—Chuck Aly



NASHVILLE BEAT

Timeless Everlys

When he was introducing his old friends the Everly Brothers to a packed Ryman Auditorium, Chet Atkins, a former mentor and producer, told the crowd that though he'd heard Phil and Don many times over the years, they had never sounded better. Though I'd only had the pleasure of hearing the brothers Everly on radio, records and television, I would have to agree with Chet because the duo's return to the Ryman (April 29) was truly a magical

event. As brother Don said at the show's halfway mark, during which Gov. Don Sundquist and former Gov. Lamar Alexander made the siblings honorary Tennessee Colonels, "Nothing can top this!" Indeed.

After a short but excellent set by opening act John Hartford, whose foursome also featured his son Jamie, out came the Everlys' band, led by Brit guitarist ace Albert Lee. All of the backing musicians were old

English mates of Phil's and Don's who had played with them over the last 15 years since their triumphant comeback concert at London's Royal Albert Hall: Phil Cranham, Tony Newman and Pete Wiekkel. Steel guitar legend Buddy Emmons was the lone Yank.

When Phil (59) and Don (62) finally took the stage, it was as if royalty had entered the Ryman. The air crackled with electricity and everyone in attendance must have felt the jolt when Phil's distinctive high voice topped Don's soulful tenor on the opening medley of "Kentucky/Bowling Green." It was a galvanizing moment, and one which would be repeated many times during the course of the evening. All of the hits, including the one that launched the act in 1957, "Bye Bye Love," were performed. Propelled by the rich acoustic strums of their trademark Gibsons, "Cathy's Clown," and Don's spirited "When Will I Be Loved," Carole King's haunting "Cryin' in the Rain," as well as the raucous Roy Orbison-penned "Claudette" and Little Richard's frenzied "Lucille," all hit their marks, as did the Felice and Boudleaux Bryant tunes, "Wake Up Little Susie" and "All I Have To Do Is Dream."

Despite their age—both brothers looked great—their youthful-sounding voices still are capable of touching that adolescent chord in us all. Their sound, itself born of the Appalachian styles of the Blue Sky Boys, the Delmore Brothers and others, certainly has been a building block in rock-'n-roll from The Beatles and Simon & Garfunkel to The Byrds, among others. It is a timeless sound, one that contains both the soul of country music and the heart of rock-'n-roll.

—Ron Young

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The Kinleys were named Top New Vocal Duet at the 33rd annual "Academy of Country Music Awards." Photo: Ron Wolfson

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STUDIO REPORT

by STEVE HOOD

Star Struck Fans; International Flavor

Fan Fair's gotta be one of my favorite times of the year. I could sit for hours watching the tourists with awe and curiosity in their eyes who bustle around Demonbreun and the Row, hoping to stumble across someone famous or even someone who knows someone who's famous. They are what it's all about...Starstruck Studios has also received a gathering of sorts; an international one at that; as Ace of Base from Sweden, Dolar De Prata from Sao Paulo, Brazil, The Seekers from Australia, and Tomohiko Nishimura from Tokyo, Japan have all recorded separate projects there recently. At least one of the artists booked their time after a virtual tour of the studio while visiting it's website at www.starstruckstudios.com... OmniSound, who just last September installed a new API Legacy console and has undergone major renovations in the control room by wiz Michael Cronin recently, hosted Mike Clute and Diamond Rio for tracks on their upcoming Arista album.

Emerald Sound has added a second Sony 48 track machine...The Money Pit invested some of it's green into Pro Tools 24, an SM69 mic, some Schoeps CMC-50 mics, and some more Soundelux mics... Underground Sound announces its now available-for-rent Paqrat 24 bit converters that work with ADAT or DA-88 tape machines for storage, and the Otari UFC 24 universal converter as well...Leonard Wolf, of Wolf Music, has added a new Avid ProTools 24 audio workstation to his Nashville music and sound design studio where two other ProTools systems are already employed. A group of seven HGTV spots and nine spots for Tractor Supply Company that feature George Strait and "Horse Whisperer" John Lyons have already been scored, sweetened, and mixed in the first month of the new system's use...And The White House recently added "The West Wing", a full feature ProTools room that is equipped to handle multitrack editing, pitch correction, and album mastering, with outboard gear that includes Meyer HD-1 monitors, a Tascam DA-30 MKII DAT recorder, an Otari UFC-24 universal converter, and a Yamaha CD-R. Jordan Richter, formerly with Roswell East studio in Chicago, joins up as the new ProTools engineer.

Creative Workshop is proud to be working Jason Manning these days, as he mans the songplugger and catalog manager positions...615 Music's Laura Palmer is now Business/Studio Manager, and they've brought in Kyle King as sales manager, Shari Robey as Administrative Assistant, and Craig Copeland as Music Registration Coordinator...Dat's all for this month, remember to fax 'em by the fourth (your reports, that is), and try not to run over any fans. See ya next month.

Artist Producer Engineer Label Project

BENNETT HOUSE

Steve Green	Frank Hernandez	Dave Schober	EMI Christ.	strng/horn/voc
"The Rock Slinger"	D. Hart/J. Schrader	Bob Clark	Hope Pub.	trax
Self	Matt Mahaffey	R. Dodd/K. Andrews	Spongebath	trax/od's/voc
Heavenly Melody	David Hamilton	D. Schober/S. McLean	ORTV	trax/strng/horn
Michael O'Brien	Paul Mills	Ronnie Brookshire	Benson	trax
Nichole Nordemann	Mark Hammond	"	Sparrow	"
Vanessa Williams	Keith Thomas	Bill Whittington	Sony	od's/mix
Jon Secada	"	"	"	"
Uncle Sam	"	"	"	prog/voc/od's
Shane Minor	Dann Huff	Jeff Balding	Mercury	trax
Victoria Shaw/others	C. Downs/D. Pack	Snake Reynolds	Cyst. Fib. Fnd.	trax/od's/vid

COUNTY Q

Kelly Shiver	—	C. Pfaff/T.W. Cargile	Major Bob	trax/od's/mix
Aimee Mayo	—	"	BMG	"
Byron Hill	—	R. Matson/R. McGee	MCA	"
Tony Martin/Lee Miller/Monty Criswell	—	David Buchanan	Hamst./Cumb.	"
➔ Doug Johnson/Pat Bunch—	—	T.W. Cargile/R. Matson	S. Erin/Bunch	trax/mix
Sherrie Austin	—	C. Pfaff/R. Matson	Wrensong	trax/od's/mix
Bill Luther	—	Cargile/Matson/Endres	BMG	"
Marty Slayton	Norro Wilson	T.W. Cargile	Norro Prod	trax
Jill Colucci	—	"	Heart Street	trax/od's/mix
Kim Carnes	—	T. Endres/T.W. Cargile	PatrickJoseph	"

Artist Producer Engineer Label Project

CREATIVE RECORDING

Jamie	Stephony Smith	Mills Logan	EMI	—
Pub. demos	T. Douglas/D. Fritts	Paul Skaife	—	—
Darryl Worley	Jason Hauser	M. Logan/P. Skaife	EMI	—
Mark Selby	B. Maher/M. Selby	B. Maher/P. Skaife	Moraine	—
Pub. demos	Doug Nichols	M. Logan/P. Skaife	EMI	—
"	Richard Carpenter	"	—	—
Jack Sundrud	Bruce Miller	"	Fame	—
Brittany Ozier	Steve Mandile	Mills Logan	Moraine	—
Sean Michaels	Brent Maher	B. Maher/M. Logan	"	—
Pub. demos	Tim Johnson	Logan/Skaife/Scoggins	EMI	—

CREATIVE WORKSHOP

Joe Falcon/Seth Garrison/Heather Alkire	Tommy Dee	Joe Funderburk	TNT Prod.	demos
➔ Various	Ronnie Gant	"	Hori-Pro	"
Various	Bob Morrison	"	Bob Morrison	demos
Rick Saucedo	Matthews/Saucedo	"	inde.	od's
Bob Davis	Eddie Bell	B. Krusen/J. Funderburk	Centerstage	Chrstn Cntry

CUPIT STUDIOS

Laura Sheridan	—	Ron Treat	—	demos
Jack Robertson	Jack Robertson	"	—	"
Jon Nicholson	Jerry Cupit	"	—	pre-prod
Tracy Reynolds	"	"	—	vocals
Ray Brasseur	"	"	—	"
Ken Mellons	"	"	Curb	pre-prod
Shara Tew	"	"	—	vocals
Suzanne Lee Price	Joe Khoury	"	—	artist demo
Jim Frazier Prod.	—	"	—	"
Doug Collins	—	"	—	demos
Sound Creations	Fran Kawolski	"	—	jingles
Rick Durrett	—	"	—	vocals

DAN WILLIAMS

Toyota	Dan Williams	Willie Pevar	—	—
Mattell Hot Wheels	"	"	—	—
CVS/Revco	"	"	—	—

EMERALD SOUND

Deana Carter	C. Farren/D. Carter	Marcantonio/T. Waters	Capitol	mix
Warren Brothers	Chris Farren	"	RCA/BNA	"
Rodney Atkins	Chuck Howard	"	Curb	trax
Yankee Grey	J. Leo/R.E. Orall	B. Fowler/A. Ditto	Sony	trax/od's
Sara Evans	N. Wilson/B. Cannon	B. Sherrill/G. Smith	RCA	trax
Jerry Kilgore	S. Bogard/J. Stevens	J. Guess/P. Murphy	Famous	trax/od's

LOVE SHACK

Julie Wood	M. Bright/D. Huff	M. Hagen/B. MacMillan	EMI	od's
James/Nichols	"	"	"	"
Brad Little	Skip Ewing	Ed Simonton	—	"
Michael Smotherman	Robb Royer	Lee Groitzsch	—	"
Susan Werner	Darrell Scott	Miles Wilkenson	Bottom Line	trax

MAGIC TRACKS

Michelle Wright	Billy Joe Walker, Jr.	Alan Schulman	Arista	od's
Scott Emerick	M. McNally/M. Miller	"	—	"
Sawyer Brown	"	"	Curb	trax

MASTERFONICS

Olivia Newton-John	Tony Brown	C. Ainlay/M. Ralston	MCA/DTS	DTS mix
Crawford/West	Bob DiPiero	H. Tassin/J. Saylor	WB	mix
Trini Triggs	Chuck Howard	Csaba/D. Hall	Curb	"
Jewel	Ben Keith	"	Atlantic	"
Tami Jones	Paul Worley	B. Sherrill/M. Hagen	Sony	od's

Artist	Producer	Engineer	Label	Project	Artist	Producer	Engineer	Label	Project
Rose	Denny Knight	D. Knight/J. Saylor	—	od's/mix	Jars Of Clay	—	Rocky Schnaars	Brentwood	rough mix
Travis Tritt	Billy Joe Walker	D. Thoener/P. Murphy	WB	trax	John Berry	Chuck Howard	Dave Thoener	Capital	trax/mix
Kevin Sharp	David Foster	J. Balding/G. Spinner	Asylum	"	Lesley McDaniel	"	"	Curb	trax
Allison Moorer	K. Greenburg/T. Brown	J. Niebank/Chris Davie	MCA	mix	Ledward Kaapana	Steve Buckingham	Gary Paczosa	Windham Hill	"
Julie Wood	D. Huff/M. Bright	J. Balding/M. Hagen	EMI	"	Jeff White	Jeff White	"	Rounder	"
MASTERLINK					Alison Krauss	A. Krauss/C. Atkins	"	Hokker	trib. to Chet
Fishbone Fred	J. Noland/T. Preiser	Eric Paul	—	trax/od's/mix	Noah Kelly	K. Lehning/F. Rogers	S. Tillisch/K. Lehning	Asylum	trax/mix
Mogollon	Larry Jefferies	Larry Jefferies	Vista World	od's/mix	Larry Gatlin	Larry Gatlin	Dave Cline	—	mix
Prentis Goodwin	Audie Ashworth	J.R. McNeely	—	mix	615 MUSIC				
Demos	Stillwell/Dacus/Morrison	Stan Dacus	Fat Sam	trax/od's	Music Factory (Netherlands)	Randy Wachtler	Dennis Ritchie	—	promos
➔				od's	WRAL-TV	"	"	—	news music
Sams Town Casino	N. Lyras/E. Dixon	N. Lyras/C. Hailey	—	od's	Dateline NBC	"	Drew Rydberg	—	show themes
Kathy Hussey	K. Hussey/B. Mater	Chad Hailey	—	mix	Johnny Paycheck	Wachtler/ Saltmarsh	"	—	Life&Times
L.C. Malone	David Z	David Z/C. Hailey	Windy Ridge	trax	Comedy Twist ABC-TV	➔	Wachtler/Rutherford	John Wiles	—
Hurricane Carter	H. Johnson/H. Carter	C. Hailey/D. Henson	Fat Puppy	trax/mix	➔	Wachtler/Rutherford/Snider	Robert "King" Williams	—	concert intro
Oystein Sunde	Ashworth/A. Tylden	"	Spinner	trax	Pam Tillis	Wachtler/Rutherford/Snider	Dennis Ritchie	—	—
Ole Berthelsen	Ole Berthelsen	"	Guree	trax/mix	NBC Today Show	Rutherford/Wachtler	John Wiles	—	TV show theme
MONEY PIT					TNN-CBS Cable	"	Drew Rydberg	—	—
Collin Raye	P. Worley/B.J. Walker	Ed Simonton	Sony	piano od's	TNN Life & Times	Saltmarsh/Wachtler	Drew Rydberg	—	—
The Wilkinsons	Haseldon/Zavitson/Johnson	E. Seay/E. Hellerman	Giant	trax/od's/mix	SOUND EMPORIUM				
➔		Schleicher/Hellerman	Sony	trax	Vince Gill	Tony Brown	R. Martin/M. Andrews	MCA	od's
Tammy Jones	Paul Worley	E. Seay/D. Jamison	Bluxo	"	Jenny Simpson	G. Fundis/R. Methvin	D. Sinko/M. Andrews	Mercury	trax/od's
Wild Horses	Anthony Martin	Cooper/Hellerman/Breckling	Sony	trax/od's/mix	Billy Dean	D. Gates/B. Dean	"	Capitol	"
Montgomery-Gentry	"	"	"	"	"Old Dogs"	Jim Yockey	"	—	comm. shoot
MUSIC MILL					James Bonamy	McClure/Bonamy	M. McClure/J. Skinner	—	trax
Dove Awards	Harry Stinson	Eric Rudd	CCMA	trax/od's/mix	Gillian Welch	T Bone Burnette	Will/Andrews/Skinner	Almo	"
Sara Evans	B. Cannon/N. Wilson	Billy Sherrill	RCA	od's	David Pack	David Pack	S. Bishir/H. Nirider	Warner Res.	"
Kenny Chesney	"	"	"	"	John Cowan	Wendy Waldman	M. Boshears/J. Skinner	Windswept	"
Chitao E Xorora	Guto Graca Mezco	Benny Faccone	Polygram	"	SOUNDSHOP				
OCEAN WAY					Wheels	Andy Byrd	John Dickson	—	od's
Faith Hill	Byron Gallimore	Julian King	Warner	trax	Chris Cummings	Jim Ed Norman	E. Prestige/M. Capps	WB	trax
Alan Jackson	Keith Stegall	John Kelton	Arista	"	Rick Trevino	Don Cook	M. Bradley/M. Capps	Sony	mix
Lucinda Williams/Emmylou Harris		Glyn Johns	Almo	trib. alb.	Fish Heads & Rice	B. Chancey/W. Aldridge	"	"	"
Peter Frampton	Peter Frampton	Justin Niebank	Disney	trax	➔				
Garth Brooks	Lee Logan	Travis Turk	Capital	radio show	SOUNDSTAGE				
Kathy Troccoli	Nathan Disearé	Paul Salvason	Reunion	trax	Reality Check	Todd Collins	R. Shippen/T. Green	EMI/Starsong	mix
RECORDING ARTS					Sara Evans	Tony Brown	Jeff Balding	RCA	"
Shannon	Mucho	Alvord/Haudin/Greene	Udeniable	mix	Vince Gill	"	C. Ainley/M. Ralston	MCA	"
Cloud Nine	Banken/Hogue	J. Jaszcz/G. Greene	Cinch	"	Olivia Newton-John	"	J. Balding/A. Grassmick	"	"
Jordan Hill	"	"	Atlantic	"	Warren Brothers	Chris Farren	S. Marcantonio/T. Green	RCA	od's
The Matters	Russ Zavitson	R. Good/G. Greene	Shop	"	Michael McDonald	Michael McDonald	R. Will/A. Grassmick	WB	mix
The Wilkinsons	Zavitson/Haselton/Johnson	Rodney Good	Giant	voc/od's	Jeff Carson	Max T. Barnes	C. White/T. Green	Curb	"
➔				mix	Alan Jackson	Keith Stegall	John Kelton	Arista	od's
Wayne Warner	Troy Lancaster	R. Charles/G. Greene	Shop	mix	Bobby Bare, Jr.	Peter Collins	P. Hager/M. Springer	Immortal	mix
SEVENTEEN GRAND					Collin Raye	Paul Worley	K. Beamish/D. Bason	Sony	"
Shannon Brown	Tankersley/N. Wilson	Brian Tankersley	Arista	mix	WOODLAND				
Sara Evans	Pete Anderson	"	RCA	"	Various "Listen To Our Hearts"	➔	Phil Nash	Ronnie Brookshire	Greg Parker
Patty Loveless	Vince Gill	Russ Martin	Sony	Tribute	➔	Madison Choir	Leon Burnette	Tye Bellar	John Clark
Lisa Angelle	L. Angelle/A. Gold	Tony Shepperd	Dreamworks	mix	Shannon Brown	Tankersley/N. Wilson	Brian Tankersley	—	od's/mix
Allyson Taylor	Allyson Taylor	Jake Nicely	Decca	od's	Michael McDonald	Michael McDonald	Ronnie Brookshire	—	od's
Orleans	Jody Peterson	"	HDS	5.1 mix	Kathy Troccoli	Joe Thomas	Frank Pappalarde	—	trax
Ty Herndon	Paul Worley	Tommy Cooper	Sony	od's					

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Bobby Karl... Works The Room

Gold is such a pretty color, don't you agree?

It's been awhile since we had a precious-metal celebration, so the fabulons turned out in full force to celebrate **Michael Peterson's** favorite hue. The site was La Paz on Cinco de Mayo (5/5).

"How about a hickey to take home and show my wife?" inquired visiting songwriter **Richard Bach** flirtatiously of **Marjie McGraw**. Never say those things in front of a person with a pen in his hand. Meanwhile, Marjie's hubby **Bob Colson** was asking above the din of the salsa band. "Where is Susana Ross when you need somebody to dance with?" What's going on here? **Joyce Rice** cautioned us that La Paz had a bad rating from the health department for improper meat storage and rodent droppings. We all ate anyway.

Chris Blizzard, David Preston, Tia Sellers, Jim Ed Norman, David Wycoff, Kurt Denny, David Corlew, Ron Huntsman, Janis Azrak, Jamie Matteson, Judy Harris, Donna Hughes, Gary Falcon and his management partner **John Goodman**, co-producer **Robert Ellis Orrall, Jay Orr, Rick & Janis Carnes, Chuck Aly, Brian Prout, Bob Paxman** and **Nancy Anderson** worked the room, as did master schmoozer Michael.

The band was so loud we couldn't hear each other gossip, but I did catch **Bill Mayne** praising Michael's character as well as his music. Also: the star's "Too Good To Be True" was at "cinco" on the charts on Cinco de Mayo.

A lot of our "golden boys" (and girls) have been making the party rounds lately.

Garth Brooks made both No. 1 fetes for "Two Pina Colodas," to the delight of **Brad Schmitt**, ASCAP and BMI (5/18). And we can't say enough good things about the writers, **Shawn Camp, Benita Hill** and **Sandy Mason**.



(L to R) Capitol's Pat Quigley, ASCAP's Connie Bradley, Garth Brooks, producer Allen Reynolds and writers Sandy Mason, Benita Hill and Shawn Camp celebrate "Two Pina Colodas" reaching the top of the charts. Photo: Alan Mayor

Marty Stuart was among the celebs du jour at the 50th wedding anniversary bash for **Earl & Louise Scruggs** (5/3) at the Gibson Cafe. Your 50th is your Golden one, right? There's that lovely color again. **Hazel Smith** pronounced it the best party she's been to all year. And she's been to a few.

Charlie Daniels rounded up the troops for an NFL Players Association press conference at the CMA building (5/18). **Kirt Webster** has all the details. **Jo Dee Messina** starred at her record-release bash on the Curb parking lot (5/6). **Victor Meczyzne** staged his at Radio Cafe (5/4). **Olivia Newton-John** chose The Trace (5/14).

There were golden rings at the First Christian Church on Franklin Road (5/16). That's because TNN publicist **Dolly Neese** exchanged them with her betrothed **Steve Chandler**. Partly because she's fabulous and partly because her parents are twin fabulons, a world of music people attended the nuptials and/or the reception at the Maxwell House Hotel. So joining **Chuck & Sandy Neese** in merriment were **David & Karen Conrad, Kevin Lane, David & Susana Ross, Horton Frank, Jon & Cynthia Grimson, Lisa Wahnish, Al & Phyllis**

Shiltz, Patsi Cox, Wayne & Pat Halper, Jenny Alford, Dan Einstein, Kathy Mattea & Jon Vezner, Holly Potts, John Grady, Bob & Lucinda Millard, Dick Frank, Noel Fox, Al & Dawn Bunetta, Rhetta Harvey and **Janet E. Williams**.

OK. I'm gonna try this. Bear with me. The bride's gown had a sleeveless, fitted lace bodice with a seven-foot train erupting from back satin pleats. The bridesmaids' colors were blue and yellow. Their gowns were navy chiffon and they carried sprays of yellow (golden?) roses. Among them was **Eve Annunziato**, who works in TV in Missouri. The groomsmen included her hubby, Cape Girardeaux, Mo. TV weatherman **Charlie Neese**. They wore yellow rosebuds in their lapels. **Renee Chandler** sang "God Bless Our Love." **David Foster** officiated, warmly. Dolly and Steve were adorable.

Sandy, by the way, looked like she'd stepped offstage at the Academy Awards. She was scrumptious in a cream-colored floorlength gown with a wide shawl collar. Thanks to Ms. Potts, her shoulders and bosom were dusted in gold glitter. There's that color again. ♦

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[continued from page 8]



ROGER MURRAH

Roger Murrah has been reappointed by Governor Don Sundquist to serve a second term on the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission Advisory Council...

Lisa Gladfelter Bell has joined FORCE as publicist...

The Gibson Guitar Cafe and Gallery is holding a country song contest this summer, with a Gibson CL45 Custom Acoustic guitar as grand prize. The top four winners will also receive a free demo of their song that will be played for publishers and record companies. 385-9262...

Gary Younger, former West Coast Promotions Manager for Imprint Records has formed Go West! Promotions. Based in Los Angeles, Go West! will provide regional promotion support to record labels. 818-360-1685...

Country.com has added an online bookstore and will feature titles and on-line chats with prominent country music, motorsports, lifestyle and Southern authors...

LABEL NEWS

Greg Gosselin has been promoted to Director of Marketing at Atlantic Nashville. He was manager of Marketing Administration...

Scott Cosby has been appointed Tour Marketing Administrator at Arista Nashville. The 1988 Belmont grad was formerly Promotion Coordinator at the label...



SCOTT COSBY

Atlantic Records has promoted **Greg Sax** to Vice President of National Promotion. He was formerly Southwest Promotion Manager based in Dallas. Sax will relocate to Nashville...

Gerry House has signed on to host the DreamWorks Records Fan Fair show featuring **Randy Travis**...

Tampa DJ **Tom Rivers** is slated to host RLG's Fan Fair show on June 17th...

ARTIST NEWS

Brooks & Dunn were named the winners of the International Duo of 1997 at the Dutch Country Music Awards Gala on April 26. **Alan Jackson** was named Top Male Vocalist...

Steve Wariner's *Burnin' The Roadhouse Down* sold nearly 30,000 units its first week, placing it at No. 6 on the chart and giving Wariner his career-high debut...

Sara Evans has been in the studio recently singing background vocals on "I Never Really Knew You" for **Vince Gill's**

upcoming album, and has collaborated with **Tony Brown** on "Almost New," a song for the soundtrack of the upcoming film *Clay Pigeons*, starring **Joaquin Phoenix**. She's also working on her second album, due out this fall, with producers **Norro Wilson** and **Buddy Cannon**...

David Kersh reeled in a 6.5 lb. bass to take the first-prize \$10,000 purse in the 1998 Bassmaster Superstars Benefit on Old Hickory Lake in Hendersonville, TN on May 1. Kersh has donated the prize money to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation...

Garth Brooks has sold over 4 million tickets on his current tour and on May 1, he surprised the 4 million ticket buyers—

Greg and Melissa Seiner—at the second of his four sold-out shows at Roberts Stadium in Evansville, IN. Brooks bestowed the lucky couple with tour merchandise, ten dozen red roses, a Sony video camera and a 35 mm camera, a four-day four-night trip; golf clubs for each; and a Chevrolet Suburban...



WADE HAYES

Wade Hayes has joined the likes of **David Letterman**, **Jerry Seinfeld**, **George Clooney** and **Tiger Woods** as one of *Playgirl* magazine's hottest celebrity bachelors...

The first ever show of **Marty Stuart's** original photographs will be this September, in an installation with the works of award winning LIFE photographer **Ed Clark**. Also, Stuart has authored an article to be published in the May issue of the prestigious *Oxford American* magazine...

Ricochet performed a benefit concert at lead singer **Heath Wright's** alma mater to raise funds for a scholarship program. The South Plains (Texas) College graduate will have a scholarship in his name for upcoming musicians...

Sherrie Austin traveled to Cologne, Germany in early May for an appearance on the popular German TV show *Geld Oder Liebe*. (*Love Or Money*). This program, with 8 million viewers, had never before featured country music until Arista label-mates **Diamond Rio** appeared last December...


Alabama is making plans to open their second Alabama Grill restaurant in Myrtle Beach, SC. This theme-oriented restaurant,

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MUSICAL CHAIRS

similar in nature to Hard Rock Cafe and Planet Hollywood, showcases an extensive memorabilia collection from country music stars and legends. The first Alabama Grill opened in Pigeon Forge, TN in December of 1996...

Reba McEntire's new album, *If You See Him*, is her first enhanced CD. Plus, Microsoft has designed an exclusive Reba Browser with a custom interface design that features Web site links, wallpaper, and the RebaNews Active desktop component. Through the ECD, Internet users can connect directly to Reba's Website to continue the experience...

Former Mississippi State lineman and country humorist **Jerry Clower** received the All American Football Foundation's Outstanding American Award on May 18 at Sam's Town Casino in Tunica, MS...

PUBLISHING NEWS

DreamWorks/SKG Music has signed a co-publishing deal with **Buck Moore** and Princtella Music...

Sony/ATV Tree has entered into a co-publishing agreement with Mike O'Rear Publishing Co., Inc. Both companies will work in tandem to maximize the exploitation of copyrights under the O'Rear umbrella. Writers signed to the co-venture include **Darlene Austin, Bob Frisch, Greg Hudik** and **Billy Sideman**...

Mark Weiss has joined Harlan Howard songs as Office and Administration Manager. He replaces **Katie Pareigis**, who joined the Hard Rock Cafe promotion and publicity team...

Robert Mather has been promoted to Associate VP, Administration, EMI Music Publishing Nashville. He was previously Senior Director of Administration...

Mike Whelan has been promoted to Director of Creative Services at Opryland Music Group...

Willis Jones Music has a new address and phone number: PO Box 12080, Nashville, 37212; 615-383-1031...

Maverick Music, owned by **Madonna, Freddy DeMann** and **Lionel Conway**, has landed the No. 1 & No. 2 spots on the *R&R* Country charts for the first week in May, and on *Billboard's* country singles charts the second week in May. Both "Out of My Bones" and "This Kiss" were co-written by Maverick writer **Robin Lerner**. "Bones" was penned with **Gary Burr** and **Sharon Vaughn** and "Kiss" with **Annie Roboff** and **Beth Neilsen Chapman**...

NEM Entertainment is re-establishing its Nashville presence with the signing of **Emmet Martin** as Creative Director. Temporary offices are at 26203 Clocktower

Drive in Franklin. 615-771-0195. NEM handles the back catalogs of writers such as **BB King, Christine McVie, Dean Dillon, Mac McAnally, Billy Kirsch, Dave Gibson** and **Marty Raybon**...

Nick Pellegrino has joined SESAC as an affiliated writer...

Todd Wolfe and **R. Scott Bryan**, two former members of Sheryl Crow's band, have signed a co-publishing agreement with Hamstein Publishing...

Jim Scott has formed Encore Entertainment, a new publishing and artist management company. Scott co-founded Double J Music Group with Juan Contreras in 1994. **Keith Follese** is Encore's President. **Brad Allen** will serve as plugger, and **Pamela DeMarche** will be Professional Manager. **Karen Light** will serve as Office Manager. 615-256-1207...

Southern Arts Music and Key Mark Music have moved to 1710 Roy Acuff Place (The Music Mill). The phone number remains the same...

BOOKING/TOURING NEWS

Henry Juszkwicz, Chairman & CEO

of Gibson Musical Instruments company, has teamed with concert promoter **George Wein** to produce the first annual Gibson Guitar Festival this July 25 and 26 at Fort Adams State park in Newport, Rhode Island. The event will feature two stages with performances by top guitarists, instructional guitar clinics, interactive guitar booths, a virtual reality concert simulator, new product demos and other guitar oriented activities. The festival will feature, but not be limited to, Gibson artists. 212-496-9000...

Jerry Jeff Walker's annual Laborfest, usually held in Luckenback, Texas on Labor Day weekend, will move this year to the Mishawaka Amphitheatre in Bellvue, Colorado. 970-482-4420 or <www.mishawakaconcerts.com>...

INDEPENDENT NEWS

Blue Hat Records has inked a distribution deal with Navarre Corporation. **David Corlew**, President/GM of Blue Hat has announced the team's first release will be **The Charlie Daniels Band's** *Blues Hat*, on June 16...

Koch Records will reissue Grammy win-

THE SONG POWER INDEX

→ predicting new single success ←

SPI MONDAY • MAY 18, 1998 • #080

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL (# of reports)	ADD FACTOR	PASSION
8.04	•	VINCE GILL/If You Ever Have Forever In Mind/MCA (30)	4.07	3.97
7.80	•	MICHAEL PETERSON/When The Bartender Cries/Reprise (30)	3.83	3.97
7.76	7.61	TOBY KEITH/Double Wide Paradise/Mercury (33)	4.12	3.64
7.75	7.62	PATTY LOVELESS/High On Love/Epic (32)	4.06	3.69
7.60	7.45	DIAMOND RIO/You're Gone/Arista (32)	3.94	3.66
7.07	•	JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY/Cover You In Kisses/Atlantic (28)	3.68	3.39
6.83	6.39	MARK NESLER/Used To The Pain/Asylum (30)	3.33	3.50
6.79	•	MINDY McCREADY/The Other Side/BNA (29)	3.48	3.31
6.64	6.24	LISA BROKOP/How Do I Let Go/Columbia (30)	3.47	3.17
6.47	6.48	LINDA DAVIS/I Wanna Remember This/DreamWorks (34)	3.41	3.06
6.21	5.64	BIG HOUSE/Faith/MCA (34)	3.21	3.00
6.17	6.27	MILA MASON/The Strong One/Atlantic (34)	3.32	2.85
5.17	•	GEORGE JONES/Wild Irish Rose/MCA (30)	2.50	2.67
3.09	3.14	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN/I Honestly Love You/MCA (32)	1.53	1.56

SPI = Add Factor + Passion. Songs are ranked by SPI points. Ties are ranked according to highest Add Factor Average.

METHODOLOGY/RESEARCH SPI

The SPI number shows a new single's strength, as perceived by radio programmers, on a 2 to 10 scale. Our panelists rate each song up to five points for Add Factor (5=add), and up to five points for passion. Those scores are combined and averaged to compute the SPI score. The correlation between peak SPI number and ultimate chart success is detailed in the 2/8 issue of *Music Row*.

ner **Lucinda Williams'** 1988 release *Rough Trade* on June 16th. The original 18 tracks have been remastered and new liner notes were written by poet laureate **Miller Williams** (Lucinda's father). Williams long-awaited Mercury release, *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road*, will also bow in June. Koch will also reissue two landmark country albums, *Train Whistle Blues* by **Jimmie Rodgers** and *Flatt And Scruggs At Carnegie Hall...*

OTHER FORMATS

Rainsong Graphite Guitars has signed bassist **John Entwistle** to an endorsement agreement...

Legendary jazz guitarist **Lee Ritenour**, who recently started his own label, i.e. Music, will release his solo debut recording *This Is Love*, featuring guest vocalists **Lisa Fischer** and **Phil Perry**, saxophonists **Bill Evans** and **Ernie Watts**, **Bob James** on electric piano, and other renowned musicians...

BENEFIT NEWS

The 1998 **Joe Diffie** Charity Golf Classic has been pushed from June 15 to September 28 at Legends of Tennessee Golf Club. Proceeds will benefit First Steps, Inc. 615-742-4343...

Muriel Anderson's annual All-star Guitar Night at the summer NAMM Show is set for Friday, July 10, 8pm at Ace of Clubs. This year's lineup includes **Dan Crary**, **Michael Johnson**, **Brent Mason**, **Pat Bergeson**, **Larry Knight**, **Nokie Edwards**, **Anderson** and more. A portion of the proceeds will go to Gilda's Club of Nashville. <www.allstarguitarnight.com>...

The Rotary Club of Lebanon will present the benefit show for Camp Horizon, a respite for children with cancer, at Cumberland University on June 13 at 6:30pm. **Matraca Berg**, **Bobby Braddock**, **Bobby Boyd**, **Sylvia Hutton**, **Brett Jones** and **Billy Burnett**, among others, will perform an in-the-round show at the university's Bill & June Heydel Fine Arts Theater. For tickets or sponsorship information, call 444-4350...

Sammy Kershaw hosted the Second

WRITER'S NOTES

Robin Lerner



BIRTHPLACE: New York
YEARS IN NASHVILLE: 2
PUBLISHER: Maverick Music
HITS/CUTS/CHART ACTION: "This Kiss," "My Wild Frontier," Faith Hill; Out Of My Bones," Randy Travis; "You'll Always Be In My Life," Neal McCoy; "Crazy Love," Luther Vandross
FAVORITE SONG YOU WROTE: "My Wild Frontier"
FAVORITE SONG YOU DIDN'T WRITE: "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother"

ON WHAT INSTRUMENT DO YOU WRITE? A Pilot Precise Rolling Ball V7, Fine, Blue; legal pad, guitar, piano...in that order.

INFLUENCES: Broadway, Motown, Bob Dylan, Beatles, Rickie Lee Jones, Elvis Costello

ADVICE TO WRITERS: Be authentic—try not to anticipate the market. If you write from a true place, inspiration is sure to knock... Always keep a light on and a window open!

LITTLE KNOWN BIOGRAPHICAL FACT: Years ago, I drove a horse and carriage in Central Park... I'm not related to Alan J. Lerner... Phil Spector threatened to kill me in a limo!... As a little girl, my daughter Tess played with an imaginary princess, "Puckalesia," after whom my publishing company was named.

ISSUES FACING SONGWRITERS TODAY: Diane Warren...

Robin is experiencing phenomenal success with "This Kiss" and "Out Of My Bones." MR asked her how it felt to have co-written both the No. 1 and No. 2 songs on the Billboard Country charts. I'm burning a lot of candles. It feels great because I've been working so long and so hard to get there. *Give us details about Phil Spector threatening murder in a limousine.* I don't know if I should! He's kind of an explosive personality. He carries this body guard around with him and if Phil doesn't like something you do or say, he'll threaten to kill you. One evening a group of us were going to a dinner in Manhattan, and I took a seat in the limo next to this girl. Phil sort of had his eye on her, so he told me if I didn't move he'd kill me. *So what did you do?* I moved.

Annual Torch Breakfast at Planet Hollywood in Nashville on April 30. The breakfast/celebrity auction raised over \$10,000 for the 1998 Tennessee Special Olympics. The event was part of the yearly fundraising efforts of the Metropolitan Police

Department...

Bill Anderson will return to his adopted hometown of Commerce, GA on June 26 for his Second Annual Homecoming Benefit Concert. The event, to be held at Tiger Stadium at Commerce High School.

ADMIT ONE

ARTIST	GROSS	TIX SOLD	%FULL	VENUE	CITY/ST	DATE
Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, Steve Wariner	\$2,594,040	120,653	100#	Alamadome	San Antonio, TX	4/14-18
George Strait, Tim McGraw, John Michael Montgomery, Faith Hill, Lee Ann Womack, Lila McCann, Asleep at the Wheel	\$2,154,509	55,269	100	Silverdome	Pontiac, MI	4/18
George Strait, Tim McGraw, John Michael Montgomery, Faith Hill, Lee Ann Womack, Lila McCann, Asleep at the Wheel	\$1,853,795	47,390	100	TransWorld Dome	St. Louis, MO	4/19
Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood	\$1,673,455		100~	Compaq Center	Houston, TX	4/7-11
George Strait, Tim McGraw, John Michael Montgomery, Faith Hill, Lee Ann Womack, Lila McCann, Asleep at the Wheel	\$2,015,436	49,739	100	Alameda County Stadium	Oakland, CA	4/26
George Strait, Tim McGraw, John Michael Montgomery, Faith Hill, Lee Ann Womack, Lila McCann, Asleep at the Wheel	\$1,482,413	37,809	100	Edison Field	Anaheim, CA	4/25
Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood	\$863,255	42,110	100*	LSU	Baton Rouge, LA	4/23-25
LeAnn Rimes, Bryan White	\$140,377	5,754	100	NM State University	Las Cruces, NM	
Glen Campbell, Ruby Lovett	\$63,628	2,122	63**	Center for Performing Arts	Cerritos, CA	4/17-18
Neal McCoy	\$60,342	2,440	72	Star Plaza Theatre	Merrillville, IN	

source: amusement business

*Three sellouts **Two shows #Six sellouts ~Five Sellouts

MUSICAL CHAIRS

also features **The Jordans**, **Johnny Russell** and **The Whites**. Proceeds will help restore the 100 year-old Commerce Cultural Center...

The National Kidney Foundation of Middle Tennessee has organized a "Kidney Cars Program," an ongoing fundraising project wherein anyone can donate a used car, boat truck or motor home to be sold or to be salvaged for parts. The Kidney Foundation will arrange free vehicle pickup and donors may qualify for a tax deduction. Call 1-800-488-2277 or 615-383-3887...

A total of 144 golfers, including Nashville newscaster **Bob Mueller**, **Marty Roe** and **Mark Miller** participated in the sixth annual **Gerry House/Logan's Roadhouse** golf tournament on April 28 at Legends Club of Tennessee. The event raised more than \$25,000 for the Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity. Funds will cover the costs of the 98th home built by Habitat in the community...

TV/FILM NEWS

TNN will show *The Life and Times of Owen Bradley* on July 1. Bradley is considered the "founder" of Music Row, and is one of the most pervasively influential figures in the history of country music...

CHRISTIAN NEWS

The Christian Music Trade Association (CMTA) has announced plans to implement a music classification system for new music releases. Product will be categorized and coded with a six-digit identifier, theoretically helping retailers rack music and better

position it in stores. The code will be printed above the UPC barcode, showing a main category, a subcategory and the theme (for example, Christmas or Easter). The system includes 22 main categories, 45 subcategories and 11 theme selections, and is designed to develop a national consistency for Christian retail...

A Christian music-themed restaurant similar in style to the Hard Rock Cafe will open next month near Arlington, TX. The restaurant, still unnamed, is a \$1.5 million facility located across the street from the Six Flags Over Texas entrance, and will feature live Christian bands, drama teams and comedians seven nights a week, plus album release parties and acoustic concerts by local and national Christian artists...

Christian retail generated the largest sales of **Michael W. Smith's** *Live the Life* when it debuted in late April. According to SoundScan, of the 49,000 copies sold, 43,000 were purchased at Christian retail. The album charted at No. 23 on *Billboard's* Top 200...

David Caldwell has been tapped as Senior Vice President of Operations and Administration for the Sparrow Label Group.

Sharon Heyward has been appointed Senior Director of Marketing for Harmony Records...

Copyright Management Inc. and Integrated Copyright Group Inc. are merging with The Zeal Group. The new company combines administrative services for Gospel and Christian music publishers with systems development and technology services to provide a comprehensive

Christian Music Publishing Management concern. CMI's **Terry Smith** will continue to serve in an executive capacity; **John Barker**, founder of ICG, becomes CMI's Chief Operating Officer and **Tim Smith** will continue as the President and CEO of the Zeal Group...

Benson artists **NewSong** will host two Xtreme Summer conferences this June in Panama City Beach, FL. Other artists will include **Big Tent Revival**, **Out of Eden** and **Reality Check**, plus speakers **Dawson McAllister** and **Barry St. Clair**...

Singer Songwriters **Geron and Becky Davis** have formed a partnership with international relief agency Feed The Children. The Davis' will show an informational video at each of their concerts and give attendees the opportunity to become involved with the organization's efforts in that area. ♦

SIGNINGS

RECORDING

Johnny Paycheck • Sony Nashville
David Robertson, Alicia Williamson • Discovery House Music

PUBLISHING

Steve Rice • South Beach Music
Red Simpson • Jiles-Beam Music

MANAGEMENT

BlackHawk • Mike Robertson Management
Philip Claypool • BLT Management

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ADULT CONTEMPORARY

"Please Come Back" • Michelle Tumes • Sparrow

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"Cross It Out" • Lisa Daggis • Cheyenne

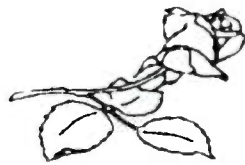
MAINSTREAM ALBUM SALES

You Light Up My Life: Inspirational Songs • LeAnn Rimes • Curb

CHRISTIAN ALBUM SALES

Obvious • 4Him • Benson

Source: 5/4/98 issue of *CCM Update*.
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Visit Tracey K. Houston at her booth at Fan Fair (Building D, Booth 425). The Tracey K. Houston Fan Club Party to be held at The Scoreboard, (located at Music Valley Dr. by Opryland) Thursday, June 18th at 5:00 P.M. until?

Catch Jesse Wilson at the I.F.C.O. Booth at Fan Fair, June 16-19 at the following times:
Tuesday: 2:00-6:00 P.M.
Wednesday: 4:00-6:00 P.M.
Thursday: 2:00-6:00 P.M.
Friday: 10:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.

Everyone's invited to The Jesse Wilson International Fan Club Party, June 18, 8:00 P.M. until 11:00 at Joey Wayne's, 1038 W. Kirkland Avenue, Inglewood, TN (behind Radio Shack)

Children are welcome until 11:00 P.M. (No Cover Charge)

All Artists appear courtesy of Rosebud Records, © 1998 Rosebud Records ©, Rosebud Records, Inc.
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Eddie Rabbitt

November 27, 1941—May 7, 1998

Legendary country singer and songwriter Eddie Rabbitt succumbed to lung cancer on May 7 at the age of 56. Rabbitt had fought a long battle with the disease.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Rabbitt first found success as a songwriter in the early 1970s, penning "Kentucky Rain" for Elvis Presley, which became Elvis' 50th Gold record, and "Pure Love" for Ronnie Milsap. His own artist's deal came in 1974 at Electra Records. Rabbitt's first No. 1, "Drinkin' My Baby (Off My Mind)" came in early 1976, the first of a string of chart hits that lasted through five record labels over 15 years. Rabbitt was a much awarded artists, including the ACM's New Artist of the Year in 1978, *Performance* magazine's Best Country Music Act, *Cash Box's* Top Country Crossover Male act, and two Grammy nominations for Best Country Song and Best Country Vocal Performance for "Drivin' My Life Away," all in 1981. Rabbitt continued to score chart and sales success through 1990, when six of his songs were given BMI "Million-Air" awards.

Rabbitt continued to tour until he was diagnosed with lung cancer. He refused to let his illness put a stop to his career and fulfilled a lifelong dream when he recorded an album of children's songs, *Welcome To Rabbittland*, in 1996. He also recorded *Beatin' The Odds* between chemotherapy sessions, and that album was released by Intersound Records last September.

Rabbitt is survived by his wife, Janine; one daughter, Demelza, 16; and one son, Tommy, 11. Memorial donations may be made to Vicel, Inc., Eddie Rabbitt Memorial Fund, PO Box 1328, Bonsall, CA 93004. Vicel is a medical research group developing immunological treatments of cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

—Charlene Blevins



WELCOME ABOARD

Dear Edward Morris,

I really enjoyed your clear and up front reviews of the latest country music videos. For those of us who live, breath and eat it, it is certainly refreshing to read a review from a reviewer who has obviously taken the time to really watch the piece. I know you won't always be "in love" with our clips, but the honesty is appreciated. Welcome Aboard!

I took you seriously when you asked the video community to invite you to our production shoots. I'm making sure to fax you production booklets as we do them and look forward to meeting you soon. Take care!

Andi Varagona

Director of Sales, Picture Vision

Editors note: Ed can be faxed information at 386-9213

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INDUSTRY EVENTS CALENDAR

JUNE

7-12—**NashCamp: Nashville Acoustic Music & Songwriting Camp**, Montgomery Bell State Park, Nashville, TN 615-386-9765

14—**IFCO Fun Fest**, Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, TN 615-371-9596 or www.ifco.org

14—**8th Annual Wrangler/City of Hope Celebrity Softball Challenge**, Greer Stadium, Nashville, TN 615-880-7347

15—**The 1998 Joe Diffie Charity Golf Classic**, benefit First Steps, Inc., at Legends of Tennessee Golf Club 615-742-4343

15—**32nd Annual TNN Music City News Country Awards**, Nashville Arena, Nashville, TN

15—**Music City Celebrity Luncheon & Fashion Show**, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, TN 615-256-2015 or www.tjmartellfoundation.org

15-20—**27th International Country Music Fan Fair**, Tennessee State Fairgrounds, Nashville, TN 615-889-7503

20—**CountryFest '98**, Nashville Arena, Nashville, TN

22-28—**Chet Atkins Musician Days**, various venues, Nashville, TN

JULY

2-4—**Mountain Dance & Folk Festival**, Downtown Asheville, NC 828-626-FOLK or sbanjoc@aol.com

8-11—**MusicWomen International's 5th Music Summit and Showcases** 615-860-4084 or MWIBoss8@aol.com

AUGUST

3-4—**The Vinny Pro-Celebrity Invitational Golf Tournament**, Golf Club of Tennessee, Kingston Springs, TN 615-790-7755

SEPTEMBER

23—**The 32nd Annual CMA Awards**, Grand Ole Opry House, Nashville, TN

OCTOBER

1-3—**Oklahoma's International Bluegrass Festival**, Guthrie, OK, 405-282-4446

3-4—**1998 MS 150 Bike Tour** to benefit the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Franklin TN 615-269-9055

9-18—**Georgia Mountain Fall Festival**, Hiawassee, GA 706-896-4191

CLASSIFIEDS

ROAD CYCLISTS—Industry pedal pack "The Big Rings" are gearing up. E-mail: warrenbobo1988@sprintmail.com to receive planned ride notices.

Classified Ads are \$25 per insertion for 25 words or less. Additional words are 25c. Send copy/payment to: Music Row, P.O. Box 158542, Nashville, TN 37215 or call (615) 321-3617.

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