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COUNTRY MUSIC™



LEONARD KAMSLER

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by Rich Kienzle

Letters

Strait Talk

Hats off to Patrick Carr for an interview well done on "The Man Under the White Hat." Granted he had a great subject!

Christopher Wright also did a fantastic job with his camera. There again, what a great subject!

Country Music Magazine is doing a super job of letting us fans know more about the "stars" and the happenings of the industry. Keep up the good work!

Janice Schmidt

Mt. Vernon, Indiana

*That's Ms. Christopher Wright—her camera. By the way, Ms. Wright is also married to Patrick Carr. For more of her work, see our excerpt from *Country Stars and Their Homes* on pages 23 to 27.—Ed.*

Regarding your article on George Strait (which I thoroughly enjoyed), I thought Ricky Skaggs was the Second Coming and George Strait one of the disciples.

Have I been deceived? Have I followed false teaching all this time? Say it ain't so!

Cheryl Powers

Hayesville, North Carolina

In every person's life there is a very unique singer. For my parents it was Hank Williams. For me it is George Strait.

It's nice to know that George isn't out making headlines for someone to distort. He can handle fame, and keep his professional life separate from his private life.

I want to say I'm glad Patrick Carr was able to show him as what I would regard as "Something Special."

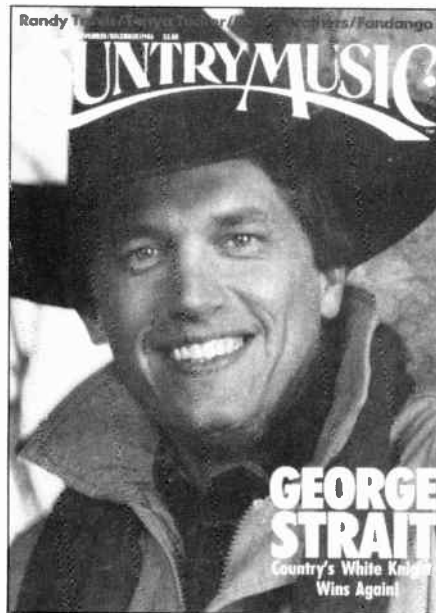
Janet Bennett

Lowndes, Missouri

Strait to the Heart

On November 9, 1986, I saw George Strait in concert in Landover, Maryland. As you said in your November/December issue, he is fantastic! One of a kind! I'll never forget that concert, and the next time he's in town you bet your life I'll be there.

Yes, I was one of those girls screaming! Once you hear his great country voice and see him sing, you have to scream to release the excitement! He really put on a great show. He sang some old songs and some new ones too! He



was and is fantastic.

I just want to say thank you, George, you are a great person and performer! You are my white knight!

Jamee L. Colbert

Hyattsville, Maryland

P.S. Do you have any information on a George Strait fan club?

To reach the George Strait Fan Club, write P.O. Box 2119, Hendersonville, Tennessee 37077.—Ed.

Calling for Conlee

Thanks for the article on John Conlee by Michael Bane in 20 Questions in your November/December issue. I have been a fan of John Conlee for years and think he is a true country artist. If possible I would like to know if he has a fan club. Also, I would like to know how many albums he has and the names if possible.

Ronnie Melson

Adamsville, Tennessee

*To reach the John Conlee Fan Club, write P.O. Box 150261, Nashville, Tennessee 37215. John's had 13 albums in all. His latest, *American Faces*, on CBS, is due out this spring.—Ed.*

Tanya on Top

Thank you, thank you, for the article on Tanya Tucker by Patrick Carr in the November/December issue.

I have been a very avid fan of Tanya's

for twelve years now, and have followed her career very closely for as long. And considering we are about the same age, I think that's a real tribute to the lady.

I never could understand why Tanya has not received more recognition for her many talents in the music industry, but from what she says in the article, maybe that will change in the near future. I've always felt that she needed more exposure, because this world needs more of Tanya Tucker.

I definitely agree with Patrick Carr that *Girls Like Me* is her finest album to date. Please do more on this very classy (yes—classy) lady in the future. Let's bring Tanya back where she belongs—on top.

Colleen Castaneda

Thousand Oaks, California

I really enjoyed the piece on Tanya Tucker. Also what I always think is refreshing about your magazine is you actually have articles! All the others are nothing more than press releases.

I met the 'old' Tanya back in 1980. At the time I was working on a magazine called *Backstage Stage Pass*, which folded before its first issue! We presented our business card to the bouncer to give to Tanya. She let us backstage and was one of the nicest people I have ever met. She gave me her agent's name and number to set up an interview.

In Patrick Carr's story, he mentions being caught up in the crazy lifestyle like Tanya. I was too. But Tanya's got a lot untapped, so I hope to see her stay on track and show it to the world!

Rocio Sinaya

Granada Hills, California

P.S. Am I ever going to see a feature on the most talented writer, singer in Nashville—Deborah Allen?

Tsk, Tsk, Tanya

The only thing I see wrong with the November/December issue of my magazine is that terrible picture of Tanya Tucker inside the front cover. The way she is dressed is sure not for a country music magazine. In my opinion, she has not changed any. She has always half-dressed. She needs to dress like a country music star if she is going to sing country. Don't you agree?

She should dress like Reba McEntire, Marie Osmond and others—she would



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Tanya Tucker and Perrier are constant companions these days. No more bad girl for her. Colleen Castaneda caught up with Tanya recently, backstage.

look more like country. I'm not putting your magazine down, because I think it is a wonderful magazine. I enjoy reading it. But let's see more articles on Alabama. They just can't be beat in my book.

Marie McCray

Hickory, North Carolina

Rah-Rah, Randy Travis

Thanks for the great article on Randy Travis in the November/December issue. I bought his *Storms of Life* album as soon as it came out and rejoiced as it gained in popularity. I was thrilled that he got his award at the Country Music Awards and that the writers of "On the Other Hand" took his hand and led him on stage to share in their honor. Country music folks are great!

I want to go to Fan Fair this year. Hazel Smith's article in *People* was very well done, and she's written in such an inviting way. Please let me know when the next Fan Fair is scheduled so I can make plans and reservations now. Also, is there a program or guidebook to help us fans know what is going on and where?

Mrs. David E. Coburn

Greenville, North Carolina

Fan Fair 1987 will be June 8-14. For information and tickets, write Fan Fair, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214.—Ed.

Travis on Tape

I went to a concert of Randy Travis', January 9, 1987, held at the Gainesville High School Gym in Gainesville, Florida. He was the greatest I've ever seen. He sounded as great as he does on his records. His songs just make you want to sit back and listen—but that was kinda hard to do with my 10-year-old daughter, Jenny, jumping up and down and screaming during the whole concert. She fell completely in love with Randy.

Ever since she was big enough to

listen to country music, she has wanted to be a country music singer. When she was nine, she tied for winner in the True Value Country Music Showdown, but I think we all lost out when the judges picked the five-piece band instead of her. She went to Randy's bus before the concert and asked to talk to Randy about singing a song with him, but of course they wouldn't let her.

I videoed the whole show, so when Randy gets so big that I can't get in to see him, I can just go in and turn on my TV and watch him, and look at the pictures of him that Jenny took, and that is a lot.

I know that he is surely gonna be the one to fill their shoes.

Bonnie Johnson
Lake City, Florida

Thank you so much for the story by Michael Bane about Randy Travis. I have listened to country music for about 12 years, and I have always loved George Jones, Willie Nelson, Kenny Rogers, Waylon, Conway Twitty, Merle Haggard, Alabama and so many more. But my favorite is now Randy Travis. He has a voice that outdoes any of the above.

I wish him the best in his country music. I think he is one of the greatest. If you talk to him, tell him I care, and to keep up the good work.

Barbara Shrun
Santa Rosa, California

We'll let him read about it here.—Ed.



Jenny Johnson may never wash again— not after getting Randy Travis' autograph at a recent concert.

Everlys Opened the Door

Thank you very much for the interview with the Everly Brothers. Don and Phil have given us so many great songs in the past and hopefully will continue to do so in the future. Their reunion couldn't have come at a better time since most of today's music is juvenile at best, with a few exceptions. Also, I think we all agree that the Everly Brothers "opened the door" for such other acts as the Statlers, the Beatles, the Oak Ridge Boys, etc., with their unique style of harmony.

I have often wondered about the Everly Brothers' personal lives, and

your interview was quite revealing. I am glad that Don and Phil have once again found peace and happiness in both their professional and personal lives, since they have given their fans so much.

Don and Phil, please consider a concert in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, since there are a lot of us who would surely be "the first in line" to buy the concert tickets.

Cathy Sekanic
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Everly Errors

There were two errors in the interview with the Everlys in the November/December issue. First off, Larry Londin, although an integral part of Phil and Don's current band, was not in the band at Royal Albert Hall. The drummer there was the late Graham Jarvis. Also, Don's son is named Edan, not Steven. (He also has three daughters, and Phil has two sons.)

Other than these errors, the feature was excellent. So was the story on the Everlys and the Shenandoah Radio Reunion in the CMSA Newsletter. Thank you for printing them.

Corey Damerell
Nanuet, New York

Thanks for the corrections.—Ed.

Credit the Songwriter, Please!

As an artist I feel I must respond to "Angry Arnie's" letter in your November/December issue. Too many fans like him overlook or do not understand the real unsung heroes of country music: songwriters.

Arnie knocks Waylon Jennings and Barbara Mandrell with phrases like "too lazy to write their own material" and "stealing ideas." Artists like these do not have to steal anything, but they do appreciate good songwriters. I guarantee that whoever wrote "Will the Wolf Survive?" was tickled to death to have Waylon record it. On the other hand, artists that Arnie says should be given credit, such as George Strait and Alabama, write very few of their own hits. But they certainly don't steal them either! Royalties are what songwriters make their living from, Arnie!

Many recording artists get credit for a song being theirs when, with just a little effort, the fan or record buyer could find out who wrote it. An album that I recorded contained songs by such writers as Kristofferson, Buckeye Jones and Nat Stuckey. This is not because I am too lazy to write my own material, but because when I record, I am going with the best material available to me. I thank God for these very talented people because they are the backbone of our industry!

John Fitzwater
Protection, Kansas

Bravo, John! Society members met John in the November/December 1985 Newsletter. John's album is titled In a Country State of Mind.—Ed.



Carlene Knox, a Reba McEntire fan, caught up with Reba recently. Thanks to the Newsletter, Carlene has Reba's hard-to-find album, Reba McEntire.

Reba's Records

I am writing to clarify all of Reba's album releases for Terry Kline, whose letter was published in the November/December issue. To date Reba has released 13 albums. In their order of release, they are:

<i>Reba McEntire</i>	1977
<i>Out of a Dream</i>	1979
<i>Feel the Fire</i>	1980
<i>Heart to Heart</i>	1981
<i>Unlimited</i>	1982
<i>Behind the Scene</i>	1983
<i>Just a Little Love</i>	1984
<i>My Kind of Country</i>	1984
<i>The Best of Reba McEntire</i>	1985
<i>Have I Got a Deal For You</i>	1985
<i>Whoever's in New England</i>	1986
<i>Reba Nell McEntire</i>	1986
<i>What Am I Gonna Do About You</i>	1986

I wish to correct you, too, in saying that the album *Reba Nell McEntire* was Reba's debut album back in 1978. *Reba Nell McEntire* is a collection of songs released in early 1986 that Reba had recorded while she was under contract with Mercury/Polygram Records, which had never been released before. I should know. I have them all.

Hope this helps.

Victoria L. Siegrist
St. Louis, Missouri

We hate to stand corrected twice, but you're right.—Ed.

Fabulous Foresters

My friend and I went to the 15th Annual Country Music Fan Fair in Nashville last June liking the Forester Sisters and

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Fan Fair '86 brought four lovely Foresters and two fans together: rear, Chevy Wingerter and Cathy Rossmiller; front, Kim, Kathy, Christy and June. The girls hit it off.

came back loving them. They are a great new harmonious family group.

My friend Cathy Rossmiller and I met The Foresters at the Cannery after taping *New Country*. With hardly any sleep since Fan Fair began, the sisters stayed to sign autographs. They very graciously let us get our pictures taken with them, while June proceeded to tell us a story about climbing the steps to the St. Louis Arch with a broken leg, Kim and Kathy complimented me on my outfit (what an honor to be complimented by a star) and Christy joined in with her handsome fiance.

Forester Sisters, you're great, and so are you, *Country Music Magazine!*

Chevy Wingerter
Quincy, Illinois

Wowed by Our Writers

I am a recent subscriber to your magazine, just received my third issue earlier this week, and I've got to say that I'm really impressed with your publication! What I like most about it is your writers.

In my opinion, there aren't many magazine writers these days who leave you feeling and knowing something after you've finished reading their articles. Most give you just the straight facts and sometimes, if you're lucky, you get a punch line scattered about here and there. Oh, I'm not saying all magazine writers are dull and numb, there are some good ones around and about, but it's a rare thing to find a whole cluster of them, and all in the same magazine!

Hazel Smith, Patrick Carr, Michael Bane, Bob Allen—you guys are great! Real down to earth writers, not ones that use all this high-tech garb that goes over our heads, and you have a real sense of humor—you don't have to look

What We Can and Cannot Answer

Sorry we cannot answer individual letters. Questions of general interest will be dealt with in Letters.

up your punch lines in a book. The performers come alive in your articles.

You guys have real talent, so keep up the good work! And thank you, *Country Music Magazine*, for giving me a magazine I really enjoy!

Annette Pashia
Potosi, Missouri

We couldn't agree more.—Ed.

Long-lost Artist Department—Diana Trask

Back in the late 1970's, we attended a Roy Clark concert at the DuQuoin State Fair. Roy's special guest was Diana Trask. We really liked her singing style, but we cannot find out what has happened to her. I wrote to the Nashville station, but they couldn't help. Perhaps you know something about her or one of your readers could help me with this.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Dorothy Boyd
Collinsville, Illinois

Anyone know about Diana Trask? Let us know.—Ed.

George Jones Shows He Cares

George Jones has been my idol and favorite country music singer for years. But what he did for my nephew, Eston O'Sullivan, is something I think should be told. Eston has been ill for a long time. He's also a very good singer and

sounds a lot like George Jones. We all love him a lot. We also know he may not be with us very much longer as he seems to be losing ground every day now.

But we are all so happy that his idol George Jones heard about his wishes to meet him. George called and talked to the family, and made plans to have Eston and his family meet him in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he was to have a concert Saturday, November 15th. He also sent passes for them to attend the concert.

I truly hope George Jones knows what a wonderful thing he has done for the O'Sullivan family. I will always be grateful, and I can say one thing. "Nobody will ever fill George Jones' shoes."

Minnie "O'Sullivan" Wall
Spartanburg, South Carolina

Allen Strikes Out on Alabama...

Mr. Allen, who wrote the review of *The Touch* in the November/December issue, seems not to be "in tune" with the reality of who is the greatest country group today: Alabama.

This "potentially good" group has converted many rock 'n' rollers, including myself, to country. Although there are many other great country singers and groups, Alabama continues to be Number One. I hope Alabama never pays attention to critics like you because the magic they exert would be over. Every record has been a success. *40-Hour Week* and the Christmas release are sensational and selling strong. Every week, I enjoy a different song as my favorite.

You and your friends had better stop being so critical and so jealous and pay more attention to the fans of Alabama! We love them!

Miguel Hidalgo
San Marino, California

...Or Does He?

Bob Allen's review of *The Touch* by Alabama in the November/December



George Jones showed Eston O'Sullivan he cared when they met recently.

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Madonna, Huey Lewis
and The News | <input type="checkbox"/> POP
Barbra Streisand,
Neil Diamond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HEAVY METAL*
Quiet Riot, Ratt,
Mötley Crüe | <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK MUSIC*
Luther Vandross,
Janet Jackson | <input type="checkbox"/> EASY LISTENING
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issue made my day. When an artist makes good and is no longer the underdog, so many are quick to turn on them and try to drag them down. Thanks to Mr. Allen for giving them the credit they deserve on their latest effort. *The Touch* is an album that I had to listen to a few times to really get a feel for it. Now I find the more I listen, the more I like it. It was well worth the 20-month wait! A lot of people are ready to write them off, but we've not heard the best even yet.

A final note to Mr. Allen: as one of the band's huge female constituency, I can say that we've been trying for years to convince Randy Owen that he is indeed a sex symbol, and yes, we *are* eating it up! Randy can whisper, coo, gurgle, moan and drool sweet-nothings in my ear anytime he wants! Nobody does it better! Roll On, Alabama! You've got the Touch!

Gay Williams
Cassstown, Ohio

Randy Owen as Sex Symbol

Dear Bob Allen,

After I finished reading your review, I played my album of *The Touch* through to see if I could detect any "gurgling" or "cooing." I don't hear it. I think Randy started acknowledging his sex symbol status with "When We Make Love" and "I Want to Know You Before We Make Love" off the previous two albums. "True, True Housewife" and "Let's Hear It for the Girl" on this album both seem to be a tribute to his wife, a person most of the band's "huge female constituency" would probably be happier forgetting. The only song which can't be taken this way is "Is This How Love Begins." One song out of ten is not enough to convict a man.

I think you're right when you say Alabama hasn't shown its true potential, but as you point out, this album is a step in the right direction. I hope and believe they'll reach their potential with the albums to come.

You deserve some credit for giving this album a fair review despite your dislike of the songs you perceive as being slanted toward their female fans.

All things considered, your review was a job well done.

Cheryl Powers
Hayesville, North Carolina

Bob just wants all the girls for himself.—Ed.

Sex Plus—That's Randy

Regarding Randy Owen as a sex symbol—yes, he is. He's as handsome as they come. *But*, were the songs not excellent and his delivery close to perfect, you wouldn't find all the females foaming at the mouth. A few of us drooling females who appreciate his manly attributes also appreciate his

total morality, his fun-loving spirit, his friendly, down-to-earth attitude and his genuine ability to care about others. There is a very, very special man behind the guitar, underneath the sexy exterior. Those of us who have seen that Randy Owen are indeed the lucky ones.

Please continue to follow Alabama's work. You're sure to see that the best is yet to come.

Nella Mackie
Nashville, Tennessee



Looking better than ever, Glen Campbell greets Mildred Williams and other fans in Jackson.

Glad to See Glen Campbell

On September 18, 1986, I drove to Jackson, Mississippi, to see Glen Campbell in concert with Kenny Rogers and T Graham Brown. Glen really looked good that night—tall, slender, handsome and was so gracious to everyone. He didn't know it, but as he walked around the stage, I got to shake his hand.

I have been Glen's biggest fan since the first time I saw him in 1969.

My twin, Jane Cole of Jackson, took the picture.

Mildred Williams
Greenwood, Mississippi

Waylon Jennings Goes to Graduation

Having just gotten around to reading your interview with Waylon Jennings in the May/June issue, I had to write and send you this picture.

I graduated from South Plains College in Levelland, Texas, on May 10, 1985, and Waylon Jennings was there at the ceremony, as his son, Buddy, was graduating also. He sat right across the aisle from my mom. She said she kept thinking, "That man looks just like Waylon Jennings, but why would Way-



Proud father Waylon Jennings goes to son Buddy's graduation in Levelland. Fan Rebecca Hopkins was graduating too. Her mom took this picture.

lon Jennings be here in Levelland at a graduation ceremony?"

Finally, she just turned around face to face and said hello to him. Then she asked him what he was doing there, and he told her that his son was graduating. About that same time, some local newsmen came up and asked Waylon for an interview and some pictures.

Waylon told them that this was his son's day, but if they would wait until after the ceremony, he would let them have all the pictures and interviews they wanted. But, he granted my mom this snapshot. She told him thanks and that the photo would probably mean more to me than the degree I was about to receive. I guess she was probably right about that since I keep the negatives to this picture in a fireproof box and my degree hangs above my desk.

Waylon Jennings has been among my favorite performers for as long as I can remember, and thanks to him my graduation day was very special.

Rebecca Hopkins
Lubbock, Texas

Great Glasers

Patrick Carr's double record review on Jim and Tompall Glaser in the November/December issue was right on about their albums, *Everybody Knows I'm Yours* and *Nights on the Borderline*. I have both, and I love them both. I have been a fan of these brothers for a long time—when they were singing together and when they went solo. They both have wonderful voices.

Jim and Tompall deserve to be kept in front of the mike. They both have the potential to have Number One albums. So, music fans, let's get out there and help them do it.

Sue Word
Redding, California

Send Letters to the Editor to Country Music Magazine, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Mark envelope, Attention: Letters.

People

MANDRELL SIGNS ON NATIONAL TV

When Barbara Mandrell co-hosted *Nashville Now* with Ralph Emery recently, her duties went beyond the traditional question and answer. Barbara, in what may have been a first, signed an exclusive recording contract with EMI America. This seemed fitting since that night's *Nashville Now* show consisted of all Capitol/EMI stars. After the show, artists including T. Graham Brown, Sawyer Brown, Mel McDaniel, Dana McVicker, New Grass Revival, Dan Seals and Tanya Tucker celebrated at a party on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry house.

BIG RIVER GOERS

Ricky Skaggs courts his wife Sharon White every chance he gets, and the latest interlude took the lovers to the Big Apple and the Broadway hit *Big River*. Of course you know that country's own Roger Miller wrote the music for that winner.

OFF THE CUFF FOR ACUFF

Picture this. The King of Country Music Roy Acuff is introducing Herman Crook as the only living member of the Opry when it originated back in 1925. Acuff, 83, told the audience that Herman is 87 years old, never smoked, drank alcohol or ran around with women. Apparently Herman had told Roy that Mrs. Crook was his only sweetheart. As the audience took in all this innocence, Acuff bleated out, "Folks, he don't know what he's missed, does he?" Die, I thought I would. 'Cause Roy Acuff ain't missed a trick. Why his girl friend Bobbi is 30 years old if she's a day. Young Bobbi drives the elderly Mr. Acuff around in that big car. The other day I was driving through Madison on Gallatin Road. The traffic was something fierce. Cars going every which way. I saw this license plate on the front of a white car that said "Wabash Cannon Ball." This young, good looking lady was



Members of Sawyer Brown and *Nashville Now*'s Ralph Emery were mighty pleased when Barbara Mandrell joined them on stage. The superstar signed a recording contract on national TV.

driving with her hair fixed up on top of her head. It was then I recognized Mr. Acuff and realized that his young friend had her hair styled real close to the way Roy's late wife, Mildred Acuff, used to fix her hair. That's show biz, you know.

ME AND DONNA FARGO ARE BOTH WOMEN OF THE EIGHTIES

Fargo's new album on Polydor is titled *Woman of the '80s*. Fargo looks well, let's hope the best for her health. If you recall, she suffers from MS.

PHOTOGRAPHER KENNY ROGERS

That Kenny Rogers ain't making enough millions with his concerts, recordings, TV, movies and other show biz doings—now he is a photographer as well. He recently had a showing of his black and whites titled "Kenny Rogers' America" at the Country Music Hall of

Fame. Prior to that he appeared in nearby Murfreesboro with Dolly Parton and T. Graham Brown.

O.B.'s BENEFIT

Troubled by a bellyache, O.B. McClinton entered the hospital to discover, sadly, that he was suffering from cancer of the stomach and liver. Exploratory surgery was about all anyone could promise O.B.; therefore, he reneged. A benefit held at the Stockyard brought in Music City's finest to aid O.B.'s family. Waylon Jennings, Ricky Skaggs, Reba McEntire, Steve Wariner, and emcee Ralph Emery charged 50 bucks a head. It sold out the popular club, owned by Buddy Killon and others. The cash goes to cover O.B.'s hospital bills and to make a nest egg for his wife and kids. O.B. made an appearance the night of the show, and the next night he went on TV with host Emery. A brave cowboy who

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People

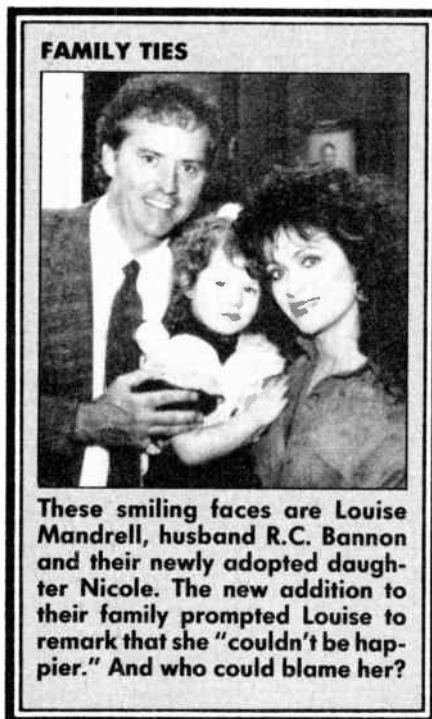
never got the breaks he totally deserved in Nashville. Not yet out of his 40's, O.B. McClinton is loved by all.

JUST CALL ME THE GREAT PREDICTOR

There is an added amount of strutting in my format tonight as I prepare this column for you wonderful fans of country music. One of my very own predictions has come true. Randy Travis has been made a member of the Grand Ole Opry. To say the least, I am gloating. From the very first time I heard Randy Travis, I said that boy deserves a home among those great names like Hank Williams and Ernest Tubb. His voice needs to be heard from the Grand Ole Opry stage, and I just knew that Hal Durham, Bud Wendell and all the powers that be would see the same thing. They did, and history once again was made in country music. Praise God that a "voice" can still be heard from Music City that exemplifies what the roots of this business are all about.

BAKING PIES FOR CRISCO

Spokesperson Loretta Lynn (who happens to also be the best female singer in the world) hosted the Crisco & Family



FAMILY TIES
These smiling faces are Louise Mandrell, husband R.C. Bannon and their newly adopted daughter Nicole. The new addition to their family prompted Louise to remark that she "couldn't be happier." And who could blame her?

Magazine American Pie Celebration Cookoff here at the Opryland Hotel. Fifty women, one from each state, baked their fave. The winning pie—was not American as apple pie—a lemon

meringue concoction baked by Cecelia Rubio, a 33-year-old mother of five. I told that chick who called me that Crisco didn't need no publicist. All Crisco needed was working with and cooking.

HEART IS WHERE THE HOME IS, OR BACK TO THE BASICS

When bluegrass **Ralph Stanley** celebrated his 40th anniversary in show biz, he invited **Ricky Skaggs** to return to Smith Mountain in Western Virginia for a get out in the heat and get down with bluegrass party. There was picking and singing, shaking hands and seeing old friends for new and different reasons. Many former Clinch Mountain Clansters like **Larry Sparks**, **George Shuffler**, **Melvin Goins** and others, along with Stanley's present band, performed. Skaggs, whose mountain home is separated from Stanley's home by a few miles and a state line, can fall back into that mountain feeling in a heartbeat. When a boy is raised in the hills, loves the Stanley Brothers music, picks and sings with Ralph Stanley as a teenager, he ain't about to fall out of favor with the music or the man. It was like he never left. Skaggs told me that when Ralph introduced him before his entrance onstage, he already had him crying. Don't sound much like somebody who cut a video and a duet with **James Taylor**, does it? Sounds like a boy who ain't above his raisings.

SELDOM SCENE ARE SEEN SELDOM FOR 15 YEARS

The Washington, D.C.-based bluegrass band **Seldom Scene** celebrated their 15th anniversary recently at the Kennedy Center, with musical guests **Linda Ronstadt**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Sharon White**, **Paul Craft**, **John Starling** and others. Noticeable backstage was **George Lucas** (movie producer of *Star Wars*, etc.) who is Ronstadt's constant companion these days. Word I got is the pair is real kissy and huggy. Ain't love outrageous! Also, word I got is the show was just the very best. With that slate of performers it just had to be the best.

LIONEL RICHIE'S PARTY

Following his sold out performance at Music City's Municipal Auditorium, **Lionel Richie** was honored with a party at Vanderbilt Plaza, one of our better places to dine, dance and drink. Some of those in attendance were **Reba McEn-**



A FIRST FOR THE OAKS

The man in the middle of the Oaks is none other than Jimmy Bowen, MCA President-Nashville. Bowen produced their 15th album *Where The Fast Lane Ends*, which was scheduled for an early 1987 release. Along with Bowen's expertise, the album also has special appearances from **Patti Labelle** and **Joe Walsh**. The Oaks just like to surround themselves with good company.



Featuring The Hit Single

"To Know Him Is To Love Him"

On Warner Bros. Records, Cassettes and Compact Discs

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World Radio History

People

A COUPLE OF TROOPERS



Boy, these guys look just as good today as they did when they started duetting in the early 1970's, don't they? Conway may have put on a few more pounds since then, but Loretta still looks trim and fit. All in all, though, neither looked any worse for wear when they recently teamed up on an episode of *Nashville Now*. Not only did they look good, but they sounded just fine. Don't you hope you age as well as those two?

tire, The Oaks' William Lee Golden and Joe Bonsall, Harlan Howard, John Schneider, Anita Pointer, Tanya Tucker, Amy Grant, Bobby Jones, Lynn Anderson, Kathy Mattea, Keith Stegall, T.G. Sheppard, Ray Stevens, Jim Varney and others. I really had planned to go. I told Susan Burns, who heads up Jobete Music (the party givers), I would try. Try I did, but that's all. I'm sure it was fun.

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS IN NASHVILLE? NEVER! WRONG!

Tom T. Hall and his wife Miss Dixie interviewed for the TV show and shared plum jam brewed by Miss Dixie from plums picked by former Prez Jimmy Carter. Now that's what I call big time and a half.

NASHVILLE KNEW KEENAN

Nashvillians remember Keenan Wynn as the movie star who hung out at the bluegrass club, The Station Inn, during the filming of the movie *Nashville*. From Nashville, *Country Music*, Russell Barnard (my boss), Rochelle Friedman (my editor, 'cause I talk so much) and myself, I send sympathy, love and respect. Also, thanks to the family

for sharing your loved one with us and the world.

KOININIA BENEFIT

The Koininia Fall Harvest Concert was held at the Roy Acuff Theater and featured the talents of The Whites, Barbara Fairchild, Connie Smith, Lisa Foster, Paul Overstreet, Ricky



Barbara Fairchild raised her voice in song for Koininia.

Skaggs and others. Koininia is a ministry on 16th Avenue and runs a bookstore which sells religious paraphernalia.

DON WILLIAMS HANGS UP THAT LUCKY HAT

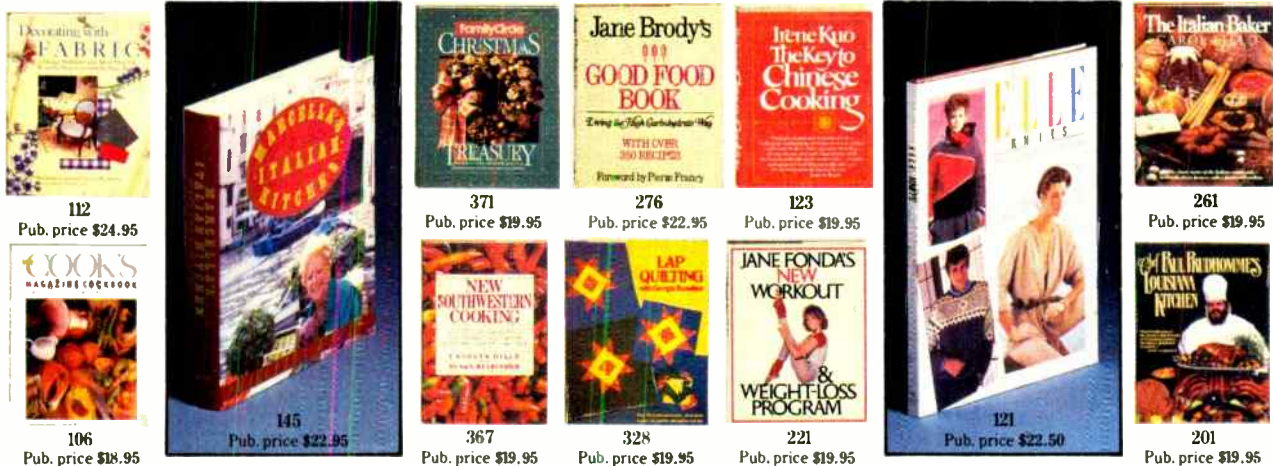
Don Williams wore his cowboy hat, the same one, for as long as anyone has known who he is. He claims he's hanging up the hat, the guitar and show biz. Don, ever the homebody, was on the road and decided he wanted no more of the same. Apparently he told his band, road crew and management of his intentions. Capitol Record exec Jim Foglesong alluded to all the positives in Williams' existence when he made the official announcement, saying Don was the kind of guy who showed up for his gigs and paid his bills.

CHARLEY SIGNS

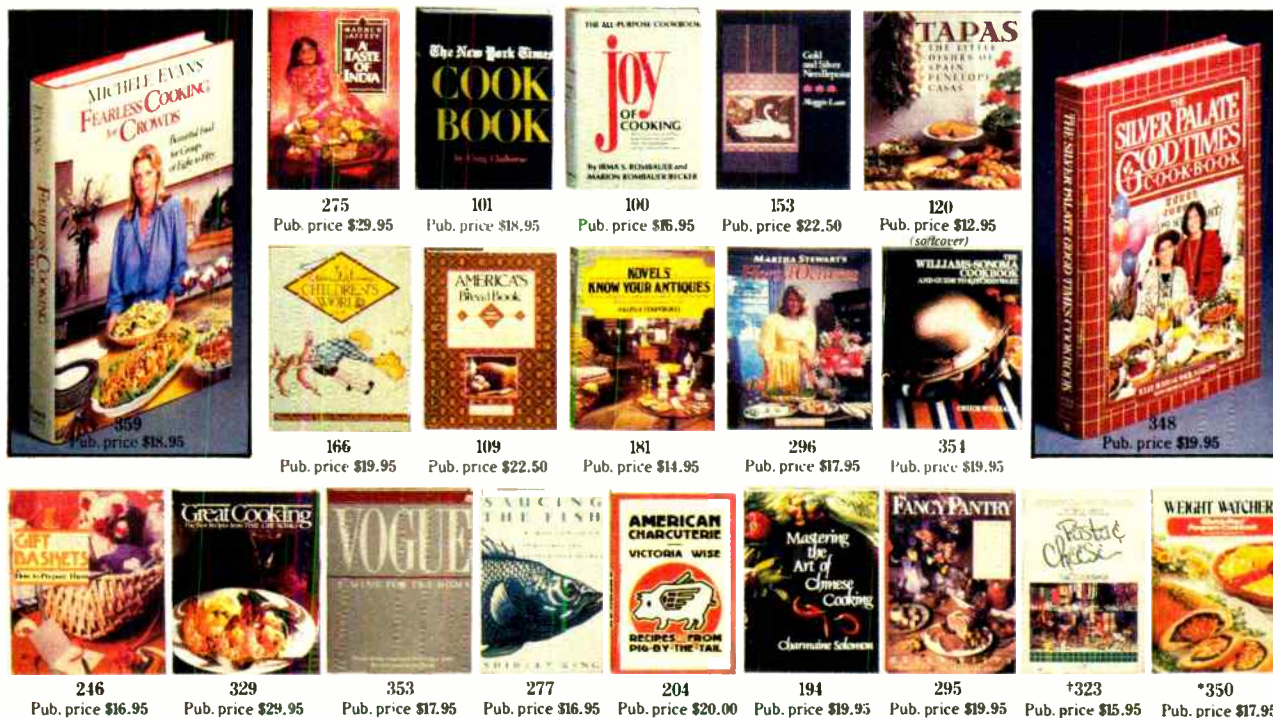
The great Charley Pride signed with Opryland Records, which is headed up by former RCA Swami, Jerry Bradley. Last I heard Ray Baker would be producing.

VIDEO FOR BUTCH BAKER

That good looking, good singing Butch Baker did his first video on a tune titled



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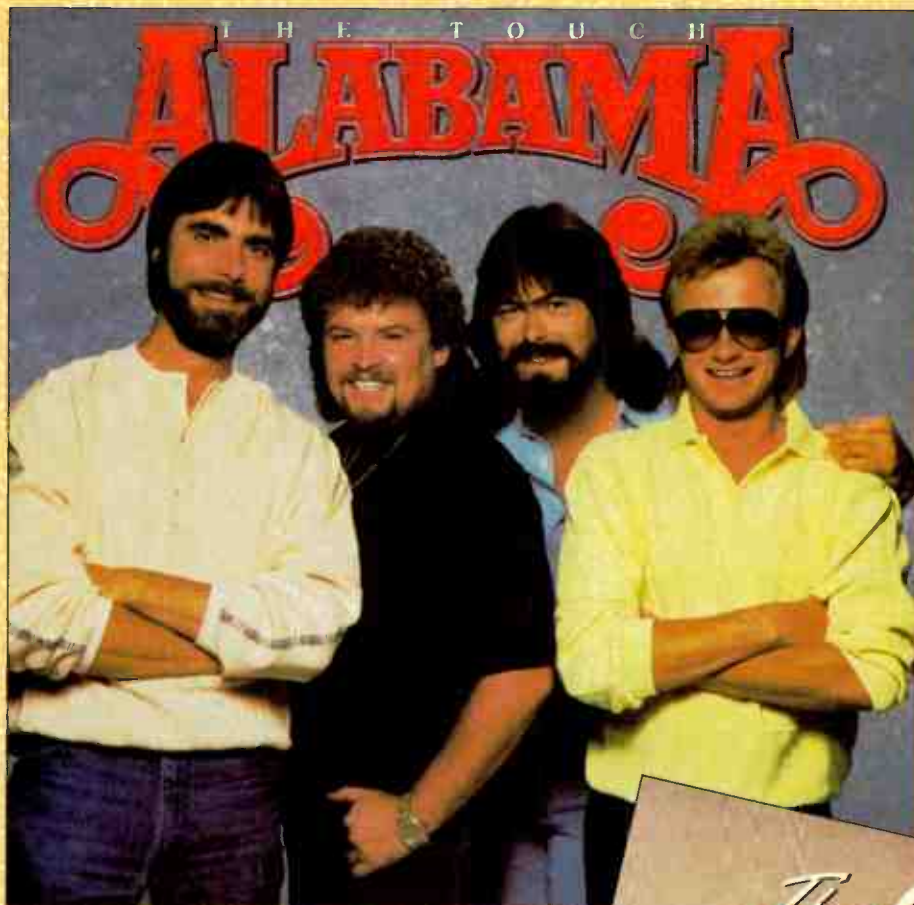
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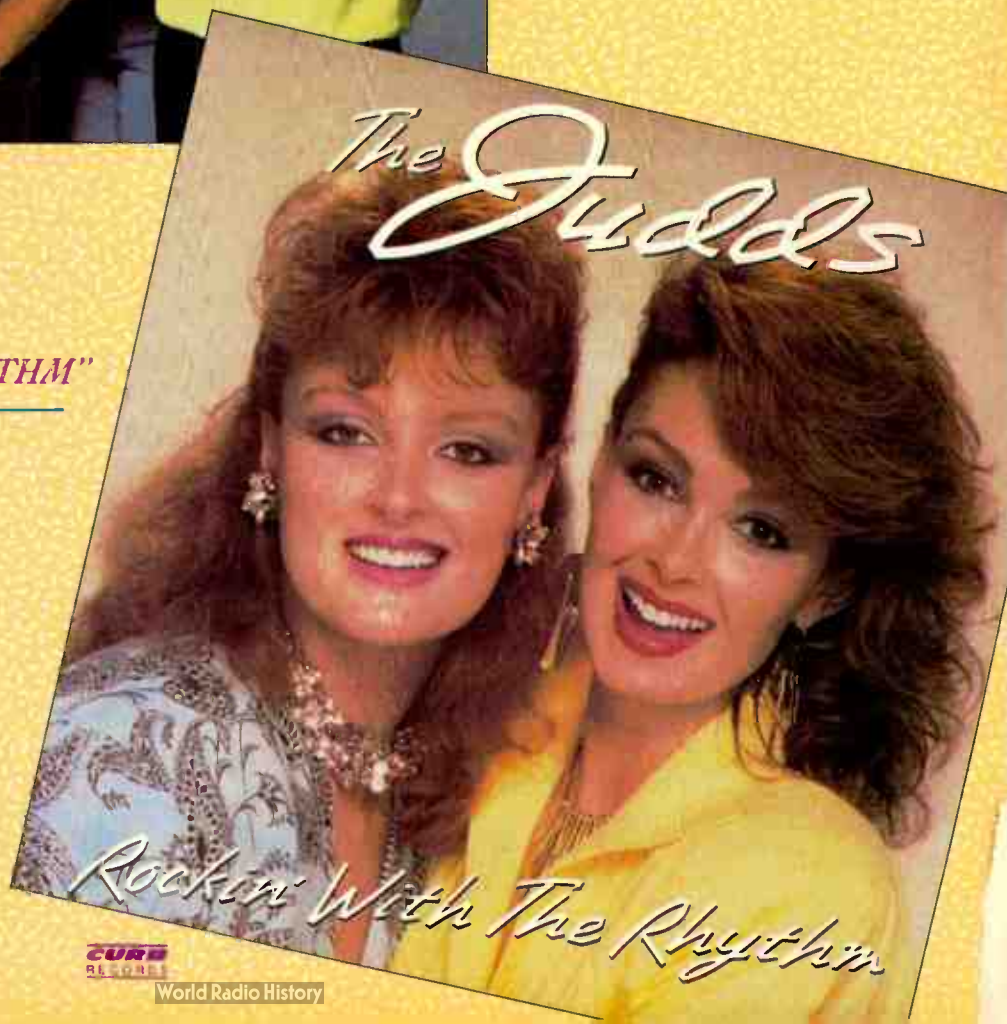
ALABAMA *"THE TOUCH"*

Featuring the #1 single, "Touch Me When We're Dancing" and their latest single "You've Got The Touch."

THE JUDDS *"ROCKIN' WITH THE RHYTHM"*

Includes more #1 hits with "Cry Myself To Sleep," "Have Mercy" and the Grammy-nominated "Grandpa (Tell Me 'Bout The Good Ole Days)."

And watch for The Judds new album, "*Heartland*" coming to your favorite record store on February 2!



RCA
Records and Cassettes

CURE
RECORDS

World Radio History

People

"That's What Her Mem'ry is For." I know the song. It's a good one, and the boy that sings it is so good looking. I just hope the video turns out as good as Butch looks and sings.

GIRLS NEXT DOOR ON VIDEO

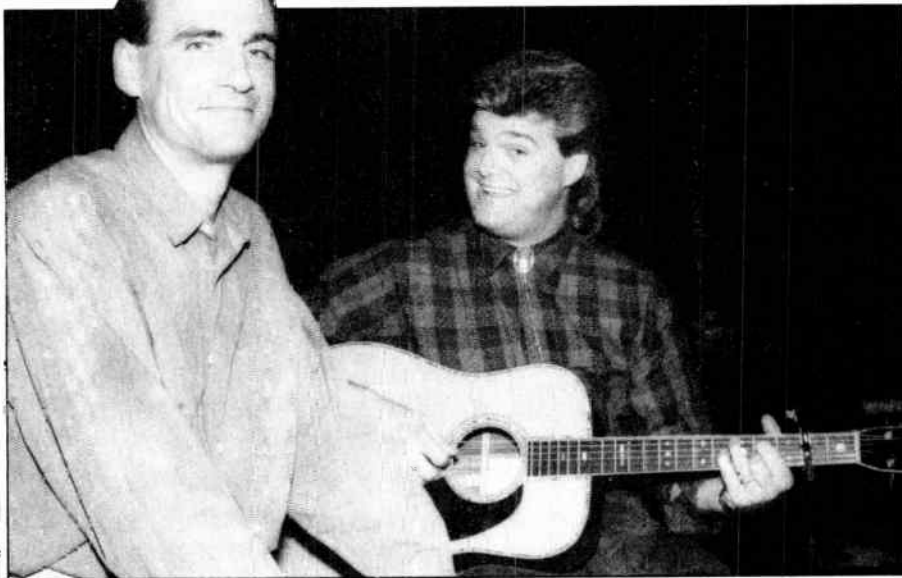
"Baby, I Want It" is the first video out of the shoot for **The Girls Next Door**. If I haven't mentioned it before, I want to share with bluegrassers the fact that **Cindy Nixon**, member of Girls Next Door, is the daughter of **Charlie Nixon**, dobroist with the late **Lester Flatt**.

BIG "HOWDY" GRAVELY ILL

Howard "Howdy" Forestor, fiddler extraordinaire for many years with **Roy Acuff and the Smoky Mountain Boys**, is very ill with cancer. Our prayers and love go out to Howdy and his wife **Sally**, who is a dear lady. And to their son and grandchildren.

BLACKBURN'S BOYS AND GIRLS GETTING IT DONE

Congrats are in order for **Rick Blackburn's** CBSers **Jim Kemp** and **Rich Schwan** for being smart enough to release "New Star Shining" by **Ricky Skaggs** and **James Taylor** to gospel radio. I hope this 'un goes Number One. Blackburn's girls ain't no slouches



Ricky Skaggs and James Taylor's "New Star Shining" was released for Christmas, but it's more than just a holiday song.

either. As publicists **Betty Batts** is first class as they come, and that **Michelle Myers** is A-okay, too. Why she and those **Sweethearts of the Rodeo**, their manager **Chuck Flood** (whom I love dearly) and my dear sweet friend, **Chet Flippo**, were out in the Big Apple dining and carrying on. *Country Music's* own **Russ Barnard** took in the show too. See, Blackburn's folks are acquainted with the biggies, just like me.

ASCAP HONORS SHOULD BE HONORED TO HONOR TROY SEALS

Troy Seals, a good man, a great songwriter whose name bears no blemish or shame, was named ASCAP "Songwriter of the Year." Troy writes for **Warner Brothers Music**, the outfit that received the "Publisher of the Year" award from ASCAP. **Tim Wipperman**, who heads up the Warner division of publishing in Nashville, allowed as how he was fortunate to have his stable of writers. I'll tell the world he's fortunate to have **Troy Seals**! A lot of the old line writers are moving their performance affiliation from **BMI** to **ASCAP**. The fact that **Frances Preston**, very talented and dearly loved by most, is now heading up the entire **BMI** organization out of **New York City** instead of **Music City** seems to have provoked many to make the move. At least that's what I hear on the street.

DIETING!

Who? **Johnny Russell**, that's who is dieting. For health reasons, so he says. You should have seen him dressed as a pumpkin on Halloween.

BOOTS WINTERIZES

If you love the saxophone and/or are a **Boots Randolph** fan and are in **Music City** during the winter months, the place to go is **Printer's Alley** where **Boots** has his own club. It's fun, fun, fun.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT



Couldn't pass up this chance to run this photo of three of country's famous ladies. The girls, **Juice Newton**, **Reba McEntire** and **Emmylou Harris** were all smiles at a Nashville party recently.

People

POPOVICH POPPING WITH HITS AND MORE HITS

Steve Popovich, who is trying to mainstream Polygram/Nashville, appears to be making some progress. Lord knows, we need to activate any and all labels. Kathy Mattea, who records for Mercury, a Polygram affiliate, is headed for higher ground with the Tim O'Brien tune "Walk the Way the Wind Blows." The Cannons, also on that label, have a pleasant song for their debut called "Do You Mind If I Step Into Your Dreams," and of course you know Polygram has signed Johnny Cash! Three good reasons why I am personally excited about Popovich and his popping off. By the way, The Cannons are managed by Irby Mandrell. Irby is the father and the manager of Barbara Mandrell, Louise Mandrell and Irlene Mandrell.

RONNIE MCDOWELL IN PRISON AGAIN

At it again, Ronnie McDowell returned to prison! Don't you just love that



A very 1940's Ronnie McDowell woos all in his new video.

headline. Looks like something you read at the grocery over the beans, taters and Tide at the checkout counter, doesn't it? Laying all kidding aside, Ronnie performed at the North Carolina Correc-

tional Institution for Women for the third time recently. Don't you know them chicks loved Ronnie's performance of "Watchin' Girls Go By." Ronnie also filmed a new video recently for his single "I Don't Want to Set the World On Fire." In it Ronnie plays a big band singer in the 1940's, complete with slicked back hair and zoot suit.

MAKING A LONG STORY SHORT

Jimmy Bowen is smart. Real smart. When MCA hired a certain pretty young thing, she didn't know George Strait from Loretta Lynn. Artist Ray Stevens approached Ms. Pretty's reception desk, asked for Bruce Hinton, who is second in command at the label. "Who may I tell Mr. Hinton is here to see him?" asked the pretty young thing. "George Jones," replied an agitated Ray Stevens. Pretty young thing punched in the correct buttons, buzzed Hinton and said, "George Jones is here to see you!" When Bowen heard about it, he took matters in his own hands, gave the pretty young thing photos of the entire roster, and said, "Learn 'em!" She did.

HIS NAME IS...



Hank Williams Jr. has all kinds of fans, including heavy metal group Van Halen. They think so much of him in fact that they asked if they could appear in his latest music video, "My Name is Bocephus." Hank happily obliged Sammy Hagar and Eddie and Alex Van Halen. After the filming Hank sent personal copies of the clip enclosed in hand made oak casings with attached brass plaques.

People

SANDY NEESE DOING IT

I like Sandy Neese. I don't know nobody who don't like Sandy. She's a first class lady and does a bang up job as publicist for MTM Records... she just may be the cat's meow her very own self. Anyway, Sandy keeps me posted on all the latest about Holly Dunn, who wrote and sang "Daddy Hands," Judy Rodman, who had the first Number One single record for the Nashville-based label, The Girls Next Door, the very, very talented Schuyler, Knobloch and Overstreet, also known as SKO, and she tells me about Merle Haggard's youngun, Marty. All these labelmates signed to MTM. Here's hoping everyone at MTM is as bright as Sandy. If so, we should hear more hit recordings and Number Ones.

JOHN HARTFORD—STEAMBOAT CAPTAIN, SONGWRITER, SINGER, MUSICIAN...

You bet your sweet aspirin tablet, John Hartford's the author of *Steam Boat in a Corn Field*. The story, as ludicrous as it may sound, is true. Originally, it was a poem set to music with 17 verses. The repetition was a little much, according to John, but he thought it would be a good book for the young and young at heart. He signed copies recently at Mills

Book Store in Tennessee's Hillsboro Village. As if all the singing, songwriting, steamboating on the rivers of the USA, traveling from sea to shining sea and back again, picking and authoring a book weren't enough... well, there's more! Now, by the grace of God and Stelling Banjo, John Hartford has a child named after him! A banjo! Yep, the child is a John Hartford Stelling Banjo. Now ain't that just the most! My very favorite thing John ever did, besides marry one of the best friends I've got on this planet, Marie Barrett, was to lay the pen to the paper and forge the classic "Gentle On My Mind."

OKAY O'KANES

The O'Kanes are A-okay. Who says so? Me, that's who. Kieran Kane and Jamie O'Hara make up the duo, The O'Kanes. I'm acquainted with Kieran, and Jamie is a friend of mine. I have dined on occasion with the rugged and handsome Mr. O'Hara. It is my Christian duty to tell you that it was Jamie O'Hara who not only penned the smash "Older Women" for Ronnie McDowell but also wrote the CMA doubly-nominated song "Grandpa (Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days)" for The Judds. "Grandpa" was nominated for both Single and Song of the Year. I predict that Jamie will be saving "gooduns" like these for The O'Kanes from henceforth.



GEORGE GETS HONORED AND I GET A TICKET

Pictured here is George Jones holding his award for Video of the Year at the CMA Awards in Music City recently. The song "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes" was written by ASCAP winner Troy Seals. By the way, George, I was cruising down Dickerson Road getting down on another one of your hits, "Wine Colored Roses," when I heard a siren, looked around and realized the flashing blue light was to my direct rear. An angry Metro policeman did not accept my flimsy excuse... listening to George Jones sing was not a good reason to be driving 53 in a 40 mile zone. Really, I thought it was an excellent reason to get lost in a song.

A COUNTRY WEDDING



The bride and groom are none other than Keith Whitley and Lorrie Morgan. The union is sure to be blessed with lots of music, since Keith records for RCA records and Lorrie stars on the Opry. There's sure to be much singing in the Whitley/Morgan household.

SHIRLEY AND ROGER, MY HEART GOES OUT TO YOU

To Shirley and Roger Sovine, my sympathy. Speaking as a parent myself, no words can express my feelings about the loss of your son, Roger Jr. The 24-year-old fell to his death from 20th floor scaffolding of the new convention center where he worked. Shirley, as a mother, I have no words. Roger and Shirley, as a parent, still no condolences are good enough. I am truly sorry. To you fans, Roger Sovine works for BMI in Nashville, and is the son of the late/great country singer Red Sovine. ■

Herman Woonzel Is Dead

by Tom T. Hall

Country legend Herman Woonzel has passed on, but the music he loved seems to have been reborn. Tom T. Hall explains.



Is it true that there is nothing new under the sun? Is it true that when something dies or passes from the scene, something new comes along to take its place? We don't know for sure; it's a theory.

Anyway, I was reminded of this the other day. I called Russ Barnard, editor of this magazine, to tell him that Herman Woonzel had died. Herman, as you might remember, used to work with a dancing bear. Herman played the banjo, told jokes and sang goofy songs of one kind or another, but mostly early-coun-

try. I kept track of Herman for a number of years and occasionally wrote about him here in this forum.

Now that Herman Woonzel is dead, there's something new under the sun. It's something old, actually—people, boys and girls, who sing country. They have fiddles and steel guitars in their bands, and they sometimes wear coats and ties like Flatt and Scruggs did. They are quiet and shy folks who don't talk a lot, like George Jones and Kitty Wells. Through some magic, or quirk of fate, they have latched onto the despair,

loneliness and joy of being ordinary. I sometimes think that ordinary is another word for country. You can hear it in their voices, and see it in their faces. I like their singing. It sounds like biscuits and gravy in a truck stop at three in the morning. It sounds like a motel room that hasn't had the door opened to it for two weeks. It sounds like your mother-in-law talking on the phone. It sounds like your brother-in-law calling from jail. It sounds country.

Herman Woonzel was expected to die. He was in his nineties. He died of an overdose of life.

Country music was supposed to die when Herman did. He was the oldest living picker and singer of note. So who are these new/old kids? Randy Travis, Reba McEntire, Dwight Yoakam, Ricky Skaggs, George Strait, The Forester Sisters, Steve Earle, Marty Stuart. Everybody from record company executives, songwriters, publishers, disk jockeys and magazine editors (except the ones who edit this magazine) have told them that country won't sell. Why are they doing it anyway? Don't they know Herman Woonzel is dead?

It rained the day we buried Herman. He was the only one dry. We buried him in the yellow, sticky mud of Benton, Tennessee. I hadn't seen him in two or three years. He had his phone taken out because he couldn't hear it ringing or hear to converse on it. His friend and neighbor told me that he was deaf when he died. It's a pity he didn't live to hear some of these kids singing. He would have liked them.

I wanted to write a little story about Herman Woonzel dying. I really did. But Herman was like Bojangle's dog; he just up and died.

I am reminded of the time someone asked Ernest Hemingway how his wife died. Mister Hemingway said, "She died like everybody else, and after that she was dead." ■

Tom T. Hall was Herman Woonzel's favorite reporter, mainly because he was the only reporter to ever interview Herman. For earlier reports see Country Music for June 1979 and November/December 1983.—Ed.

This drawing of Tom T. Hall was done by Mike Daniels of Colorado Springs, Colorado. It's based on a photo that appeared in this magazine.



Country Music
STARS
and their
HOMES

The following four pages present an excerpt from *Country Music Stars and Their Homes*, a new book published by *Country Music* for our readers. The book takes you on a tour of the homes where your favorites—people like Willie Nelson, Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash, Barbara Mandrell and Roy Acuff—live when they are off the road. You also get an inside look at some of the fabulous home-on-the-road buses where they live while touring.

The book shows you everything from George Jones' bathroom to William Lee Golden's collection of Indian relics. There are surprises, like Dolly Parton's toned-down Silver Eagle bus and the reserved elegance of Webb Pierce's English style mansion, while others are just what you would expect—Barbara Mandrell's dazzling dining room and Willie Nelson's rustic Austin spread, deeply rooted in the landscape of Texas with a serene wood and stone motif.

The photographs are the work of many of our best photographers with a lively text written by

our ace home furnishings and interior decorating expert, Editor-at-Large Michael "Slipcovers" Bane. In future issues we will present more excerpts from the book so you can see how these stars see themselves. After all, the way they live is a reflection of their personalities.

We begin with Tom T. Hall's and Miss Dixie's Fox Hollow farm house, a home that mixes 18th century English elegance with down home country charm.

—THE EDITORS

How to get your copy of *Country Music Stars and Their Homes*.

Over 25,000 of our subscribers have recently received their copies of *Country Music Stars and Their Homes* as a gift for renewing their subscriptions. To see how you can get a copy yourself, read the information on the front of the mailing wrapper that came on this issue of *Country Music* or write *Country Music*, Dept, H. Suite 2118, 342 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10173.

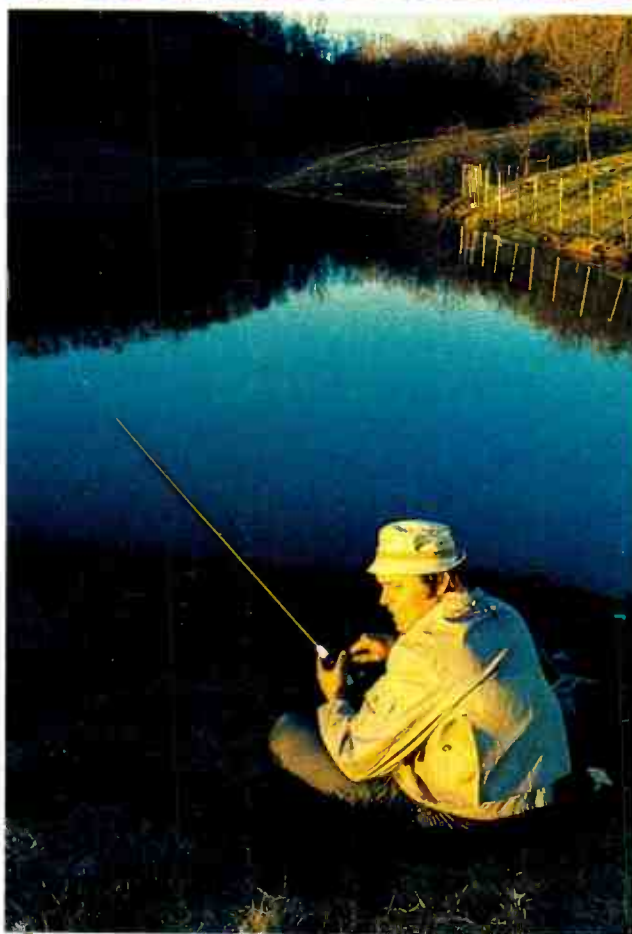


TOM T. HALL



When Tom T. and Miss Dixie Hall moved into their then-new Fox Hollow farmhouse and held their first party, the den caught on fire and burned down. "We were having a housewarming party," says Tom T., "of all jokes." Tom T. Hall, the Storyteller, has made his reputation with finely crafted stories in song, so it's not surprising that his home has its own story. The 60-acre farm in northern Williamson County near Nashville, was originally conceived as a copy of Rosedown, one of the grand antebellum mansions located in St. Francesville, Louisiana, and now open to the public as a national landmark. Rosedown was one of the few plantation mansions to escape destruction during the Civil War, because, ironically, of a combination of dense river fog and an extensive collection of statuary along the driveway entrance. When the Yankee troops came through the gates, late at night and in a heavy fog coming in off the Mississippi, they thought they were in a cemetery. The troops staged a strategic withdrawal, and Rosedown was spared.

The Fox Hollow house was al-



This is one of Tom T. Hall's favorite pastimes, and it's easy to see why.



Top left: Fox Hollow from the front, a recreation of the Louisiana plantation Rosedown.



The Hall library, one of Tom T.'s favorite rooms. It includes his favorite chair and a collection of drawings and paintings of birds.



The dining room in all its baronial splendor, watched over by portraits of King Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I.



TOM T. HALL

ready under construction when Tom T. and Miss Dixie spotted it on one of their forays through the beautiful countryside. "I liked this house because it had an upstairs porch," Tom T. says. "I stood on the landing and looked out over the property. It is beautiful up there. I just said, 'Gol-lee, this is it.' So I convinced Miss Dixie we'd be able to finish it."

There were no plans for the house, so its construction involved numerous trips to Louisiana to photograph and sketch the original. The result is a house and estate that one writer described this way: "It looks like the kind of simple little country estate where a retired U.S. Ambassador of the old school might spend his twilight years writing books on orthinology and entertaining minor royalty with good fresh garden vegetables and per-

haps a Tennessee ham cured in the smokehouse by the Master himself."

Tom T. Hall first made his mark in country music as a songwriter. A stint as a disk jockey yielded his "DJ For a Day," a major hit for Jimmy Newman in 1963, followed by Dave Dudley's version of "Mad" the following year. Tom T. headed for Nashville and his own recording career, which got a tremendous boost in 1967 when Jeanie C. Riley recorded his "Harper Valley P.T.A.," a song that became more a national mania than anything else. Tom T. then began penning and singing a string of classic songs, including "A Week in a Country Jail," "The Year That Clayton Delany Died," "Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine," and "I Love."



Not surprisingly, the Hall country kitchen is a congregating place for guests and visitors.

The center of attention in the living room is a music box on the center table.



THE JUDDS

Country Music Saved Our Butts

Naomi and Wynonna Judd are now enjoying the fruits of their labor. With a potential TV show in the works, they're approaching the big time. But their success has brought them even more—a growing understanding of each other apart from the music world.

by Patrick Carr



They're quite a pair, a genuinely odd couple. On stage and even on their album covers they may look like sweet-singin' peas in a redheaded pod—one a little larger and younger than the other, a mite more dynamically connected to the nutritional stem (as still-growing plants and people are wont to be)—but in person, without their “Judd suits” or the uncanny intimacy of their harmonies to weld them into a single supple unit, they seem like very, very different individuals.

Just the way they look, for instance. When Naomi comes into the hotel room where mother and daughter and I will talk, she's a petite, svelte, very fetching woman in dark sunglasses and a slinky, silky black and silver Oriental-print pajama suit; the mystery lady (Tokyo Rose? Mata Hari?), ready to twist you around her little finger.

She greets me quietly and briefly and a touch distractedly, as if she hasn't quite arrived at where she's at yet, then settles herself slowly against the headboard of the bed, kicks off her little black slippers, yawns, stretches, and sinks away behind the shades.

Oh, wow, think I, knowing it's just too corny but unable to resist. We've got a live one here, boy. Fun and trouble: Cat Woman!

Then the daughter arrives, breezing into our presence with an eager, jolly, bouncy air, and immediately another corny but radically different animal image springs to mind: *Cute Puppy!* Really—there's such an air of earnest, innocent, half awkward enthusiasm about this kid that I just can't help it; I'm comparing her to a huge, young Pyrenean sheepdog I used to know very well. Like that wonderful creature, Wynonna seems playful and faithful and bursting with vim, but also strong beyond her age and experience, bigger and more powerful in the world than she realizes. She looks and sounds much, much younger than the gorgeously worldly voice on The Judds' records; in fact, she looks and sounds much younger than her age, which is 22. In her oversized sweatshirt with the little plastic replicas of supermarket items sewn to the front, without makeup and with her hair tied up, she looks like a suburban 17-year-old who should by rights be giggling her way around a mall someplace.

Wynonna plonks herself down on the bed at her mother's feet, and we start being official. The Judds have just come out of the studio in Nashville, so I ask them how the record sessions went.

Naomi replies first. “It's really weird to be back out in the world,” she says slowly.

She doesn't get a chance to explain why it's weird because Wynonna jumps in.

“Being on the road is a real blessing,” she begins. “You get to actually reach out and shake hands with the fans. You get to meet people and hear wonderful stories about, oh, like how a woman gave birth to a child with Judd music playing, and that's really what gets us through the road part. But once a year we get to go into the studio and have that creativity, that fellowship of hanging out together with Don (Potter, their bandleader) and Brent (Maher, their producer) and the musicians literally for *weeks...*”

This is good grownup meaningful material presented impressively. The kid seems to relish it, to take the heartfelt-spokesperson role seriously. She's *very* sincere—and paradoxically, her responsible-young-woman

PHOTOS COURTESY THE JUDDS



"In 1979 when we moved to Nashville we went visiting an old lady out in the country, Leipers Fork, Tenn. I would check her blood pressure, and we'd sing on her front porch. There must be dozens of pictures of us singing on porch swings. Our little old white frame house was in our first video 'Mama, He's Crazy.' I miss the skunks under the house, the pipes freezing every winter, the Harpeth River flooding the yard each spring. I wonder if she does."

"In the beginning—in March of '84 Wynonna and I walked out onto a stage in front of 10,000 strangers. It was the first show—opening for the Statlers in Omaha, Nebraska. It was a milestone in our lives (and one of the most nervous times we've ever lived through). We wore the same clothes every night 'cause it was all we had. We put together an Emergency Band, and didn't have a bus or anything. Thank goodness for woolite and aspirin."



"Happy 21st Birthday to Wynonna—my little girl with the voice of a mature woman! We were in the studio recording the Why Not Me album, May 30, 1985 with Brent Maher, our great producer, and the third Judd, Don Potter. For all her life I've been baking her a devil's food cake with chocolate icing. One year I made another kind and she thought I didn't love her anymore."

stance makes her seem even younger. Real grownups sometimes talk like that, but nine times out of ten they don't actually mean it. Wynonna does.

Her mother continues the theme, a lot less passionately. "Cutting a record is sort of like a religious experience for us," she says. "It's like we're nuns or monks or something, going to the monastery, transcribing the Holy Grail or something. It's pretty heavy duty..."

Her voice trails off, then she comes back at it again on a different level, this one a tad more down to earth. "Well, to start with, we don't wear makeup," she says. "We wear stuff like *this*—'bus clothes,' we call them. I haven't been out of the house all week, you know, except to go to the studio. I wash my hair and just let it dry naturally, I cook three meals a day at home and just hang around with my boyfriend, you know, watch TV. So it's really sort of a jolt to be back out here."

Naomi starts a story about what she did yesterday—sat around "rappin', just philosophizin'" with Jim Bob, the studio engineer—when suddenly Wynonna breaks in again. "You have kids?" she asks me.

At this point I realize that in no way do I have even a ghost of a chance of controlling this particular interview. Therefore I just let it roll. Sure, I have kids, I tell Wynonna. Teenagers in big, bad, mean New York City. This gets her started in her serious-young-woman role again.

"Y'know, I'm 22, and the other day my best friend and I were thinking about how we've come a long way in terms of lifestyle," she says. "We were remembering how I used to take food back to the supermarket to get money for going out, and now here we are in 1986, really blessed to have what we have. We stay in hotels, and we travel, and I've just moved into a new house, and I was able to buy my sister Ashley a BMW for graduation—and I've come to realize that I don't care, man, *where* you live. I mean, it's really cool. I meet kids my age who come to our shows who have literally got Mohawks and Quiet Riot t-shirts—this is in, like, New York and Chicago and L.A.—but they're at *our* show.

"And, like, we're getting ready to do our own TV show, which means we'll be out in L.A. five months out of the year, and, to be honest with you, that's the *last* place I want to be. So we were talking about that the other day, and the point we were all making was what my grandmother always taught me: you're only as good as the people you surround yourself with. So whether you're in New York or L.A. or wherever, if you've got good people around you..."

"I was very blessed. I had Mom there

"Men! You can't live with 'em and you can't shoot 'em."

—NAOMI JUDD

telling me, 'Wynonna, this is right, and this is wrong. Drugs are a dead end; alcohol's a dead end; music is not.' I've been very lucky to have a Christian background, that foundation. I meet good kids from all walks of life, and the common bond is the bond they have with their parents. Yes, I've been very fortunate."

There is a silence befitting the weight of this statement for a moment or two, and then the mother speaks. "You know," she says, "I never knew about her taking food back to Kroger's until she said it in an interview once. I kept giving her the grocery money, and I never knew that's how she got money to go out."

"I only did it when I was desperate, Mom!" the daughter protests.

"Honey, you did it a *lot*," says Naomi.

"No, I didn't."

"Yes, you did."

Wynonna sighs—oh, the injustice!—then giggles, then hops up onto the bed and lays her head in her mother's lap. Naomi plays gently with her hair and strokes her face as the interview moves weirdly onward.

You really have to respect The Judds. They had a lot going for them when they started out on the star trek, it's true—a female duet team, let alone a hot, attractive *which one's which?* mother-and-daughter team, was almost a surefire hit on the basis of novelty alone—but once launched, they have been impressive. Their talent has grown, their sound has deepened, they have stayed true to the uniquely pleasant, modified-purist mainspring of their music, and they have handled their business intelligently. They have of course reaped the rewards of such virtue, and reaped them in spades—money, awards, their upcoming shot at becoming characters in your livingroom with their own TV show—and now, really, all they have to do is keep on keeping on, and avoid screwing up.

And how could The Judds screw up? Well, that's easy: Naomi and Wynonna could get to the point where they simply couldn't work together any more. And as followers of country music gossip know well, that's not just a theoretical possibility. Naomi and her daughter

have a colorful record of "priors" in this area; some very bitter, all too public instances of stress, competition and anger.

The details are unimportant, and besides, you've read all about them already if you subscribe to this magazine. What matters is *what now?* How are The Judds getting along with each other these days?

Beautifully, they say, and the way they're cuddled up together on their hotel room bed lends enormous weight to that statement.

Wynonna begins with the specifics. "It's really been hard," she says. "I used to be like, *'My mother is the most neurotic Naomi Judd in the universe! I don't understand anything she has to say.'* But country music has brought us together. Country music has saved our butts. It's been a real blessing, because the last two years on the road, we've been forced to deal with each other: 'I'm not happy with what you're doing. Let's sit down and talk about it, and work it out.' Most kids don't have that opportunity. They can leave the house, or leave home, without working it out. I can't do that."

Naomi adds, "It's like all those things they say about how to have a good marriage in the women's magazines: you have to set aside time for your relationship, or it just gets off track. *I* have to make sure that there are times when Wynonna and I can just be together without anything else going on."

"And, y'know, there's another thing," says her daughter. "When you're waiting to go on national television to accept an award, but you're having a fight, that sort of puts things in perspective. The fight's not important. It's like, many times we just don't have the time or the energy to fight; too many good things are going on."

Naomi adds another angle: The Judds' manager, Ken Stilts. When insoluble disputes arise between mother and daughter—or partner and partner—they go to Ken for a final judgment. "You see, I trust Ken *implicitly*," says Naomi. "He's not only my best friend, but Wynonna and Ashley's father-figure too—and for Naomi Judd, who's not had the best luck with her love life or men in general, that's *really* saying something. So he's our judge. He doesn't get emo-

tional about these issues the way we do, and he's fair, so his word is law." Later in the day, at the show, Ken says that this is true, and adds, "They really don't have the explosions they used to. They get along pretty well, in fact—y'know, disagreements over this and that, but nothing *terrible*."

Maybe, then, the fabled Judd fights are a thing of the past. Instead there's the sort of low-intensity, short-term guerrilla warfare common among family members everywhere, at any time; skirmishes, really, or conflicts even less significant.

A lot of it arises from personality differences. Obviously, Wynonna's commitment to her serious-young-woman role is strong. She has insights to share—thinking of Judd music as "a ministry," for instance; she has views. Her mother, on the other hand, is a little lighter on her feet, a little funnier, and a lot more mischievous. Sometimes, that irks Wynonna a touch.

For instance, Wynonna is describing her approach to the planned Judds' TV sitcom with great sincerity—"It's such a positive, a *family* sitcom, the whole family can be involved in equally, and it's another thing like our music, where we can go to sleep at night knowing that we've done something good in the world"—when her mother jumps in with, "And no puppets!"

Wynonna bristles. "*Mommmmm!*" she says. "That was *really unnecessary!*"

Then continues: "What we want to do—and you really have to treat this delicately—is to go in there and do things we believe in. For instance, I won't smoke on the show. It'll be very close to our real lives..."

But here comes Mom again. "I won't take a doctor's temperature in church," she quips.

It's too much for poor Wynonna. "I'm always trying to be straight, y'know? And *she's* over there making no sense at all!"

I venture the opinion that maybe things don't really have to make sense all the time. Lots of stuff—network television, for instance—doesn't make any sense at all no matter how serious you are about it.

"Well, you're probably just as sick as *she* is," says Wynonna. But this time she's laughing. It's okay.

Behind Wynonna's back, her mother winks at me.

The Judds are somewhat concerned about the effect of their TV show on their lives—they know the work is gruelling, the hours terrible, the glamor a myth—but all the same, they're excited. When Naomi talks about the day she and her daughters went to the Universal build-

ing in L.A. to audition, she speaks as reverently as she does about the day they auditioned for RCA; for her, it was a major triumph, an enormous milestone on The Judds' road from nowhere to everywhere. All those years working two jobs and the single-parent role too, living in rental apartments, protecting her daughters from the evils of a predatory world, and now this: a family TV show, the very biggest of all big time! It's a wonderful reward for a life of hard work and perseverance and romantic disappointment and lone responsibility, isn't it?

Yes, it is. It's a truly significant recognition of a genuinely strong, interesting, powerful woman of the modern world. What the show turns out to be like, and whether or not it gets off the ground and into the network schedule in the first place, is irrelevant in a way; more important is the simple fact that Universal—and RCA before it—thought they saw a real character and a real story in Naomi, and thought right. She is her own unique mysterious china-doll Southern belle self, of course, but she's also the archetypal tough-as-nails, sharp-as-a-tack, free-spirited single mother. A child of the Baby Boom raised in the Shangri-La security of the Fifties and matured through the wrenching upheavals of the Sixties, she made it past the cynical selfishness of the Seventies—the Decade of Divorce for her and millions of other young American mothers—and now it is her time. Now comes the acceptance, the gravy, the respect, and the power. Now, for the first time, Naomi is unquestionably the boss.

As it is currently conceived, the TV show will not recognize this real-life fact—it will be about a *struggling* showbiz mother-and-daughters unit, not the spectacularly successful team playing that part—and that's cute. While the TV folks get all the benefits of dealing behind the scenes with a strong, competent, thoroughgoing female professional (and her mostly male team), they also get to stop short of portraying her real power in their entertainment module; in the picture of our society the TV networks seem most comfortable painting for us, only big tough broads like Maude or Mrs. Jefferson wear the pants. That's the sort of irony I'm sure the petite and beautiful Naomi, like many other successful women in these and all times, has learned to appreciate all the way to the bank.

Naomi handles her power deftly, but it's not surprising that at times she finds her programming getting in the way. "I'm still into roles," she says. "I still think that if my man's got a button off his shirt, I've got to sew it back on before he's even hip that it's loose. And out here on the road, lying around in this nice



hotel room, I still get that way. You know—I should be out marble-izing that freeway."

But then, this is also the Naomi Judd who gave us one of the great quotes of all time a short while back—"Men: You can't live with 'em, and you can't shoot 'em"—and it's also the woman who attests to the power of both her mothering instinct and her daredevil streak in the same breath.

"I can't separate Naomi Ellen Judd the individual from Naomi Judd the mother of Wynonna and Ashley," she says. "The mothering instinct in me is one of the strongest parts of my character, but I *am* known to be an adventuress. A lot of Wynonna's memories of growing up are about hanging out the back of a car, zipping up and down various highways, hollering 'Where are



We were pleased to have The Judds visit our offices when we were putting this article together. In addition to persuading them to pose for a photo with our publicity-mad editor and publisher, Russ Barnard, we convinced Naomi to write the captions for the pictures on page 30. She got plenty of editorial guidance from Wynonna.



we going, and when are we going to get there?"—and me saying, "I don't know. Wherever it looks good, we'll stop and live there a while."

"So I'm definitely one of these characters who'll say, 'Double-dare me to go out and walk on that ledge, and then stand back!' But you try to hurt one of my girls, and you'll find I'm the meanest, most old-fashioned lady in the world."

The TV show challenges both characters. The show itself appeals to the adventuress, who professes to *hate* acting ("I turned it down when we lived seven or eight years in Hollywood, wouldn't even *date* actors I thought they were so superficial and phony and ego-maniacal"), but will give the job a full-throttle whirl anyway, while the L.A. showbiz environment challenges that

protective mother. "What are we doing?" says Naomi with a certain degree of wonder. "We're moving to lala-land! It's Hollywood; Bimbo-burg..."

"Mommmy," Wynonna interrupts, "Don't!" Then, ignoring her own advice, turns to me and says, "I mean, we're all human beings, and I don't understand when I meet some of those people *why* they have to *live* that way..."

Mom cuts back in again. "I was talking to Wynonna the other night about how we live, and the world we live in right now—you know, traveling all over the country, being in show business—and I said, 'Have you ever seen anyone actually snorting cocaine? Has anyone ever knocked on your door and invited you to an orgy down the hall?' She said, 'No.' So I said, 'You think Reagan's war on drugs has worked, that there are no more drugs out there?' She said, 'No.' So I said, 'Well, you get my point?'"

Naomi's point is that "the drugs and stupidity are out there," but if The Judds "re-create the same team of people, the same atmosphere" in Hollywood that surrounds them in Nashville and on the road, they'll come through just fine in the gilded palace of sin. And for Naomi, that's the motherhood challenge.

It's a big one, so, "Either here I come, Betty Ford Center, or I am gonna be..." "Senile!" quoth the loyal daughter.

"...the happiest woman in the universe! I may be the first human being to fly under her own propulsion. It'll be like it would be if I were a Little League parent with one kid on third in the bottom of the ninth with the bases loaded, and the other kid coming up to bat."

As Naomi says with pride, she has given her older daughter a career—a *very* good start in the music business—and now she's positioned the BMW-driving young Ashley—who "can't carry a tune in a bucket"—squarely into the prime-time acting world. And then, of course, she's also done very well indeed for herself. Being the boss of The Judds—a position in which she gets rich and famous while being as close to her daughters as she could ever want to be—sure beats swimming in the typing pool or working herself to the bone as a Registered Nurse in a country hospital while the kids grow up by themselves. Not bad, Naomi, not bad.

Almost showtime for The Judds. Wynonna, still in her teenager-at-the-mall outfit, is working out some stage moves around a new feature in the show, an instrumental by the band during which she and Naomi race through a mid-show costume change (they're going to Vegas, where such moves are almost mandatory),

while her mother does her thing.

Naomi's very deft, very hip, and she uses her mama-boss position nicely. When one of the band members voices fears that the instrumental might be something of a mess, for instance, she says, "It'd better not be. The first one of you to hit a wrong note comes up to my room for a good spanking."

This, of course, gets exactly the response she intended: ribald noises and questions like "Will you spank all of us, or just the one who messes up the worst?" and "How bad does it have to be?"

Naomi drops her head and gives them a look over the top of the shades. "Oh, yes," she says. "I know *all* about you boys: 'Sticks and stones will break my bones, but chains will just excite me'..."

Wynonna doesn't even blink at this exchange. All her serious-young-prude girlishness seems to have vanished; now, on stage, she's stone cold professional.

She seems to get older by the minute until, totally transformed by makeup and her "Judd suit" and the riveted attention of three or four thousand very excited fans, she sings her first note. *Then* she's the Wynonna Judd you know, even fuller and subtler and more soulful as a stage singer than she is on record, and her mother is her high harmony support; a kind of very necessary, very interesting shadow of her daughter's mature and powerful presence.

It gets confusing, this transformation and exchange of roles, so when the show's over—a great show, by the way; calling it "successful" is understating the matter—I visit with Wynonna and Naomi on their bus and ask an essential question. What I ask is, "How did The Judds—the *singing*, professional Judds—come about?" But what I really mean is *Whose idea was it?*

Naomi replies. "Well, Wynonna wanted to sing and get into a band even when she was still in high school," she says, "but I didn't want to let her. I didn't want her to be just another one of those scrungy club kids, you know?"

"But she pushed, and pushed, and I did a deal with her. I told her that once she graduated high school, I'd go into it with her. That way I could be sure she didn't get involved with the wrong sort of people, go nowhere, and end up teasing hair in a beauty parlor the rest of her life. I *know* what that's all about; you can blow your whole life at an age when you're not thinking about anything but your next milk shake.

"So that's what happened. I mean, I fought it, I really did. I tried my darndest to stop it, but"—she gives me a wonderfully smart, coy smile—"it was bigger than both of us!"

Wynonna jumps in. "And it sure pays better than being a nurse," she says.

Both of them laugh. Wouldn't you? ■

FOR **CMSA** MEMBERS ONLY



Roy Acuff Specials

In the 1930's he was part of the founding of an industry. Today Roy Acuff is an American institution. For more about his long and varied career, see this month's *Newsletter*.

No Roy Acuff box sets exist, but enough of his most important work for Columbia is available to give collectors—and those who just plain love his strong, sharp country sound—something to chew on. *The King of Country Music*. (Gusto P-16596), with 20 songs, is a bargain to start with at \$9.97 member's price \$6.98—available in record, cassette or 8-track tape. Songs include such classics as "Great Speckled Bird," "Wreck on the Highway," "I Saw the Light," "If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again" as well as "Wabash Cannon Ball," "Tennessee Waltz," "Pins and Needles" and "Muleskinner Blues." There are no liner notes.

Roy Acuff—Columbia Historic Edition (FC 39998) features liner notes, dates of all the songs (ranging from the late 1930's through the early 1950's) and 16 songs, as follows: "The Streamlined Cannon Ball," "You're the Only Star (In My Blue Heaven)," "Steel Guitar Blues," "Ida Red," "New Greenback Dollar," "When I Lay My Burden Down" and more. (Only four songs on this one are duplicated on *King*.) This collection goes for \$11.98, member's price \$9.98, available on record or cassette.

A third album, more off-beat but interesting, is *Roy Acuff: 1936-1939—Steamboat Whistle Blues* (Rounder SS23). This one, with liner notes, features very early Acuff songs recorded

before he went to Columbia. Among them: "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," "Red Lips," "You've Gotta See Mama Every Night," "An Old Three Room Shack," "Smokey Mountain Rag"—12 songs for \$11.98, member's price \$9.98, record or cassette.

To order, send check to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 0304N, Suite 2118, 342 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10173. Specify record or cassette. Add .95 postage and handling for each item ordered—that's a special for-members-only price, too—and include CSMA membership number.

Other Specials

Don't forget your member's discount on Top 25 albums—a whopping 25% off on some of the hottest records in country music these days, from Travis, Alabama, Yoakam, Strait, Jones, McEntire and rising star Lyle Lovett—on page 68 in this and every issue.

Don't forget, also, your money-off opportunities on records and cassettes in this issue's Buried Treasures and Essential Collector. Everything from young Faron Young to early Dolly Parton.

Write for the Newsletter

Loranda "Sam" Daniels from farm/ranch country in Nebraska plays in a band in her off-hours. Her story is featured in the *Newsletter* this month. The *Newsletter* is always looking for good stories, cartoons, updates on new and old performers and anything else of interest to you dedicated fans and readers. See yourself in print. Check *Newsletter*, page 34H, for where to send material.

MEMBERS POLL/MARCH 1987

VOTE

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

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records or tapes) in the last month?

Yes No

How many records? _____ How many cassettes? _____

2. Which ones did you like best? List performer and album title.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

3. To vote, list the numbers of your top 5 favorites from the Top 25, page 68.

Singles (list 5 numbers)

Albums (list 5 numbers)

Do You Use These Products?

4. Do you or anyone else in your family use any tobacco product? Yes No

Check with kinds:

Which brand?

Cigarettes

Chewing Tobacco

Snuff

Cigars

Pipe Tobacco

5. Check any of the following beverages used by you or anyone else in your family:

Bourbon

Vodka

Brandy (Cognac)

Scotch

Gin

Beer

Blended Rye

Tequila

Wine

Blended Canadian

Rum

Wine Coolers

6. Do you or anyone else in your family own a radar detector? Yes No

If not, do you plan to buy one? Yes No

7. Do you or anyone else in your family have a cassette player in a car or truck? Yes No

Do you plan to buy one? Yes No

Who Can Vote

Only CMSA members are eligible to vote. If you are a member, fill in your Membership Number _____

If you are not a member, but want to join and vote immediately, fill out the poll, enclose your check for \$12 for one-year CMSA Membership (you get an extra year of *Country Music Magazine*, too).

Fill out and mail to: March Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173.

If You Are Not a Member: You may join and order from this page at the same time at member's prices. Just include a separate check for \$12 (one-year's dues, includes an additional year's subscription to *Country Music*) payable to Country Music Society of America and follow member's ordering procedure above.

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Everybody Is a Star

We each have something unique about us. That is why, wonderful as he is, there is only one Roy Acuff. That is why, wonderful as she is, there is only one Loranda Sam Daniels. That is why, though there is a Miss America every year, there is just one Kellye Cash.

Each individual, well-known or known only to a few, has a unique view of the world. That is why the work of so many Society members is publishable here in the *Newsletter*. From every walk of life and corner of the States come stories, poems, puzzles, drawings, photographs, cartoons (we wish there were more of them!), reviews and just plain letters that make the *Newsletter* what it is.

Even the Information, Please section, one of our most popular features, was suggested by one of you, Paul Koskubar.

It is up to each one of us in life to be what we really are. For some, that means reaching millions through music, through words, through a product. For some, it means reaching a few—sustaining a family, writing a column for a local paper, being a hometown entertainer. It can even mean being a good listener or helping out an ill parent. The flower is not better than the ground.

With all of these thoughts in mind, the *Newsletter* salutes its contributors—and readers—at the start of its fourth year.

Cosmic Cowboys Fill the Wide Open Spaces With Song

Member Loranda Sam Daniels lives in north central Nebraska, not far from the state line. In her off hours she plays bass and a little guitar with four other Nebraskans, all guys. They travel long miles and stay up late to work dates together when they can. Satisfactions include companionship and the music. We're grateful to "Sam" for her story of this farm country band.

The Cosmic Cowboys started ten years ago this fall. Scott Bernt and Mark Elsbury are original members. Scott Kunz and I have been with them three years. Lynn Spelts joined us in February a year ago.

Scott Bernt, 29, is married with two kids. He has a welding repair business and a trucking business in Butte, Nebraska. The trailer in the picture of all of us was made by him. He is an excellent impressionist when we can talk him into it.

Mark Elsbury, 25, has a wife and two kids. They live in O'Neill, Nebraska. He works for a large farming corporation. We like to tease him about his bad jokes and his Willie Nelson picking.

Scott Kunz, 23, is tall, blonde and single. Scott lives and works on his family's farm near Stuart, Nebraska. He also works for a farmer north of Stuart. He is our other resident crazy.

I'm afraid I don't know much about Lynn yet. He lives in O'Neill and does sand-blasting and painting. Ask him anything and he knows something about it. And he gets a haircut once a year!

I am 30 and single. Live on a farm ranch with my folks near Ainsworth. I run a cap-printing business with a good friend from a



Cosmic Cowboys include lead singer Scott Bernt, far left; lead guitarist and harmony singer Mark Elsbury in football jersey; bass and lead player Loranda Daniels; drummer Scott Kunz and lead and rhythm guitarist Lynn Spelts under that hat. Back-up trailer by Scott Bernt. Loranda's the band chronicler.

band I used to play with. Work at home haying and feeding. Also do a little leather tooling. Recently moved into my own house.

We play in small towns in our area mostly. I live 42 miles from Kunz, 73 miles from Mark and Lynn, and 84 miles from Scott Bernt. Our dances are usually in steak-houses, bars and legion halls. Get a lot of wedding dances. Our "crowds" are local people out dancing up a storm. The farm economy is real bad around here, so people don't have the money to hire bands as often as before.

The Cosmic Cowboys play music from

In This Issue

- Making Their Own Mark
- Creative Readers
- Long Live King Acuff
- Collections



Setting up—what a mess! Mark, Jimmy Bernt and dad Scott Bernt.

"Cheatin' Heart" to "She and I." We play a lot of Waylon, Milsap, Haggard, E. T. Conley, Willie, CCR, Dirt Band and others. My personal favorite is Waylon.

The nights are long. I leave around 5:30 to get to Scott K's. Then we ride together to the booking. Have to be set up and ready by nine. Play four 45-minute sets. Tear it all down, load up and drive home. Usually get



Going through a song before nine—**Scott Bernt, Lynn (still in his hat), Mark and drummer Kunz.**

home around 4 A.M. It's long but fun. It has to be, 'cause you can't make a living doing it around here.

The thing I like most, I guess, is being with the guys in the band. They are good friends and we have a lot of fun. Their families are great. Don't get to see them that much. Find that I miss all of them when we don't play for awhile.

There are so many funny stories that only someone in a band would understand. Weird harmony in weird places. Suddenly drawing blank on a song you've done a hundred times. Tangled cords and heavy amps and speakers. Breakfast at 2 or 3 A.M. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

**Loranda "Sam" Daniels
Ainsworth, Nebraska**

host in Memphis or Nashville. I love the Memphis area, and there are lots of entertainment programs I am looking into, but I am open, I will wait and see! I am open to change and new opportunities.

DD: Would you consider a career in singing, then?

KC: It would have to come out and grab me, I guess. Right now, I am not planning on it, but I have a very open mind.

DD: Who is your favorite singer?

KC: My mother, Billie Cash. She has a beautiful, beautiful soprano voice. She sounds like an angel. I have always enjoyed listening to her sing. We have done concerts together, I enjoy singing with her. And I love to watch Johnny. He is a fantastic entertainer and has a lot of charisma. I think that is something all of the Cashes have! We love to get up on the stage and perform.

DD: Well, do me a favor and tell John and June and family "hi" for me.

KC: I will.

**Dennis Paul Devine Sr.
Council Bluffs, Iowa**

Miss America Leads Fashion Parade for Clarkson

Miss America, Kellye Cash, grand-niece of Johnny Cash, led off the Clarkson Hospital Fashion Show in Omaha this fall, and Dennis Devine was there, to take in the sights, hear Kellye and former Miss America, Susan Akins, sing, and to ask Kellye about her future plans. Thanks to reporter Devine for this coverage.

My first interview with a "Miss America"! What would I ask her?

The occasion was "Forty Carats, the Many Facets of Fashion," a production for Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. The place was the Peony Park Ballroom, the date was October 2nd, it was raining and I *had* remembered to bring an umbrella. It was the show's fortieth year, 800 volunteers were behind it—the show's chairman, Joan Bermis, met us at the door.

Kellye and I had time for a few words before the show.

DD: Why did you decide to enter the Miss America contest?

KC: Well, it was something I wanted to do at a very young age; I think a lot of young girls dream of being Miss America, but as I grew up and entered college, I saw the career and scholarship opportunities that the pageant offered. That was something I was not aware of before. Once I saw that and saw it was not a typical beauty contest, I began to work very hard to prepare myself.

DD: Were there steps you had to take to reach the Miss America pageant?

KC: Yes. My first pageant was in March of 1986—Miss Memphis State. I was first runner-up. I won other pageants, then Miss Tennessee of 1986, then Miss America.

DD: What kind of career do you plan for the future?

KC: Well, I am planning to go into broadcasting. I was a radio announcer in Memphis before I won Miss Tennessee, and I have a degree in communications, so I will probably look for a career as a talk show



Miss America 1987, flanked by Ak-Sar-Ben pages, leads off Clarkson show.

SUSAN L. MEYERS/CLARKSON HOSPITAL

Being on the Borderline

Sometimes being oneself means singing it like you want to, regardless of labels and trends, as Dudley Brown, an English professor and fan from Maryland sees (hears) Billy Joe Royal and Rodney Crowell doing in their latest albums. Also, for Dudley, being himself means writing, writing, writing, for Country Sounds, and now for the CMSA Newsletter. Welcome, Dudley.

The Rodney Crowell album reviewed here by Dudley was also reviewed in Country Music (by Patrick Carr); the Billy Joe Royal was not. Thanks to William W. Russell of California for the photo of Billy Joe, taken at the Paso Robles Mid-State Fair.

BILLY JOE ROYAL/RODNEY CROWELL

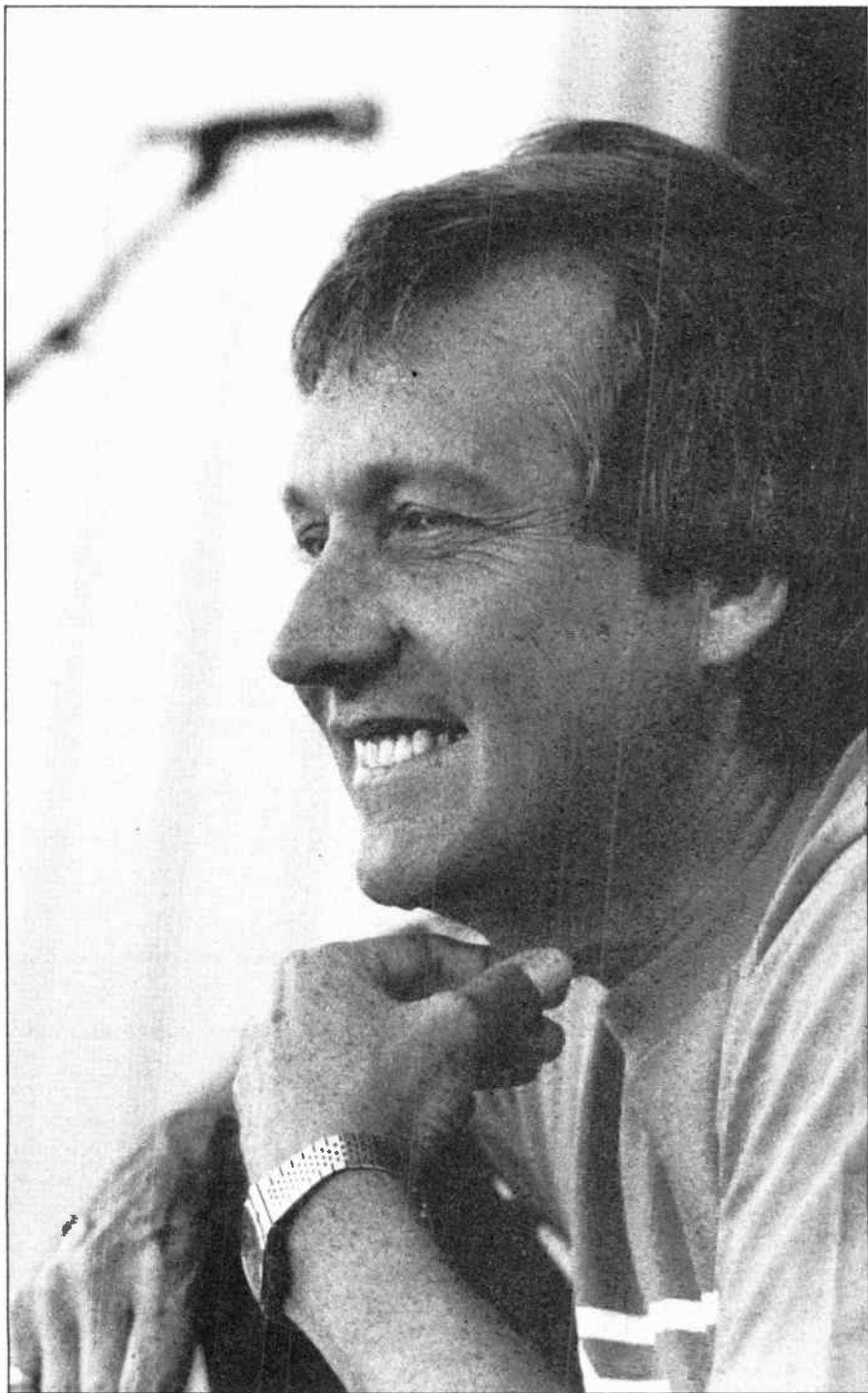
As country diversifies, as “New Traditionalists” thrive alongside country rockers, the old “What’s country?” debate heats up again, at least among those who care about labels. If you just care about music, then you’ll forget the arguments and enjoy today’s variety, like the best southern rock ever (Southern Pacific), daring new country/rock fusion (Wild Choir), and these two current “borderline” albums by Rodney Crowell and Billy Joe Royal.

Crowell’s *Street Language* is his first new record in five years, and he sounds almost unrecognizably different. (And richer, and better.) Actually, he sounds a lot like a young Roy Orbison, who co-wrote one song. And the album, like Orbison’s, has several lush ballads along with some driving rockers. “Oh, King Richard,” for example, really moves.

Street Language has been promoted as a rock crossover record, and it made the bottom of the pop charts briefly as one video, “Let Freedom Ring,” even got on MTV. But, mainly, this clear, open emotional record is falling between the pop-country cracks where no one buys it or hears it—the same thing that’s happening to *Wild Choir*—a pity, since these records are better than most of what’s on either chart, if only people would forget about labels and just enjoy.

Now on its third charted single, Billy Joe Royal’s *Looking Ahead* (which mostly doesn’t) is doing better. It’s been on the charts five months and is still climbing slowly. Actually it’s the most successful album of Royal’s sporadic hit making career, whose two peak years were 1965, which saw “Down in the Boondocks” and “I Knew You When,” and 1970, “Cherry Hill Park.”

Most of *Looking Ahead* is in the Fifties-rock doo-wop ballad vein recently re-popularized by Ronnie Milsap. Royal has an odd, thin, pinched-sounding voice which may take some getting used to. Occasionally, when he goes up for a high note he seems



WILLIAM W. RUSSELL

The future looks good to Billy Joe— three singles and an album rising.

to be headed for Frankie Valli Territory—he doesn’t make it, but the effect and the effort are touching.

The second and third singles, “Boardwalk Angel” (a John Cafferty/Beaver Brown rock song) and “I Miss You Already” (the 1957 country hit), have their charms, but to me the best, most moving song is “Sad Cliches”—whose lyric actu-

ally finds a way to make cliches fresh one more time. “We’ve Both Got a Lot to Learn” is another well written ballad.

Not for purists (for whom I don’t have too much sympathy), the Crowell and Royal albums exist near the constantly-stretching boundaries of musical styles.

**Dudley Brown
Cumberland, Maryland**

Readers Create

The ever-popular Readers Create returns with contributions from around the nation. Watch these pages for more from you readers.

Fun With Names by JUSTIN FUNN

Fill in the blanks. The missing name gives you two different people or groups.

1. Loretta _____ Anderson
2. Boxcar _____ Nelson
3. Montana _____ Whitman
4. Johnny _____ Greenwood
5. Rex _____ Frizzell
6. Christie _____ Brody
7. Doyle _____ Dunn
8. Johnny _____ Brothers
9. Shotgun _____ Sovine
10. Jan _____ Bellamy
11. Patsy _____ Slim
12. Susan _____ Charles

Justin Funn does not want to reveal his location. He's working on more puzzle ideas and needs deep seclusion. But he's somewhere in the Lower 48.—Ed.

Answer to Fun With Names: Lynn, Willie, Slim, Lee, Allen, Lane, Holly, Wright, Red, Howard, Montana, Kay(e).



Tribute to George Jones

I am twenty-three and I sketch for a hobby, and I like the material that George Jones has done. I would like to know if you can give me the address to George Jones, so I can send him a drawing, so he can sign it for me.

Stanley Guy
Everman, Texas

To reach George Jones, write P.O. Box 730, Doucette, Texas 75942.—Ed.

Change

A man walked into the music store to purchase the latest country music record. The clerk rang up the price of the record and said, "That will be one Dolly and Twitty cents, please."

Elisabeth Alexander
Olive Bridge, New York

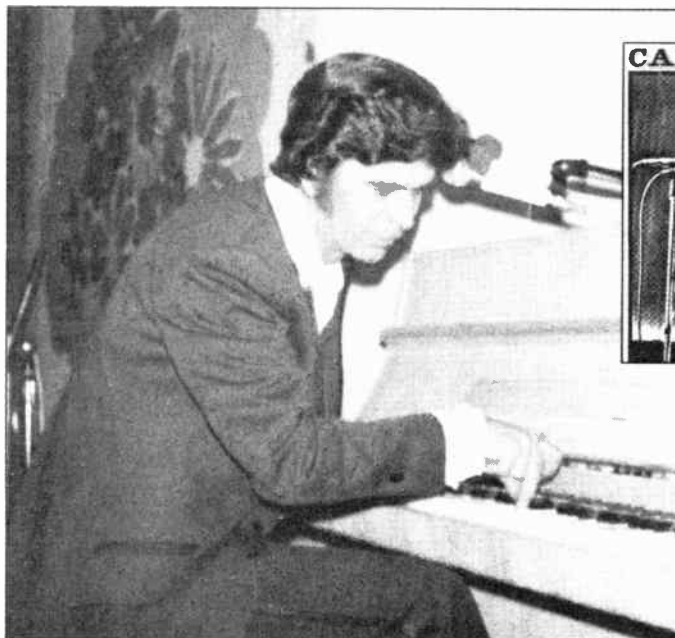
Elisabeth wrote: Do you like corny jokes? Here is one that I made up. Answer is: Yes, we do. Please send more.—Ed.

Magee Marches on

Songwriter/singer Magee just won't quit. He's working to recoup his losses from the Blackwood Productions scam he got caught in back in 1985, while the FBI investigates the whole operation, and has made some further strides on his own, including meeting up with old acquaintance, rockabilly Carl Mann. "Snowblind" by Magee appeared in the March/April 1986 Newsletter.

As a direct result of you printing the words to my song, "Cocaine Eyes (Snowblind)," it was published by Texas Crude Publishing in Austin, Texas. It was being considered as the anti-drug anthem for the proposed Concert That Counts. Nancy Reagan was affiliated with this effort, but then she disassociated herself with it and one by one the scheduled artists pulled out.

I auditioned in Nashville for the *You Can Be a Star* show a couple of months ago. The audition went well, but the secretary told me if I were accepted, it might be six months to two years before I competed. It



Carl Mann tours and records when he can, but right now he's home running the saw-mill for his dad, who's ill.



T.B.

The Legendary Marty Robbins

I am a nineteen-year-old artist and enjoy eyeing and reading your Readers Create section in the *Newsletter*. I find it gives me a chance to see other "country music artists." I have recently completed a poem and portrait collage of the legendary Marty

Robbins. I also hope to send future portraits as soon as they're completed.

Terri Barr

Green Valley, Arizona

Teri, we tried to reach you to thank you for your contribution. The address did not work. Come in, please.—Ed.

Heartache

I have been a country and western fan ever since I could, and a member for over two years and many more, I hope, of your association.

I have a little something here my heart has prompted me to write. Hope others would enjoy it. Keep up the good work, and thanks.

Marianne Baby
Sioux City, Iowa

Your Memory Is Making Me Blue

I wish I could get that feeling again
But I only get it when I have you
You're in every kiss, every caress
God, your memory is making me blue

You're the singer, you're the song
The reason for everything I do
In every corner of every room
Your memory is making me blue

There is another one who cares
Yes, and I know his love is true
I want to give him what he gives me
But, God, your memory is making me blue

I want you so bad, I need you so much
And, yes, I want to forget you too
But I'll find you again, fool that I am
'Cause, God, your memory is making me blue.

—M.B.

took three years to get the audition, so what's a couple more years. While in Nashville I reunited with an Army buddy of mine, Carl Mann. Actually he lives between Nashville and Memphis in his hometown, Huntingdon.

I was thinking of him before I went to Tennessee, because he wasn't included in the reunion of the Sun label rockabilly legends. He was the last successful artist Sam Phillips discovered. Actually he was on the Phillips label, a subsidiary of Sun, but he was included on the Sun Story re-releases in 1977 (*Vol. 6*), along with Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison and Charlie Rich.

I think maybe Carl Mann is the forgotten son of the sun. He did the first uptempo version of "Mona Lisa," which was copied by Conway Twitty. Conway also copied Carl's style on his revision of "Danny Boy." Imitation is the highest form of flattery, but I don't think Carl Mann has ever received the recognition he deserves. He still tours

Europe and has had some recent success in record sales. It seems to me that the popularity of rockabilly music in the States goes in cycles, but it has had a constant following in Europe ever since its inception.

Carl and I may be collaborating on some new material. Hopefully the next time I write I'll have some positive, exciting news to share.

Magee
Marathon, Florida

JANUARY POLL
ALABAMA'S TOP 25 SINGLES OF THE MONTH

Randy Travis
Reba McEntire "What Am I Gonna Do About You" *Storms of Life*

Randy Travis and Reba McEntire are going steady, and George Strait, Dwight Yoakam and Alabama are trying to cut in—while George Jones looks on, amused.

What does this mean? Well, Reba and Randy won the November Poll, Reba in albums, Randy in singles. In January they changed leads. Dwight Yoakam is in third in albums with *Guitars, Cadillacs*, just a little ahead of George Strait, #7, and those boys from Alabama who have *The Touch*.

In singles, Alabama's "Touch Me When We're Dancing" is Number Two in the CMSA. George Strait and George Jones are tied right behind the foursome with Strait's "It Ain't Cool to Be Crazy About You" and Jones' "Wine Colored Roses."

Don't forget you can buy Top 25 albums at the special 25% off CMSA members' discount, and don't forget this month's poll on the For Members Only page. Who wants to cut in on Reba now?



COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

Bashful Brother Oswald, Jess Easterday, Roy Acuff, Rachel Veach, Lonnie Wilson in the late 1930's.

ROY ACUFF

The King of Country Music

by Rich Kienzle

Roy Acuff has outridden the fads and stands, today, almost alone, as one of the originators and first great stars of the industry that calls him king.

First saw Roy Acuff in July, 1970, talking to a young black kid at Sho-Bud Guitars in Nashville, just up the street from his own Roy Acuff Exhibits. The King of Country Music, a title conferred on him by baseball great Dizzy Dean, was a neighborhood fixture, and no one paid him any mind.

Today, Acuff at age 83, on TV or at Opryland, is Nashville's George Burns, a past legend marketed to audiences who barely know who he is. New Traditionalists notwithstanding, his songs seem distant from the present or recent past. It's easy to forget that in the 1930's and 1940's Roy Acuff was a magical name, as Hank, Willie, Cash, Haggard, Ricky Skaggs or even Alabama are today. In a very new industry, Acuff was a giant. For a time he *was* the industry, and he had much to do with what it eventually became.

Roy Claxton Acuff's upbringing was conservative, steeped in traditional music and

values. He was born in Maynardville, Tennessee, north of Knoxville, on September 15, 1903, the son of Baptist minister Neill Acuff. He grew up on traditional ballads, and his dad's oldtime fiddling made a particular impression on him.

The Acuffs moved to Fountain City, just outside Knoxville, where Neill Acuff became an attorney. It's been said that at least some of Roy's emotional stage presentation came from watching his father, who, with his preaching experience, was effective in a courtroom.

After graduating from high school, Roy aimed for a career in professional baseball. But one afternoon in July 1929, while playing ball in Knoxville, a sunstroke attack put him in bed for several months. After several more attacks kept him an invalid for a year, his sports goals seemed permanently beyond reach. His convalescence gave him plenty of idle time, so Neill Acuff brought him a variety of stringband records

to listen to. Roy taught himself to play his dad's fiddle and then concentrated on singing, stealing voice exercises from his sister, who was then studying opera.

Fully recovered by 1932, he joined a regional medicine show, where he learned much about stage presentation as the group traveled around eastern Tennessee and western Virginia. Playing music and acting in skits gave him enough confidence to concentrate on performing, and by 1933 he'd formed the Tennessee Crackerjacks.

The Crackerjacks wound up on WROL in Knoxville, then joined WNOX's *Midday Merry-Go-Round*, a daily music program that later launched Chet Atkins, Archie Campbell and Homer and Jethro. Acuff grew dissatisfied with the WNOX salary and took the band back to WROL, where they were renamed the Crazy Tennesseans following an impromptu remark by a station announcer. They were able to work personal appearances in the area, but

success on a grand scale remained elusive.

One song bailed them out. Roy had heard WNOX artist Charlie Swain sing "The Great Speckled Bird," a song which combined the melody of "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes"—the same melody heard in "The Wild Side of Life" and "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels"—with some new lyrics written by the Reverend Earl Osborn. Swain copied down the lyrics for Roy and then left town.

Roy inserted the number into his repertoire. William Callaway of the American Recording Company (ARC) had heard of the song and was looking for someone to record it. He heard Acuff's version and signed him to the label in October, 1936. At their first session, Roy and the band recorded some ragged versions of pop hits as well as "Great Speckled Bird," which did extremely well.

A financial dispute with ARC put him on hold until he teamed up with ARC producer Art Satherley, who also recorded Bob Wills and Gene Autry. With Satherley, Acuff started recording in earnest, his sights set on joining the Opry. That wasn't easy. Opry founder George D. Hay wouldn't audition Roy and his band, and they didn't get a crack at the Opry stage until Hay was off sick in February, 1938.

On February 5 they took the stage at the Dixie Tabernacle, the Opry's home base at the time, and did two instrumentals followed by Roy singing "Great Speckled Bird," accompanied on dobro by Clell Summey. Nervousness marred his performance, and they returned to Knoxville assuming they'd failed. But two weeks later the Opry, after counting up masses of fan letters, offered Acuff a spot on the show. His timing had been perfect: singers with bands were the coming thing in country music.

Success followed gradually. Dobroist Summey, later known as Opry comedian Cousin Jody, left to pursue other musical ideas. But the dobro sound was established, and Acuff replaced him with Pete "Oswald" Kirby, who remains with him today. WSM felt the "Crazy Tennesseans" name was derogatory and the band became the "Smoky Mountain Boys." At the same time, Roy hired singer/banjoist Rachel Veach, and, mindful of his conservative audiences, characterized her as Oswald's sister, which scotched any gossip about them traveling together.

"Wabash Cannon Ball" was originally recorded in 1936, sung by Acuff's then-harmonica player, Dynamite Hatcher. But Roy sang it onstage, and not only made it an enormous favorite but his trademark number as well. When he began hosting the Prince Albert Tobacco segment of the Opry in 1939, broadcast nationwide over

NBC, his stardom was assured.

Buoyed by strong record sales and his weekly access to a nationwide audience on radio, Roy's personal appearances were enormous draws through the World War II years. In 1942 he made \$200,000 from shows alone, not counting his record sales, Hollywood films and sales of his songbooks. That same year saw his enormous hits, "Wreck on the Highway" and "Fire Ball Mail." In 1943 "Night Train to Memphis," "Low and Lonely" and "Pins and Needles" also became country standards.

Again, his own business sense and that of his wife Mildred came into play when, in 1942, they gave longtime pop songwriter Fred Rose \$25,000 to start Acuff-Rose



Roy and Mildred step out in the 1970's.

Publishing, which later published classic songs by Hank Williams and others. The value and range of his investments grew, among them an East Tennessee resort known as Dunbar Cave Park.

Tired of the Prince Albert Show and the grind, he left the Opry in 1946 and was replaced by Red Foley. Within a year, he was back, but things were changing on the Opry as a younger generation, exemplified by Eddy Arnold, Ernest Tubbs and Hank Williams, took over.

Politics had long interested him, and he nearly ran as the Republican candidate for Governor in 1944 before withdrawing. He did run in 1948, and his campaign appearances were mainly musical. He lost, but drew far more votes than anyone had expected.

Politics aside, through the 1940's and early 1950's the band remained basically unchanged. At one point they "modernized" by having Oswald play electric dobro,

then thought better of it. The amplifiers soon came back, however. Acuff, like other traditional acts, strongly felt the pinch of rock 'n' roll. He surprised everyone by hiring Shot Jackson as steel guitarist and Jackie Phelps on lead guitar. Roy even thumped a snare drum himself for awhile, and Oswald used his dobro sparingly if at all.

His record sales had begun slipping in the early 1950's. In 1952 he moved to Capitol, then briefly recorded for MGM and Decca before joining Acuff-Rose's Hickory label, where he managed three respectable hits: "So Many Times" and "Come and Knock," which broke the Top 20 in 1959, and a remake of "Freight Train Blues" in 1965, the same year as his near-fatal auto accident.

By the late 1960's the Smoky Mountain Boys had swung back to the original Acuff sound. Oswald was back on dobro throughout their shows, and in 1967 Acuff hired young acoustic guitarist Charlie Collins, a solidly traditional musician, as he returned full circle to the acoustic sound. He continued touring on into the 1960's and made special trips—including appearances in Vietnam—to entertain American troops.

Unlike Flatt and Scruggs, he didn't attract young folk music fans during the 1960's. An exception to this rule was young singer-songwriter Paul Siebel, who griped openly in *Rolling Stone Magazine* about kids who revered the blues but didn't know Roy Acuff.

That made his participation in the 1971 *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* album with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band surprising. Earl Scruggs, Jimmy Martin, Merle Travis and Maybelle Carter were there, but they were popular with young folk audiences. Their combined version of "I Saw the Light," including Acuff, hit Number 56 in 1971.

By the early 1970's Roy had cut back touring and did much of his performing in Nashville on the Opryland stage, which opened to the public in 1974. He stirred controversy at that opening by hosting Richard Nixon, teaching him how to use the famous Acuff yo-yo at a time when everyone else in show business was forgetting they had ever heard of Nixon.

In recent years he's weathered illnesses, the death of his wife Mildred and the loss of veteran Smoky Mountain Boys Jimmie Riddle and Onie Wheeler. Acuff now lives on the Opryland premises in a specially-designed house, his collections of musical instruments and other mementos on display nearby. Acuff-Rose may now be part of Opryland's corporate structure, and his greatest performing days are surely past. But nearing age 84, Roy Acuff remains the King of Country Music and will for all time. ■

Albums Available

A good variety of Roy Acuff material is available. For details, see For Members Only page in this issue.

COLLECTIONS

Collections continues to be a popular feature. Both sections are still backed up. For an amazing error, spotted by a reader, which didn't help matters a bit, see the letter below.

Fitting Correction

I have found the most unusual error in your November/December 1986 Newsletter that I can't resist pointing out to you.

I have enclosed copies of the July/August and November/December Newsletter pages on Collections. Please note that all the letters dealing with buying, selling and swapping of magazines are identical I have hi-lited them for easier observance.

The reason this error stood out so plain for me is that I wrote to R. L. Brillian and purchased two magazines from her at \$5.00 each plus postage. What she sent me was *Movie Mirror Country Music* magazines. She doesn't respond to additional correspondence.

I paid Kenneth L. Edgeth \$275.00 for his collection. He stated that he had "all magazines, from Vol. 1 to present." What he sent me was Vol. 1 Issue 7 to present. Since the first six issues are missing, his collection was not worth anywhere near what I paid. In answer to my correspondence, he states he was a Charter subscriber and Issue 7 was the first issue he received and consequently he believed that to be the first issue. He has promised to check friends and try to help me find the missing issues.

When you note that this particular page is backed up 6-9 months and you mistakenly reprint previous ads, it is fitting and proper that I call it to your attention. *Ha!*

Herb Steadham

Lafayette, Alabama

Is my face red! Thanks for the correction. For everyone's information, the very first issue of Country Music Magazine was the Preview Issue, distributed to performers, industry executives, radio stations and potential advertisers only, in the summer of 1972. The first issue for sub-

scribers was Vol. 1 Number One—September 1972.—Ed.

Collecting the Magazine

Some have this, some need that. Help each other out. See end of each entry for notes on missing or special issues.

• I have a collection of *Country Music Magazine* from Oct. 1972 to 1986. Would like to sell. Oct. 1974 and July 1976 are missing. **Mrs. Morris Gray, 3407 Moray Lane, Falls Church, Virginia 22041.** *There was no Oct. 1974. In order to conform to newsstand dating, the Oct. 1974 issue became the Nov. 1974 issue, Vol. Three, Number Two. The magazine then carried on from there. Glen Campbell is on the cover. July 1976 does exist. It's the Country Bicentennial issue with Dolly Parton dressed up as the Statue of Liberty, winking, on the cover.—Ed.*

• I have a complete collection of the magazine issues from July/August 1979 through September 1981 plus the Hank Williams Jr. no-date issue (approximately Oct.-Dec. 1981). I'm willing to sell this set to anybody with a good offer. **Luanne Wanie, Route 1 Box 296, De Pere, Wisconsin 54115.**

• I have issues of *Country Music Magazine* for sale starting as far back as Jan. 1973 (Jerry Lee Lewis' picture on the cover). I have about 100 copies or more, all in good condition. Anyone interested, contact me at this address. **Maxine Lampman, 318 Rhonda Drive, Lot 72, Fremont, Michigan 49412.**

• I have duplicate issues of *CMM* available. Every issue from May 1977 through Sept. 1981 and Dec. 1985 to present. A-1 condition. Includes the undated Hank Williams Jr. issue (Oct.-Dec. 1981). Minimum accepted \$150.00. I need the following issues: all five issues from 1972 (Preview, Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.); Jan., Feb. and April 1973; and August 1974. If there were any issues for Oct. 1974 and Aug. 1981, I need them.

By the way, how about printing up another poster showing the covers of all the past issues? **Herb Steadham, Rt. 1 Box**

237, Lanett, Alabama 36883.

There was no Oct. 1974. See note above. Aug. 1981 was combined with July 1981—July/August 1981—with Burt Reynolds on the cover. The poster is a good idea. Maybe we'll do it.—Ed.

Information, Please

Contact these members directly if you have the information or items they need.

• I am searching for a song on King Records from about 1954. It is "Evergreen" by The Morgan Sisters. I'll buy the disk of it or pay for it on tape. Also, those looking for Vernon Dalhart and George Morgan material, write me. **Paul Koskubar, 3798 Country View Rd., Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235.**

I'm the person who suggested that you start this 'service column' in your fine magazine about two years ago. I think the readers all find the column and your magazine perfect, fine and the best country music publication printed in years!

Good luck and success. I enjoy the magazine.

Paul Koskubar

Thanks! In spite of problems, the readers do seem to find it worthwhile.—Ed.

• I am looking for the comedy version of "Temptation," which came out in the 1940's. I don't know who did the song, but as I remember, it could have been Judy Canova or Spike Jones. I have bought many recordings of "Temptation," but none of them are the right one. Hope someone out there remembers it and will let me know how I can get it—record, tape, whatever. **Leona Hargraves, 1105 No. 10th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85006.**

• I collect all material on Dolly Parton. Records to magazines. Send me a list of what you have to sell. **Michael White, 442 Village Green Lane W., Madison, Wisconsin 53704.**

• I used to own a gospel album called *Nearer My God to Thee* by the Louvin Brothers. If anyone knows where I can find another one, I sure would like to know as

soon as possible. **Eddie Hathcock, Rt. 1, Box 54, Billingsley, Alabama 36006.**

• I am writing in the hope that someone out there can help me. I heard a record, late 1958 or early 1959, called "The Three Stars." It was written about Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper and Richie Valens. I heard it after the plane crash that took the three of them. I never knew the author. I would like very much to buy or have a tape of it. I would also like to know where I can order t-shirts or souvenirs of some of my favorite singers, George Jones, Merle Haggard, Conway Twitty. Thank you for your help. **G. Kinkle, 3410 Hill Rd., Lake Orion, Michigan 48035.**

• I have been looking for a cassette or record of Jimmy C. Newman's song "Shawmarie." I am 12 years old and have never heard that song. The reason I am so interested in it is because my name is Shawmarie Baird. I live in a small town near Durango, Colorado, called Ignacio. *Small town.* All the kids here listen to rock-punk. Anyone knowing where I can get a recording of "Shawmarie", please contact me or my parents. Thank you. **Shawmarie Baird, Box 202, Ignacio, Colorado 81137.**

Pen Pal

Here is something special, from far across the sea. Anybody interested?

• I am writing to inquire if you have a Pen Friend column in your magazine as I would like to correspond with a country fan with a view to exchanging letters and tapes. We do not receive any country music magazines here so we are unable to make any contacts. Hoping you can assist me in some way. **Mrs. Coral McCauley, Waipahi R. D., Waipahi, South Otago, New Zealand.**

To submit material to the Newsletter, write Country Music Magazine, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Mark envelope: Attention, Newsletter. Include membership number.

From out here in fan-land, there was always something tragic about Don Gibson, something not just sad but wrong: something broken and perhaps unreparable.

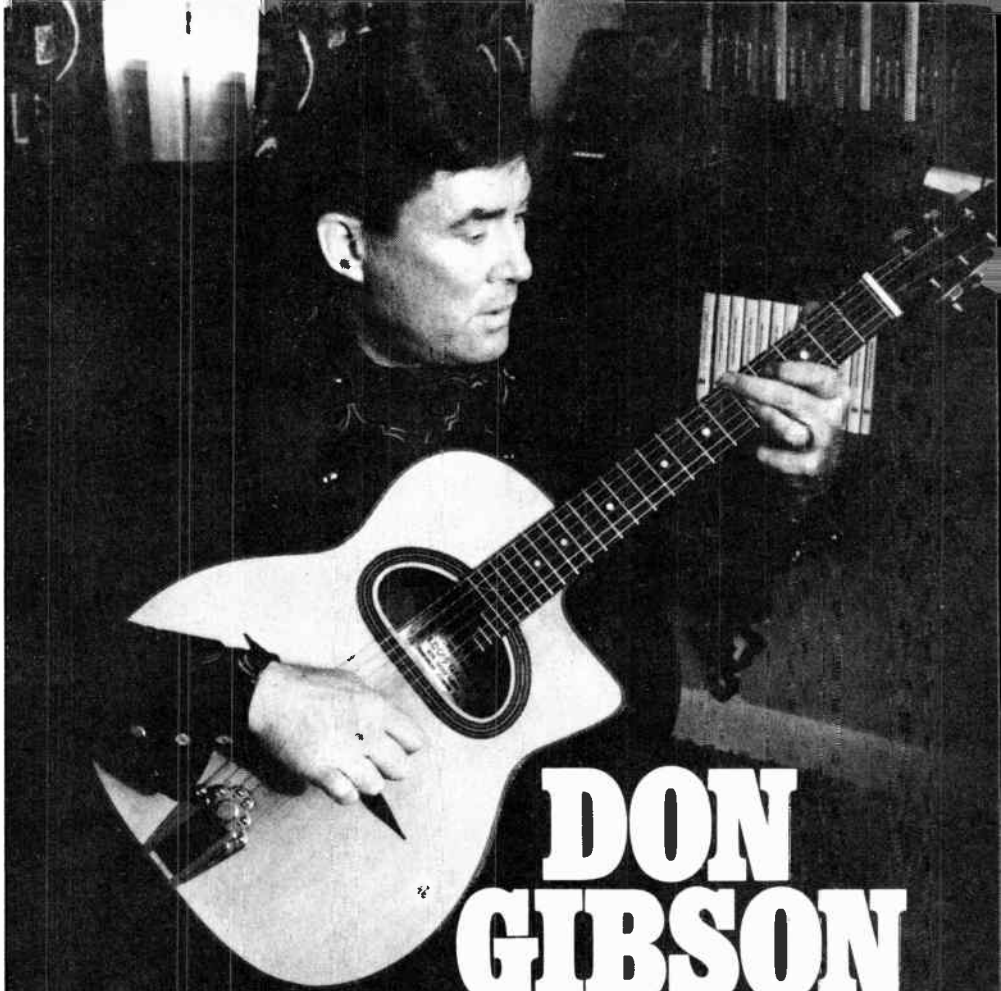
It translated on record. You could hear it bleeding through those bleak, lost songs of his, and it made the records special. "I Can't Stop Loving You," "Oh, Lonesome Me," "Blue, Blue Day," "Sea of Heartbreak" and the other hits of his late Fifties/early Sixties prime had a rare hard edge of reality about them, a sense of something much more than performance happening in the grooves, and it was this quality which really sold them. The songs themselves were great, of course, to the point where any kind of singer can still move you with them, but nobody has ever sung them like Don Gibson did. He *meant* them, and you *knew* it, the way you knew Hank meant "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" and Lefty meant "I Never Go Around Mirrors." The damn songs were his life.

And really, what a life. Even when he could still sing "If loneliness meant world acclaim/Then everyone would know my name/I'd be a legend in my time" and know that he really was a legend—that his loneliness *did* mean world acclaim—it was still one Blue, Blue Day after another, and the Sea of Heartbreak was still a terrible place in which to sail. The worst reality of all, though, was the fact that somewhere in him, he knew that the Sea of Heartbreak was where he felt most at home. For one thing, he knew its emotional charts far better than those of any other region, so he could at least expect no difficult surprises; no tempests of joy, none of the navigational hazards posed by true love or trust. For another, he liked to lose himself in its Bourbon tides, and he just *loved* to wreck himself on its spiky, brittle, razor-sharp reefs.

Those more than anything were the edges on which Don Gibson preferred to squirm, and though he had his druthers, he wasn't overly choosy when push came to shove: the reefs could be made of Benzedrine, Dexedrine, Ritalin, or any old thing you could legitimately label "speed."

He loved the stuff so much that he didn't think twice about throwing away everything else when it got in the way of the speed. That's why today you don't hear the name Don Gibson spoken in the same breath with the names Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell; the career which could have made him as immortal as those two was one of the things he just let die on the vine.

But then, everything's relative. Don Gibson may not have achieved Hank and



DON GIBSON

Keeping His Head Above Water

by Patrick Carr

Don Gibson almost went under. Personal problems, liquor and pills took away his career before he could stop them, but it's a grateful man who talks to Patrick Carr and, one day, he may even write again.



In his hey day (above) as he stands today (inset).

Lefty's immortality, but he didn't earn it the hard way, either; he's still alive. And like they say about a baseball game, it ain't over til it's over.

He doesn't look too bad, considering; he's still a big, barrel-chested, husky feller, and there's a lively light in those big, sad Mr. Blue brown eyes. When he walks,

though, the damage shows: peripheral neuropathy of the feet, a painful and awkward condition common among people who have drunk far too much alcohol for far too long. Though Don began to break his amphetamine addiction fourteen years ago, he continued to drink until fairly recently. The problem in his feet took him off the road, into a wheelchair, and away from the bottle almost two years ago. Now he's sober, and his

foot condition has eased to the point where he can get around with the help of a cane.

We meet in the conference room of the Acuff-Rose music publishing organization, where Don is unquestionably at home. Wesley Rose, son of the man who was Hank Williams' mentor and now a Country Music Hall of Fame member himself, was Don's first solid connection to the big time; saw him singing "Sweet Dreams" in a Knoxville tavern back around 1956, offered him a songwriting contract on the spot, balked but then agreed to Don's demand for a recording contract as part of the deal, and has been behind him ever since.

Don wasn't a nobody when Wesley walked into that tavern; he'd already graduated from playing clubs around his home town of Shelby, North Carolina, to a regular spot on the WLX (Knoxville) *Tennessee Burn Dance* and *Midday Merry-Go-Round* radio shows, and he'd already had "I'm So Glad to See You Again" recorded by Hank Snow, and he'd even had a couple of inconsequential singles of his own on the RCA Victor label. On the other hand, he wasn't really going anywhere, either; there was no particular zip to his career.

That state of affairs continued even after he signed on with Wesley and moved to Nashville. Faron Young gave him his first hit record as a writer with "Sweet Dreams" in 1956, but his own career as a singer didn't exactly catch fire.

"Wesley had me on MGM, and MGM had me doing whatever was big at the time, which happened to be Webb Pierce," he remembers with a laugh. "I even recorded 'Sweet Dreams' in that God-awful style, trying my damndest to sing through my nose."

Nothing happened. He roamed around, playing clubs. He moved from MGM to RCA Victor, with Chet Atkins at the helm producing him. Still nothing new; just more roaming, more clubs.

Eventually he and Chet got together, and admitted to each other that they were going nowhere. Don was ready to quit, move on somewhere else, but Chet wanted to try one last tactic. Why not try the new sound, with the lush music and the backup singers and all, on a couple of his very best songs?

Thus "Oh, Lonesome Me" and "I Can't Stop Loving You," which added up to one of the most powerful (and commercially successful) two-sided singles in the history of country music. Pure, career-launching, trend-setting, star-making magic; the most moving and effective record of the whole Nashville Sound era, and Don Gibson's ticket to the very top.

The vocals were just great: raw, pained, passionate, utterly convincing.

Don remembers the recording sessions, and what went into those magnificent performances.

"I was beginning to hit the bottle pretty good by then, and me and the boy that played drums had been up all night drinking, so I went in there with an 'I don't care' type of attitude—you know, 'To hell with it; ain't nothin' goin' to happen with it noway'—and just did it like I wanted to do it. I guess I did things I wouldn't have done if I'd been sober. I wasn't hard to handle or nothin', but I was loose.

"I guess that's the only time whiskey ever really helped me, you know? It and the pills wound up ruining me, but that time it helped me, and it helped me big."

"I don't see how
I lived through it all.
But I did, and
I'm grateful."

It's an old, old story. A person grows up with some sort of personality problem—in Don Gibson's case shyness, otherwise known as fear—and one day discovers a chemical which removes it for a while, and then discovers some way down the line that the problem is now the chemical. Some people, the lucky ones, quit at that point with little difficulty. Others, the one in six or seven Americans born with a genetic setup predisposing them towards addiction of one sort or another, find that they can't stop. That's what happened to Don Gibson.

"They invited me to join the Grand Ole Opry after 'Oh, Lonesome Me,' and I said okay," he remembers. "They couldn't get over the fact that I wasn't jumping up and down with happiness, but I wasn't. I was never that excited about it. See, I got on speed—bad, very bad—during that time. They couldn't get me in to do sessions or to go on stage, that kind of thing. I didn't intend to be like that, but I just didn't care, really. I wanted drugs more than a career.

"That was a hell of a bad time in my life. The so-called star bit; raised by a sharecropper and never having anything in the beginning, then coming into something like that. I was making \$500 a night, big money in those days, and I was staying on the road—I was *living* on the road, really. When I wasn't working

I'd just lay over in a hotel. It didn't matter. I'd come in and do Opry shows periodically, but not enough to make them happy. So finally they let me go after I showed up an hour late for a Prince Albert show one night."

I ask him to explain, if he can, what the appeal of the speed really was—why he chose it over everything else.

"I never liked drinking that much," he says. "I liked the effect of it, but I didn't actually like to drink. So when pills came into my life, they were the answer. I thought, 'This is *great!*'"

"You see, I had a house but not a home; I had no home life, nobody with me. Then I was afraid of the stage, afraid to go out there. I'd never liked performing that much, you know; I'd always been backward, shy, a loner, always afraid of what people thought of me—but once I got the pills in me, I didn't care *what* people thought. Speed was my God. When I went to bed at night, I made sure I had them placed and ready—if I went to sleep at all, that is. For months I'd get by with just little naps from time to time. I tried to stay on a rosy high, you know, with uppers and downers, but sometimes it didn't work, and that was hell, boy: coming into some hotel room so high on speed that nothing I took would calm me down. I'd just lay there.

"I got down to skin and bones; just pathetic shape. Everybody in the business knew about it, and it was getting known to the fans too. Shows didn't want to book me, the networks didn't want me on TV. But I thought, 'So what? I don't have to work. My songs will keep me in pill money and keep my debts paid.' I never had to keep track of the money, you see. Acuff-Rose did all that, kept everything straight and just paid me cash."

It went on like that for about a decade, until the shadow of Don Gibson connected with a woman he had known as a girl in Shelby, and things began to change. "For the first time I had someone who loved me, who really cared about me," says Don, "so I tried to get away from the pills. We couldn't make it with the pills between us."

They married, and Don fought the good fight—willpower which failed, detoxification which didn't last—until eventually, after a 1972 show in which he made a complete ass of himself in front of both his audience and his family, he quit the pills for good.

That left just the alcohol. With the pills gone, Don found out that he liked drinking more than he thought he did, and for the next twelve years—money from his songs rolling in steadily, as much road work as he wanted readily available (chiefly in Europe)—he lived under the influence.



Don Gibson was particularly well liked in England. His double album *Country Number 1*, which was released only in England, earned him a pair of gold records. He's pictured here with Wesley Rose of Acuff-Rose.

Then, with his health and his marriage and most other things in crisis, he had an awakening, or at least he began a process of awakening with a lot of help from a lot of people. He began to understand that all his problems stewed and boiled in one deadly pot—the progressive, incurable, but arrestable disease of alcoholism—and he finally surrendered to that fact. Now he sits with Bobbie, the girl from Shelby, in the Acuff-Rose office and says, “I don’t see how I lived through it all. But I did, and I’m grateful. I’m grateful for every day now. I don’t drink, and I live but one day at a time; I can make it through one day.”

Don Gibson’s recording and touring days are over now, it seems; he thinks of himself as too old to launch a second star career, and besides—as he found out when he got one—he never really wanted one that much to begin with. He’ll leave that end of things to younger, hungrier, more vigorous people. He doesn’t keep up

with the music business to any great extent, though he says that, yes, he’s starting to like what he hears on the radio a little more these days. Randy Travis, for instance, sounds good to him, though like new country singers who seem to come along every ten years or so, maybe Randy sounds a little too like Lefty for comfort.

We digress, for a while, into talking about Lefty, who was dear to Don. “I last saw him about six months before he died, and he was still drinking. ‘I think I’ll just slip around back for a moment, Don,’ he said. ‘My throat’s gettin’ awful dry.’” But then, inevitably, we get around to the big question: songs, the writing or not writing thereof.

“I haven’t written anything in four or five years,” Don says, “and no, I don’t feel too good about that. I’m hoping to get back into it; I just can’t get started yet.

“I dunno. I’ve let all these problems with my feet and legs hang me up a lot. I’ve gone to the guitar a time or two and started something, but...”

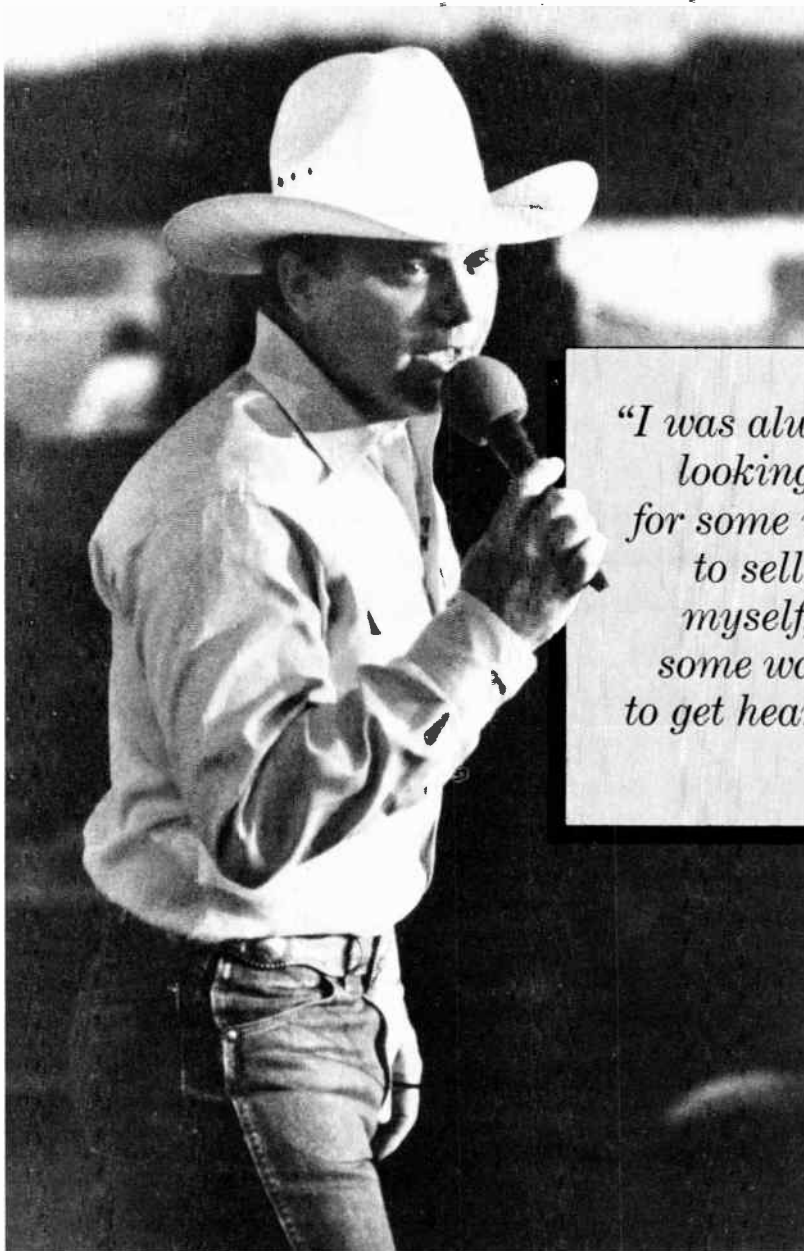
He starts one line on the subject, to the effect that he wrote so much for so long that he’s just tired of it, and tries it on for size a while before realizing its basic untruth, and then he starts another one: that modern songs are too complex, not at all the sort of thing he’s good at.

Horse manure, say I. The world is full of healthy, college-educated, multi-millionaire songwriters wishing that just once in their lives they could write a piece as purely, simply brilliant as “I Can’t Stop Loving You.”

That may be true, Don admits. Shel Silverstein, one of the “new” songwriters to whom he feels inferior, once told him exactly that about himself.

So where does that leave us, Don?

“Well, it’s true, I think I really *will* get back into it eventually,” he says. “There’s always that thing in the back of my head saying *You can write one a little better than ‘I Can’t Stop Loving You’ or ‘Oh, Lonesome Me.’* I know I could, or at least I know that that’s a goal. And I really don’t intend to quit.” ■



"I was always looking for some way to sell myself, some way to get heard."

like he did, and he doesn't have too many doubts about things staying that way. In fact, the only real area of conflict in Pake's life seems to have been his difficulty deciding between two equally attractive means of expressing himself: music or steer roping. The issue is settled now, but for a long time it was a close-run thing.

Like the cattle, the music had always been there. Pake's mother was gifted musically—she might have "gone places" if she hadn't had to start teaching school at the age of 16—and she trained her three kids to sing harmony to a T. They'd sing in the car, in hotel lobbies, anywhere. They were good. They went semi-professional, and they made money; not much, but some. They made their own records; pressed 325 copies of the first one, and sold 'em all. They had potential—Pake figures they were at least as good as the Gatlins—but Reba's break into a solo career in 1976

ended, necessarily, the joint career of the Singing McEntires.

On his own, Pake did a little of everything: ranching, roping, and singing too. "I'd play a Saturday night job, and sell my records at the job," he remembers. "Then I'd get in the truck after the job and drive to a steer roping. I'd rope, and after the job, I'd get my cassettes out and go through the crowd selling 'em just like people would sell pots and pans."

"See, I had to do *something*," he explains. "I couldn't just be a fixture at some club. I wasn't going to settle for that."

The music he played had a little of everything, too. He had been a diehard country fan when he was younger. "I had a little sign on my dash," Pake recalls, "saying 'These dials are set to country music. Please don't turn them to rock 'n' roll,' and at school I used to get fightin' mad with kids who'd play Led Zeppelin

and Steppenwolf and all that kind of stuff." However, he softened in his later, professional years. "On my own records I tried to hit a broad area, so I could find a song on there that everybody could like," he explains. "Some guy would say, 'I like rock 'n' roll.' I'd say, 'Look, man, I got "Old Time Rock 'n' Roll" by Bob Seger on here!' He'd say 'Oh really? Let me listen to that,' and then maybe he'd listen to 'Another Place, Another Time' or one of my songs, 'Rodeo Man' or something."

The same approach worked on gospel fans, western fans, you name 'em; that enthusiasm, that personalized pitch, that honest face. Pake turned a minor profit on his merchandise.

Still and all, it wasn't the big time, and it was hard. "I was always looking for some way to sell myself, some way to get heard," Pake says. "I'd lay in bed at night thinkin' of ways to do it. I really wanted it. That's how I could walk up to a perfect stranger and say 'Hi. I'm Pake McEntire. This is my latest album I've got out, and it's got some really great songs on it. I've got it at a very reasonable price of six dollars, and I wonder if you'd be interested in buying it...'"

Eventually, it was Reba's success that got her brother's foot in the door at RCA, the label Pake had always wanted to call his own. When he was little, he'd look at the labels on the records he'd bought, and mentally alter them. Instead of *Elvis Presley*, they would read *Pake McEntire*. Now they do.

Pake was a pretty good roper. He won money, and he loved the life; the travel, the crowds, the competition. "That's why all this doesn't bother me," he says today. "The music life ain't that different from the roping life."

He does, however, figure that his divided loyalties held him back. "I always had a dream of doing the two things at one time, and that's just not possible," he says. "They're too competitive for one man to be the best at both of them. And making my living from ranching and roping cattle and playing music was tough. It had me strung out about to kill me; goin' hard and fast at all three. I think that kept me from getting to Nashville a lot sooner than I did. You just can't spread yourself that thin. I finally figured that out."

Now he's a full-time musician, but back in Oklahoma his daddy is running a thousand head of cattle on his ranch, and Pake confesses that "when I'm back home, I'm going to be practicing roping. Not exactly stayin' ready, but participating. Then if some year the music plays out, I'll have something to go back to."

That's our boy. Good and steady. ■

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CHARLIE DANIELS

And The Music That Knows No Bounds

Back when things were simple and cowboys rode the range, Charlie Daniels' type of music was born. He's pursuing it still, for in his view, music is as wide open as the range.

by Michael Bane

The once and future king of Tennessee walks up to the small pockmarked object and snorts. a noise like a cross between an angry horse and an amused bear.

The object is small and round, white with a small nick on one side. I join the hulking figure, and together we stare at the object as if it has fallen to the earth from deep space, a messenger from an older, wiser race. It is lying almost hidden in high grass, sandwiched between two small oak trees. In the

distance, a flag waves on a finely manicured lawn.

The object stares malevolently as we walk around it, taking its measure.

Finally, Charlie Daniels pulls himself to his full height, an easy six foot and change. He pushes his cammie baseball hat back on his forehead and fixes me with a stare cold enough to ice a beer keg at 50 paces.

"Is this a friendly game Michael, or what?" he says, pointing at the white object lost in the tall grass. I opine as to

COLOR PHOTOS JOHN LAND LE COO





how it's about the friendliest game I've ever played, and I figure Tennessee rules are as good—maybe better—than any.

“Good,” says Charlie Daniels, bending over and plucking the golf ball out of the rough. With a fluid motion he lobs the ball toward the green; it bounces neatly in the middle of the fairway.

“Better,” he says, squinting into the sun.

Once a year, when the road and the ranch permit it, Charlie Daniels goes back a century, to a time when men rode the range and songs were sung to the accompaniment of your occasional coyote. He leaves the

“If Nashville would stop trying to figure out what's country and what's not, country music would be bigger than pop.”



beautiful Tennessee hills and his log cabin farmhouse with the newfangled satellite dish and old-fangled quarter-horse ranch to head west, to follow a trail that is equal parts history and myth. For a while he will ride the range, a cowboy on a spread in Texas. He'll rope and ride and eat his meals from a chuck wagon and sleep underneath the stars. Some nights he'll take out his guitar and sing for his trailmates—and maybe the occasional coyote. And he'll remember a time that maybe never was, a time celebrated in Charlie Daniels' songs, a time when the world was, if not simpler, at least more understandable. And then, after a week or so, he'll head back to Nashville, to the ranch at Mt. Juliet, to juggle a career in a business that's every bit as secure as a desert sand dune, as easy to get ahold of as a greased steer. From his perch in Mt. Juliet, Charlie Daniels will contemplate turning 50 years old, with thirty years on the road in the music business behind him. He'll think about a marriage that's

endured and a son gone to college. He'll think about his quarterhorses, his guns, his music, his career.

He will think about being a damn good cowboy, because, I think, that's what Charlie Daniels is all about.

The Volunteer Jam, Charlie Daniels' annual orgy of Southern music, is still weeks away as Charlie and I hit the links, or whatever it is golf-type people call it. I had been invited to play golf with Charlie and had accepted without informing my host that my total knowledge of golf was that it was played with a ball and a stick and had something to do with small holes on lawns. I committed this fairly impressive breach of etiquette for a couple of reasons, not the least of which was that I was looking forward to seeing Charlie away from the frenzy of the stage. I also counted on Charlie's unflappable good humor and sense of fair play. I figured he'd teach me how to play golf.

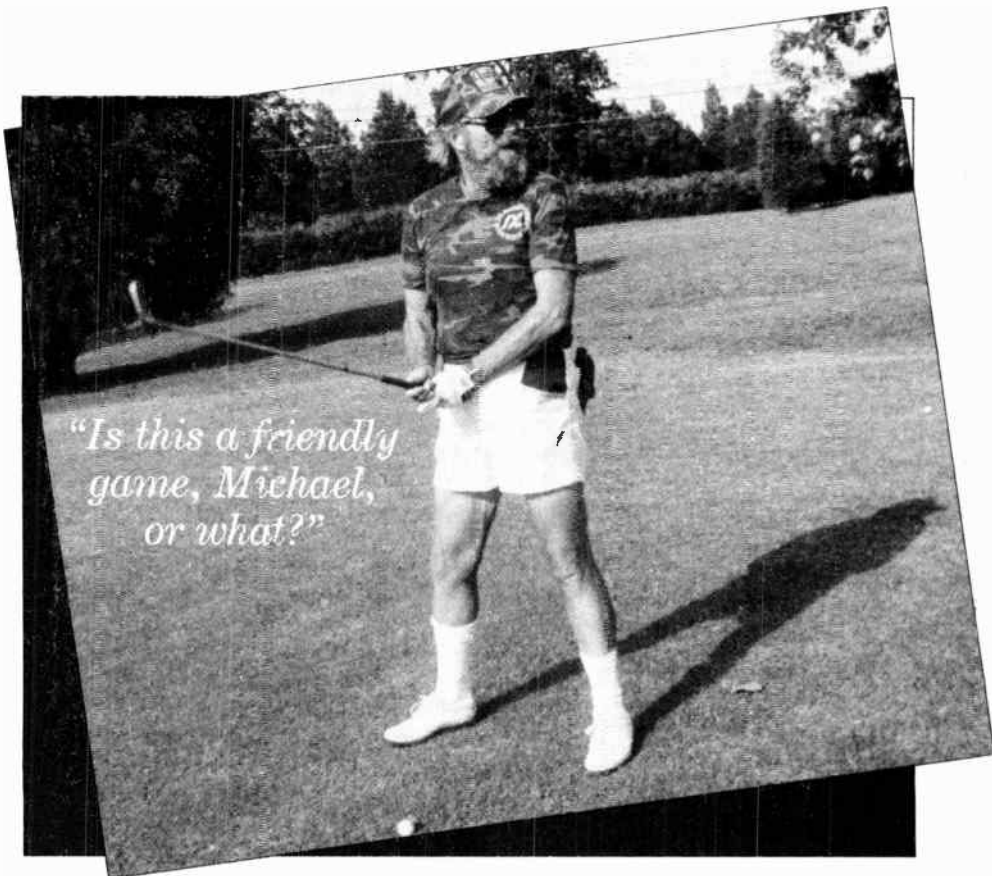
I wasn't far wrong, either. The setting is an exclusive country club nestled in the rolling hills 20 miles outside of Nashville. Finding Charlie Daniels isn't hard at all. Just scan the course, looking past all the hot pink shirts and lime green pants and plaids bright enough to scare horses to find the only golfer dressed in camouflage—cammie t-shirt, white shorts, cammie golf hat, sneakers. The most disconcerting thing about Charlie Daniels these days is his bulk—or, actually, his lack of it. The beard's still there. The height is right. But Charlie Daniels is slim, maybe 100 pounds slimmer than the bear-like figure of his early album covers. He exercises, he eats right, he runs, he doesn't drink or smoke or take funny chemicals.

"I'm gonna be 50 years old, Michael," he says. "I just got up one day and decided it was time to take care of the body the Good Lord gave me."

Charlie Daniels speaks with passion, as if a thing not worth doing passionately is a thing not worth doing at all. Whether it's describing a diet or running the enormously successful Charlie Daniels organization, Charlie Daniels is on fire all the time.

It is a fire that's made Charlie Daniels a legend in the music business, an artist who has defied time and trends to return to the top of the charts again and again. It's a fire that's led him from rock to country, from the blues to the high lonesome sound of the mountains. He has seen the fads come and go, courted controversy like a lustful suitor, never one to hold silent when words needed to be spoken. Now, strangely, he and I are in a golf cart, chasing balls all around this manicured lawn like we had good sense.

Golf, though, is hardly the topic on his mind. Like so many times in the past,



Charlie Daniels wants to talk about music, his music, and Nashville's music.

"You know what's so darn stupid," he says, punctuating his words with a jabbing finger. "I mean, country this, country that. Is it country? Isn't it country? What a waste of energy. Have you ever thought that if Nashville would stop trying to figure out what's country and what's not, country music would be *bigger* than pop. Bigger! And that's the truth, Michael."

The golf cart weaves along its little paved road, heading to the next tee, and Charlie's finger slashes out again and again.

If they would *just*...

For *once*...

Put *aside*...

All the *bullshit*...

Charlie Daniels shakes his head, as if the incredible blindness of the music business is too much for him to abide. You know, he says, popular music is not the personal preserve of people under 25 years old. Music belongs to everyone, and people who try to put labels on it are fools.

Every so often, we play golf.

Charlie Daniels was born in Wilmington, North Carolina, on October 28, 1936, the son of a lumberman. It was an itinerant job, one that set the tone for Charlie Daniels' later life. "Wherever the yellow pine grew," Charlie says, "that's where we lived." His family traveled through North and South Carolina and into north Georgia, from one sawmill town

to the next. The towns were all the same—hot and dusty, with a sense of community punctuated by the lightning-quick violence of a sawmill Saturday night. From the honkytonks and the front porches and churches of the rural South came the music—bluegrass and mountain music, filtered through the Appalachian Mountains to the tail end of the Smokys, rhythm and blues and the earlier field chant blues, and gospel from black and white churches.

When he was 15 years old, a neighborhood boy got a cheap guitar as a gift, and in his spare time he showed Charlie the chords.

"I learned a *G-chord* first," he says. "After I learned two or three myself, we started bugging everybody else we ran into to teach us more!"

Music began to occupy more and more of Charlie's time—it was, he says wryly, a more appealing career than picking cotton or following in his father's footsteps in the lumber business. His big break, though, came not in a bar, but in a creosote plant in Wilmington, North Carolina, where he was working days to make ends meet in the mid-1950's.

The creosote business was on the skids, and somebody was going to have to be laid off. The choice was between Charlie and another employee, who happened to be black. In those days in the deep South, that wasn't a choice at all. To keep the black worker with a family from being laid off, Charlie quit, reasoning he could always make a living with his music.

His first band was bluegrass, the

Misty Mountain Boys, but bluegrass couldn't cut it in the rock 'n' roll world of the 1950's. So pretty soon Charlie Daniels and the Jaguars—so-named by record producer Bob Johnston, who would soon be on his way to Nashville to record Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash—were slapping it out with the best of them.

"Whatever was popular, we played it," says Charlie Daniels. "I played everything from 'Malaguena' to 'Ode to Billy Joe.' You learn to play whatever is coming down the pike. I started back when Bill Haley and Little Richard and all those people were popular, and I played those songs. The Presley-Carl Perkins era, right on up through the Beatles. Always with a little country on the side..."

Charlie Daniels followed one of the meanest, roughest, toughest musical roads in America—the Southern bar circuit. That circuit hit every nickel-and-dime honky tonk across Florida, Georgia, Alabama and the Carolinas—places with sawdust on the floor and chicken wire protecting the stage, where there was a stage.

Eventually he drifted up to Washington, D.C., looking for clubs with enough customers to justify hiring a full-time band. Along the way, his music was evolving, becoming a mishmash of blues and country and rock and soul, maybe a little jazz thrown in on the side.

It was a music people wanted to hear and wanted to dance to, more popular in some places than cover versions of hit songs. Call it boogie music, call it Southern rock—people couldn't get enough of it, a point not lost on Charlie Daniels.

In 1967, when the bars and the honky tonks were beginning to take their toll on the Jaguars, now known as the Charlie Daniels Band, Charlie got a call from a voice from the past. Producer Bob Johnston invited Charlie to Nashville to work as a sessions musician—mostly guitar, but fiddle now and then. One of the first projects was Bob Dylan's landmark *Nashville Skyline* album, the first of many attempts to pull together the warring factions of rock and country.

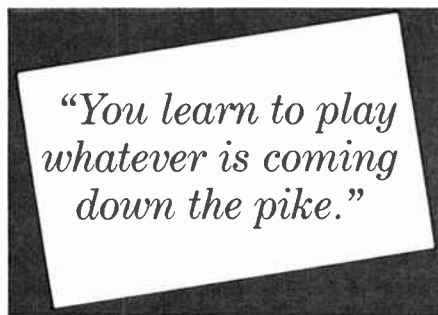
That album is interesting in the history of popular music not because it was unsuccessful—"Lay, Lady, Lay" was a gigantic hit—but because it failed miserably at what it hoped to accomplish. Most serious musicians—and listeners with any brains—realize that the boundaries between country and rock were no different than the boundaries between black music and white music—more in the minds of the beholders than in any real stylistic differences. Cleverly disguised country music had been on the rock charts for years. Examples that come to mind are Ray Charles' much-ballyhooed "raid" on

Nashville in the early 1960's or Tom Jones' cover of Porter Wagoner's "Green, Green Grass of Home" in 1967.

But by the late 1960's American culture had become, quite literally, violently polarized. On the one side was the counterculture, the youth culture of sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll. On the other side was the rednecked boogiemer, listening to country music and planning the jackbooting of America.

There was no middle ground.

The timing and the almost mystical aura around Bob Dylan kept *Nashville Skyline* from becoming the powerful statement it was intended to be, but the lesson wasn't lost on sessions man Charlie Daniels. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Charlie Daniels has flatly refused to buy the whole package.



He had come to hate the war in Vietnam and to despise Richard Nixon for his role in it and, later, Watergate. He even felt obligated to throw his newly reformed Charlie Daniels Band into the fight against the war, an effort which came to a screeching halt when he discovered that he couldn't "just" be against the war.

He played the big moratorium in Washington, D.C., but found himself growing more and more disillusioned with the protesters sharing his stage. That disillusionment came to a head at a big peace rally in New York City.

"The women's liberation was there, the gay liberation was there, the Communist Party, the Attica Prison Contingent—every damn body and his brown dog that had something to bitch about was there," he says. "And I said to myself, 'I'm a damn fool...'"

Charlie Daniels knows what it's like to feel a million miles roll on by, to watch a hundred thousand telephone poles click past a tour bus window, a steady metronome for a life on the road. Curiously, though, time spent with Charlie Daniels is uplifting time, because he is a man in love with the life he's chosen to live. He gets mad and he steams at people who'd divide the music, because he—better than maybe anyone else—understands that the divisions are false. He has reached out to kids, their parents and their grand-

parents, and he has, for the most part, succeeded.

Charlie Daniels and his music have exalted the South and her people, sometimes flying in the face of "conventional" wisdom. When he recorded the new Southern anthem, "The South's Gonna Do It Again," in the waning days of 1973, there was no greater liability than to admit being from the South. As a legacy of the hipper-than-thou 1960's, the South was viewed as some sort of quarantine zone below the Mason-Dixon line, peopled with unreconstructed rednecks and bat-swinging sheriffs. But Charlie Daniels went beyond the stereotypes, to touch a uniquely Southern core. In his music, he captured a land of mystery and honor, a place as different from, say, downtown Manhattan as hogs and cattle. His people drank too much and swore a bit and prayed on Sunday and knew what it felt like to work with their hands. They rolled with the punches, lived for the day and danced in the evenings, to a music that was and is a little bit of this, a little bit of that.

Charlie Daniels has done a bit of it all, and now, sitting on this soon-to-be-dead golf cart, he can look any man in the eye and say, damn it all, it was worth every blessed mile.

"Ya see, Michael," Charlie Daniels is saying, "if you don't keep your head down, you're never going to be able to hit the ball."

He scowls a Charlie Daniels scowl, and I rear back and whack the little white sucker.

The ball sails into the air, arcing off into the middle of the mowed part.

"Damn," says Charlie Daniels, shaking his head.

"Damn," I say.

The best parts are the rides in the golf cart, where we careen around and frighten the other golfers. Charlie's getting ready for the 12th Volunteer Jam—"I only did it to promote my records," Charlie says, more in awe of the Jam than my golf game. "Now, it's got a life of its own."

The Jam is a legend, Charlie Daniels' proof positive that music is music, that Billy Joel can walk on the same stage and play to the same crowd as Roy Acuff. In fact, the 1986 Volunteer Jam marked the first reunion of the Allman Brothers Band, one of the greatest rock groups to ever walk on any stage—the kings of Southern rock.

They will come back together because Charlie wants them to, because the stage at the Volunteer Jam is neutral ground, because somewhere underneath the bad times and the bummers and too many drugs and too many miles they still believe, as Mr. Charlie Daniels still believes, that the music can set you free. ■

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Louvin Bros: My Baby's Gone—I Wish I Knew/My Baby's Gone/Blue From Now On/While You're Cheatin' On Me/Loraine/When I Loved You/She Didn't Even Know I Was Gone/You're Running Wild/Plenty Of Everything But You, more! LP No. HAT 3028/Cass. No. HATC 3028



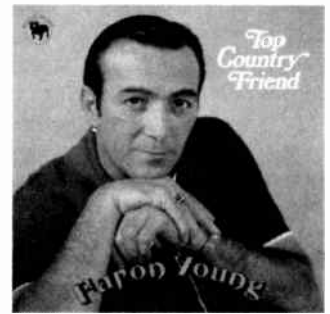
Patsy Montana: Original Hits From The West—I Wanna Be A Cowboy's Dream Girl/Lone Star/Swing The Cowgirl/My Poncho Pony/Back On Montana Plains/I Wanna Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart/Ridin' Old Paint/ Good-night Soldier, more! LP No. CSR 3/Cass. No. CSR 3C



Webb Pierce: The Great Songs of Webb Pierce—I'm Walking The Dog/It's Been So Long/Slowly/There Stands The Glass/Even Tho/ I'm Gonna Fall Out Of Love With You/I'm In The Jailhouse Now/Wondering/You Can't Be True/I'm Not In Love With You. LP No. BDL 1025



Webb Pierce: Webb!—Sittin' Alone/My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You/You Make Me Live Again/Tupelo County Jail/Falling Back To You/Life To Go/After The Boy Gets The Girl/Pick Me Up On Your Way Down/The Violet And The Rose/I Won't Be Crying Anymore, more! LP No. HAT 3019/Cass. No. HATC 3019



Faron Young: Top Country Friend—If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin')/Riverboat/Congratulations/Face To The Wall/Hello Walls/You're Still Mine/Three Days/ Alone With You/Country Girl/Back Track. LP No. BDL 1030



Bob Wills: The Rare Presto Transcriptions—Draggin' The Bow/Tennessee Saturday Night/Twin Guitar Special/Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone/Bob Wills Boogie/ No Wonder/San Antonio Rose/Judy/Tumbling Tumbleweeds, 8 more! LP No. CSR 1/Cass. No. CSR 1C



Kitty Wells: Kitty's Choice—Sugar-time/Dark Moon/Jambalaya/Half As Much/Tennessee Waltz/Beautiful Brown Eyes/Your Cheatin' Heart/Seven Lonely Days/Jealous Heart/When The Moon Comes Over The Mountain/Bonaparte's Retreat/My Happiness. LP No. HAT 3018/Cass. No. HATC 3018



Kitty Wells: Original Queen of Country—Makin' Believe/Poison In Your Heart/I Don't Claim To Be An Angel/After Dark/One By One/I've Kissed You My Last Time/On The Lonely Side Of Town/You And Me (And The Power In Your Heart), more! LP No. BDL 1025/Cass. No. BDL 1025



Hank Thompson: Dance Ranch—Beaumont Rag/Headin' Down The Wrong Highway/Bartenders Polka/Bubbles In My Beer/Makes Room In Your Heart (For A Memory)/Summit Ridge Drive/I Wouldn't Miss It For The World/After All The Things I've Done, and more! LP No. HAT 3027/Cass. No. HATC 3027



Bob Wills: More Rare Presto Transcriptions—In The Mood/Sugar Mountain/Eimer's Tune/My Life's Been A Pleasure/Texas Home/Dipsy Doodle/Just A Little Lovin'/Cherokee Maiden/You're The Sweetest Rose In Texas, 9 more! LP No. CSR 2/Cass. No. CSR 2C



Bob Wills: Time Changes Everything—Across The Street From The Alamo/I'm Living In The Middle Of Nowhere/South Of The Border (Down Mexico Way)/Running Bear/Texas Double Eagle/Time Changes Everything/Limehouse Blues, more! LP No. HAT 3024/Cass. No. HATC 3024



Wilburn Bros.: Country Gold—Crazy Arms/I Don't Care/I Don't Love You Anymore/I Wonder Where You Are Tonight/Before I'm Over You/When I Stop Dreaming/I Dreamed Of An Old Love Affair/World Of Forgotten People/I Can Stand It, more! LP No. HAT 3007/Cass. No. HATC 3007



Loretta Lynn: Sings Loretta Lynn—The Minute You're Gone/The Other Woman/Alone With You/Why I'm Walking/Act Naturally/World Of Forgotten People/Color Of The Blues/A Hundred Proof Heartache/I Walked Away From The Wreck, more! LP No. HAT 3023/Cass. No. HATC 3023

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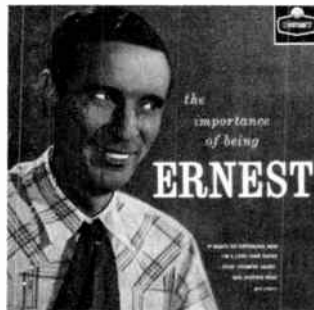
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Ernest Tubb: Importance Of Being Ernest—It Makes No Difference/I Wonder Why I Worry Over You/Your Cheatin' Heart/I'm Waiting For The Ships That Never Come In/I'm A Long Gone Daddy/All Those Yesterday's/That, My Darlin', Is Me, more! LP No. HAT 3006/Cass. No. HATC 3006



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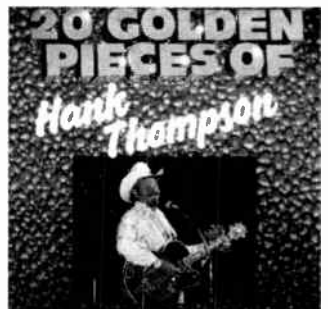
Hank Locklin: From Here To There To You—Let Me Be The One/Please Help Me I'm Falling/Geisha Girl/Happy Birthday To Me/Send Me The Pillow That You Dream On/These Arms You Push Away/It's A Little More Like Heaven Where You Are, more! LP No. BDL 1033/Cass. No. BDLC 1033



Tex Ritter: Streets Of Laredo—Title Song/Blood On The Saddle/Barbara Allen/Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie/Rye Whiskey/Bob Weevil/Sam Bass/The Face On The Barroom Floor/When The Work's All Done This Fall, more! LP No. BDL 1022/Cass. No. BDLC 1022



Ernest Tubb: The Daddy Of 'Em All—You're Breaking My Heart/I Dreamed Of An Old Love Affair/I Knew The Moment I Lost You/My Hillbilly Baby/This Troubled Mind Of Mine/Daisy May/There's No Fool Like A Young Fool, 5 more! LP No. HAT 3015/Cass. No. HATC 3015



Hank Thompson: 20 Golden Pieces—Who Left The Door To Heaven Open/When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold/There's A Honky Tonk Angel/Whatever's Left/Green Light/Fair Weather Love/I Recall A Gypsy Woman/Smoky The Bear, more! LP No. BDL 2042/Cass. No. BDLC 2042



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And it's absolutely the easiest Tomato to grow — no staking, no caging, no pruning, no trimming — just harvest meal after meal of huge luscious, mouth watering Tomatoes all season long!"

I'd like to share the good news with Tomato Lovers everywhere about a remarkable new Tomato hybrid that will revolutionize home gardening...a new genetic-engineering breakthrough from the laboratories and test-gardens of agricultural scientists that *someday* will be in everyone's home garden. But if you act promptly, you can be one of the FIRST home gardeners in America to grow it *now!*

This amazing new Tomato is totally *unlike* any you've ever seen or grown before...totally unlike any you've ever sunk a sweet-tooth into!

Incredibly Delicious Taste!

When it comes to taste, this fabulous new Tomato is the all-time champ. Quite frankly, *it's the best damn Tomato I've ever tasted!* Its ruby-red flesh literally *bursts forth* with juicy goodness...bursts forth with sugar-sweet flavor and an *intense* delicious Tomato taste. The mouthwatering flavor of this astonishing Tomato is a *revelation* — until you've enjoyed it for yourself, you simply cannot possibly imagine how absolutely delicious a Tomato can be! Each super-succulent fruit is a whopping 12"...13"...even 14" or more around. And you'll actually harvest a dramatic outpouring of up to 50 POUNDS or more of these exquisitely good-tasting Tomatoes from every single plant!

Incredibly Easy to Grow!

What's more, this amazing new hybrid is *absolutely the easiest Tomato to grow that I've ever seen!* Horticultural scientists actually **BRED OUT all the bother** when they BRED IN all that good taste. With this Miracle-Bush™ Tomato there's no staking, no caging, no trimming, no pruning...no special care, no special sprays, no special feeding for the most luscious, most delicious Tomatoes you've ever eaten. Just start it indoors on any sunny windowsill, then set it out in your garden and watch it grow! You'll harvest meal after meal of

Yields are estimates for most areas of the country, based on results actually achieved but may be lesser or greater than figures stated depending upon climate, soil conditions, amount of sun, and other factors. Miracle-Bush is our trade name for Super Bush tomato variety. Your tomato(es) will be shipped in pre-treated, pre-seeded nurseryman's starter pot(s) approximately 3-5 weeks after receipt of order.

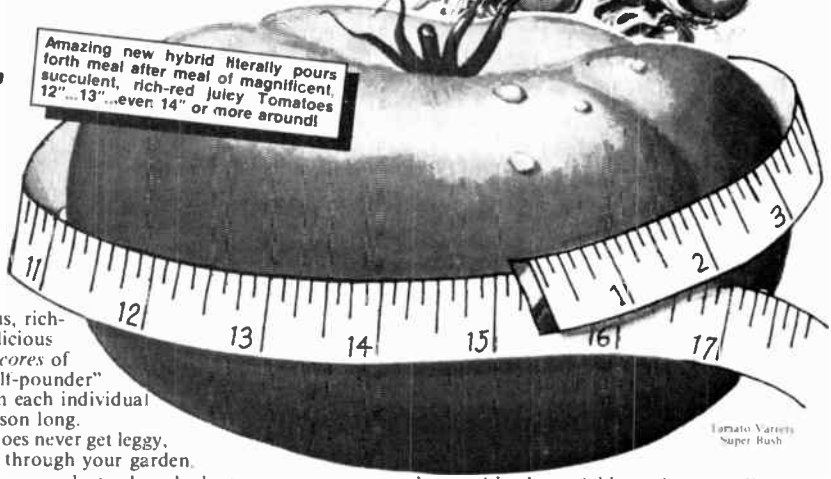
huge, luscious, rich-red super-delicious Tomatoes...scores of fabulous "half-pounder" beauties from each individual plant, all season long. These Tomatoes never get leggy, never sprawl through your garden.

Instead, each plant grows to a lovely, well-shaped bush no more than about 36" tall...so compact, so symmetrical, so pretty in appearance you'll consider using the Miracle-Bush Tomato as an ornamental in your front lawn. And there's just never been a better Tomato for planting in window boxes or containers on a sunny porch or patio!

Meal after Meal of Delicious Tomatoes Week after Wonderful Week!

Just imagine the taste-thrills you'll enjoy as you prepare fresh-off-the-plant super-salads and sauces...just picture the mouth-watering snacks you'll glory to as you sink your teeth into the ruby-red, rich, delicious flesh of these astounding Tomatoes right off the bush!

Take it from me, you'll be the hero of your family, and the hit of your neighborhood with these spectacular heaven-sent beauties! And you'll have *more than enough*



Tomato Variety Super-Bush



MEET W.M. — AND DISCOVER WHY WE CAN'T USE HIS NAME!

For more than 20 years, W.M. has been recognized as one of America's leading experts on gardening and horticulture. He has contributed to several books, and has written countless articles on home gardening for magazines and newspapers. He lectures all across the country, and is on the faculty of one of our nation's leading Universities. His many commitments prevent us from using his name in this advertisement, but every word is his...and every word is true. This statement is notarized to prove it!



W.M. Notary Public

to share with the neighbors...because I'm not talking skimpy, I'm talking Tomatoes...scores of Tomatoes from every single plant! Not those teeny-weensy tiny Tomatoes other bush hybrids produce, but big, magnificent "movie star" half-pounders so rich in intense, flavorful goodness that every time you taste one, your taste buds will throw a party for your mouth.

The Best Tomatoes in the World Just One Penny Each!

These days, when I walk into a grocery store, I get sick at the prices I see. Sixty, seventy, even eighty cents and more for those plastic-looking, plastic-tasting things that should be ashamed to call themselves Tomatoes. Then I think of these delicious Miracle-Bush Tomatoes you can grow yourself for just about a penny apiece and I pity the people who never even *dream* of how scrumptious a Tomato can really be!

If you like Tomatoes, you'll love my Miracle-Bush beauties! I'm so certain of that fact that I'll pay for the Tomatoes myself if I'm wrong.

The Most Mouth-Watering Tomatoes Ever — Or Your Money Back!

Let me put it this way: send for my Miracle-Bush Tomatoes now...plant them in your garden...start them on a sunny windowsill...and enjoy their luscious goodness as snacks, in salads and sauces all season long. Then, if you're not as thrilled with my Miracle-Bush Tomatoes as I am, let me know next fall, and I'll refund every penny you paid! Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed, or your money back.

Miracle-Bush Tomato, Dept. MBT-00, 9th Floor, 27 W. 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

Please rush me the Miracle-Bush Tomato(es) checked below. I understand each one comes in its own pre-treated, pre-seeded professional nurseryman's starter pot, guaranteeing me the best-tasting Tomatoes I've ever eaten, or my money back (except postage and handling).

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- Three Miracle-Bush Tomatoes, just \$5.50 plus \$1.50 postage and handling.
- Six Miracle-Bush Tomatoes, just \$8 plus \$2 postage and handling.

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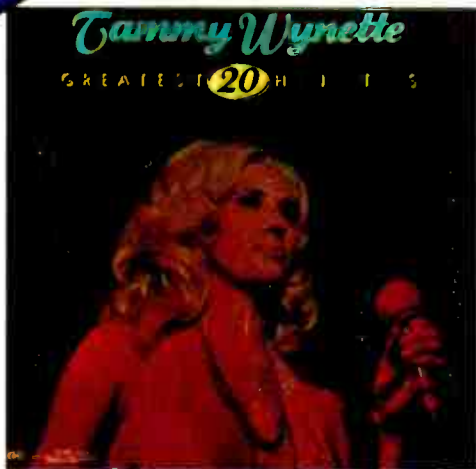
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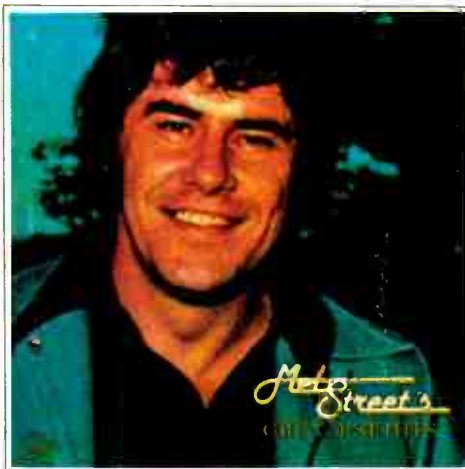
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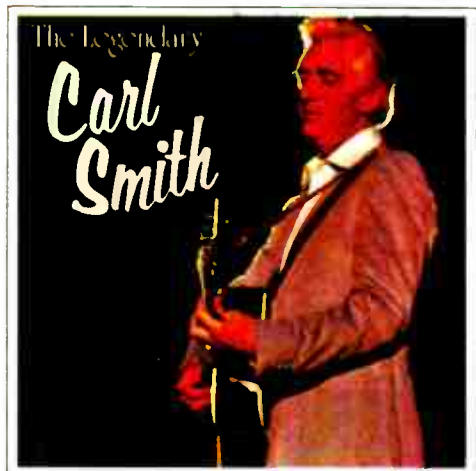
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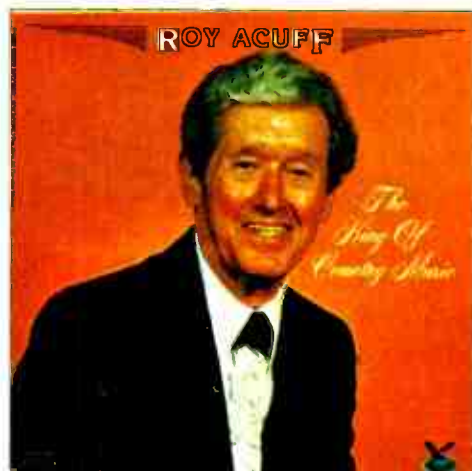
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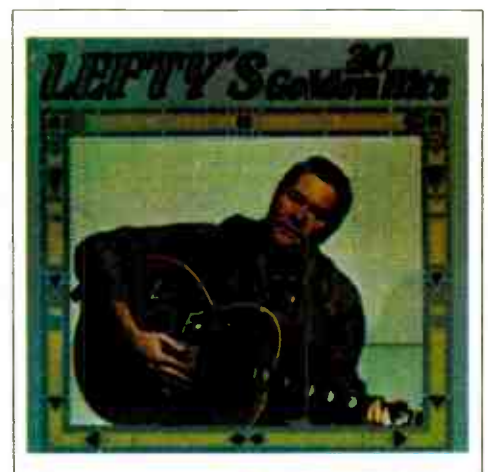
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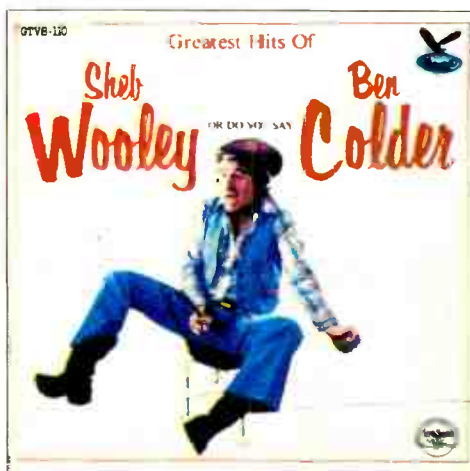
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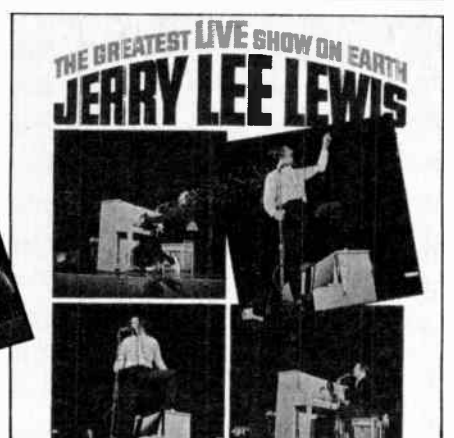
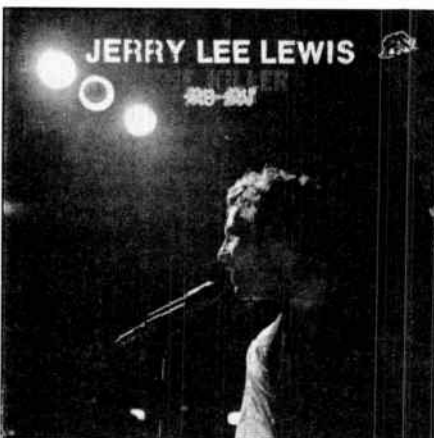
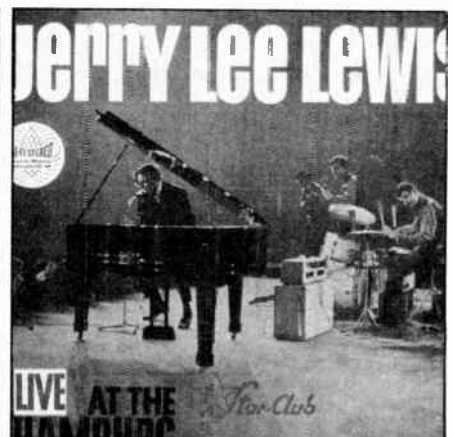
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Record Reviews



Jerry Lee Lewis
The Killer: 1963-1968/
The Killer: 1969-1972
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When Jerry Lee Lewis signed with Smash Records in 1963, his career was in limbo after the flap over his marriage. Five years later, after an excruciatingly slow start, he was on top of the country charts, singing the same type of ballad he had sung when Jack Clement auditioned him at Sun Records.

His Sun sides remain his most enduring work, but he spent 15 years from 1963 to 1978 with Smash and Mercury

Records, recording over 500 tracks that range from brilliant to awful. Sam Phillips was no longer around, but at Smash Jerry Lee did have the considerable talents of producers Shelby Singleton and producer/musician Jerry Kennedy behind him.

As Bear Family's Richard Weize told me last fall, "The rock 'n' roll people didn't buy Jerry Lee's country stuff when it was available. Now that it's been deleted, they decide they want it." Weize has obliged with a project that is even more ambitious than his incredible Lefty Frizzell box: three boxed sets, 10 albums in each, encompassing the entirety of Jerry's Smash/Mercury career except for a few lost, untraceable sides. The first

box, *The Killer: 1963-1968*, covers the first five years of his Smash career, including previously unreleased material; *The Killer: 1969-1972*, the second box, carries on from there. The third, *1973-1977*, is yet to be released.

The first box begins with Lewis' early, unsuccessful years at Smash and ends as he returned to the charts with a solid string of country hits starting in 1968. His first sessions yielded mediocre remakes of his old Sun favorites, none up to the originals. The strongest number of the bunch is Charlie Rich's ballad "I'll Make It All Up to You," which sounds a lot like hits he would have five years later. At the time, he seemed burned out singing rock in the

studio, except for his 1964 masterpiece "I'm on Fire."

His live shows, however, were incredible, and the two 1964 albums of live shows in Hamburg, Germany—never before available in the U.S.—and Birmingham, Alabama, make that abundantly clear.

The unrelenting savagery of his performances was as strong—or stronger—than before. Both albums constitute some of the most exciting live rockabilly music ever recorded, for *The Killer* is truly in peak form.

Back in the studios in 1965 and 1966, Lewis and company tried everything from rhythm and blues covers to "Lincoln Limousine," a bizarre, jaunty original number about the John Kennedy assassination. Again, some numbers worked

Record Reviews

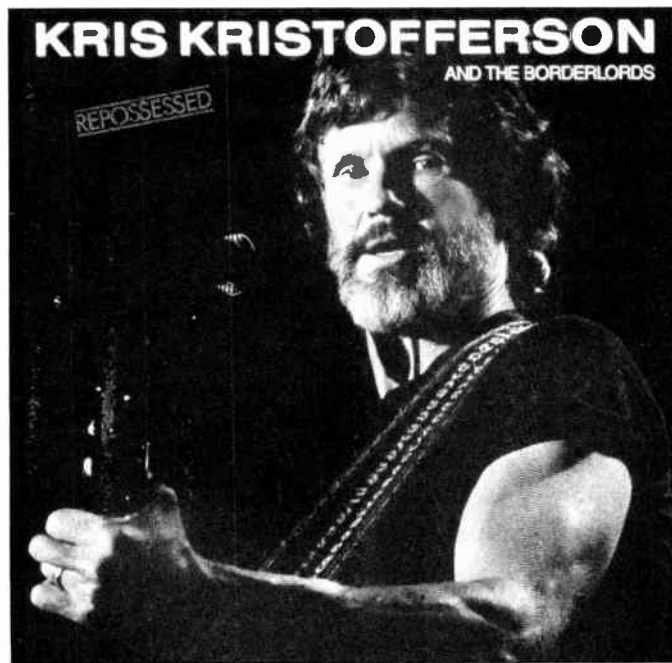
and others failed completely, but another fantastic live album came from a concert at Fort Worth's Panther Hall. Some of the rock sides, like the unissued and autobiographical "Rockin' Jerry Lewis" were fine, but the most compelling songs were still the country sides, songs like his outstanding interpretation of "Green, Green Grass of Home."

By 1967 nothing was selling. He was reduced to recording dreck such as "Just Dropped In (To See What Condition My Condition Was In)," the phony psychedelic number that propelled Kenny Rogers and the First Edition to fame. As understandably ready to leave Smash as Lewis was, the company was ready to give up as well.

Recording Jerry Lee as a strictly country artist was Jerry Kennedy's last-ditch effort, and on January 5, 1968, he recorded "Another Place, Another Time." This time everything jelled. By March it was Number Four in the nation, the first of an awesome string of best-sellers. Ironically, in 1974, after Jerry's success had peaked, his cousin Mickey Gilley also succeeded with this same sound.

Some of the best numbers Jerry cut during this period weren't hits but covers of country classics, like his searing interpretation of Webb Pierce's "There Stands the Glass." His repeated references to himself as a stylist take on new validity with his interpretation of Merle Haggard's "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive," a song that normally works best in Haggard's hands alone. Just as impressive are his rocking versions of "Walking the Floor Over You" and a remake of his Sun recording of "Let's Talk About Us."

Listening to all this proves that most recording sessions are not logically planned and meticulously worked out. Instead, you can sense the very real desperation as Sin-



gleton and Kennedy try rock, country, soul and whatever else they thought might work, moving from one style to another.

As usual, Bear Family's packaging is outstanding, the digital remastering rendering the sound far superior to what's on the original discs. The copiously-illustrated book in the first box, with its rare photos, is nice, though Colin Escott's text is not up to the standard of his fine work on the Lewis Sun box. The discography is the most valuable part of the book.

The second, *The Killer: 1969-1972*, features still more unissued sides, including two albums of live Vegas shows and a fantastic, live gospel concert which has never been heard before on record. There's a book in the second box, too.

In mid-December, Jerry Lee bailed out of the Betty Ford Center, where he was to be treated for what they called "painkiller dependency"—"I took enough pills for the whole damn town," he sang in 1975. Word was he hated getting up early and wouldn't do assigned chores. The same month, in an interview with a major rock maga-

zine, he said he never quit drinking even after his near-fatal stomach rupture six years ago.

Despite the bad health and the even worse publicity he's endured in recent years, Jerry Lee Lewis continues to be a charismatic figure. That's why he inspires lavishly assembled compilations like this. Few singers in any field will ever receive this kind of tribute during their lifetime or beyond, and as Jerry himself would tell you, few deserve it more. Think about it.

—RICH KIENZLE

Kris Kristofferson
Repossessed
Polygram/Mercury
422-830406-1

It's easy now to overlook the influence Kris Kristofferson had on mainstream country music when he first emerged as an artist/songwriter in the late 1960's and early 1970's. He broke through with a handful of unforgettable, original songs—"Help Me Make It Through the Night," "Loving

Her Was Easier," "For the Good Times," "The Pilgrim" and others—that were almost Shakespearean in their sensual yet precise imagery and their clarity of emotion. As both a writer and an artistic presence, Kristofferson injected country music with a new-found lyricism, realism and atmosphere of street-romance. And, in the process, he brought on board a whole new generation of mostly college-age listeners, this writer being one of them.

After a long absence as a recording artist, Kristofferson is back in the running, and as I listen to his new album, which, the accompanying press release informs me, he's been working on for six years, several things are obvious.

Number one, Kristofferson—now, just as way back when—still has no more than a marginal sense of pitch and melody; though I must say that Chips Moman, his producer this time around, has given his voice, on many of these cuts, some of the most sympathetic treatments I've ever heard.

Number two, Kristofferson has also seemingly gotten religion in some form or another. There are only one or two songs on here that could be called "spiritual" or "inspirational" in any conventional sense of those words. One of them is a powerful ballad about martyrdom, called, simply "(My God) They Killed Him," where Kristofferson draws parallels between Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the image of the Savior, and the idea of salvation (both spiritual and emotional—for those who care to draw a distinction) runs like a subcurrent through some of the rawest musical twists of down-and-dirty-realism on these sides.

All of which is to say that, in listening to *Repossessed*, it's obvious that Kristofferson

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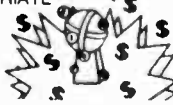
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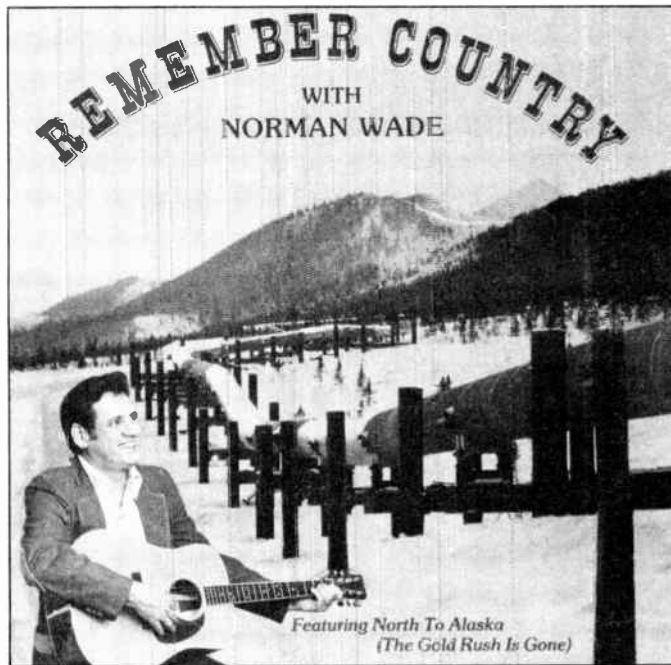
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Record Reviews

has a helluva lot on his mind these days, and he seems to have reinvoked at least some of his former lyrical genius in getting it down on vinyl. Take, for instance, "What About Me," one of the most haunting of quite a few haunting and thematically unsettling songs on this album. The graphic images of despair in this song bring back memories of the dark depictions of living close to the edge that we once heard in songs like "Sunday Morning Coming Down." Only now, the despair is both political and religious, instead of merely romantic and personal. As the song opens, the narrator is sitting in a dingy room, watching a Vietnam veteran shooting up drugs. The two get into a philosophical discussion about the meaning of freedom. "He looked up from the potion he was cooking in his spoon/and nailed me with the anger in his eyes." The song's next stanza is about an encounter with a woman who's lost both parents to terrorism in El Salvador. "She said it's even sadder that it's in El Salvador/The named it for the Savior, don't you see." Finally, we find the singer standing before "the wonder of the Warrior Jesus Christ/and destiny was burning in his eyes."

Mind you, not all the songs here are this ripe with suggestions of social urgency and—possibly—apocalypse. Others, like "Mean Old Man," "El Coyote," "Anthem '84," and "Shipwrecked in the Eighties," are more personalized, sometimes quirky statements of someone who's clearly spent his share of time coping with the darker aspects of fame and incipient middle age. In "Shipwrecked" he actually shifts gears and almost seems to reject religion as a panacea for personal confusion.

Kristofferson is joined on the album by his band, The Borderlords, which includes longtime musical sidekicks Billy Swan (guitar/vocals)



and Donnie Fritts (keyboards/vocals). Carl Perkins guests on vocals and guitar on "Mean Old Man."

Producer Chips Moman, who has been responsible for two of the worst albums in recent memory—Willie Nelson's latest, as well as the recent *Memphis Rock 'n' Roll Reunion* album—acquits himself wonderfully here with sparse, raw-boned arrangements and a lean and mean production style.

As I said, Kristofferson never was, and sure still ain't, no Caruso. But as a musician and street-level poet/philosopher, he's clearly once again right in the thick of it. The result is this new album which may take some getting used to for the uninitiated; but which clearly demands a listen.

—BOB ALLEN

Norman Wade
Remember Country
NCR International NCLP-501

Being this magazine's resident traditionalist, readers get the mistaken impression I'm some 55-year-old who won't listen to anything

newer than Hank Williams. The age alone is 20 years off, and I have more albums by The Beatles than by Porter Wagoner. That same type-casting gets me on mailing lists of local singers and promoters who herald their dedication to "real country music," which is fine by me.

But when I get their records, they're often unlistenable, perpetuating the stereotype that all hillbilly singers sing off-key through the noses. Bandy, Jones and Haggard may be their idols, but those three have good material to choose from, topflight musicians to work with and most of all, *talent*. Most of these local amateurs are trying in vain, pursuing "a dream that turned out wrong," as Lefty sang in "Honky Tonk Stardust Cowboy."

So I wasn't expecting much when I got an album by Norman Wade, a one-time employee of Marty Robbins, via one of these "real country" people. Here we go again, I said after reading a press release that informed me that, among other things, Wade sang with emotions that "only a hand full (sic) can convey," that he appeared on the "Grand Ole Opey" (sic)

and "loves Pabts (sic) Blue Ribbon Beer." Maybe he can sing, but his press agent sure can't spell. Once I quit laughing, I put the record on, figuring it'd be more of the same.

My mistake.

We have here a rarity: a little-known artist with the same stubborn integrity we loved in Moe Bandy a decade ago. Wade's understated, tartly expressive vocal style has qualities similar to George Jones or Hank, but imitates neither. Don't expect Randy Travis or even a 1980's version of George Jones. Wade's music has the feel and durability of George's classic Starday albums of 25 years ago.

"North to Alaska (The Gold Rush is Gone)," an update of the Johnny Horton hit, is a bit weak and contrived. Still, Wade gives it his best and turns in a credible performance. "If That Ain't Country," a blues-flavored celebration of his rural roots, is an oddly structured song laden with Southern clichés, but he sings it with such overwhelming conviction, it becomes a high point.

This is not to say there aren't flaws, for despite being cut in Nashville, this wasn't exactly a high-budget production. The excellent number "God Made You for Me" has a few flat notes here and there, but Wade's impassioned vocal renders them irrelevant. His searing version of Hank Williams' "Me and My Broken Heart," a number Hank never recorded himself, more than does the song justice and is beautifully complimented by Buddy Spicher's fiddle and Weldon Myrick's steel.

"Blue House Painted White," written by George Jones' old Texas crony Sonny Burns, and "Shut Up and Drink Your Beer" are terse and well-focused, "Beer" conveying plainspoken honky-tonk annoyance as blunty as possible. "The Memories of Her," a Wade original, is a brilliant study in desolation. I

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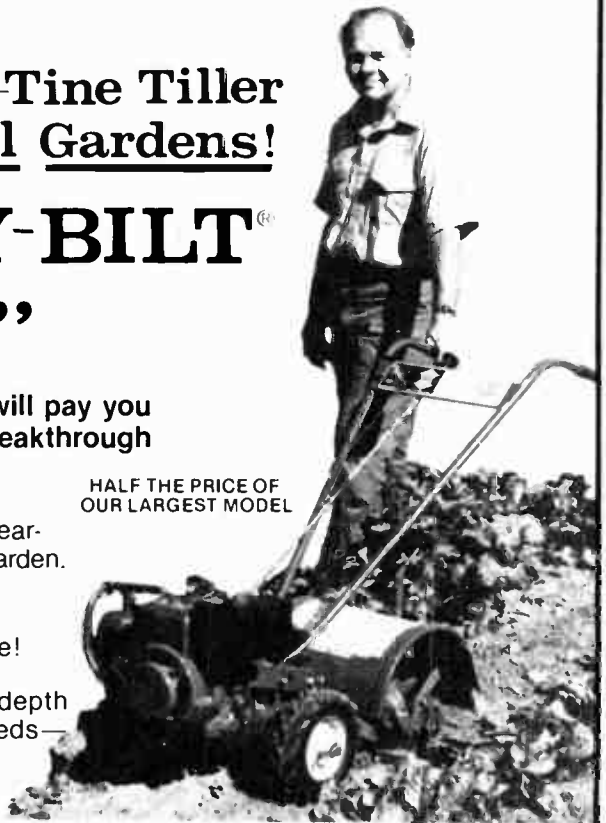
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Record Reviews

could have done without his version of Luke The Drifter's recitation "Men With Broken Hearts," but then I could only take ol' Luke in limited doses anyway. His performance of "Living with a Memory" is drenched in truly chilling desperation.

Frankly, I don't know if Wade will ever accomplish the breakthrough he so richly deserves. Plenty of talented artists don't. But no one who hears this album can doubt his talent; several major-league Nashville producers ought to listen to this one closely. If there were more "real country" singers like Norman Wade, I'd be a lot less cynical about the records I get from the rest.

—RICH KIENZLE



Nanci Griffith *Lone Star State of Mind*

MCA 5927

The Last of the True Believers

Philo/Rounder PH-1109

Once In a Very Blue Moon

Philo/Rounder PH-1096

Poet In My Window

Philo/Rounder PH-1098

There's a Light Beyond These Woods

Philo/Rounder PH-1097

Nanci Griffith has been knocking on the Nashville music industry's door for quite some time, without noticeable success. Last year, when recording artist Kathy Mattea had a Top Five hit with a song Griffith wrote called "Love at the Five and Dime," recognition began coming her way.

Griffith is now making her major-label debut with her new MCA album, *Lone Star State of Mind*, but she comes to the label not as a diamond in the rough, but as a fairly mature, well-rounded talent with a substantial body of

recorded work already to her credit.

Over the years since the late 1970's, she recorded four albums for the Philo/Rounder label, as well as one or two for a couple of small Texas labels. Thanks to the powers-that-be at Philo/Rounder, who, like a lot of the rest of us around this business, sense that Griffith is finally on the verge of having—as they say—"Major Impact," all four of these earlier albums are now newly available or reissued.

Suffice to say, what these earlier albums, such as *There's a Light Beyond These Woods*, which was recorded almost nine years ago, demonstrate is that Griffith was surprisingly near top form as both a songwriter and a singer as long ago as 1977 and 1978. Mentioning these earlier releases is also another way of letting you know that if you do like what you hear on *Lone Star State of Mind*, there is already a heck of a lot more out there where that came from.

As a singer, Griffith does not possess what you would call a beautiful voice. I don't predict any duet outings with Kenny Rogers in her immediate future. In fact, her voice

does take some getting used to. Her singing style is, nonetheless, unusually commanding and magnetic. Often, to make her point in song, she calls up an amazingly powerful folkish warble. And she can just as easily summon up shades of mousey, little-girl wistfulness, as on her version of Julie Gold's deadly serious "From a Distance," on the *Lone Star* album, or on her own splendid version of "Love at the Five and Dime" on *The Last of the True Believers*, released last year. Then again, she can break out in almost caterwauling gusto—as on her thrilling roller-coaster ride of a vocal on her own song, "Ford Econoline," wonderfully powerful road song on *Lone Star*.

Her vocal performances throughout all these releases are peppered with delightfully exuberant, eccentric inflections and flourishes. Texas somehow becomes "Taahxus" on the title song from *The Last of the True Believers*, one of many fine philosophic, romantic ballads you'll find scattered throughout her work.

Griffith's original songs—and there are many that are impressive among the cuts on

all five albums—are full of well-etched characters, often on the run from shadows of their own pasts, or gazing out from the uneasy refuge of solitude at past loves lost, found and lost again. Songs like "Ford Econoline" or "Lookin' for the Time" off *True Believers* are rowdy celebrations, while on songs like "Michael's Song" from *There's a Light Beyond*, written in a more traditional folk song vein, she seems to reach out and grapple with some kind of abstract sense of loss brought on by time, distance and fading memories.

My only problem with MCA's *Lone Star State of Mind* is that there are not more Griffith originals. Even allowing for the usual bet-hedging precaution that accompanies a major-label debut, it is hard to understand why nearly half the songs here are drawn from outside sources—even if the song choices, with only a few exceptions, are fine. It also bothers me a little that Griffith has this habit of posing for album covers clutching some weighty work of literature, such as Larry McMurthy's *Lonesome Dove* or Eudora Welty's *Delta Wedding*, as if to drive home the point that, yes, she *is* literary and *does* read big books. Somehow this point is made well enough by her songs alone.

All that aside, Griffith is a welcome addition to the country music scene. This past year has, after all, produced a startling crop of new male singer/composer prodigies: Lyle Lovett, Dwight Yoakam, Steve Earle... And now, we can chalk one up for the women too: Nanci Griffith has arrived.

It's certainly not every day that you come across an artist like this, who emerges on the scene almost fully developed, with so much to say, and—as both writer and singer—such a fascinating and magnetic way of saying it.

—BOB ALLEN

Buried Treasures

Re-issues,
Rarities and the
Hard-to-Find

Stetson Records has pulled off a coup of sorts with their first re-release of four classic albums from Capitol, known to be the most difficult of all the major labels where reissues are concerned. Some of Stetson's recent MCA efforts have missed the mark; however, these four are some of their best.

Hank Thompson: The 1960 Capitol album *Dance Ranch* (HAT 3027) combined Thompson's best attributes: ebullient vocals, honky tonk material and the tight, swinging musicianship of his Brazos Valley Boys. Much of the honky tonk material consists of standards like Merle Travis' "Lawdy, What a Gal," Jerry Irby's "Drivin' Nails in My Coffin" and "Bubbles in My Beer." These songs, all done to death by everyone in the 1950's are revitalized in Thompson's hands.

The instrumentals, ranging from a jazzed-up version of Bob Wills' "Beaumont Rag" to big band favorites like "Summit Ridge Drive" to "Bartender's Polka," spotlight the band's strengths. The players combined Bob Wills' drive with Spade Cooley's smoothness, but steered clear of the syrupy mediocrity that often befell Cooley. As one of Thompson's best albums, its new availability is welcome indeed.

Rose Maddox: *Rose Maddox Sings Bluegrass* (HAT 3029) was Bill Monroe's idea. In 1962 he suggested she do a bluegrass album at a time when no women had emerged as serious bluegrass artists. Monroe, not known for wearing his enthusiasm on his sleeve in those days, even went so far as to play mandolin on five of the tracks with the backup band of Don Reno and Red Smiley, then a popular bluegrass act.

The album, made up largely of uptempo bluegrass standards, five of them by Monroe, with a few main-



Hank Thompson and the Brazos Valley Boys

stream numbers with electric steel thrown in for good measure, remains electrifying 25 years later. Rose's full-throated vocals on "Footprints in the Snow" and "Molly and Tenbrooks" remain a model for female bluegrassers today. Even if you're thoroughly sick of "Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms," as I am, you'll find her version refreshing. This album changed Rose's entire musical direction. Most of her records and performances in the past 20 years have been with bluegrass bands.

Faron Young: In the early 1950's Faron was one of the Young Lions, a far cry from the elder statesman he is today. Back then his good-natured cockiness dripped from every note he sang, obvious on his early hits like "Goin' Steady" and "If You Ain't Lovin'."

Sweethearts or Strangers (HAT 3026), his first 12-inch album from 1957, is a collection made up largely of others' hits, including Jimmie Davis' "You Are My Sunshine," "Sweethearts or Strangers," Hank Sr.'s "I Can't Help It" and an oddity or two like his own composition "Poor Boy." Though none of his early Capitol hits are included here, his performances are so infectious, you don't miss them.

The Louvin Brothers: As if Rebel Records' Louvin set

(reviewed last issue) wasn't enough, Stetson's rereleased their 1960 album *My Baby's Gone* (HAT 3028), which boasts one of those 'great 1950's/60's Capitol covers. Though four songs on the Rebel album are duplicated here, that's a minor gripe. Numbers like "The First One to Love You" and "She Didn't Even Know I Was Gone" serve as further testimony to the magnificent dignity and beauty of The Louvins' music.

"I Wish It Had Been a Dream," which sounds like an Everly Brothers ballad, was a rare concession to rock 'n' roll. "Blue From Now On" has much of the spirit of the Delmore Brothers, and speaking of the Delmores, Stetson would be wise to attempt rereleasing one more incredible album, *The Louvin Brothers Sing the Delmore Brothers*.

Loretta Lynn: Stetson's also reissuing Loretta Lynn's first Decca album, and though it doesn't have her first hit "I'm a Honky Tonk Girl," *Loretta Lynn Sings* (HAT 3023), originally released in 1963, gives an excellent picture of how she sounded nearly 25 years ago before her success was really established, long before *Coal Miner's Daughter* and mega-stardom.

Like most of Owen Bradley's Decca productions of the 1960's, this one mixes Loretta's chart hits, such as

"Success" from 1962 and "The Other Woman" from 1963, with covers of other artists' hits, including Stonewall Jackson's "Why I'm Walking," Buck Owens' "Act Naturally" and "Lonesome 7-7203" and George Jones' "Color of the Blues." Her three original numbers, "The Girl That I Am Now," "World of Forgotten People" and "A Hundred Proof Heartache," while nowhere near as good as her 1970's material, give an idea of how her songwriting developed.

The Everly Brothers: In 1968 Warner Brothers Records caught the potential of country-rock before most other major labels saw the light. Their earliest country "concept" album, the Everly Brothers' *Roots*, was a brilliant effort, years ahead of its time. Now considered a classic, England's Edsel Records recently repackaged it (ED 203) with the original liner notes and cover.

Warner's Lenny Waronker and Andy Wickham conceived a unified record mixing brief airchecks from 1952 Everly Family radio shows done in Kentucky (which should someday be released in their entirety) with stunning numbers current at the time, the whole being an update of their earlier masterpiece *Songs Our Daddy Taught Us*.

Suffice it to say that the Everlys' interpretations of Merle Haggard's "Mama Tried" and "Sing Me Back Home" are outstanding, as is their radically reworked version of "T For Texas," the old chestnut "Shady Grove" and Randy Newman's "Illinois." Also included is an early version of Don Everly's "I Wonder If I Care as Much," performed so beautifully by Ricky Skaggs on his latest album. *Roots* didn't sell in the 1960's, yet it points to much of what happened in the next two decades.

—RICH KIENZLE

Essential Collector

We looked at some great bargain-priced cassette reissues last time, and here are some more.

Johnny Horton: Dwight Yoakam's success with Johnny Horton's 1956 hit "Honky Tonk Man" has made people stop and think about Horton, whose phenomenal success lasted from the late 1950's through hits like "The Battle of New Orleans" until his death in a violent 1960 car crash. *Battle of New Orleans* (CBK 3012) features eight of his finest Columbia sides—most of them hits—from that era.

Songs are divided between the popular historical "saga" numbers like "New Orleans," "North to Alaska," "Sink the Bismarck," "Johnny Reb" and "Comanche" and more conventional tunes, including "Honky Tonk Man" (you can hear how closely Yoakam copied the original), "Whispering Pines" and "Rock Island Line." Since a reissue of Horton's Dot album, made up his earliest recordings for the Abbott label, is due shortly, a Horton renaissance may be in the making.

Ray Price: In the late 1960's Ray Price, who'd recorded for Columbia for nearly 20 years, took tremendous heat from longtime fans when he abandoned his keening honky tonk style, dumped his western outfits, lowered his voice and started crooning ballads backed by gushing strings, even though he kept on having hits with Columbia, as he had before. *The Same Old Me* (CBK 3013) covers both eras.

Five 1950's numbers, "My Shoes Keep Walking Back to You," "Heartaches by the Number," "Invitation to the Blues," "City Lights" and particularly "Crazy Arms," are now definitive honky tonk standards. Three others, "I Won't Mention It Again," "The Same Old Me" and "You're the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me," were



Johnny Horton

his earliest country-pop hits. You can figure what my favorites are, but you do have a choice, given what's here.

Hank Williams Jr.: While we wait for PolyGram to wise up and rerelease Bocephus' groundbreaking *Hank Williams Jr. and Friends*, it's easy to forget that he had years of success on MGM before he truly found his own voice. *Sensational Country Hits* (CPK-5001) cover eight of his late 1960's/early 1970's hits, among them "All For the Love of Sunshine," "Eleven Roses," "The Last Love Song," "Cajun Baby"—which is an unfinished song of Hank Sr.'s—and his majestic version of bluesman Slim Harpo's ballad "Rainin' in My Heart."

Slim Whitman: Slim Whit-

man made his first records for RCA Victor in 1949, then stayed with the label for three unsuccessful years. It wasn't until he signed with Imperial in 1952 that he clicked with "Indian Love Call" and started establishing himself. *Birmingham Jail and Other Country Favorites* (CAK-954) reproduces a long out-of-print Camden album that reveals much about his early music.

His sweet, sentimental ballad style—admittedly an acquired taste for some people—was already formed at the time. He was doing the same type of material then that propelled him to fame in the 1950's and again in the 1980's complete with his famous falsetto yodeling.

It's amazing that none of the ten numbers included on this collection were hits because "Wabash Waltz," for example, is a perfect performance as is his phenomenal version of "I'm Casting My Lasso Towards the Sky," with both an extended yodel that must have wrenched his throat and a spritely Chet Atkins guitar solo. Chet, Homer and Jethro and steel guitarist Jerry Byrd all back him on another excellent number, "Tears Can Never Drown the Flame." This is

the forgotten part of Slim's career, and a serious historical reissue of his RCA numbers wouldn't be a bad idea.

Dolly Parton: Before Dollywood, before *Nine to Five* and "Here You Come Again," back in the days when she worked with Porter Wagoner, nobody argued about whether Dolly was country or not. *Just the Way I Am* (CAK-2583) brings together material from her early RCA singles of the late 1960's, including her moving "In the Good Old Days (When Times Were Bad)," her version of Porter's "Carroll County Accident," "In the Ghetto," "Daddy," and "My Blue Ridge Mountain Boy," which is one of her finest original compositions.

Tom T. Hall: Some of you might disagree, yet I've always felt that the cutting edge of Tom T.'s career as both a recording artist and songwriter were his early recordings for Mercury. Later he seemed to soften and mellow out.

You can hear that contrast clearly on *Greatest Country Hits* (CPK-5002). You get the harder stuff with Hall originals like "The Ballad of Forty Dollars" from 1968, 1969's "A Week in a Country Jail," and his 1971 masterpiece, "The Year That Clayton Delaney Died." My sole complaint is the inclusion of "It's All in the Game," a mediocre non-original. "Shoeshine Man," another of his early numbers, should have been included instead. Later songs like "Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine" and "I Care" show a definite mellowing.

As I said before: compact discs may indeed be the coming thing, but they won't dominate the country market for a good while. Cassettes like these are a good compromise, because of their sound and portability. But don't dump your turntables, either.

—RICH KIENZLE

How to Get These Treasures

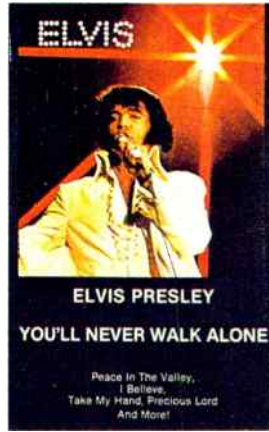
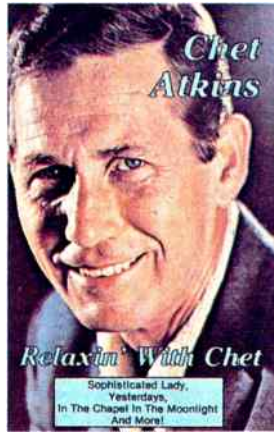
The following Stetson albums are all \$9.98 and are all available in record or cassette: **Hank Thompson**, *Dance Ranch* (HAT 3027); **Rose Maddox**, *Rose Maddox Sings Bluegrass* (HAT 3029); **Faron Young**, *Sweethearts or Strangers* (HAT 3026); **The Louvin Brothers**, *My Baby's Gone* (HAT 3028); **Loretta Lynn**, *Loretta Lynn Sings* (HAT 3023). **The Everly Brothers**, *Roots* (ED 203) is available in records only for \$11.98. CMSA member's price, deduct \$2.00 from each album.

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JOHNNY CASH—THIS IS JOHNNY CASH: A Boy Named Sue/Five Foot High And Risin'/Man In Black/Folsom Prison Blues/If I Were A Computer/Frankie's Man/Johnny/One Piece At A Time/Understand Your Man—No. CBK3014

COUNTRY GIANTS—(M. ROBBINS, J. HORTON, J. CASH): Battle Of New Orleans/El Paso/If You've Got The Money Honey/We Sure Can Love Each Other/Waterloo/I Walk The Line/The Grand Tour/PT 109—No. CBK3006

SKETER DAVIS—THE END OF THE WORLD: The End Of The World/Daddy Sang Bass/My Coloring Book/Son-Of-A-Precacher Man/Am I That Easy To Forget?/Little Arrows/Hold Me Tight/Angel Of The Morning/I Forgot More Than You'll Ever—No. CAK2607

HITS BY TOM T. HALL: (Old Dogs, And Children And) Watermelon Wine/A Week In A Country Jail/The Year That Clayton Delaney Died/I Wish I Had Loved Somebody Else/Son Of Clayton Delaney/You Show Me Your Heart (And I'll Show You Mine)/It's All In The Game/More About John Henry—No. CPK3202

JOHNNY HORTON—BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS: The Battle Of New Orleans/North To Alaska/Sink The Bismarck/Honky Tonk Man/Comanche/Whispering Pines/Johnny Reb/Rock Island Line—No. CBK3012

WAYLON JENNINGS—THE ONE AND ONLY WAYLON JENNINGS: Yes Virginia/Dream Baby (How Long Must I Dream)/You Beat All I Ever Saw/She Loves Me (She Don't Love You)/It's All Over Now/Born To Love You/Down Came The World/The Dark Side Of Fame/John's Back In Town/Listen, They're Playing My Song—No. CAK2183

WAYLON JENNINGS—HEARTACHES BY THE NUMBER: Heartaches By The Number/Tiger By The Tail/Foolin' Round/(That's What You Get) For Lovin' Me/You're Gonna Wonder About Me/Folsom Prison Blues/Busted/Time To Bum Again/Leavin' Town—No. CAK2556

WAYLON JENNINGS—RUBY, DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE TO TOWN: Just To Satisfy You/Gentle On My Mind/Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town/Leavin' Town/Your Love/New York City, R.F.D./Hangin' On/Today I Started Loving You Again/Time To Bum Again—No. CAK2608

BILL MONROE—THE BEST OF BILL MONROE: Summertime Is Past And Gone/Old Cross Road (Is Waiting)/Blue Grass Special/Mansions For Me/Goodbye Old Pal/Yodel #4/Toy Heart/True Life Blues—No. CBK3021

JIM NABORS—OUR LOVE: The Impossible Dreams/Strangers In The Night/Somewhere My Love/Swanee/Our Love/There's A Kind Of A Hush/Little Green Apples/Sunrise/Sunset—No. CBK3011

WILLIE NELSON—COLUMBUS STOCKADE BLUES AND OTHER COUNTRY FAVORITES: Columbus Stockade Blues/I Love You Because/Heartaches By The Number/Seasons Of My Heart/San Antonio Rose/Don't You Ever Get Tired/Fraulein/Go On Home/I'd Trade All Of My Tomorrows (Just For You)—No. CAK2444

DOLLY PARTON—JUST THE WAY I AM: Just The Way I Am/Little Bird/Mama Say A Prayer/My Blue Ridge Mountain Boy/In The Good Old Days (When Times Were Bad)/In The Ghetto/Daddy Come And Get Me/The Carroll County Accident/Gypsy, Joe And Me—No. CAK2583

ELVIS PRESLEY—ELVIS SINGS "FLAMING STAR": Flaming Star/Wonderful World/Night Life/All I Needed Was The Rain/Too Much Monkey Business/Yellow Rose Of Texas—The Eyes Of Texas/She's A Machine/Do The Vega/Tiger Man—No. CAK2304

ELVIS PRESLEY—LET'S BE FRIENDOS: Stay Away, Joe/If I'm A Fool (For Loving You)/Let's Be Friends/Let's Forget About The Stars/Mama/I'll Be There (If You Ever Want Me)/Almost/Change of Habit/Have A Happy—No. CAK2408

ELVIS PRESLEY—ALMOST IN LOVE: Almost In Love/Long Legged Girl/Edge Of Reality/My Little Friend/A Little Less Conversation/Rubberneckin'/Clean Up Your Own Back Yard/U.S. Mail/Charro/Stay Away—No. CAK2440

ELVIS PRESLEY—C'MON EVERYBODY: C'Mon Everybody/Angel/Easy Come, Easy Go/A Whistling Tune/Follow That Dream/King Of The Whole Wide World/I'll Take Love/Today Tomorrow And Forever/I'm Not The Marrying Kind/This Is Living—No. CAK2518

ELVIS PRESLEY—YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE: You'll Never Walk Alone/

Who Am I?/Let Us Pray/There'll Be Peace In The Valley/We Call On Him/I Believe/It Is No Secret/Sing You Children/Take My Hand, Precious Lord—No. CAK2472

ELVIS PRESLEY—I GOT LUCKY: I Got Lucky/What A Wonderful Life/I Need Somebody To Lean On/Yoga Is As Yoga Does/Riding The Rainbow/Fools Fall In Love/The Love Machine/Home Is Where The Heart Is/You Gotta Stop/If You Think I Don't Need You—No. CAK2533

ELVIS PRESLEY—ELVIS SINGS HITS FROM HIS MOVIES: Down By The Riverside And When The Saints Go Marching In/They Remind Me Too Much Of You/Confidence/Frankie And Johnny/Guitar Man/Long Legged Girl (With The Short Dress On)/You Don't Know Me/How Would You Like To Be/Big Boss Man/Old MacDonald—No. CAK2567

ELVIS PRESLEY—BURNING LOVE AND TWO HITS FROM HIS MOVIES-VOL. 2: Burning Love/Tender Feeling/Am I Ready/Tonight Is So Right For Love/Guadalajara/It's A Matter Of Time/No More/Santa Lucia/We'll Be Together/I Love Only One Girl—No. CAK2595

ELVIS PRESLEY—SEPARATE WAYS: Separate Ways/Sentimental Me/In My Way/I Met Her Today/What Now, What Next, Where To/Always On My Mind/I Slipped, I Stumbled, I Fell/Is It So Strange/Forget Me Never/Old Shep—No. CAK2611

RAY PRICE—THE SAME OLD ME: Heartaches By The Number/My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You/I Won't Mention It Again/The Same Old Me/Invitation To The Blues/City Lights/You're The Best Thing That Ever Happened To Me/Crazy Arms—No. CBK3013

THE INCOMPARABLE CHARLEY PRIDE: I'd Rather Love You/Time/You're Not A Friend Of Mine/Jeanie Norman/Anywhere (Just Inside Your Arms)/When The Trains Come In/Piroque Joe/Was It All Worth Losing You/Instant Loneliness/This Highway Leads To Glory/Time Out For Jesus—No. CAK2584

JIM REEVES—ACCORDING TO MY

TOP 25

Albums

1. Reba McEntire *What Am I Gonna Do About You*
2. Alabama *The Touch*
3. Randy Travis *Storms of Life*
4. Ricky Skaggs *Love's Gonna Get Ya*
5. George Strait *#7*
6. Dwight Yoakam *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.*
7. Earl Thomas Conley *Too Many Times*
8. Sawyer Brown *Out Goin' Cattin'*
9. Steve Earle *Guitar Town*
10. George Jones *Wine Colored Roses*
11. Hank Williams Jr. *Montana Cafe*
12. The Judds *Rockin' With the Rhythm*
13. Willie Nelson *Partners*
14. Dan Seals *On the Front Line*
15. T Graham Brown *I Tell It Like It Used To Be*
16. Restless Heart *Wheels*
17. Alabama *Greatest Hits*
18. Kenny Rogers *They Don't Make Them Like They Used To*
19. Gary Morris *Plain Brown Wrapper*
20. Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Bros. *Partners*
21. The O'Kanes *The O'Kanes*
22. John Anderson *Countrified*
23. Exile *Greatest Hits*
24. Lyle Lovett *Lyle Lovett*
25. Reba McEntire *Whoever's in New England*

Singles

1. Dan Seals *You Still Move Me*
2. T.G. Sheppard *Half Past Forever*
3. Gary Morris *Leave Me Lonely*
4. Ronnie Milsap *How Do I Turn You On*
5. Tanya Tucker *I'll Come Back as Another Woman*
6. Crystal Gayle *Straight to the Heart*
7. Conway Twitty *Fallin' For You For Years*
8. John Conlee *The Carpenter*
9. Eddie Rabbitt *Gotta Have You*
10. Lyle Lovett *Cowboy Man*
11. Nitty Gritty Dirt Band ... *Fire in the Sky*
12. Eddy Raven *Right Hand Man*
13. Earl Thomas Conley *I Can't Win For Losin' You*
14. Lee Greenwood *Mornin' Ride*
15. Keith Whitley *Homecoming '63*
16. Randy Travis *No Place Like Home*
17. Sweethearts of the Rodeo *Midnight Girl/Sunset Town*
18. S.K.O. *Baby's Got a New Baby*
19. The Judds *Cry Myself to Sleep*
20. The Statler Brothers *Forever*
21. Restless Heart *I'll Still Be Loving You*
22. Juice Newton *What Can I Do With My Heart*
23. Steve Wariner *Small Town Girl*
24. Kenny Rogers *Twenty Years Ago*
25. John Schneider *Take the Long Way Home*

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0304/87

Vision Break-through

When I put on the pair of glasses what I saw I could not believe. Nor will you.



They look like sunglasses.

By Joseph Sugarman

I am about to tell you a true story. If you believe me, you will be well rewarded. If you don't believe me, I will make it worth your while to change your mind. Let me explain.

Len is a friend of mine who has an eye for good products. One day he called excited about a pair of sunglasses he owned. "It's so incredible," he said, "when you first look through a pair, you won't believe it."

"What will I see?" I asked. "What could be so incredible?"

Len continued, "When you put on these glasses, your vision improves. Objects appear sharper, more defined. Everything takes on an enhanced 3-D effect. And it's not my imagination. I just want you to see for yourself."

When I received the sunglasses and put them on I couldn't believe my eyes. I kept taking them off and putting them on to see if indeed what I was seeing through the glasses was indeed actually sharper or if my imagination was playing tricks on me. But my vision improved. It was obvious. I kept putting on my cherished \$100 pair of high-tech sunglasses and comparing them. They didn't compare. I was very impressed. Everything appeared sharper, more defined and indeed had a greater three dimensional look to it. But what did this product do that made my vision so much better? I found out.

DEPRESSING COLOR

The sunglasses (called BluBlockers) filter out the ultraviolet and blue spectrum light waves from the sun. You've often heard the color blue used for expressions of bad moods such as "blue Monday" or "I have the blues." Apparently, the color blue, for centuries, has been considered a rather depressing color.

For eyesight, blue is not a good color too. There are several reasons. First, the blue rays have one of the shortest wavelengths in the visible spectrum (red

is the longest). As a result, the color blue will focus slightly in front of the retina which is the "focussing screen" onto which light waves fall in your eye. By eliminating the blue from the sunglasses and only letting those rays through that indeed focus clearly on the retina, objects appear to be sharper and clearer.

The second reason is even more impressive. It is not good to have ultraviolet rays fall on our eyes. Recognized as bad for skin, uv light is worse for eyes and is believed to play a role in many of today's eye diseases. In addition, people with contact lenses are at greater risk because contacts tend to magnify the light at their edges thus increasing the sun's harmful effects.

Finally, by eliminating the blue and uv light during the day, your night vision improves. The purple pigment in your eye called Rhodopsin is affected by blue light and the eyes take hours to recover from the effects.

SUNGLASS DANGER

But what really surprised me was the danger in conventional sunglasses. Our pupils close in bright light to limit the light entering the eye and open wider at night—just like the aperture in an automatic camera. So when we put on sunglasses, although we reduce the amount of light that enters our eyes, our pupils open wider and we are actually allowing more of the blue and ultraviolet portions of the light spectrum into our eyes.

BluBlockers sunglasses are darker at the top to shield out overhead light. The lens used is the CR-39 which most eye doctors will tell you is one of the finest materials you can use for glasses and is manufactured under license.

The frames are some of the most comfortable I have ever worn. The moulded nose rest will fit any nose. The hinge causes the frames to rest comfortably on your face and can be adjusted for almost

any size face.

We also have a clip-on pair that weighs less than one ounce. Both come with a padded carrying case and an anti-scratch coating.

I urge you to order a pair and experience the improved vision. Then take your old sunglasses and compare them to the BluBlockers. See how much clearer and sharper objects appear with BluBlockers. And see if your night vision doesn't improve as a direct result. If you don't see a dramatic difference in your vision—one so noticeable that you can tell immediately, then send them back anytime within 30 days and I will send you a prompt and courteous refund.

DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE

But from what I've personally witnessed, once you use a pair, there will be no way you'll want to return it.

Astronomers from many famous universities wear BluBlockers to improve their night vision. Pilots, golfers, skiers, athletes—anyone who spends a great deal of time in the sun have found the BluBlockers indispensable.

Our eyes are very important to us. Protect them and at the same time improve your vision with the most incredible breakthrough in sun glasses since they were first introduced. Order a pair or two at no obligation, today.

To order, credit card holders call toll free and ask for product by number shown below or send a check plus \$4 for delivery.

BluBlocker (0020CO) \$59.95

Clip-On Model (0024CO) 39.95

BluBlocker is a trademark of JS&A Group, Inc.

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