

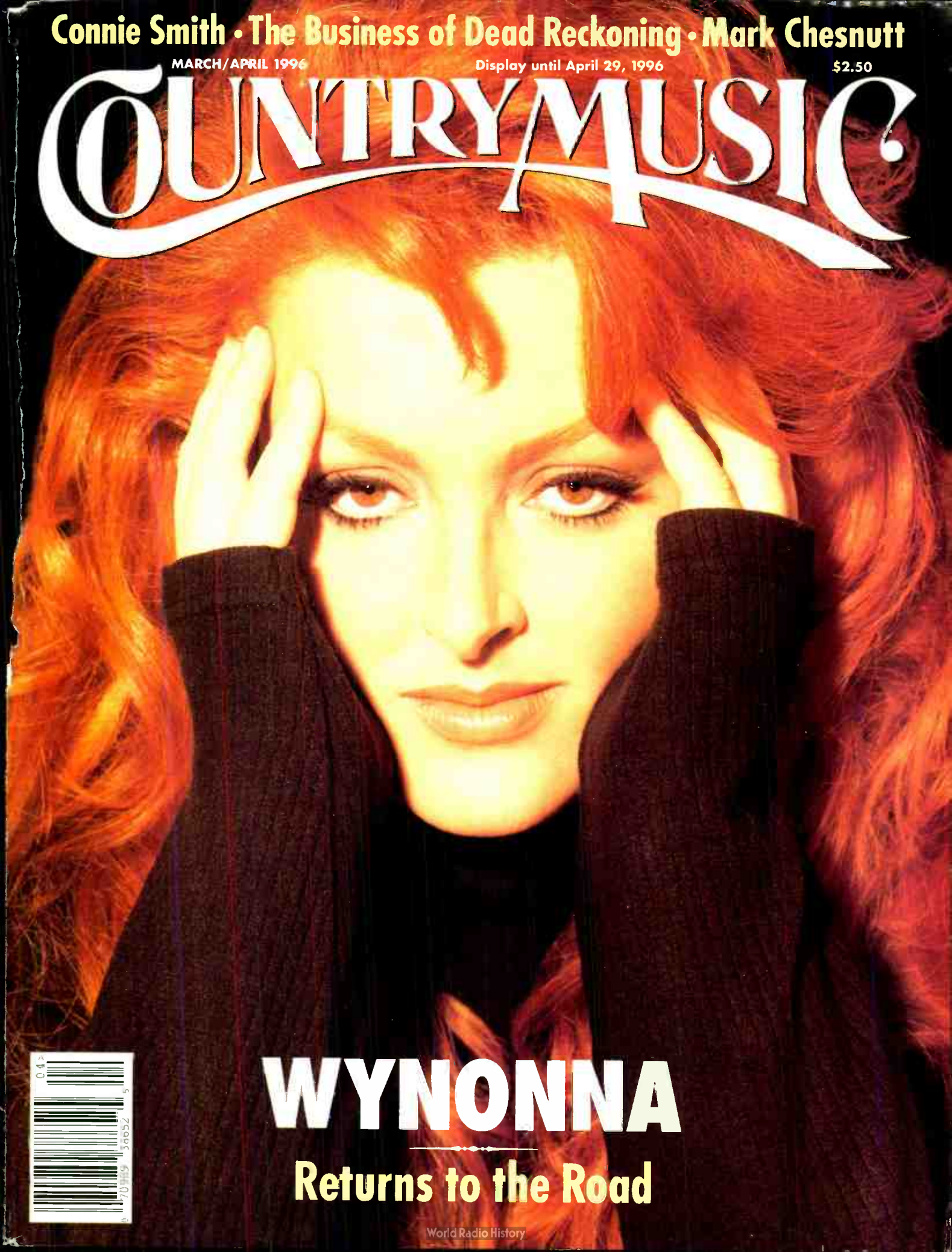
Connie Smith • The Business of Dead Reckoning • Mark Chesnutt

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# COUNTRYMUSIC



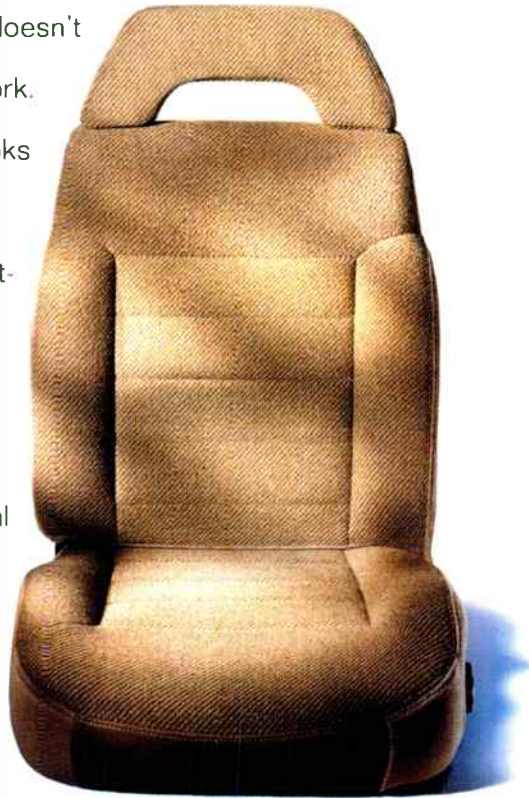
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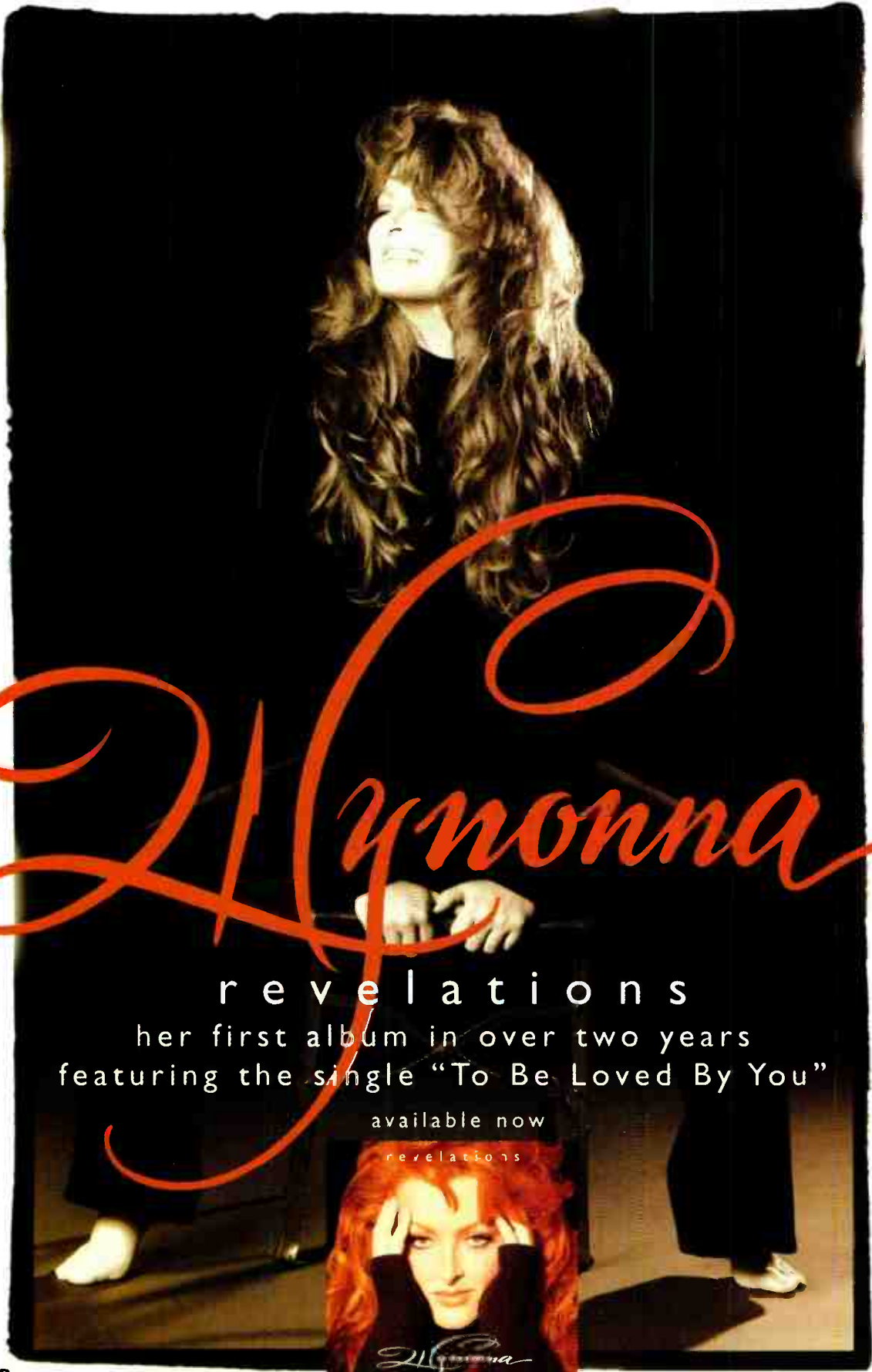
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# COUNTRY MUSIC

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He likes honky tonks and sings pure country music. Get the photos and the facts on this Texan who even named his son Waylon.
- 40 The Business of Dead Reckoning** *by Patrick Carr*  
Why did Kieran Kane, Kevin Welch, Tammy Rogers, Harry Stinson and Mike Henderson form their own record label? Kieran Kane is happy to tell you why. At Dead Reckoning, the artist comes first—a revolutionary concept in the record biz.
- 48 Wade Hayes: On a Roll** *by Bob Allen*  
Having gone from pounding nails to sharing the stage with his heroes in just a short span of time, Hayes says he's blessed. He's preparing for the long haul by learning all he can from those idols.
- 68 20 Questions with Connie Smith** *by Patrick Carr*  
Thirty years ago Connie Smith was at the top of the country charts with "Once a Day." Today she's making a comeback with a new producer, new music and a new record deal. Welcome home, Connie.

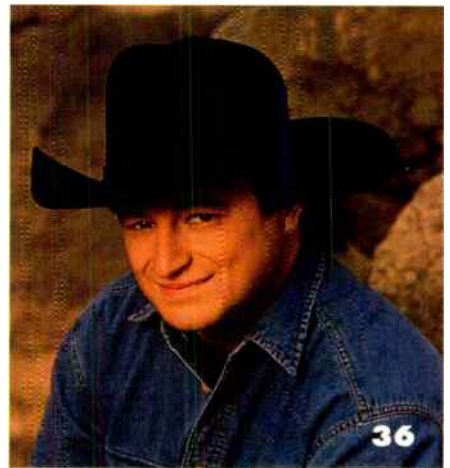


JOHN CHIASSON/GAMMA LIAISON

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## COVER STORY

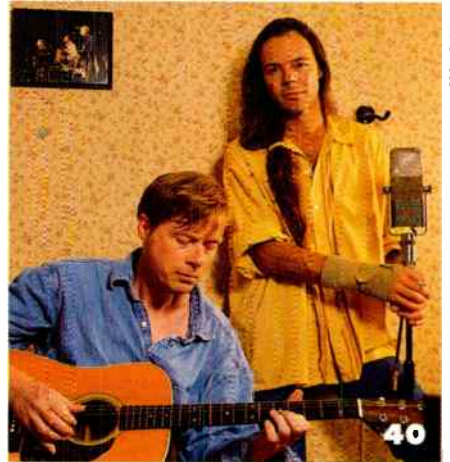
- 30 Mighty Wynonna Returns** *by Bob Allen*  
As you might have guessed, there's a lot on Wynonna's mind of late: a new album, a new tour, a new baby and a new husband. Bob Allen spent some time with her at the height of all this. In the midst of the hubbub, he found a grown-up Wy: accepting her past and looking to the future. Wy reveals how plans somehow have a way of coming together just when you least expect them to.



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BEITH GOWIN

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# People

## HOMAGE TO HOLLY

For the first time in my memory, **Maria Elena Holly** came to Music City. Widow of the late legendary **Buddy Holly**, she was here as a guest for the celebration of the record release of *not fade away (remembering buddy holly)* on Decca Records, honoring her late husband and his music. The petite Mrs. Holly and a bevy of famed and near-famed turned out for good food, good friends, good drinks and great live music from Holly's original **Crickets**, who were joined by rock greats **Al Kooper**, **Steve Cropper** and **Glen D. Hardin**. That was indeed royal entertainment! **Nanci Griffith**, **Joe Ely**, **Todd Snider** and **The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**, all of whom appear on the album, also added to the evening's rocking entertainment. CEO MCA/Nashville **Bruce Hinton** and Decca execs **Sheila Shipley-Biddy** and **Mark Wright**, hosts of the event, announced that the project, an 18-month undertaking, will have a worldwide release. TNN's **Kevin Hale** announced that the network will air a two-night Buddy Holly tribute special the last of February, hosted by **Waylon Jennings**. Jennings appeared on the recording with **Mark Knopfler**, as did **Marty Stuart** with **Steve Earle**, **The Mavericks**, **Levon Helm**, **Mary Chapin Carpenter** with **Kevin Montgomery**, **Los Lobos**. **The Band** with **The Crickets**, and **Suzy Bogguss** with **Dave Edmunds**.

Also included is Holly's original vocal of "Peggy Sue Got Married," with new backing by **The Hollies** and **Graham Nash**. This project's executive producers were the best-dressed man on Music Row, Mr. **Bruce Hinton**, along with **Mark Wright** and **Frank Lidell**. It will, no doubt, be a huge success for Decca and for TNN. I attended the do with handsome young **Shannon Meyers** of Major Bob Music, where owner **Bob Doyle** and **Lana Thacker** hang their hats. MCA prez **Tony** (wow) **Brown** kissed me. So did TNN's VP of Programming **Brian Hughes**, the debonair Mr. **Hinton**, Decca's young **Frank Lidell**, and MCA's young **Larry Willoughby**. All these men have equally good taste.

Look for the album in stores and turn to Record Reviews in this issue for more.



A 17-year-old **Waylon Jennings** backs **Ritchie Valens** on bass in this historic photo that I happened upon in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was taken January 24, 1959, in Kenosha, Wisconsin, a little over a week before Valens died in the plane crash that also killed **Buddy Holly** and **The Big Bopper**, while they were all on tour together. It's eerie that this photo turned up just as Decca is releasing the **Buddy Holly** tribute album.

## WY'S BIG NEWS

All of Music Town was a-buzz with "Have you heard the news, there's more rocking at midnight" for **Wynonna Judd**. A month shy of her first album release in two years, with a TV special in the making and a two-year tour on tap, the former **Baby Judd** announced her second pregnancy. For details, see our cover story this issue. Meanwhile, **Naomi Judd** has opened a new eatery called **Trilogy** near Music Row on Division St. where the trendy **Maude's** used to be. Grand opening brought out **BlackHawk**, who will open shows for Wy this year. **The Mavericks** and **Tom Wopat**.

Lord, I wish I was Wynonna. Now she's got a place to eat and doesn't have to pay.... It's also the location of the wedding reception, with entertainment by **The**

## Nashville Bluegrass Band.

We must mention movie star sister, **Ashley Judd**. Rumor has it her beau at the present time is **Matthew McConaughey**, her co-star in the movie version of **John Grisham's A Time to Kill**.

## ALISON, YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY

Included in the Sunday supplement of the *Tennessean* was a "warm muffins and cool music" ad. A coupon saved 40 cents on two packages of **Martha White Muffin Mix** at the store, while the mail-in certificate offers **Alison Krauss'** cassette for \$3.99, plus three UPC symbols from any **Martha White Muffin Mix**. I'd wager **Miss Martha White** sold a whole passel of mix with the offer. **Martha White** is **Alison's** tour sponsor for some 100 shows in 1996. And **Martha White** meal and flour are in my cupboard.


Reporter: *Hazel Smith*

Editor: *Rochelle Friedman*



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# People

## EASTER SEALS TIME AGAIN

Easter Seals Celebration, the annual telethon to raise funds for the Easter Seals Society, will occur this year on March 2nd and 3rd—probably right about the time you're reading this. If so, tune it in for the "Music City Round-Up" segment, which will feature performances by various country artists. Among the hosts are **Charlie Chase** and **Pat Boone**.

## OAKS SAGA CONTINUES: WILLIAM LEE GOLDEN RETURNS

Like a soap opera, it never stops. It was clear as mud why **Steve Sanders** abruptly departed his gig with The Oaks. Left "baritone-less," the group called on 22-year-old **Dee Allen**, who took over Sanders' place without a glitch. Son of Oaks lead singer **Duane Allen** and **Norah Lee Allen**, and a member of the Grand Ole Opry's **Carol Lee Singers**, Dee did a fabo, bang-up job until the end of the year. That's when it was confirmed that, after an eight-year hiatus, **William Lee Golden** would rejoin The Oaks. The reunited group's first concert dates were in late January. Saga does not end, however.

Steve Sanders' current wife, **Janet Sanders**, faxed me a two-page letter from the couple's home, complete with the couple's Hendersonville address, phone and fax number. The letter referred to litigation proceedings against her husband by ex-wife **Mary Milbourne**, mother of his two children. According to the fax, Sanders' 21-year-old daughter, **Gaylea Sanders**, dropped out of Austin Peay Uni-

versity due to pregnancy, had the baby and enrolled at Vol State in Gallatin this summer, all without Steve's knowledge. Sanders has never seen his grandchild. Son **Sevren Sanders** apparently also dropped out of college after his father had paid his expenses. Milbourne is suing for additional tuition payments, payable to her, to cover Gaylea. It's a sad situation.

## BARBIE AND KEN GO ITALIAN

**Barbara Mandrell** and hubby **Ken Dudley**, the Barbie and Ken of Hillbillyville, join pal **Naomi Judd** in the restaurant biz. Barbie and Ken have opened a couple of Italian eateries called **Fazoli's**. Serving both drive-through and eat-in, the eateries can be described as McDonald's Italiano.

## JUST MARRIED JMM

Atlantic's **John Michael Montgomery** got married in the Atlantic. Well, on it, anyway. He and girlfriend **Crystal White** were married in January during a private ceremony on board the *Nordic Empress* ship in Miami, Florida. The couple then honeymooned on a cruise to the Caribbean. JMM and Crystal met two years ago.

## DELBERT DONE A NEW ONE

Since we last "wrote," **Delbert McClinton** has performed at the White House for **President** and **Mrs. Clinton**, and the IRS is looking for him. Not to fret about the latter, the IRS actually owes Delbert money. Now, that's a new one—I bet the house and farm that if Delbert owed the IRS money, they'd find him.



Oaks reunited: Joe Bonsall, Duane Allen, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban.

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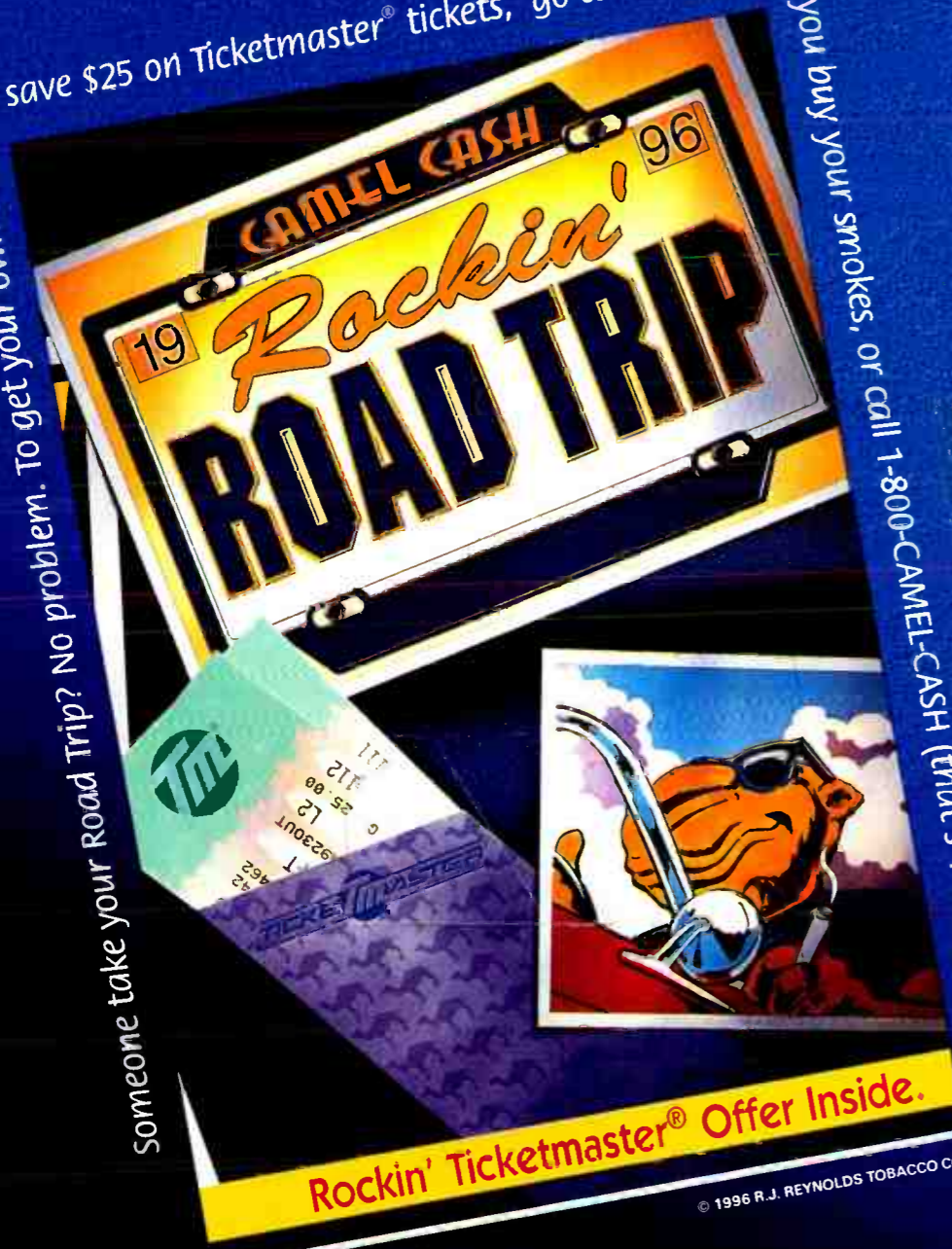
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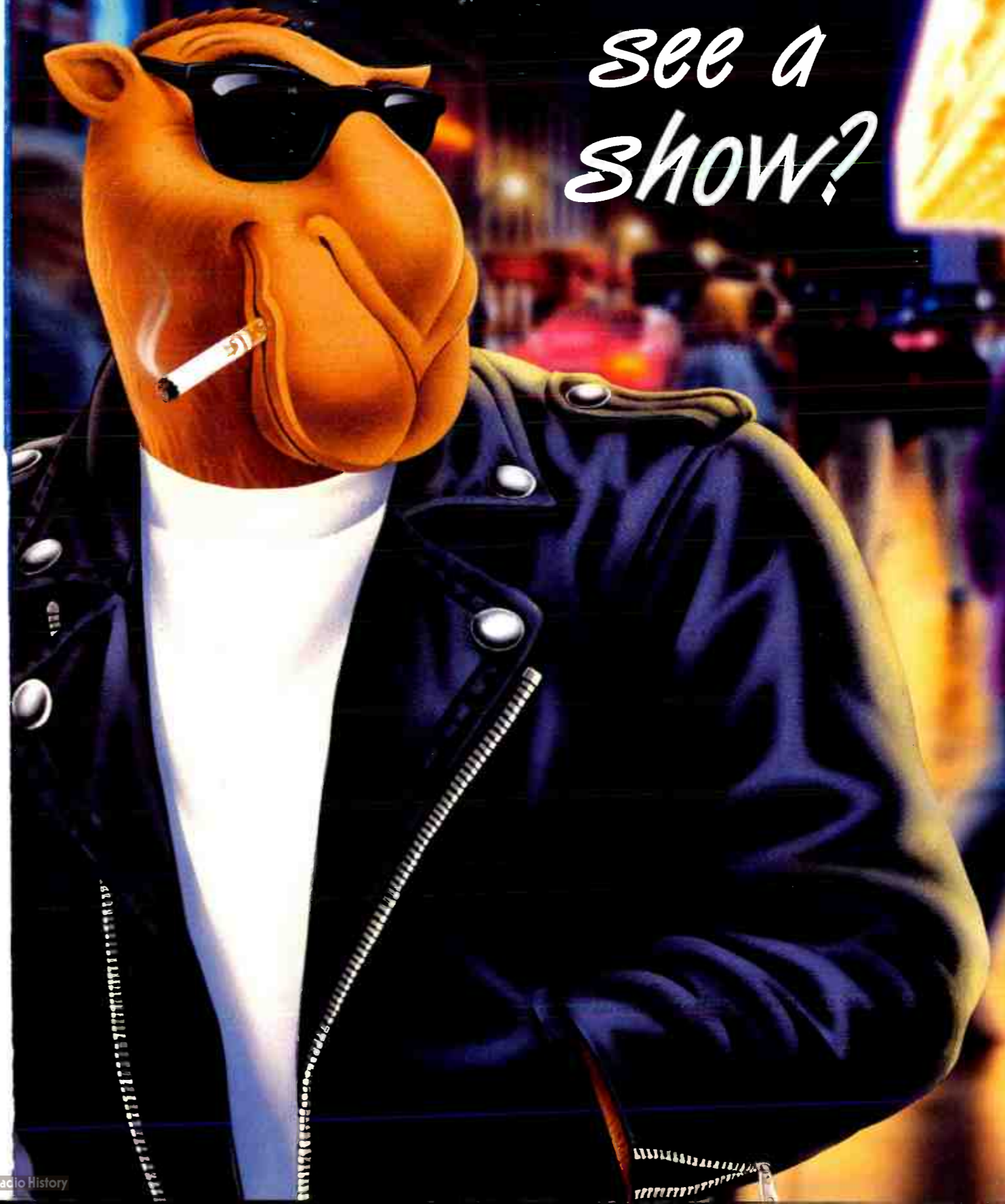
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# People



Loretta Lynn bestows the honor of official Opry membership on RCA's Martina McBride during the taping of the Opry's 70th Anniversary special for CBS-TV.

## OPRY NOTES

Country music's first honky tonk heroine, **Jean Shepard**, celebrated her 40th anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry. To honor this fabo singer, the Country Music Foundation unearthed 24 songs from Shepard's early Capitol Record years. If you want to hear what singing from the heart is, get yourself a copy of this one (see **Rich Kienzle's** Buried Treasures column in this issue for more).

The Singing Ranger, **Hank Snow**, celebrated his 46th year as an Opry member. Plagued with glaucoma and kidney problems, Hank was laid up for a while but is back performing at the Opry every weekend.

**Skeeter Davis** celebrated her 64th birthday singing on the Grand Ole Opry. For the occasion, Skeeter had her nails painted blood-red trimmed in silver. She sang her international hit, "The End of the World," and allowed how happy she was to still be an Opry member.

One of my happiest moments recently was watching the taping of the 70th Anniversary special of the Grand Ole Opry. Then seeing the show on CBS-TV made me equally proud. All my life I've loved the Opry, and it makes me extremely happy to see newcomers like my friend **Martina McBride** added as members of the cast. It was good to see **Loretta Lynn** out and about. 'Twas Loretta who inducted Martina as an Opry member. If you missed the show, shame on you! You missed **Dolly, Reba, Vince, Lorrie, Alan,**

**Randy, Pam, Marty, Patty, Clint, Travis, Hank Jr., Emmylou, Skaggs, Mandrell, The Whites, Hal Ketchum** and the other Grand Ladies of the Grand Ole Opry besides Jean and Skeeter. Lastly, you missed legends like **George Jones, Grandpa Jones, Little Jimmy**

**Dickens, Don Gibson, Chet Atkins and Ray Price**, along with funny men **Roy Clark and Mike Snider**. So there.

Former Opry member and Hall of Fame member **Eddy Arnold** has suffered a mild stroke. Eddy is able to be up and about, we are happy to report. He still has dizzy spells but is determined to overcome this setback.

Recently making Opry debuts were **Bryan White**, who is anticipated as the country superstar of 1996; **Jeff Carson**, whose first two ballad singles were out of the chute Number One hits; and those lovable **Moffatts**, who virtually brought the house down. There's no place on earth like the Grand Ole Opry.

## WHADDA ANNIVERSARY

For their second wedding anniversary, **Shania Twain** and hubby/producer "**Mutt**" **Lange** spent two weeks skiing in Sun Valley. At the end of the first week, Twain called the Mercury office in Nashville to learn that her album, *The Woman in Me*, had sold 250,000 copies that week. At 4.5 million, this is the fastest selling country record by a female in the history of the biz. Shania has set some records—and sold some records—and she may tour in 1997, sez she.

## OPERATION SMILE, LITERALLY



Big-voiced singers **Wynonna** and **Donna Summer** ham it up during the benefit for Operation Smile at the Opry House recently. The organization provides surgical care to needy children with facial disfigurements. Stars from in and out of country music graced the Opry stage for this worthwhile charity, among them **Wy, Summer, Randy Travis, Della Reese, Joe Diffie, Vince Gill, Trisha Yeorwood** and more.

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# People

## TWO DEBUT



Recent Grand Ole Opry debuts include Asylum's barely legal (he's just 21) Bryan White and Giant's Daryle Singletary. Opry stalwart and new Atlantic Records signee Ricky Skaggs introduced Singletary, who said he hadn't been that nervous since his wedding day. As for White, his biggest fan was in attendance: his grandma, Shellie White, made the trip from Oklahoma City for the event.

## BY GEORGE 'N' WRANGLERS

How many years have me and all you red-blooded females known that **George Strait** is the reason God invented Wranglers? Why, I've carried on about him looking as fine walking away from me as he does walking towards me for aeons. Finally, Wrangler learned. Now, there he is and here we are, me and a blue zillion healthy females looking at "Wrangler" written on the back side of the best-looking backside in show biz, George Strait. Those TV ads are soooo cool. Almost as cool as the Strait man. You jealous males, before you accuse me of listening with my hormones, let me tell you that *Strait Out of the Box*

by Mr. George Strait is not only 'bout wore out at my house, it is the largest-selling country music boxed set ever assembled. Music never sounded better than this, and Lord knows, no man ever looked as good as George Strait from the "smile end to the Wrangler end." While we're Strait on the subject, let's talk a tad about The Cat in the Hat. The teaming of The Cat in the Hat and Mr. Strait is a match made for hillbilly heaven. When I heard that Mercury's **Terri Clark** (a/k/a "The Cat in the Hat") would be opening shows for my main man, Mr. S., I knew that would be where I wanted to be in 1996. Both in hats, boots and Wranglers, why there's no better pairing. Speaking of Wrangler, the company

which covers so many country music backsides, sponsored a street fest/parade/concert "do" in Old Town, Scottsdale, Arizona, following the Super Bowl Parade the Saturday before the Big Game. Entertainment was provided by Capitol's **Lisa Brokop**. Lisa's album is out now.

## A FIDDLE SILENCED


I think I'd be safe in saying that "**Chubby**" **Wise** is the most copied and influential fiddle player of all time. Fiddler with the definitive dream bluegrass band, **Bill Monroe and His Bluegrass Boys** from 1945 to 1948, which at the time included virtuoso **Earl Scruggs** at 19 years old on five-string banjo/baritone vocals; **Lester Flatt** on guitar and lead vocals; **Cedric Rainwater** on string bass, and Monroe's mandolin and awesome tenor vocals, he also served a 16-year stint as a member of **Hank Snow's Rainbow Ranch Boys**. A Florida native, Chubby—and **Ervin Rouse**—wrote what turned out to be one of the most famous fiddle tunes, "Orange Blossom Special." His album, *An American Original*, on Pinecastle Records, was mentioned in this column. I am humbly proud that my son, **Terry Smith**, played upright bass on the recording. The 80-year-old grand old man Wise told the musicians in the studio that it would be his last record. **Sonny Osborne** produced it and played banjo, his brother **Bobby Osborne** played mandolin, and **David Crow** played guitar. After a bout of pneumonia, Chubby died of a heart attack.

## MORE STRAIT NEWS: CHEVY-STYLE

More news on the man we all love to watch! Seems Chevy Trucks has had the good taste and the good sense to sponsor **George Strait's** "Strait Out of the Box" tour in 1996, starting up in Lexington, Kentucky, before you even read this. Thank you, Chevy Trucks. You're dependable, and so is George.

## NASCAR COUNTRY

Columbia Records and NASCAR have teamed up for another racing compilation on the heels of last year's *Runnin' Wide Open. Hotter Than Asphalt* features 11 different country stars, **Alabama**, **Waylon Jennings**, **Hank Jr.**, **Joe Diffie** and **Tanya Tucker** among them. Each artist contributed a song that hasn't been released elsewhere. According to the press release, stock car racing is America's Number One spectator sport. And we know country is America's Number One music. Natural combination.



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# People

## RUMOR HAD IT

Our evening paper, the *Nashville Banner*, ran a piece about the new "Free As a Bird" **Beatles** video which revisited the "Paul Is Dead" hoax. For all of you younger than our illustrious leader, **Russell Barnard**, here's some background: According to the article, in the late 60's a disc jockey college kid in Detroit started the "Paul is dead" rumor. What the story did not tell is who the DJ was who started this rumor that circled the globe. Once and for all, *Country Music Magazine* readers, gather around and read carefully. Tell your children to tell their children that back when he was a college kid, the now comedic bass player with **Riders in the Sky**, none other than **Fred "Too Slim" LaBour**, instigated the rumor as a joke, and it snowballed around the world. The end result was **Paul McCartney** had to emerge from seclusion in Scotland to convince the world that he was, in fact, alive and well. After that, Too Slim went into show biz. Remember fans, sometimes you get more than you pay for, as is the case with this item. See what you learned.

## OVERSEAS

The USO utilized the talents of **The Nashville Bluegrass Band**, **The Forester Sisters** and **Larry Gatlin** to entertain the troops. Appearances were made in Hungary, Macedonia and war-torn Croatia. We at *Country Music* want to thank the troops, the music makers and the USO for doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.



Country's own Larry Gatlin with U.S. servicemen and servicewomen on the USO tour.

## HAZEL AND THE COWBOY



Backstage with **Kenny Chesney** before his show at **A Little Bit of Texas** in Indianapolis, Indiana. **A Little Bit of Texas** sponsors "Hazel's Hotline," Ms. Smith's weekly radio gossip show on **WFMS** in Indy. **Hazel** phones 'em up every Friday with the latest Music City dish.

## HONKY TONKING MARK

He's been labeled the Hillbilly Messiah. He's a honky tonker. Like **George Jones**, he's a Beaumont, Texas, native. He tests the songs he plans to record on truck

drivers, carpenters, plain working people. He's **Mark Chesnutt**, and he figures that's who his fans are. Honky tonking Mark is himself. Give him a guitar and a mike and let him sing. Mark says he tried a little "professional staging" and "stage patter" as suggested by those who get paid big bucks to do such things. That don't work for Mark any more than lying would work for me. All he wants to do is sing. Shoot, that's all I expected Mark to do. I saw most of the performances at Opryland's Celebrity Theater last summer, and Mark's concert was one of my favorites. Mark sings country...something we need around here. If radio wants country, they've got Mark.

## GARTH'S DERBY

He had it all planned. Taking off a year, the biggest money-making country star of all-time—**Garth Brooks**—would record an album (he did), release a single (he did), release a second single (he did), release the album (he did, it's called *Fresh Horses*), and hit the hillbilly "round the globe" track. Things change. He's done tons of TV, the music is selling like hot cakes, and the skedded tour, set to start in Atlanta this month, is up and running. However, the three-year worldwide tour is having a very important detour come August 10. Garth and **Sandy Brooks** are expecting their third child to join **Taylor Mayne Pearl** and **August Anna**. I'd suspected Sandy was "in the family way" at Garth's Number One songwriter's party at ASCAP for "She's Every Woman," which he co-wrote with Victoria Shaw. By his side, wife Sandy was slim, svelte, glowing and more beautiful than I'd ever seen her, and I told her so. Sandy answered, "Yep. Everytime I get my weight down, I end up pregnant again." Pointing to Garth, she added with a laugh, "He just won't leave me alone." So the derby takes a breather for a spell. I send my best to country music's crown prince and princess and hope for them a healthy child. A boy would be perfect, however.

## JETT JETTING

**Hank Williams'** renowned **Drifting Cowboys** band will be backing his long-lost daughter, **Jett Williams**, jetting to Europe for a tour which touches down in Germany and Switzerland. The 43-year old Jett, born hours after her famed daddy died, lived with Hank's mother when she was a baby. Eventually, an Alabama couple adopted the youngster, and she wasn't told her true identity until they died. By then, she was in her later 20's. She has proven who

# People

she is, and through lawsuits has also gained monetarily. Guesting on the Grand Ole Opry dressed in white hat, boots and cowboy outfit, Jett looked so like Hank Sr., so like the man she was never allowed to call daddy as a child. She sang "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" and "I Saw the Light," both songs from her dad's rich catalog.

## LADIES GO KRAFT COUNTRY

Kraft Foods will be sponsoring a 33-city benefit tour featuring three of Nashville's favorite female stars. **Pam Tillis**, **Lorrie Morgan** and **Carlene Carter** will take to the road together beginning in May for the tour, which will raise money for Second Harvest, the national food bank. Kraft was the key sponsor of the Country Music Association awards broadcast for 20 years.

## THE STONE HEART

When **Doug Stone** suffered a heart attack recently while in a restaurant at the Charlotte Airport, he was hospitalized at Carolina Medical Center for a week. Upon his release, pal **John Michael Montgomery** sent his bus and bus driver to Charlotte to drive his friend home to Music City. I accidentally heard about John Michael's generosity and wanted to say thanks and let the readers know. As for Doug Stone's heart, as far as medical

## MAVERICKS ALL



Members of **The Mavericks**, along with a couple of all-around mavericks and party animals, at a recent MCA Records bash in Nashville. Celebrating the band's win as CMA Vocal Group of the Year are, left to right: **The Mavericks' lead singer, Raul Malo**; MCA's cigar-chomping Senior Director of A&R and Creative Development, **Stephen McCord**; our own maverick, Associate Publisher **Leonard Mendelson**; and Maverick bassist **Robert Reynolds**.

science can tell, he is doing as well as could be expected. Doug has sworn, once again, to quit all his old habits, including smoking, the hardest drag of them all to give up.

## PATTI WALTZES AGAIN



Last issue I told you about my dinner with **Patti Page** when she came to town to do **Ralph Emery's TNN morning show**. Well, here's a snap from said taping that I couldn't resist: The great Patti is flanked by Tennessee Governor **Don Sundquist** and **Ralph himself**. After Patti performed her signature tune, "Tennessee Waltz," the Gov remarked, "You've done more than anybody else I know of to make Tennessee famous around the world." Nuff, said.

## SEZ CLINT

**Clint Black** has decided to come off the road for '96. His reason is to give all the young artists room. "There's so many," sez Clint. Well, I'd wager there will be twice that many in another year. Unlike a dozen years ago when a country fan was as loyal as a country preacher's marriage, a lot of today's country fans are as fickle as a hooker's heart. When '97 comes around, hopefully the fans will be Clint hungry. Hopefully, I sez.

## TANYA TO TELL IT

Wanna hear some truth? Wanna hear what **Glen Campbell** and **Don Johnson** are really like? Well, wait no more because the Texas Tornado, **Tanya Tucker**, is about to dish the dirt of her life in the world of country music. Co-written with Nashville writer/publisher, **Patsi Cox** and published through Bantam, the book is due next summer. Word is, Tanya isn't going to gloss over the not-so-pretty parts of her life, and the book is very candid. Can't wait for this!

## I DO

The Mavericks' **Nick Kane** said his vows with longtime lady, **Kim Parker**. The couple were married in Vegas where lots of people gamble and marriages start.

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# Record Reviews

**Patty Loveless**  
*The Trouble with the Truth*  
Epic 67269

**T**he title of Patty Loveless' impressive new album comes from a wonderful Gary Nicholson song. "Oh, the trouble with the truth," she sings in a weary but wise voice. "is it's always the same old thing, so hard to forget, so impossible for me to change." In a pop culture where many like to pretend reality can be easily adjusted to good intentions and earnest desires, Nicholson points out that the truth is often unpleasant and stubbornly resistant to change. It's a very adult song, and Loveless has matured into one of the few singers who could put it across. She never acts smug and she never whines; she merely confesses how much she dislikes the truth and yet how she has learned to live with it. Against the moody, Springsteen-ish backdrop of slide guitar, drum rim clicks and clipped chords, her knowing, low-register purr juggles these mixed emotions and emerges with an understated dignity.

It's the richest singing of Loveless' career, and it sets the tone for the entire *Trouble with the Truth* album. Her husband, former Emmylou Harris bassist Emory Gordy Jr., is the producer, and he keeps the arrangements trim and tidy so his wife's stronger, deeper voice has room to maneuver. She's always had an attractive voice, able to make the most of hooky melodies like the ones provided for her by Jim Lauderdale and Tony Arata on this project, but her early work often lacked the unguarded emotional investment of the great singers. She's got it now. When she sings Lauderdale's "I Miss

PATTY LOVELESS



THE TROUBLE WITH THE TRUTH

Who I Was (With You)," she makes us believe she's talking about a relationship wound still tender to the touch. This is another adult song of mixed emotions: she admits that on the whole she's better off without an ex-lover, but she also admits there are some things about him she misses.

The album includes some catchy, uptempo tracks, including Arata's two rousing anthems and Matraca Berg's witty brush-off of a mopey ex-boyfriend, "You Can Feel Bad (If It Makes You Feel Better)." The ballads, though, provide the high points on *The Trouble with the Truth*. Another Nicholson composition, "A Thousand Times a Day," compares quitting a boyfriend to giving up cigarettes and alcohol. Such cute analogies are a dime a dozen in Nashville, but Loveless makes this one come alive by dragging her drawing voice against the beat as if she were reluctantly forcing herself to shut him out of her mind. Even better is

Lauderdale's "To Feel That Way at All," which claims it's better to experience the misery of love along with the thrill than to feel nothing at all. Loveless sings it slowly and wistfully as if she's shaking off her present pain to remember a past happiness. When she delivers the title line, she holds on to the final word, "all," as if unwilling to let go of that memory.

Throughout her career, each Loveless album has usually included one song written by an artist from the left-wing vanguard of country music. In the past, those songwriters have included Steve Earle, Lyle Lovett and Lucinda Williams; this time out she turns to Richard Thompson, co-founder of England's landmark folk-rock band, Fairport Convention. Loveless recycles his "Tear Stained Letter," which was a Top Ten country hit for Jo-El Sonnier in 1988. She does a great job with this fast, funny number (though she does change the lyric about The

Clash), and one wishes she would do three or four of these numbers on each album instead of just one.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

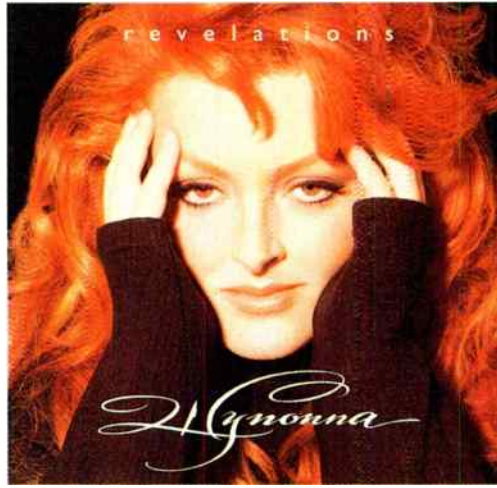
**Garth Brooks**  
*Fresh Horses*  
Capitol 7243-8-32080

**G**arth Brooks enjoyed the luxury of time when making *Fresh Horses*. For the first time since the release of his debut album, he took an extended break from the road. His strong-selling best-of collection, *The Hits*, gave him an additional breather. Producer Allen Reynolds even kept his schedule free for him, encouraging Oklahoma's best-known superstar to drop into the studio at his leisure. Reynolds suggested that he feel free to experiment, to push himself.

Considering all this, why does *Fresh Horses* sound so stale?

Perhaps Brooks over-examined himself, re-tooling the songs until he stole the life from them. Perhaps he felt the strain of superstardom and attempted to make each tune an epic venture that chimed with importance. As the best-selling artist of the 90's, Brooks no longer competes with other Music Row performers. Instead, his peers are Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Mariah Carey, Michael Bolton. Those performers tend to stretch for the everlasting anthem, *The Big Statement*, trying to blow every horn with every song. Brooks follows their lead. On the uptempo songs—"The Old Stuff," "The Fever," "Rollin'"—he pushes the jets wide open from start to finish, racing along breathlessly, as if he must beat his chest and crow about what a wild man he is every time the

## Record Reviews



drums start to pound. On the ballads—"That Ol' Wind," "The Change," "The Beaches of Cheyenne"—he deals with grand subjects in grandiose terms, each song building to a dramatic crescendo. "The Change" is about one man standing up to a world of brutality and ignorance, demanding to be counted and refusing to allow outside influences to alter his determination. "Cheyenne" tells of a woman eternally haunted by the death of the man she loved, while "That Ol' Wind" finds two lovers reuniting after a lifetime apart.

But none of these heroic narratives are as memorable or moving as Brooks' best ballads of the past, and none of the new rockers come close to rekindling the rowdy good-time nature of his best uptempo hits. "If Tomorrow Never Comes" and "Unanswered Prayers" discussed subjects as big as death and fate, but they did so in intimate terms, and Brooks' performances were beautifully understated. "The Dance" gained strength from how subtly Brooks unfolded its melodramatic message. But Brooks apparently no longer trusts his fans to pick up on such quiet strengths. Now he blares his stories with sweeping musical build-ups and histrionic vocal performances, and he milks every topic for high drama rather than gentle reflections.

The same goes for the rowdy

offerings. "Friends in Low Places" will stand as one of the classic country songs of the 90's because of the sly casualness with which the superstar delivered its self-deprecating humor. The light-hearted fun he invested in it and in "Two of a Kind, Working on a Full House" and "Not Counting You" is absent from *Fresh Horses*. That wouldn't be large scale enough for today's Garth. Now he pumps up a song that nostalgically recalls the long-gone days of five years ago by adding canned applause that sounds unbelievably contrived, and he aims at the crossover market by taking an Aerosmith song, "The Fever," and rewriting it as a rodeo anthem (his Steven Tyler-like squeals at the end of several lines pale when compared to the throat-shredding sound of Aerosmith's frontman.).

It's not just subtlety and grace that are missing. It's also any semblance of lyrical artistry. The opening of "The Old Stuff" is obviously—too obviously—modeled on Jackson Browne's "The Load Out," which also referred to arenas, roadies and union wages to a remarkably similar piano arrangement. "Rollin'" mimics the rollicking bounce of Little Feat, but without the jaunty looseness. And the crude wordplay in that song's opening line, "She was born to a mother trucker," should be beyond Brooks.

Garth Brooks always flashed

drama; his eyes have always gleamed with a wild glint. He's never shied from significant subjects, and part of his reputation is due to his extravagant energy. But he originally gathered an audience because of how that energy simmered behind his restraint. He once came across as a man who was as thoughtful as he was rowdy, and he once proved capable of penning quiet words of wisdom and performing them with quiet sincerity. But the poetry and subtlety are missing from *Fresh Horses*, trampled by ambition. Maybe next time he'll pull the reins back a little.

—MICHAEL McCALL

### Wynonna *revelations* MCA 11090

**T**his album has HUGE SUCCESS written all over it. Hey, Wynonna has a voice that should make the current crop of sensitive women singers line up to jump off that Cumberland River bridge in downtown Music City. And Tony Brown, that ole boy, does know how to produce a record. He is tasteful, doesn't overdub you into the Twilight Zone, knows how to round up a great batch of pickers. Wynonna and Tony also know how to pick hit songs—I'd say there's about six singles out of ten cuts.

Okay, you're asking....

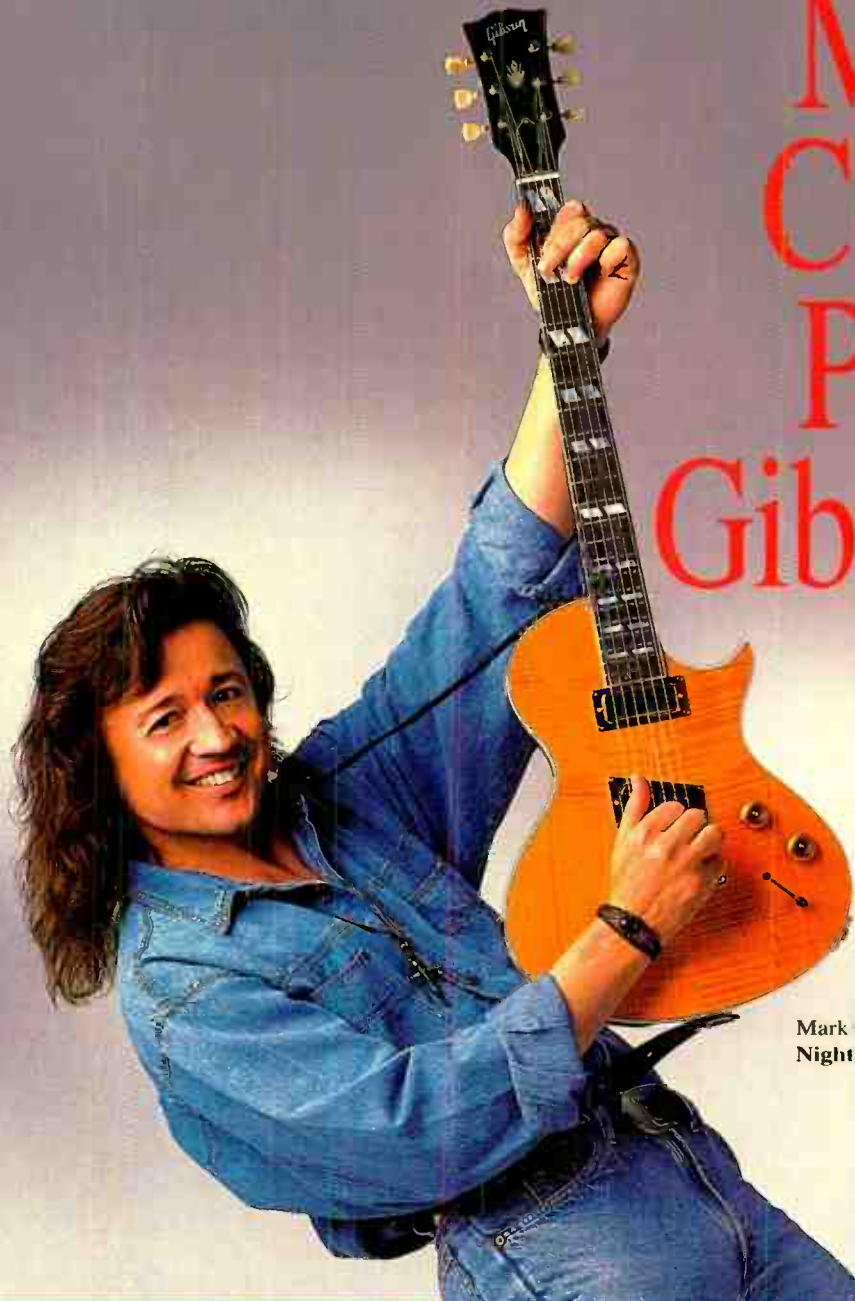
what's the catch? If the record's that good, why does ole Michael seem to be standing off on the sidelines instead of jumping up and down in the center of the field? Well, I've got to tell you, that's a bit of how Wynonna comes across on *revelations*. I mean, all the licks are here. They've even rounded up two of my favorite songwriters—Delbert McClinton and Lulu, who happens to be, in my book, a much underestimated artist. If you're looking for good taste, this album has it by the gallons; if you're looking for passion, look elsewhere.

Now, why should that be? Let's take the Delbert song, written with Gary Nicholson, "Somebody to Love You." Delbert can write roadhouse blues in his sleep, and Wynonna can sing roadhouse blues in hers. But here there's more a sense of House of Blues than roadhouse blues—the peanut shells on the floor are shipped in from Japan, and there's chardonnay on tap. Same sort of problem with "Old Enough to Know Better," a Jeff Silbar/Glen Clark number. It ought to rock, but it mostly rolls along.

What I think is: we've got a virulent case of the Bonnie Raitt's going on here. There was a time when I would have argued that Bonnie Raitt was one of the finest rhythm and blues singers I'd ever heard; what she is now is a Disneyland version of herself, done in three-quarter scale and pastel colors. And while her new music is boring as dirt, as an artist, she's more popular than ever. So we've got this conundrum—take no risk and collect a bunch of Grammys and make more money than Hillary Clinton saving an S&L; or wind up and pitch and risk missing the gravy train when it comes chugging past. I realize it's easy for me to argue for the artistic risk, 'cause I'm not the one paying Wynonna's mortgage. But it seems to me that an artist as spectacularly talented as Wynonna Judd not only can afford to take a risk,



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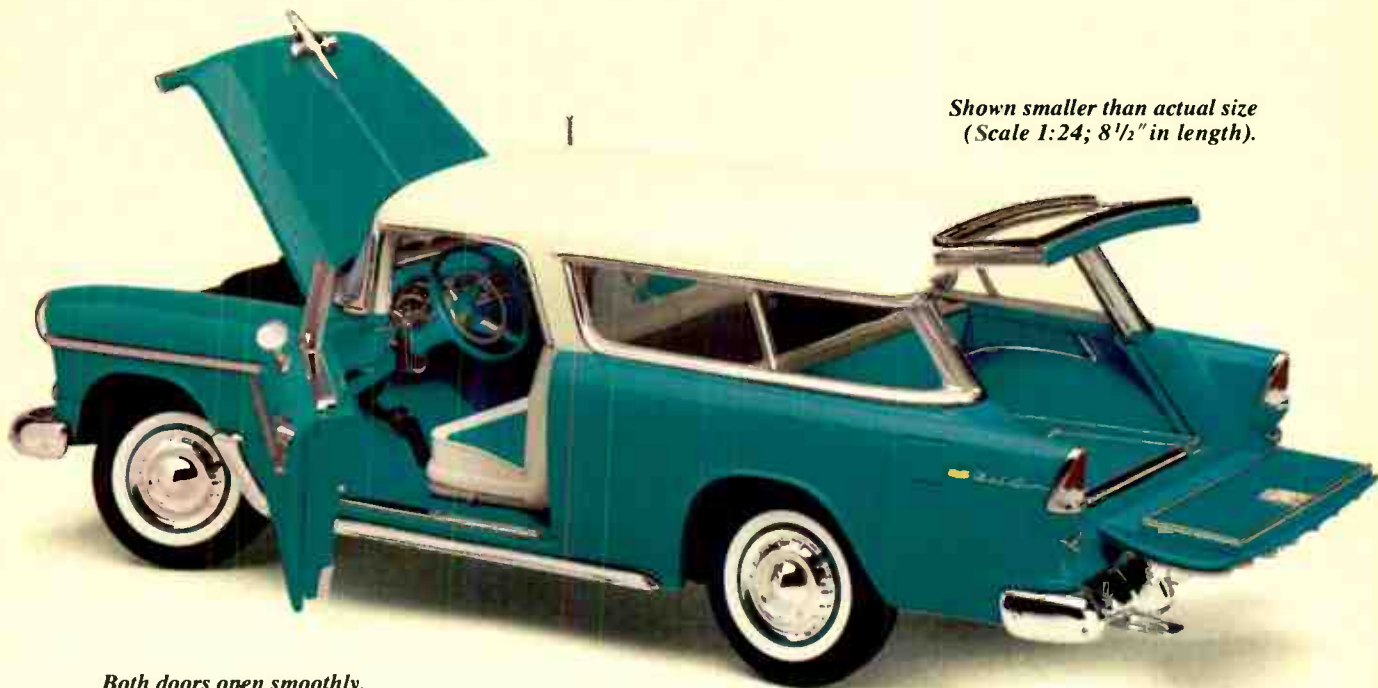
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# Record Reviews

but, in fact, owes it to her talent to give it a shot. When we treat music the same way we treat computer software, worrying about our "installed base" and "ease of operation," we run the risk of getting blown into yesterday's news when the country equivalent of Alanis Morissette comes smoking into Music City. And she will, you know. And she ain't gonna be singing a soft version of "Free Bird," neither.

What it comes down to is this, you can pluck a sharecropper's shack—lock stock and chickens—from Mississippi and stick it smack dab on the Sunset Strip in L.A., but that doesn't have a damn thing to do with soul. Accessibility and popularity, while sometimes good for the wallet, seldom yield the artistic results one might imagine.

Come on, Wynonna—kick some butt.

Your devoted fan,

—MICHAEL BANE

## Bobbie Cryner

*Girl of Your Dreams*  
MCAD 11324

When a truly promising artist loses a recording contract to poor sales, one wonders where they'll wind up. Case in point: Bobbie Cryner, who faded after a great album and two under-promoted

singles. It seemed that her label, Epic, couldn't figure out what to do with her any more than they knew what to do when Shelby Lynne recorded for them. Luckily, Shelby found smaller labels that gave her the freedom to show what she can really do. Other major-label refugees aren't that lucky. I know a couple who've bounced from label to label, desperately trying to fit any mold that will give them a hit whether it fits their style or not.

With that in mind, I was interested to see where Cryner would land and thought of only one major Nashville label that could halfway understand what she was about. That label—MCA—signed her, and independent producer Barry Beckett and head MCA A&R honcho Tony Brown took her under their wings. The result is surely different than before, with less twang and edginess. Since Cryner did so well with the rawer sound, I thought it might fail.

It doesn't. Her vocal intensity remains as impressive as ever, particularly on the first number, a beefy remake of Dusty Springfield's 1968 pop hit, "Son of a Preacher Man," one of the best songs the British songster ever recorded. Cryner's smoky growl was made for such material, and she does it proud.

If Cryner never sang another note, her writing would

be enough to make her notable. She wrote three songs here and co-wrote two more. The three she wrote herself reveal much about her lyrical skills. On paper, the title song, with its dense layers of telling detail, would seem too much for one song, yet her delivery makes it a true stream of consciousness lament. "Vision of Loneliness," a story of a woman smiling through loss, has similar strengths. The cheating husband of "You'd Think He'd Know Me Better," who keeps the house temperature at 68 degrees and the TV set blasting, is brilliantly portrayed. "I Didn't Know My Own Strength," which she wrote with Kent Blazy and Sonny Le Maire, is a study in desolation, survival, redemption and pride. The simpler "Nobody Leaves," a Cryner-David Stephenson collaboration, has far fewer vivid images, but those few, clearly from Cryner's side of the pen, are impressive nonetheless.

The non-Cryner tunes, the sensual "Just Say So" and "Oh To Be the One," are low-keyed but well-performed. And Cryner easily makes Dottie West's 1980 Number One single, "A Lesson in Leavin'," her own, with an arrangement as good as West's. The only major problem is the overuse of medium tempo, which gets downright monotonous. Also, the four minute-plus arrangement on the one slightly up-

beat song, the otherwise excellent "I Just Can't Stand to Be Unhappy," goes on 30 seconds too long.

In the end, *Girl of Your Dreams* makes two points: Cryner's vocal and writing talent were no one-shot wonder, and she finally wound up on the right label, one where, hopefully, everyone can realize what only a few of us have known in the past.

—RICH KIENZLE

## Chesapeake

*Full Sail*  
Sugar Hill SHCD-3841

A callow young musician was once earnestly quizzing a seasoned veteran about the true essence of great music-making. Is it spellbinding technique? Is it having a great singer? Is it a catchy lyric? Or state-of-the-art production?

The veteran scowled and shucked off these suggestions. "Naw, it's the feel, son," he drawled in reply. "Mostly, it's the feel."

In addition to possessing all the other above-mentioned attributes, Chesapeake, the newgrass supergroup which created a stir with its 1994 debut album, *Rising Tide*, definitely has the feel.

Though this band is relatively new, its four players are not. Electric bassplayer T. Michael Coleman, pedal & lap steel/resophonic guitarist Mike Aldridge and lead vocalist/guitarist/pianist Moondi Klein are all alumni of the premier bluegrass band, The Seldom Scene. Super-pickin' mandolin-player Jimmy Gaudreau was a longtime member of The Tony Rice Unit.

On *Full Sail*, their second album, Chesapeake (named for the Maryland-Virginia-D.C. area where all four live) serves up the sort of vivid eclecticism, superb picking and breathtakingly fluid, three- and four-part harmonies that made *Rising Tide* such a breath of fresh air. Yet everything this quartet does is infused with a sense



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“I’m Not Supposed To  
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## Bryan White’s

premiere single and video from his second  
Asylum Records album *Between Now And Forever*

(album street date: 3/26/96)

Produced by  
Billy Joe Walker, Jr. and Kyle Lehning



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# Record Reviews

of grace, precision and emotional intensity, as well as technical perfection. And, more than anything else, it's the feel that makes these 11 tracks shimmer.

The problem with some cutting edge newgrass bands is their over-fondness for hot licks, sometimes at the expense of soulfulness. But Klein, Auldrige (who's played on many sessions, including Linda Rondstadt's most recent album), Gaudreau and Coleman are far too seasoned to fall into that trap. They unflinchingly submerge their instrumental wizardry to the emotional core of their material.

You can hear the magical results on a song like Norman Blake's "Last Train from Poor Valley." When Klein, bolstered by ethereal harmonies from the rest of the band, drops into a minor key in the chorus, it makes you shiver and you can almost see the "early December snows" they sing about. Other ballads and mid-tempo cuts, like A.P. Carter's "Are You Tired of Me My Darling," Paul Mellyn's "Home from the Mills," Tim O'Brien's "Free at Heart," and Bela Fleck's and Randy Barrett's "The Lights of Home," are no less stirring.

On uptempo shuffles and blues, like Little Feat's "Let It Roll," Ricky Skaggs' and Wesley Golding's "One Way Track," and W.B. and J. Emerson's "Crawfishin'," Chesapeake's members do let their fingers do some walkin' and talkin', and you soon realize why these guys are some of the most revered and oft-awarded players on their respective instruments.

The thread that ties all these components together and gives Chesapeake's genre-bending music such intrigue and emotional density is Moondi Klein's extraordinary tenor. The Long Island-born singer, who trained as an opera singer years ago, has both a technical and stylistic range that's uncanny. In concert, he effortlessly leads the band in a seamless segue from Bill

Monroe's "Blue Moon of Kentucky" to Van Morrison's "Moondance." And on record, he infuses Chesapeake's music with a haunting quality that seems guaranteed to win a following among Bill Monroe fans and Van Morrison fans alike.

—BOB ALLEN



**Chely Wright**  
*Right in the Middle of It*  
Polydor 314 529 553

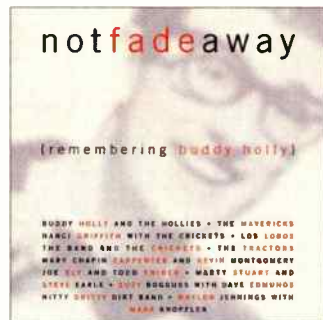
Chely Wright's *Woman in the Moon*, one of 1994's pleasant surprises, introduced a straightforward vocalist with echoes of Tammy, Dolly and other traditionalists. The quality of the release was even more pleasant given that her producer is Harold Shedd, better known for producing safe, often mediocre music. As with Amie Comeaux, Shedd played to Wright's strengths the first time out. One always wonders, however, what the second album will bring.

In this case, it's a mixed bag, but a generally successful one. Even on below-average material, Wright's spirit and voice are usually more than enough to rescue the project. The three losers here, the insipid "Alligator Purse," "Listen to the Radio" and "Heart-Shaped World," are all aimed at radio airplay and little else. They would make me change stations immediately—except for Wright's performances. Her vocal presence is hypnotic on such high-quality fare as "The Love That We Lost," a symphonic, contemporary ballad, and low-keyed, contemplative tunes such as "Day One,"

"What I Learned From Loving You" and "The Love He Left Behind," a moving chronicle of a widowed mother's struggles.

"Right in the Middle of It," "The Other Woman" and the driving, alliterative hook song, "Gotta Get Good at Givin' Again," reveal Wright's very promising writing skills. The latter song is clearly a hook tune aimed at radio, but its serious message saves it from being merely trivial. She does equally well with the moody, stately "It's Not Too Late," a one-more-chance ballad co-written by Tracy Byrd and the team of Bill and Sharon Rice.

Wright's talents, gleaned from listening to people who've made their mark, Connie Smith, Wanda Jackson, Loretta and Buck Owens among them, have stood her in good stead. With Shedd and co-producer Ed Seay giving her ample leeway, *Right in the Middle of It*, despite the three duds, is a worthy followup to that impressive debut two years ago. —RICH KIENZLE



**Various Artists**  
*not fade away (remembering buddy holly)*  
Decca DRND-11260

Unlike far too many recent "tribute" albums, this is one of the few that actually makes sense. For all of Buddy Holly's contributions (he was a major influence on everyone from The Beatles to Waylon Jennings and The Rolling Stones), there's a new generation out there that knows little about the Lubbock, Texas-

born singer, who died in a plane crash in 1959.

*not fade away (remembering buddy holly)* has, for one thing, a certain purity of vision and intent about it that far too many Nashville-released tributes seem to lack. These fresh, often thrilling, re-interpretations of songs recorded, and mostly written, by Holly three decades ago often manage to enhance, or at least shed fresh light on, the originals.

Another particularly cool thing is that the contributions aren't just limited to Nashville artists. Along with The Mavericks, Waylon Jennings (a close friend and protégé of Holly), Mary Chapin Carpenter and The Tractors, we also hear spirited Holly covers from Los Lobos, Joe Ely, The Band, and the British rock group, The Hollies. Holly's original backup band, The Crickets, is also heard throughout.

Even better, the participants were obviously given all the creative leeway in the world, and many produced their own tracks. All told, these 12 selections were recorded by about a dozen different producers, working in about a dozen different studios on two continents. As the accompanying press material points out, none of the participants are signed to Decca, the company that released *not fade away*.

On the rockin' side of things, Holly's fellow Lubbockite, Joe Ely, with vocal accompaniment from Todd Snider, turns in a punched-up version of "Oh Boy!" that makes it sound like the song was written just for him. Los Lobos transforms "Midnight Shift" into a sinister, bluesy walk on south-central L.A.'s wild side. Nanci Griffith, backed by The Crickets, sounds so delightfully jaunty and drawling on "Well...All Right" that I hardly recognized her at first.

Marty Stuart and Steve Earle collaborate on a raw, bluesy rendition of "Crying, Waiting, Hoping" that's driven by their gutsy vocals and by some steaming guitar licks

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## ✧ WYNONNA ✧

*“...The Baptist people, I think, were really disappointed in me...  
I’d had a clean slate, then all of a sudden did the  
ultimate thing, without being married.”*

seems destined to erase any misgivings lingering after her long absence and unanticipated life changes.

Then, in January of this year, she threw us another sucker punch, announcing that she was pregnant with her second child, due July 4th, right in the midst of her “global tour.” And, she announced that she and her beau, Arch, had finally decided to marry. Immediate questions were “Is she going to take another year and a half off?” and “Does she really *want* a career?”

I had a chance to ask Wynonna these questions and more one recent afternoon. We met at her office in Franklin, Tennessee. Seated at the end of a cluttered conference table, dressed in black, Wynonna polished off a quick sandwich as one-year-old Elijah scabbled around at her feet.

As always she was as high strung as a piano wire: hands in constant motion, talking a mile a minute about life, love, psychology, religion, country music, motherhood and other topics, both lofty and mundane.

Even so, she was calmer and more decisive than the kid I’d spoken with five years ago on the farewell tour. Above all, she was a hoot: by turns somber and self-effacing, comical and mischievous—a pleasure to talk with.

Her year and a half away from the public eye has been a time for reckoning. A time for putting all the scattered pieces in place—or at least, coming to terms with the fact they may always be somewhat scattered. A time for growing up.

**CM:** *You don’t seem like that same antsy kid I used to know.*

**WYNONNA:** I think I finally began to realize that I don’t *have* to be perfect, I don’t *have* to have all the answers, I don’t *have* to have a ten-year plan. In this business, we get so worried about being Number One, and having a brilliant career. *(She rolls her eyes.)* Whatever happened to being happy and loving music?

Making this record really brought me back...to my first love, which is singing. I don’t care about my hair. I don’t care about the perfect outfit for the awards show. I don’t care anymore. I gained 75 pounds with Elijah. I was miserable, at times, in the studio, singing my heart out. I think that’s what you hear...that’s why people will like this record...the honesty in it. That’s what I’ll always remember when I look back on it. Nothing else was for sure. I didn’t have an office. I didn’t have a management team anymore. I was afraid I might not even have fans after all this. I knew I had friends out there, but they were all worried about me. They knew how fragile I was. So I took all those joys and fears and anxieties and pains and put ‘em in this record.

I’ll always remember how chaotic everything else in my life was, and how perfect the music seemed to be.

**CM:** *At your press conference a year and a half ago, when you announced you were pregnant and hanging it up for a while, you seemed a little embattled.*

**WYNONNA:** A little? I felt like I was going to be crucified! Getting pregnant didn’t quite fit in with The Judds saga, ladies and gentlemen! Certainly, things didn’t turn out like I thought they would! *(Laughs ruefully.)* Life is unpredictable, and I felt so responsible for so many people. The fans with 16-year-old daughters who called and wrote letters said how important I was to their daughters. For some reason, I guess they decided that I had to be the role model, or the scapegoat, in terms of sex or something. I found that interesting.

*Elijah hollers loudly and pounds a fork on the table, Nikita Klushchev-style, as if entering a protest in his mama’s behalf.*

**CM:** *Some people’s letters were nasty?*

**WYNONNA:** Oh, yeah! People throw down when they call or

write to The Judds...because they don’t have to look at you. *(Shrugs.)* I just felt very vulnerable, and very humbled by this whole experience. Would I go back and change it? Nope! *(Glances at Elijah.)* He’s the light of my life.

But back at the time of the press conference I had to stand up in front of friends and family and journalists I’ve known my whole career and say, “Uh. I don’t mean to let you all down, but something has come up.”

You have to understand, too, I was a well-oiled machine then. Everything was peachy. I was in the highlight...on my way to my global career: *Wait’ll next year, she’s gonna kick butt!* Pregnancy didn’t fit into anybody’s program. It sure shut me down! I was no longer Wynonna-Judd on the bus. I was that girl who’s pregnant. It did a number on me...making me realize how people really do put you up on a pedestal. I always felt vulnerable...I knew they were watching my life. I never realized how people *literally* take their cues from you. For a lot of unwed mothers I became sort of a hope seller. For the Baptist people, I think, they were really disappointed in me...I’d had a clean slate, then all of a sudden did the ultimate thing, without being married.

**CM:** *It sort of shattered the storybook Judds image?*

**WYNONNA:** I think it was such a shock, because I’ve always been a rebel, but I’ve always kept it pretty much within the lines of right and wrong. Ya know, I could get away with a pink streak in my hair or stayin’ up late, but this pretty much topped the scale. But I came home and realized I’m gonna be okay, and I knew God knows my heart and forgives me. So I just threw myself into making this record. It was a pretty heavy time, for sure. Arch and I were trying to find out what was going on with us. Mom was watching her kid have a kid. But it was a good time, too. I don’t wanta make it sound all dreary.

*Elijah wails inconsolably, as if to dispute this last claim. He reaches out for a small mustard jar that’s on the table.*

But in this world ain’t *nothin’* for sure, folks! We all get so caught up in security and having this idea of what we’re gonna be. Like, *What? Wait a minute!* Time off also helped me realize I don’t have the answer—to anything, really. Only that I do this one thing well, which is singing. It all boils down to, “I’m singin’, here’s my record. Dig it, if you can.”

*Elijah sticks in his two cents worth: “Dja-dja-dja. Dja-dja-dja!” She grabs him by the seat of the pants and gently hauls him back across the table top. “Put a cork in it, buddy!” she grumbles.*

**CM:** *There are places on revelations that seem otherworldly.*

**WYNONNA:** Sometimes it’s hard to put into words what really does happen. It is like I tap into another realm. Like something just happens in *spite* of me. I’m still amazed...I can open my mouth and this *voice* comes out! *(Rolls her eyes in amazement.)* Because I’m really a goofball. Most of the time, onstage, I’m fartin’ around and bein’ funny. Then all of a sudden I open my mouth and... *(She shakes her head.)*

**CM:** *It doesn’t always come so easy, does it? You’ve described the making of your debut album as a rather hellish ordeal. Your producer, Tony Brown, recalled how all the musicians would be waiting and you’d decide you weren’t ready, and you and Tony would go to lunch and spend hours while the studio clock was ticking. Tony jokes about “\$4,000 lunches.”*

**WYNONNA:** *(Laughs cynically.)* Tony called ‘em that, but I’m the one who paid for ‘em!

**CM:** *You’ve described your career right after The Judds ended as a terrible time. From the outside, it seemed like a triumph. Yet from inside looking out, it was apparently much different.*



**WYNONNA:** Uhhmm... Yeah, I almost died. It's kinda like...are your parents still living?

**CMM:** No.

**WYNONNA:** Did you clean out the house when they died?

**CMM:** Yeah. All that stuff.

**WYNONNA:** That's just how I felt, my dear, making that first record. "I don't wanna do this." I really resented my former manager. I had begged not to go back out on the road alone, but I got the old "Suck it up and be a brave soldier" speech. Once I got out there, I felt, "I don't wanna do this. I'm really miserable, I'm really hurting, and I need to mourn!" I tell people now, when someone dies, take time, quit your job, whatever...or else it's gonna come back and jump on you pretty hard.

**CMM:** I've always loved that first album. I thought it was a lot more soulful than the second one. Tell Me Why.

**WYNONNA:** I agree.

**CMM:** And the new album?

**WYNONNA:** I started the sessions off with "Freebird," the Allen Collins/Ronnie Van Zant Southern rock anthem, in June last year. It's taken a year and a half of continuous work...a very major struggle.

*The baby enthusiastically shakes his rattle, as if to say, "Right on, Big Mama!"*

**CMM:** You've been in Christian counseling for a few years. What exactly is that?

**WYNONNA:** (Laughs uproariously.) It's 80 dollars an hour, is what it is! (She winks slyly at Elijah.) Whoa! I'm gettin' really good, Elijah! I'm gettin' feisty! (Laughs again, then settles down.)

When I say "counseling," the Christian world goes nuts. Because counseling represents psychology, which is almost anti-God to some people. Psychology sometimes gets away from the spiritual laws, okay? The woman I go to uses scripture to clarify things. She supplies me with all the insights from her psychology background, but it's interpreted through Christian beliefs. I went to her with Mom during the farewell tour, just to figure out how we were going to separate from each other without dying, or without killing each other! Or, leaving angry, like often happens when you leave a relationship. And I've kept going on my own for five years.

**CMM:** So it's really helped you untangle things?

**WYNONNA:** It has. Sometimes there are no answers for what's wrong...like when I found out the identity of my true father. No one could say anything that helped. But Jenny, the counselor, showed me how to go back to the Bible and learn to help myself...to be a part of my own healing...We want someone to tell us what to do, and how it's gonna be, and that everything's okay. Well, nobody can tell you that. What Jenny does say is, "Here are the tools, go learn." I know there are people out there, thinking, "Oh, so she has a shrink! What's wrong with her?" That's why I use the word *Christian*. I believe in it. Even if you're normal, it helps! (Laughs.)

**CMM:** Well, that excludes most of us.

**WYNONNA:** Well, I think most normal people need it more!

*Elijah grins and grapples for his mother's lipstick, as if to assure her that he has no intention of growing up normal. She*

*scoops him up and shakes him gently. "Elijah! Here's where we talk about I'm the mother and you're the child!"*

**CMM:** Let's talk about marriage—yours. I understand that when Arch formally proposed, it was a very special moment.

**WYNONNA:** It was really corny. (Laughs.) I think a lot of people went, "Ugh, this is just too dorky!" But the real blessing is that the decision had very little to do with the birth of Elijah. That's part of it, of course...I know people out there will think I'm weird, but that wasn't the reason for deciding to marry Arch. He and I really had to figure out, if something happened to Elijah, what would be left of us? And we finally realized that we really dug each other—in spite of the fact that we had a kid together. And that's real important, ya know, because Elijah's gonna grow up and move away someday and drive off in that second-hand truck I buy him. I've always been afraid that marriage puts part of your power out. And it really doesn't. I can tell ya what really is cool... something I heard about marriage, that I'd never heard before. Not even from my mother, and I think she knows everything! Marriage isn't about a covenant with someone. It's about a covenant with God. For the first time in my life I realize that it has to do with a commitment with me and God. I never had thought about it that way. I thought, if we got married, he was gonna start...callin' me his little old lady, pattin' me on the butt and askin' for more ice tea. I'd had so many women give me their bad marriage stories, I'd just decided, Oohh, not me! But I realized I'm kidding myself to think I can make it without a man. I've ruined enough hearts to realize that God's greatest wish for us is to find a partner.

**CMM:** Was it love at first sight?

**WYNONNA:** No! He's the last person I would have picked! But that's the key. He's everything that I'm not, which I guess is what I was lookin' for, but I just didn't know it. We're so different, it's amazing. But we get along so well. It's almost like, "It's been a couple of weeks now, aren't we supposed to fight or something?"

**CMM:** How did you and Arch meet in the first place?

**WYNONNA:** He dropped out of the sky...actually, in the sky. I was flying back from an awards show, minding my own business, when this guy leaned over and said, "Do you wanta ride your Harley in a Harley ride I'm puttin' together?" Of course, I love to ride, so I said sure, and I gave him my number. He kept calling, and one thing led to another. I wouldn't go out with him, though, for about a month. We just talked on the phone. But, we finally went out, and I didn't like him at all at first. Does that ever happen to you? You meet somebody you can't stand, and they end up being one of your best friends?

**CMM:** More times than I care to think about.

**WYNONNA:** Well, it was like that. I thought, "What a jerk." And here he is now, my official husband to be!



Arch, Elijah and Wy. Next Christmas, there'll be another family member.



**CMM:** Will it be a big wedding?

**WYNONNA:** A very simple one. Just five or ten people. Ya know, there are just so few moments in my life that are intimate, that I get to share with just the people who I'm gonna die and be buried beside. Let's face it. I share my life with everyone. So I just want the wedding celebration to be for the immediate family. So Arch has the chance to have me as his woman, without a lot of photographers around. Arch has to really put up with a lot. People forget that. He gets to be the Man of the Hour.

**CMM:** What's the new baby gonna be? Boy or girl?

**WYNONNA:** In my spirit, it's a girl. Her name will be Pauline Grace, if it's a girl...my grandmother's name. Samuel Glenn, or Samuel Judd, if it's a boy. Glenn was my grandfather, and Arch picked Samuel. Samuel's a pretty heavy character in the Bible.

**CMM:** You mentioned the shock of discovering for the first time who your real father was. That must have been quite a trauma.

*Elijah lets out a howl of protest, as if he's his mom's attorney and objects to the question. Wynonna dandles him. "What's wrong with you, kid?" she teases.*

**WYNONNA:** Yeah, there was that, on top of everything else. I found out, after 30 years, the man who I thought was my father is not, and that my real father was someone I'd never met. It came out in the papers not too long after that. *(She chuckles.)* There was a little portion in Mom's book missing about that. But, I'm okay with it now. It turned out that everybody knew it...everybody but me. Talk about naive! My sister knew. My mother knew. My grandparents knew. The whole town I was born in knew. They wanted to protect me. But this is the blessing—the crappiest thing that can happen in your life can also bring you peace, believe it or not. It was a gift that they loved me, because they didn't have to. They chose me. It made me realize that we're not just bound by blood. The man I thought was my father chose to marry my mother, even though I wasn't his. That's a gift. My grandmother knew, and never told me, and loved me in spite of it. We were bound by spirit. It took this mess to get me to understand that.

**CMM:** But you must have felt a sense of betrayal at first.

**WYNONNA:** Oh, I was pissed about it for a while! I thought everybody was deluding me. It was like, "Who's next?" I had to be funny about it some days. And I'd look at John Unger, my new manager, and say, "Is your real name John?" I'll never get over it, but I got through it, and I came to realize how blessed I was to be loved by people who chose me.

**CMM:** But you've since met your real father?

**WYNONNA:** Oh, yeah, he's a good guy. He lives in Kentucky. But I was 30 years old when I met him for the first time. Hey, what the heck! *(She grabs for Elijah, who's skittered off across the floor like a sand crab.)* It's never dull around here!

*As if to prove his mother's point, Elijah's become a real bundle now. He's squawking, mewling, grabbing, knocking things off the table, grasping for my tape recorder, generally having a real big time. His mom giggles with exasperation, and*



JOHN ATASHIAN/RETNA

*summons an assistant. "Could you maybe take Elijah out and play in the traffic for a while?"*

**CMM:** How's your mom doing?

**WYNONNA:** *(Heaves a weary sigh.)* Oh...she's very fragile. Very full of life. Her little body is weak, at times, but she's maintaining... though how you ever maintain with that disease, I don't know. Ultimately, it destroys the liver. We know that, and we live with that, and I try to act like it's not really true. *(She stares desolately into space.)* So...we're hangin' in there. She just opened up a new restaurant, with Pop, over on Music Row.

**CMM:** Are you involved in that?

**WYNONNA:** *(Her scowl makes me glad looks can't kill.)* The restaurant business? *(Grins.)* I say no, but I don't know. Mom and I are involved in so much that it's like we never left the road. We still talk about singing together again.

**CMM:** You still talk every day?

**WYNONNA:** No. Even though she lives right down the road, I don't see her enough. She works too hard...she's out talking to ten thousand people about how they should take care of themselves. She's on a mission, man. So, I don't see her much.

**CMM:** A stock question: What do you think about the state of country music right now?

**WYNONNA:** It's just so boring! It bothers me that, right now, everybody's trying to do the same thing. I just think of all those musicians and artists out there who've come up to me, and said, "God, I'm glad you did that song! It's so weird, and so neat and so different, man! I just think it's great you did that!"

I don't mean to sound arrogant about it, but I think, "Why aren't you doin' that?" I hear people saying, "Gosh, Wynonna, I'm glad to see you getting away with all this!" But I'd really like more women to be rebels. But I think artists are just scared. I think it's so sad that most of the artists out there conform to the method. The cookie cutter method. Not to name names, but you've seen what the videos are like lately. These young guys with their jeans and their hats, trying to do these dance moves. It's, like, "What are you doing? You look really stupid in that hat!" I'd just like people to be themselves. Their wacky selves.

**CMM:** A few people in the business, when they heard you were pregnant again, said, "Well, I guess this is it! There goes the tour! There goes her career! I guess she'll shut it down again."

**WYNONNA:** No way! I'm fired up and ready to go! I think everybody's fear was, "Is she gonna take another year off?" Heck, no, man! I'm ready! I've got all my ducks in a row here. Unless, of course, I end up having triplets and I have to sing from a bed on stage or something. Nope! The show must go on!

**CMM:** Will you take the two kids on tour with you?

**WYNONNA:** Heck, yeah, man! I've got the bus velcroed up and down. I'm gonna make 'em little velcro suits like David Letterman, and just sort of stick 'em on the side. Heck, ya, I'm the road kid with my two kids and a knucklehead!

**CMM:** Arch will be on tour with you, too?

**WYNONNA:** Of course he is. He's gotta keep an eye on me. ■

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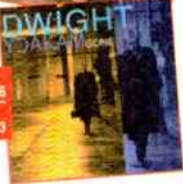


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# Newsletter

## REVIEWS & FEATURES

### The Collections Page Returns!

In news that is sure to make many members happy, the Collections section is now reopened. Effective immediately, you can start to send in your entries for Information, Please, Collecting the Magazine and Pen Pals. In order to ensure the smooth operation of the section—and hopefully avoid further shutdowns—a few new rules are in order, and we're going to have to be a little tougher with the rules that were already in effect. So, then, here's a rundown of the rules for the section: 1) A valid membership number must be included with each entry. 2) Entries must be kept to 40 words or less—and less is better! 3) Only one entry per member per issue. 4) We reserve the right to edit for space and style. 5) Entries that do not follow the rules will be discarded.

Additionally, there are some rules applying specifically to Pen Pals: 1) The Pen Pals section is a means of introducing CMSA

members who wish to correspond. It is not a personals or "lonely hearts" column, and we will not print physical descriptions, requests for romance, requests for photos, or entries making reference to race. For instance, do not say that you are a "lonely single white male, 160 lbs." or indicate that you only wish to correspond with "single white Christian females," etc. If you want to take up such issues in your letters to each other, that's up to you, but such comments will not be printed in the *Newsletter*. 2) Pen Pal entries for members under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian indicating that the minor can be included in the section.

I think most members will agree that these provisions will improve the Collections section, and make it fair for everyone. Of course, there will always be some "grey areas," but, as they say, the decision of the judges is final. So, stick to the rules, and enjoy. Any comments you have on this will be appreciated!

### Reader Creates, Vince Appreciates

*Portage, Wisconsin, member Tammy Frederiksen fills us in on the excitement that followed the publication of her Vince Gill painting in Readers Create.*

I would like to send my sincerest thanks to you. I sent in a photo of a painting I did of Vince Gill, and you were nice enough to print it in Readers Create in the January/February 1995 *CMSA Newsletter*. Well, you put in my quote about wanting Vince to sign it, so I wrote a letter to his public relations agent, Janis Broughton, and I enclosed a photocopy of the *Newsletter* page. I'm not sure what convinced them, but they gave me backstage passes to get it signed. (I had been trying for four years!)

I met Vince in Green Bay, and he's one of the nicest performers I've ever met. He gave a wonderful concert with a heartbreaking version of the song for his brother, "Go Rest High on That Mountain." He was very polite backstage and gave willingly of his time. This was the ultimate dream come true for me, and I want to thank you for helping me to achieve that dream. I'll never forget meeting Vince. Whenever I get down, I look at the pictures and painting, and it instantly lifts my spirits.

**Tammy Frederiksen**  
Portage, Wisconsin



**Having Vince Gill sign her painting was a dream come true for Tammy Frederiksen.**

### On the Road for RVS

*CMSA member Linda Shahangian of Jefferson City, Missouri, and a group of friends spent a good portion of 1995 traveling...to see Ricky Van Shelton in concert. From July through November, they logged some 6,000 miles on the road. Here's Linda's story.*

Thought I would let you know how a group of women from Missouri spent the '95 concert season. We are a dedicated group of Ricky Van Shelton fans. The group includes myself, Sissy Becvar (of Kansas City), Fonda Bunch (Eldon), Linda Falter (Freeburg), Clarine Hart (Henley) and Renae Woodland (Jefferson City). We have had a lot of fun planning our trips, going on them, and then reliving them! We laugh a lot.

We started out July 1st by driving to Murray, Kentucky. Saw Ricky's concert Saturday night, slept very little, and drove back to Warrenton, Missouri, for a concert the next day. The very next weekend we drove to Branson to see both of Ricky's shows at the Grand Palace. The first weekend in August we made our way to Kingsport, Tennessee, and two weeks later to Chicago, Illinois. On the way back from Kingsport, Sissy and Linda stayed in Arnold, Missouri, overnight so that they could be first in line the next day to buy tickets for a concert there scheduled for

#### In This Issue

- Looking Like the Stars
- Travel Tips
- Collections Page Reopens!
- Elton Britt in Legends

**Editor:** George Fletcher

**Executive Editor:** Helen Barnard

**Art Director:** Kathryn Gray

October. In September we went to Hutchinson, Kansas, to see Ricky at the Kansas State Fair. In October we went to the Arnold concert that we had bought tickets for in August. In November, Nashville, Indiana, was our destination.

Through all these trips, we have experienced huge traffic backups, heat, rain, snow and ice, and many winding "backroads." On our trip to Kingsport we got caught in a construction backup, and Clarine said she just knew we were in the Twilight Zone and would spend the rest of our lives riding around in my red Es-

cort. Stood in a lot of long lines, missed a lot of sleep, and at times some meals, but it was worth every minute. Ricky is not only a terrific singer but a wonderful guy. His shows are always top-notch, and so is he. He is surrounded by a fabulous band, The 7 1/4 Band: Tommy, Rocky, Darin, Bruce and George. They have their own tape out called *One Size Fits Some*. They did a wonderful job on it. I also can't say enough about what a super guy Tim Bowlers (RVS' road manager) is.

Ricky has always made time for us, or acknowledged us in the audience. He is

one guy who really appreciates his fans. (I know some fans have been upset that he didn't honor all backstage passes at some shows this year, but he was suffering severe sinus problems the last part of the season.) I can only hope that Ricky will again receive the recognition he deserves. Whether radio plays him or not, the fans will still be there. We will continue to go to his concerts and buy his CD's. We are now suffering RVS withdrawal and are anxiously awaiting the '96 tour season.

**Linda Shahangian**  
Jefferson City, Missouri

### House Fans Raise the Roof

*"House Fan Jan Howley," as member Janice Howley calls herself, hails from the picturesque sounding town of Panorama City, California. She and her friends took in a James House show in Anaheim, California, recently.*

August 8, 1995, at the Cowboy Boogie in Anaheim, California, was a very special night! I have admired the talents of James House since I first saw his video for "Hard Times for an Honest Man" in 1990. I love everything he sings, yet that song remains my favorite. I know his career will be filled with special moments like the one he gave me and

my friends at the Cowboy Boogie. I never had a doubt that his live performance would be as electric and charismatic as his voice and songwriting are.

James and his band treated all of us as if they were the fans and we were the stars! They couldn't have shown us a better time by giving us the warmest welcome ever. My friends and I will always remember it, and I wanted to share our great pictures. I so enjoyed making the "House Fans" (see photograph) which created quite a buzz on the Cowboy Boogie's dance floor!

**"House Fan" Jan Howley**  
Panorama City, California

**CMSA Member Jan Howley and friends had a blast at a recent James House concert in California. Jan made the "House Fans" that each carried, and they all got to meet House after his show. In each photo, Jan's the one in the white hat. In the photo below, Jan's mom, another Jan, is also a fan.**



### CMSA Spring Travel Section

*Here's a look at a few travel ideas for the spring of 1996.*

#### SILVER SPRINGS GOES COUNTRY

*As I write this, the Northeast is hard in the grip of winter. We've just gotten through a major blizzard, and are now staring down the barrel of yet another winter storm. The thought of traveling somewhere warm holds a lot of appeal, and Florida's Silver Springs nature theme park would fit the bill nicely. It has the added bonus of a full slate of spring-time country concerts.*

Silver Springs, Florida's oldest tourist attraction, is a 350-acre nature theme park located east of Ocala, about 50 miles south of Gainesville. And to celebrate 1996, the park has a full slate of country concerts planned for the spring. Dates confirmed so far are: Gene Watson, March 2; Johnny Cash, March 30 (a road trip for CMSA member and longtime Johnny Cash fan Dennis Devine, perhaps...right, Dennis?); Charley Pride, April 6; Waylon Jennings, April 13; Jerry Clower and The Whites, April 20; and Eddie Rabbit, April 27.

The park, known for attractions like the Glass Bottom Boats, the Jungle Cruise, Lost River Voyage, Jeep Safari, White Alligator Exhibit and various animal shows, is open daily, 9 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., and admission is \$26.95 for adults, \$18.95 for children. Prices include the concert entertainment, and there are numerous shops and restaurants on the premises. For further information, call Silver Springs at 352-236-2121.

#### ACOUSTIC MUSIC AT MERLEFEST

*It's time once again for the annual Merle Watson Memorial Festival at Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. Here's what they have on tap for this year.*

Doc Watson will once again host the ninth annual Merle Watson Memorial Festival



**Waylon performs at Silver Springs, in Florida, while Doc Watson hosts this year's Merle Watson Memorial Festival in North Carolina.**



April 25-28, at Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. The festival, which began in 1988 with some 6,000 participants, is now known as one of the biggest acoustic music events of the year; last year's attendance was 38,000.

This year's line-up of talent includes artists from the folk, bluegrass, country, acoustic and blues fields, among them: Alison Krauss and Union Station, Bela Fleck (formerly of New Grass Revival) and The Flecktones, Sam Bush (another NGR alum), Tim and Mollie O'Brien, Hal Ketchum, John Prine, Bill Monroe, Jerry Douglas, Nashville Bluegrass Band, The Rankin Family, Tom Paxton, Chesapeake (a favorite of CMM contributing editor Bob Allen, see review in the magazine this issue), John Hartford, and many more. In addition to continuous music on several stages for four days, the event also features camping facilities, children's activities, an audience picking tent, mountain crafts, instrumental contests, a songwriting contest, and more.

Advance tickets for the whole four-day event are \$80; they're \$70 for three days. These prices are in effect through March 22. For more information on the Festival, call 800-666-1820. To purchase tickets, call 800-343-7857. To enter (or get details on) the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest, call 800-799-3838 before March 18. All proceeds from this event help fund the Merle Watson Memorial Gardens at the college, and 20 other non-profit organizations.

### FAN FAIR'S 25TH...

*Time again for the big Nashville event.* This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the International Country Music Fan Fair. Taking place at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville, Tennessee, June 10 through 15, 1996, the cost of the Grand Ole Opry and Country Music Association co-sponsored event is \$90. Call 615-889-7503 for details on tickets. For information on hotels, call the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce at 615-259-4700. If, by the time you read this, it's already sold out, check with local tour operators, who may have packages available.

### Looking Like the Stars

*In the November/December issue, we printed photos from members who had people in their family who looked like country music stars. That prompted the following responses as we continue the series on "Looking Like the Stars."*

### MAYBE IT'S MARK

Enclosed is a picture of my uncle, Mario Signorelli Jr. He has been mistaken for Mark Chesnutt several times! Once, some women in a department store asked him

if he was Mark Chesnutt, and when he said "no," they didn't believe him, and followed him to the checkout counter and looked at his credit card to read the name! I hope you can use these pictures and let members decide if Mario is a lookalike!

**Theresa Grabowski  
Daytona Beach, Florida**

### TIPPIN TIMES TWO

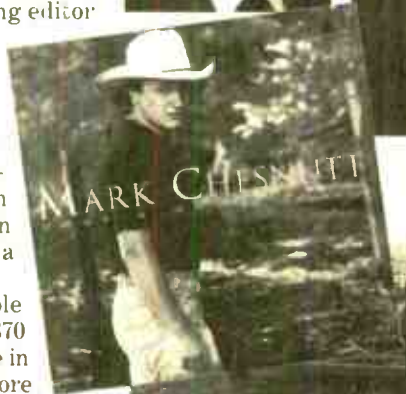
Thought I might pass this along to y'all. I've had a great time being mistaken for Aaron Tippin. This photo was taken at Fan Fair in 1995. I'm very proud of this picture, since I am also a "working man." I install fire sprinklers (pipefitter). I enjoy reading the magazine!

**K.W. Godfrey  
Lewisville, Texas**

### ANOTHER AARON

Recently my husband and I met a fellow in a restaurant who resembled Aaron Tippin. I asked him, "Are you related to Aaron Tippin?" He said, "No, but I wish I was." He gave us his picture so I could send it to you. His name is John Dechiro. Maybe you can see the resemblance.

**Thelma Mastin  
Rochester, New York**



**John Dechiro (above left) and K.W. Godfrey (above right) both favor Aaron Tippin, while Mario Signorelli Jr. bears a resemblance to Mark Chesnutt.**

## Attention, Members!

The Collections page is now reopened! You may send entries in beginning immediately. Keep in mind the RULES of the section: 1) Membership number *must* accompany entry. 2) Entries *must* be kept to 40 words or less (we may occasionally be slightly flexible on this, but only in Information, Please). 3) Entries for Pen Pals from members under the age of 16 *must* be accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian giving permission. 4) Only one entry per member per issue. 5) We reserve the right to edit for space and style. 6) No requests for romance or photos. See also editorial on the front page. *Fair warning: many of these pen pal entries do not fit the NEW RULES.*

## Collecting the Magazine

Members, please help each other complete your magazine collections.

•For Sale: back issues of *Country Music*, *Music City News*, *Country Weekly*, etc. Specify interests. SASE for list. **Riek J. Cunningham, 134 Berwick St., Berwick, ME 03901-2702.**

## Information, Please

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

•Wanted: magazine articles, clippings, pin-ups of Tanya Tucker, especially those from the early to mid-80's, also her appearances on *The Late Show With David Letterman*, *The Mike and Marty Show*, *TNN Video Album Hour* and *Wheel of Fortune*. Will trade or pay reasonable price. Also want Shania Twain's videos: "What Made You Say That," "Dance With the One That Brought You" and "You Lay a Lot of Love on Me," on VHS. Have lots to trade on Alan, BRC, Clay and JMM. Send list describing what you have. **Melissa Phipps, Rt. 2 Box 332, Clintwood, VA 24228.**

•Wanted: Anything on Jon Randall. Especially album-type 12x12 flats of *What You Don't Know*. Also any videos, photos, etc. of Jon with The Nash Ramblers. Anyone who can help, please write. Fans interested in corresponding are welcome as well. **Lon Middleton, 12509 Stickney Pl., Oklahoma City, OK 73170.**

•Wish to trade cassette copies of live concerts, interviews and radio programs. Most any artist and dates. I have many of these items from the 1950's through the 1980's. If interested, send list for trade only, and I will send my list. Will answer all inquires. Bluegrass also welcome. **Bill E. Wilson, P.O. Box 193, Patrickburg, IN 47455.**

•Great shots of your favorite country artists for sale: Lorie, Reba, Garth, JMM, Vince, Wynonna, Shania, Clint, Faith, BRC, Alan, Clay and many more. Send SASE and list favorites. Reasonably priced. **Todd Fussy, Rte. 2 Box 153, Royalton, MN 56373-9588.**

•Switching to CD and selling all cassettes. Hundreds of titles and artists from Roy Acuff to Trisha Yearwood. Great condition and great prices. Send

SASE with two stamps for complete list. **Eve Rosenbaum, 53 South Parker Dr., Monsey, NY 10952.**

•Wanted: anything and everything on my favorite, Gene Watson. Newsletters, photos, 45's, LP's, CDs and cassettes, etc. **Barbara Kidd, 933 SE 2nd St., Grand Prairie, TX 75051.**

•Photos of your favorite country stars for sale. Send SASE and list favorites. **Photos, 22301 Wyldwood Dr., Little Rock, AR 72210.**

•Wanted, really wanted: Reba tour books, fan club newsletters prior to 1992, sealed VHS *For My Broken Heart*, sealed CD *Greatest Hits*, 1987. Make offer or trade, send SASE for responses. I'm a big Reba fan. **Caroline Lips, 765 South Orange, Turlock, CA 95380.**

•VHS six-hour tape, \$25. Awards: CMA, ACM, TNN, Songwriters, No Hats Tour: Alan, Reba, Garth, Randy, Loretta, etc. on *Nashville Now*, Grand Ole Opry, *Music City Tonight*. I am looking for '84 CMA awards and '88 CMA awards. SASE to **June Miner, 517 Edward Rd., West Melbourne, FL 32904.**

•Wanted: CDs by Randy Travis, Willie, Roy Rogers, Chris LeDoux. Trade for one of these: Alan, *Don't Rock the Jukebox*; Travis Tritt, *For a Better*; Eagles, *One of These Nights*; Suzy Bogguss, *Voices in the Wind*; Little Texas, *Big Time*; Tony Rice, *Plays and Snaps Bluegrass*; Johnny Cash, *The Gospel Collection*; Martina McBride, *The Time Has Come*; Carlene Carter, *Little Love Letters*, or Reba's autobiography. If interested, write to **Ingo Breuer, Antoniusstrabe 3, D-53894 Mechernich-Firmenich, Germany.**

•Looking for anything on The Judds/Wy. Interested in early promos, tour merchandise, TV/radio appearances, or willing to pay high price for anyone's whole collection. Would also like to hear from die-hard fans. **Darla Chasteen, RR1 Box 2250, Cameron, OK 74932-9787.**

## Pen Pals

Make new friends by mail. *Pen Pals is a means of introducing CMSA members who wish to correspond. It is NOT a "pen pals" column. Physical descriptions and requests for romance or photographs will not be printed. We also reserve the right to edit for space and style. Pen pal's written permission required for those 16 and under.*

•Hey there, cowboys! Single, lonely and incarcerated 29-year-old female wishes to correspond with single men. I enjoy country music as well as other types of music. Also, I enjoy the outdoors, rodeos and rural living. Give this "Okie" a whirl. Will answer all. **Brenda D. Rose #133404, M.B.C.C. (S.H.U.), Oklahoma City, OK 73136.**

•Hello, I'm 26 years old, an Aries, and looking for friendship. I love country, Travis Tritt, Hank Jr., Aaron Tippin, Tractors, etc., and I love classic rock: Skynyrd, Clapton, Thorogood, Eagles, Seger, Doors, etc. Also love the beach, my cowboy hat, concerts, movies. If interested, please write. "It's just another Tequila Sunrise." **Lisa Texeira, PO Box 194, Acushnet, MA 02743.**

•Hi, everyone! This Massachusetts native is a country music lover; Alan, Garth and Alabama to name a few. I'm 35, single and will answer all who write. Other interests: football, photography and reading. **Amy St. Peter, 10 Colonel's Lane #3L E. Weymouth, MA 02189.**

•I am a 48-year-old, divorced father of two college students. Like Garth, Vince and Tractors. Would like to hear from other country music lovers. Females please, southeast US. Nephew has country band, could arrange trip or meeting to listen. Photo for mine, 35 and up only. **Dale Kirk, 185 Wanetree Dr., Roswell, GA 30075.**

•23-year-old, single female, looking for new country pen pals. Faves are Reba, Oaks, Tim McGraw, Vince and others. If you love writing letters, men or women ages 20-30, please write. Will try to answer all. **April West, 324 Crest Ln., Westminster, MD 21157.**

•38-year-old, nickname is Tex. Hobbies are all sports, especially golf, horses, camping and dancing. Love to hear from a country music lover. Favorites are Reba, Patty Loveless, Loretta, Dolly, Judds, Garth, Jones, Tammy, RVS, Kathy Mattea, BRC, Conway and more. Will answer all letters from country girls. **John Lee Grisez R134-316, Allen Corr. Inst., P.O. Box 4501 Lima, OH 45802-0450L**

•I love all country music, my favorite is Aaron Tippin. I also like John Berry, Sammy Kershaw, Reba, Michelle Wright and others. My hobbies are writing letters, poetry, genealogy and collecting autographs. I would like to hear from other Aaron fans of all ages. Will answer all, no inmates. **Linda Johnson, 91 Parkside Dr., Red Deer, Alberta, Canada T4P 1K1**

•Hi, I'm a 28-year-old male, would like to hear from people all over. Age or race doesn't matter. Locked up in state prison now. I like all kinds of music from country to rock 'n' roll and everything in between. Hobbies include fishing, camping and hiking, raising animals, writing and receiving letters and collecting pictures of singers. **Thomas E. Parker #58594L Ferguson Unit, Rt. 2 Box 20, Midway, TX 75852.**

•Howdy! I'm a 30-year-old male doing a little bit of time and would love to have a few pen pals to write to. Some hobbies are leather crafts and writing and receiving letters from all over the country. I like all kinds of music, but country the most. Favorites are: Garth, Clint, George Strait, Reba, Lorrie and Tanya. Will answer all. **Tracey Duke #596225, Rt. 2 Box 20, Midway, TX 75852.**

•Hi! I'm a 19-year-old, single female and I love country music. Favorites are Tim McGraw, Tracy Lawrence, Clay Walker, Ken Mellons, Little Texas and Diamond Rio. I enjoy concerts, country dancing and photography. I'd like to hear from cowboys, 18-27, who love country music. Other music okay, too. No inmates, please. **Andrea Dubas, 2510 Mt. Vernon, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.**

•Hi, I'm 31 years old and a major Travis Tritt fan. I'm looking for others to trade photos, etc. I will answer all letters. No inmates, please. **Libby Worley, 137 W.**

**1st St., Gastonia, NC 28054.**

•Hi, I'm a 24-year-old, single gal who loves country music. Some favorites are: Marty, John Berry, Tim McGraw and Mark Collie. I would like to hear from guys 21 and up. Photo gets mine. No inmates, please. **Janet Simpson, PO Box 938, Roseboro, NC 28382.**

•Hi, I'm a 23-year-old, single female and a true country music lover. I am the lead singer of a country band, and my hobbies include singing, playing the guitar and country dancing. I like Sawyer Brown, Reba and Patsy. Would love to hear from guys and gals of all ages for correspondence, etc. No inmates or chain letters, please. Photo gets mine. Will answer all. **Diana Gibson, 643 Swan St., Terre Haute, IN 47807.**

•Hi! I'm a 15-year-old country boy who would like to make new friends. Favorite singers are Reba, George Strait, Alan, Tammy, George Jones, Faith Hill and many others. If you'd like a friend to write to, please fill my mailbox. No inmates, please. **Eddie Johnson, 504 Jefferson St., Winona, MS 38967.**

•Hello, I'm a single mom, 21 years old. I have recently moved to Texas. My interests are rodeo, dancing, music and writing letters. I will correspond with any man or woman, age unimportant. **Susan Franks, P.O. Box 1172, Freer, TX 78357.**

•I'm 25 years old, love country music. I love Garth, Little Texas, Martina McBride, Chris LeDoux and George Strait. Looking for someone age 23-27. No inmates. **Charlotte E. Wright, 1302 29th St., Gulfport, MS 39501-6216.**

•Hi, I'm a 29-year-old, single male who has just found out how wonderful country music really is. I really like Little Texas and Garth. I am doing time in prison and would love to hear from anyone. I enjoy the outdoors. Write and we can become friends. I sure need them in a place like this. Age and sex does not matter. **Emory Futo 500592/6A-32, P.C.C., Rt. 2 Box 2222, Mineral Point, MO 63660.**

•Hey, I'm an almost 16-year-old country girl who loves reading, nature, trips, 4x4 trucks and listening to country music. Favorites include Tim McGraw, George Strait, Shania Twain, Faith Hill, Diamond Rio and many others. Love to hear from everyone, especially cowboys (15-21) and foreign country music fans. No inmates, please. **Crystal Harvell, 2151 Brittany Tr., Pleasant Garden, NC 27313.**

•Country music is my life! Howdy, I'm a 19-year-old, crazy cowgirl looking for new friends. Reba and Chris LeDoux are at the top of my list, but I enjoy all country artists. My hobbies are concerts, rodeos, letter writing, and I have a strong interest in the military. I'd love to hear from anyone in the military, or who has similar interests. **Brenda Gail Young, PO Box 171206, Irving, TX 75017-1206.**

•Hi! I am 25 and a single mom. I love country and Christian music. My favorites are Dolly, Reba, Elvis, Patsy, Joe Diffie, Mark Chesnutt, Clay Walker, Little Texas, Alabama, Kenny and many more. My hobbies are writing letters, reading, playing with my com-





World Radio History

**MARK CHESNUTT**  
COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE MARCH/APRIL 1996

# Boyfriend Wanted

By Rebecca Ann Stratton

My name is Becky Stratton. You don't know me from Adam. But, I'm a real person. I'm single now. I live near Roswell, GA. I have an associate degree in finance. And, up until 18 months ago, I was so inhibited, I hardly had the courage to say "hello" to people.

I was too tired to be romantic with my then-husband, Bernie. I'd fall asleep on the couch every night at 8:30 or 9:00. When he did take me out, he was ashamed of me. And said so in front of everyone.

When I walked, my thighs brushed together. I couldn't even cross my legs. I was fat. Not just "overweight." Fat. I was 5' 4" and weighed over 200 pounds.

Two years ago, Bernie went out "... for a paper." He never came back. But he did leave a "Dear Becky" letter on my dresser. And a week later, he filed for divorce.

I went to my doctor for help. I knew my weight was the source of my problems. But I'd tried 15 different diets. One by one. And failed at all of them.

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

I started the program on April 22nd. Within the first four days, I only lost three pounds. So I was disappointed. But during the three weeks that followed, my weight began to drop. Rapidly. Within the next 189 days, I went from 202 pounds to 133 pounds.

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

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

How can you eat so much and still lose weight?

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

Metabolism is evened out, so fat is burned away around the clock. Not just in unhealthy spurts like many diets. That's why it lets

you shed pounds so easily. Without hunger. Without nervousness.

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

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

There are other benefits too ...

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

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

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

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

But most diets try to force us to change all that.

And that's why they fail!

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

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

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

*"In spite of church suppers, I've lost almost 50 pounds in four months and I'm not having a rebound gain. Both my wife and I enjoy the meals."*

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

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

And then there's me.

Bernie did me a very big favor.

Since I've become thin, my life has changed. Totally. I quit smoking. I have a good job. I love to shop for nice clothes. And I'm in control again.

I'm very particular about who I date. I really am. I'm looking for a guy who really cares for me. Who won't abuse me — physically or verbally. And who enjoys doing fun things on the spur of the moment.

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

They'll be happy to send you the program to examine for 31 days. Show it to your doctor. Try it. If you're not delighted with the amount of weight you're losing, you'll receive a complete refund. Every penny. Even shipping and handling.

What's more, Green Tree Press won't cash your check for 31 days. You can postdate it 31 days if you wish.

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

Or keep it longer. Try it for six months. Even then, if you're not continuing to lose weight on a regular basis, you'll receive a full refund.

To order, just send your name, address and postdated check for \$12.95 (plus \$3.00 shipping/handling) to The Clinic-30 Program, c/o Green Tree Press, Inc., Dept. 913, 3603 West 12th Street, Erie, PA 16505.

## AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

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

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

Green Tree Press is a member of the Erie, Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce. Bank and business references are available upon request.

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PULL-OUT  
CENTERFOLD  
OF-THE-MONTH

# MARK CHESNUTT

## Facts of Life

### Personal Data

*Given Name:* Mark Nelson Chesnutt  
*Birthdate:* September 6, 1963  
*Birthplace:* Beaumont, Texas  
*Residence:* Jasper, Texas  
*Family:* Father, Bob; mother, Norma; brother, Bobby; wife, Tracie; son, Waylon  
*Hobbies:* Hunting, fishing, collecting albums  
*Animals:* Seven dogs—Hobbes and Brandi are Rottweilers, Calvin a Chow, Jack a stray, Heather Marie and Casey two Yorkies, Chelsea a Siberian Husky; three cats, Rosie, Tish and Tiger  
*Favorite Color:* Blue  
*Favorite Food:* Seafood and chicken enchiladas



### Videos

"Too Cold at Home"  
"Brother Jukebox"  
"Your Love Is a Miracle"  
"I'll Think of Something"  
"Ol' Country"  
"Sure Is Monday"  
"She Dreams"  
"Gonna Get a Life"  
"Trouble"

### Awards

CMA Horizon Award, 1993

### Quotes

*On Honky Tonks:* "I don't know what I like about them, but I do know they're a lot better than discos. Honky tonks have live bands. For me to go to a place, it needs to have live music. I like to listen to it. And I like to sit in."

*On the Road:* "We hit the road in August of '90, and I don't think we came home until the fall of '91. I like the road a lot. But there's a point where you need to take a break to take at least a week off so you can relax a little bit and get something else on your mind. That way, you'll be excited to go back to work. But the way we were doing before, we were working nonstop. It was like being in prison for the first couple of years. Hell, we were on the road constantly. That wears on you real bad. I've had to slow down a little bit. I've got a family now."

*On his Show:* "A year or two ago, my managers tried to get me to do some high-energy things like these other acts do. I tried it, and it was fun for awhile. But it just wasn't me. It's never been me. We have a lot of fun on stage, but it's not choreographed. We may run around a little during a song, but we don't go crazy."

### Fan Club

Mark Chesnutt Fan Club, P.O. Box 128031, Nashville, Tennessee 37212.

### Vital Statistics

*Height:* 5' 10"  
*Weight:* 165 lbs  
*Color of eyes:* Brown  
*Color of hair:* Dark brown

### TV Appearances

*Grand Ole Opry Live, Tonight Show, Live with Regis & Kathie Lee, Entertainment Tonight, Music City Tonight, Prime Time Country, Politically Incorrect*

### Recording Career

Record Label: Decca Records, 60 Music Square East, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Album	Release Date
<i>Too Cold at Home</i>	1990**
<i>Longnecks and Short Stories</i>	1992**
<i>Almost Goodbye</i>	1993**
<i>What a Way to Live</i>	1994*
<i>Wings</i>	1995

\*Gold album (500,000 units)  
\*\*platinum album (1,000,000 units)

### Singles

"Too Cold at Home"  
"Brother Jukebox"

"Blame It on Texas"  
"Your Love Is a Miracle"  
"Broken Promise Land"  
"Old Flames Have New Names"  
"I'll Think of Something"  
"Bubba Shot the Jukebox"  
"Ol' Country"  
"Sure Is Monday"  
"Almost Goodbye"  
"I Just Wanted You to Know"  
"Woman, Sensuous Woman"  
"She Dreams"  
"Going Through the Big D"  
"Gonna Get a Life"  
"Down in Tennessee"  
"Trouble"  
"It Wouldn't Hurt to Have Wings"

puter, spoiling my son rotten! I would like to hear from guys and girls. Please, no inmates. **Kathy Combs, 22735 Merrill, Hazel Park, MI 48030.**

•Hi! I'm married, two children, almost 40, and female. I'd love to hear from any married or single women who share my interest in dolls, crafts, Alan, Dwight, Brooks & Dunn, Statlers, Faith, Pam and more. No single men or inmates. **Sharon Gavala, 2160 Keppen, Lincoln Park, MI 48146-1188.**

•Hello! I'm married and 60 years old. I love country music and have for years now. Want to hear from gals ages 40-75. I like RVS, Pam Tillis, Conway, Loretta, Moe Bandy, etc. If you wrote previously and we lost contact, I'd love to hear from you again! Please fill my mailbox. **Mrs. Alvin Kahle, PO Box 42, Alma, KS 66401-0042.**

•Hey y'all! I'm a 16-year-old country girl. Favorites are: George Jones and Strait, Conway, Loretta, Martina, David Lee Murphy, Kenny Chesney, Steve, Patsy, Trisha, Patty, John and Audrey Wiggins and practically everybody else. Interests include rodeo, basketball, racing, songwriting, singing, playing guitar, concerts, watching CMT and TNN, movies and just having fun. I'm a big Tuff Hedeman and Lane Frost fan. I'd love to hear from y'all. **Amanda Barker, 307 S. Main St., Edinburgh, IN 46124.**

•Country music guy seeks pen pal gals, 18-25. Have own hand working various country fairs. Like camping, song publishing. Faves are Alan, Brooks & Dunn, and Tracy Lawrence. **Jerry Minnick, P.O. Box 1946, Hiram, OH 44234.**

•Hi! I'm 12 going on 13. My favorite songs are "Any Man of Mine" and "I Guess I Must Be Wishing On Someone Else's Star." My favorite singers are Clay Walker, Rick Trevino and Shania Twain. Will answer all. No inmates. **Kerri-Jo Hyde, 4658 State Hwy. 68, Ogdensburg, NY 13669**

•Hi! I am a single, 18-year-old female. A country music lover. Favorites are Alabama, BlackHawk, Reba, George, etc. Hobbies are meeting new people and camping. Would like to hear from anyone 18-39. No inmates, please. **Katie Baugh, 12494 5th St., Yucaipa, CA 92399.**

•36-year-old Army man, soon to be divorced. Love listening to Hank Jr., Pam Tillis, Johnny Cash, Charlie Daniels, Lorie, Shania Twain, Bob Wills, 1960's British music, and new country and pop. Enjoy fishing, walking, writing, golf and traveling. From Oklahoma, near Tulsa. Also like country people. **James Fair, IHHC, 43rd ASG, Box 10, Ft. Carson, CO 80913.**

•Hi, I'm a 29-year-old who loves country music. I'm happily married and we have two young boys. My favorites are John Michael, Sammy K., Reba, Garth, Pam T., and Neal McCoy. My hobbies are being with my family, camping, swimming and collecting bears. I'll answer all, no inmates, please. **Mary Woods, PO Box 228, Bloomingburg, OH 43106.**

•Hi! I'm a 22-year-old, married homemaker with one daughter. I am a big fan of Travis Tritt. I am interested in

buying pictures of him and trading pictures, articles, etc. If you love Travis, please write to me. Will answer all. No inmates, please. **Jennifer Weaver, PO Box 325, Tate, GA 30177-0325**

•I'm 41 years young. Would like to correspond with country music female fans, age 20 and up. Unfortunately I'm incarcerated, but I'm not a bad person. Some favorites are Conway, Waylon, Alabama and many more. Also like classic rock. **John L. Borg, CSP Sacramento B7-121, PO Box 290066, Represa, CA 95671-0066.**

•Hey, ladies, this 30-year old country music lover would really enjoy hearing from you. Please don't let where I am keep us from writing. Everyone makes mistakes. Will answer all. **Charlie Street #854769, P.O. Box 601 CIC, Pendleton, IN 46064.**

•Howdy y'all! Almost 50-year-old Cajun living the lyrics of a Johnny Cash song, "Stuck in Folsom Prison." Would really enjoy corresponding with any and all who go crazy over Reba, Kenny, Willie, Garth, with the occasional time out for Gloria Estefan, Pink Floyd, Arlo Guthrie or even Puccini. **George H. Brown, E-21720, FB7-121, PO Box 290066, Represa, CA 95671-0066.**

•Hello! I am a 32-year-old, married housewife and mother of two children. Love country music and making friends via mail. Will answer all. **Iva C. Lehr, PO Box 1575, Willis, TX 77378.**

•Hi, I'm a country boy and a photographer. I'm 36 and have met/had my photo taken with hundreds of country stars. My favorite is Dolly! I collect and have met her. Also fan of John Schneider, Barbara Mandrell, Crystal, Marie Osmond, Ronnie Milsap, Anne Murray, Loretta, Tammy, Aaron T., Mary Chapin, Ken Mellons, Pam T. Would like to hear from other fans/collectors. We could help each other out. I also met/collect Hollywood stars, and *Wizard of Oz*, *Monsters*, and *Lucey's* shows. **Bob Simmons, 2025 Innwood Dr., Youngstown, OH 44515.**

•Hi! I am a divorced male, age 36. I love country dancing and country music. My favorites are Tanya, Emmylou, Patty Loveless and George Strait to name a few. Would love to hear from women of any age interested in a new friend. **Frank White, 80 Bel Air Dr. S., Merritt Island, FL 32952.**

•This 21-year-old, single cowgirl would like to hear from single cowboys 20-30 years of age, who must at least be able to saddle a horse. Interests include: horseback riding, rodeos, dancing, camping and outdoors. Have listened to country music my entire life, some favorites are Alabama, George Strait, Randy, Reba and Trisha. No inmates, please. **Jennifer Trusty, 13004 Cnty. Rd. 22, Granada, CO 81041**

•I'm looking for pen pals who are big Conway fans. To me he was the greatest. I'd love to hear from others who agree. Would also be interested in trading Conway memorabilia. I'm 40 and female. No prisoners, please. **Ms. Leslie Gardner 7533 Madora Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91306**

•Hi, I'm a female, 36, from the NYC area, interested in learning to line dance. My favorite artists are The

Tractors, Brother Phelps, A.J., Diffie, Wynonna, Trisha and others. Other interests are sports, science fiction and traveling. Will answer all except inmates. **Millie Elstad, 279 Adams Ave., Staten Island, NY 10306.**

•Hi! I'm 33 years old and I would love to hear from ladies only of any age. I am a big fan of Brooks & Dunn, Travis Tritt, Joe Diffie, Lee Roy Parnell and just about everybody else. No inmates, please. **Elaine Hendrix, 1041 Brighton, Tucson, AZ 85711-5109.**

•31 years old with minor walking disability. So don't go out much, but would love to make new friends. Love country music, the outdoors, auto racing, my pet lab, country and gospel music. Would like all guys age 24-32 to write, no inmates, please. Will answer all. **Nannette Brinnon, 906 S. 18th St., El Centro, AZ 85711-5109.**

•Hi! I'm 33 years old, married and looking to make some new friends. I love country music, animals, concerts, movies, shopping, and walking. If you're between 25 and 45 and share these interests, please write. No inmates. **Kathy Dieffenderfer, PO Box 231, White Deer, PA 17887.**

•Hi! I'm 15. I love country music. Favorites are Garth, JMM, Clay Walker and more. Interests include reading, writing letters, camping and auto racing. Would love to hear from people with similar interests. Please, no inmates. **Dezra Sigwing, 21750 Juniper Flats Rd., Nuevo, CA 92567.**

•Hello, I'm 28 and looking for sincere pen pals. Interests are camping, NASCAR racing, writing and animals. My country music faves are Garth, Alan, Alabama, George Strait, JMM and more. Will answer all. **Myla Michalec, 3360 Chichester Ave, Apt S-45, Boothwyn, PA 19061**

•Hi! I'm 19 years old and a big country music fan. My favorite singers are Anne Murray, Garth, Aaron T., Reba, Brooks & Dunn and Shania Twain. I like writing letters, playing softball and volleyball, and going to church. I'll try to answer all letters. Would love to hear from 19-24 year old men and women. **Jodi Rupert, Rt. 1 PO Box 452, Towanda, KS 67144.**

•Howdy from the Lone Star State! I'm a 24-year-old college graduate. Favorite artists are: Garth, George, Clay, John Michael and Alan, to name a few. Other interests are: reading, concerts, shopping, movies and rodeos. I would like to hear from anyone ages 24-30, especially real cowboys. No inmates, please. Will try to answer all. **Kimberly R. Simpson, PO Box 897, Kyle, TX 78640.**

•Hi! I am 28 years old and have never been married. I love the country and country music. Some favorites are Garth, Alan, George S., Brooks & Dunn and more. I enjoy country dancing, cooking, reading romance novels, watching pro wrestling, writing letters, taking long walks on the farm, and I am a big animal lover. I'd love to hear from everyone, so please fill my mailbox. **Michelle Yanta, PO Box 396, Devine, TX 78016.**

•Hello! I am 29 and love country music. Would like to hear from single

guys, 28 to 40. Ladies any age also welcome. Favorite is Loretta, also like Donna Fargo, JMM, Tim, Kathy M., Eddy Raven, Alan, Tanya and more. Like horses, NASCAR and bears. Need pals in WV. No prisoners, please. **Kay Howes, 2101 Chapel Rd., Gassaway, WV 26624.**

•Hi! I'm a 23-year-old, single country music fan. I love to read, write letters and more. My favorites are John Michael, Tim, Reba, Shania Twain, 4 Runner and more. I'd love to hear from other country fans, including Native Americans, between the ages of 18 and 30. No prisoners, please. **Christine Snyder, Box 134, White, PA 15490.**

•43-year-old male, seeking women to write to. Looks, age unimportant. Give this man a chance. **Jeff A. Bailey #H-33812-PVSP, Box 8503, C-4, H6-L, Coalinga, CA 93210.**

•Hello! I'm 34 years old, brought up on country. Prisoner desires friendship and correspondence. Some interests include art, sports, cooking and writing letters. Will answer all. **Daniel James E-71473, P.O. Box 7500, BI-2B3, Crescent City, CA 95531**

•Hello! I'm a 19-year-old female looking for pen pals. I love country music, especially Tim McGraw, Tracy Lawrence, Tracy Byrd, Clay Walker, JMM, Little Texas, BlackHawk and Diamond Rio. I love to write, and would love to hear from single guys 18-30. No inmates, please. **Andrea Dubas, 2510 Mt. Vernon, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.**

•Howdy! I'm a 24-year-old country cowboy. Hobbies include computers, bonsai, outdoors, rodeos, reading and writing poetry and Westerns. Favorite artists include Ronna Reeves, Selena, Tim McGraw, Rick Trevino and The Mavericks, among others. Would love to hear from single country cowgirls, especially military. Will try to answer all. **Joey West, 711 N. 1st Ave. #3, Laurel, MS 39440.**

•Divorcee wants to write males who are divorcee, widowers or single men 50-70. I'm 48. Like yard sales, flea markets, travel, reading, wrestling and basketball. Favorite singers are Dolly, Billy Joe Shaver, Anne Murray and Ronnie McDowell. No prisoners, please. **Dorothy Cozine, 156 Sunset Dr., Frankfort, KY 40601-3632.**

•Hi. Presently incarcerated, soon to be released. I'm 36 and enjoy country music. Favorites are Linda Davis, Reba, Faith Hill and Vince, to name a few. Hobbies include writing songs and poems and meeting people. Would like to hear from anyone. **Bruce Lane #21180, Box 208, Indian Springs, NV 88070.**

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GENE BEAR ARCHIVES



By Rich Kienzle

**E**lton Britt has not been dealt the best hand by history. For the most part, he remains forgotten, little more than a footnote to the rise of country with his 1942 hit, "There's a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," the first Gold disc ever awarded for a country recording. A few may remember him for his yodeling, much in the style of his hero Jimmie Rodgers. Certainly, Britt never achieved the heights that Ernest Tubb, Eddy Arnold or Webb Pierce did. He was no innovator musically, nor did he claim to be. Yet he accomplished much, as a yodeler and pioneer West Coast country performer in the days when the L.A. country scene was attached to the sleepy, rural town of Los Angeles. After his 1942 hit, Britt did a number of records with pop acts long before that was widely done. His fame also paved the way for the far greater success of a singer-yodeler of the next generation: Slim Whitman.

James Britt Baker was born June 27, 1913, in Marshall, Arkansas. His interest in music grew as time went on, and he picked up the songs of Jimmie Rodgers and other performers in a similar style. He might have taken some time to develop, but good luck stepped in. In California, the popular country stringband The Beverly Hill Billies, who'd just started performing over Los Angeles radio in 1930, were losing one of their members, a singer named Hubert Walton. Since Walton came from Arkansas, the band traveled there to find a replacement. They found 17-year-old Jimmy Baker and soon had him on a plane to California. Renamed Elton Britt, he fit right into the band, which would become a pioneer country organization on the coast, with the likes of Zeke Manners and Stuart Hamblen among its membership. Over the next three years, Britt, appearing regularly with the group over KMPC in Los Angeles, grew as a performer and by 1933, was ready to leave the band.

Heading east to New York City, he joined transplanted Beverly Hill Billies "Pappy, Zeke and Ezra," "Zeke" being Zeke Manners. Manners offered Britt a slot, and the act became "Zeke Manners and his gang with Elton Britt." Britt spent the next few years working and recording with various acts, developing a formidable reputation as a yodeler. He started recording alone for RCA Victor's Bluebird label in 1937. In New York, he also started working with Bob Miller, a Tennessee-born songwriter who wrote

# Elton Britt

*A yodeler whose biggest hit received the first Gold record in country music, Britt's star shown most brightly during World War II.*

cowboy songs in the early and mid-30's and had developed a knack for creating songs based on events of the day. It was Miller who penned "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," a song reflecting the rush of patriotism that followed the December 7, 1941, Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. Such songs were common in the days following Pearl Harbor in the pop field, and country performers had done their share, such as Carson Robison's "We're Gonna Have to Slap the Dirty Little Jap" and "Mussolini's Letter to Hitler."

"There's a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere" was a very different type of number: the plaintive song of a country boy wanting to do his part for the war effort. It immediately attracted attention, with Britt being asked to sing it at the White House for President Roosevelt. Eventually it sold four million copies, qualifying Britt for the first "Gold record" ever awarded a country performer. (Glenn Miller had received the first Gold record ever awarded for his million-selling big band favorite, "Chattanooga Choo Choo," in 1941.) In 1960 Red River Dave revived the song, rather inappropriately, to commemorate the Russian shooting down of an American spy pilot, hardly the same thing as the original. In the end, this song alone would make Britt a star.

Such records often wind up being an artist's only hit. Not in Britt's case. He followed up in 1945 with another patriotic tune: "I'm a Convict with Old Glory in My Heart" and, with the war ended, had an even bigger hit in early 1946 with the sentimental "Someday," which remained at Number Two on *Billboard's* Folk Music charts for five weeks. His next release, "Wave to Me My Lady," and the flipside, "Blueberry Lane," both landed in the Top Five in the spring of 1946, the year that proved to be his biggest for hit records. He generally kept his home base in New York City, where he was backed on records by top flight New York jazz and pop studio musicians.

In the late spring of 1946, he had a Number Five hit with a cover of "Detour," also a hit for California-based acts Spade Cooley, Wesley Tuttle and Foy Willing and The Riders of the Purple Sage. That summer came "Blue Texas Moonlight," a Number Six single for one week, followed in late summer by "Gotta Get Together With My Gal." In 1948, "Chime Bells" was Number Six on *Billboard's* Best Selling Folk Records, Number 12 on its Folk Juke Box charts (both charts were separate in those days). In 1949 he and a group called The

Skytoppers covered George Morgan's hit, "Candy Kisses," and took it to Number Four on the Best Seller charts, Number 12 on the Juke Box charts.

In addition to doing movie appearances in such Western films as *Laramie* and others, Britt had also been working on New York radio with female yodeler Rosalie Allen, who also recorded for RCA, and in 1950 she, Britt and the instrumental group The Three Suns (known for their 1947 hit "Peg O' My Heart") teamed for a version of the Hank Williams number, "Beyond the Sunset," which became the only hit recording of

In 1960, his career fading, he ran in New Hampshire's 1960 Presidential Primary.

By the late 60's, it appeared that Britt's hitmaking days were behind him. There were several reasons for this. The obvious one was that his style seemed dated. In addition, he was a highly polished, smooth singer comfortable recording with slick pop musicians, which set him apart from the Ernest Tubb and Lefty Frizzell school of singers. Certainly he had no chance of appealing to younger singers, and with a lack of appeal to the fans of the rawer hard country of Tubb



**A Britt songbook from 1937 with all Bob Miller songs. In later years he collaborated with Zeke Manners on *The Wandering Cowboy* album, which included "Star Spangled Banner Waving...."**

that song. That year they followed it up with "Quicksilver," another Top Ten single. Britt's established name led him for a time to Boston's popular WCOP *Hayloft Jamboree* Barn Dance show, on which he appeared with various acts including Buzz and Jack, which featured "Cowboy" Jack Clement.

Britt continued performing around the country after that, though the music scene was changing. He remained renowned for his yodeling, and in 1954 RCA released Britt's first LP, a 10-inch collection of his yodeling numbers. For the remainder of the 1950's, however, his hitmaking days had ended. By 1959, he was recording for ABC Paramount, having no success with singles, but recording four LP's. *The Wandering Cowboy* featured Britt with old friend Zeke Manners. Subsequent ABC LP's were *I Hear a Forest Praying* (1960), *The Singing Hills* (1965) and *Somethin' for Everyone* (1966).

and others, he was musically a man without a constituency.

Or so it seemed. In the spring of 1968 he was back on RCA and, to everyone's surprise, he was back on the charts with "The Jimmie Rodgers Blues," a strange number that served as both Rodgers tribute (at a time when Rodgers had been forgotten by everyone except Ernest Tubb and Merle Haggard) and a reminder of Britt's own yodeling talents. It made it to Number 26, spending a respectable ten weeks on the charts, followed by a new LP, *When Evening Shadows Fall*. His 1969 single, "The Bitter Taste," did far less well, making it to only Number 71.

Out of the spotlight, Britt was living at a Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, farm at the time he died: June 23, 1972.

**Albums Available**  
See For CMSA Members Only page.

# Readers Create

## Remembering George Morgan

From Newport, Rhode Island, comes member Glennice Cate Newhouse, who says, "I read each issue faithfully, but I'm always anxious as I open it to see if there is anything about my long-departed friend, George Morgan, but it seems he is never mentioned." Glennice rectifies that with her tribute to Morgan, originally written in 1978, some three years after George's July 1975 death.

### My Tribute to George

I met a man a long time ago,  
the nicest man I could ever know  
He had the sweetest smile and the most  
handsome face,  
I knew no singer could ever take his place.  
He sang beautiful songs the world will surely  
miss,  
his big hit was a song about a "candy kiss."  
He sang beautiful songs so true to life,  
he sang about Anna, his beautiful wife.  
When he was on stage singing the songs we  
loved to hear

We knew no one could sing them like the  
George we hold dear.  
He sang sad songs like "Almost," my favorite  
song.  
Each time I heard him sing it, the memory  
was so strong.

He traveled this world over, and brought  
happiness to all,  
but the sad part, I hate to tell you,  
George won't be with us this fall.  
God needed George in heaven, to sing around  
his golden throne.  
And someday we can all see him, when our  
master calls us home.  
There is no way to tell you how much we  
miss you day by day,  
Your loved ones are so lonely, since you went  
away.  
But you will live forever in the hearts that  
hold you dear.  
'Cause we will play your music for everyone  
to hear.  
—Glennice Cate Newhouse

## Walking a Mile in Her Shoes

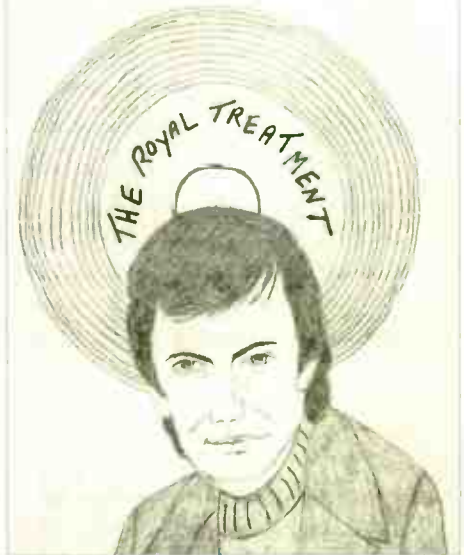
Ric Florka and his wife Earleen, members in Canton, Michigan, are country dance instructors, and in his letter, Ric relates the situation that led to his writing "Everything" from his wife's point of view: It seems that Earleen was going with the dance group to Nashville, and mentioned to a friend that she was looking forward to "getting away from everything." The friend asked if Ric was "everything," and he picked up the ball from there.

### Everything

He did everything he wanted and never paid  
any mind.  
I try my best to tell him everything's going  
to be just fine.  
He still keeps his girlfriends happy and then  
fed me this line.  
That if he stays with me and I let him be,  
I'll get everything in time.  
I'd tell him everything's not perfect, no  
everything's not great.  
We could try to work things out but you get  
home too late.  
Till one night he came home to find my letter  
on our bed.  
Then he got smashed, his life was trashed  
'Cause this is what it said:

### Chorus:

I'm gonna  
Give up everything, getting rid of  
everything, leaving everything behind.  
Everything went from bad to worse, getting  
everything off my mind.  
Exactly what I was writing him, he couldn't  
really see.



## A Look at Billy Joe

Member J.G. Felton, of Eure, North Carolina, sends in a sketch done by her daughter, Rosa Lee, of a family favorite—Billy Joe Royal. Mrs. Felton used to buy every issue of *Country Music Magazine* at a local store, but became a member when she "subscribed after the owner of the store retired and closed!"

Until he read the part that said he was  
everything to me.

He couldn't believe I left him, gave me  
everything I had.  
Those pots and pans, new garbage cans, my  
car at best, was sad.  
He grabbed that piece of paper off the  
refrigerator door.  
And shed a tear 'cause he was out of beer.  
And read my letter once more.

### (Repeat Chorus)

He remembers now in looking back some  
things I used to say.  
How everything seemed to just go wrong.  
And it seemed like every day,  
Everything was never as I thought and I  
wanted it to end.  
Then he pulled my letter from the trash, and  
read it once again.

### (Repeat Chorus)

He called me up and promised me he'd be  
more sensitive,  
That running around and getting drunk  
wasn't any way to live.  
I said, Well that's just fine, and I wish you well.  
But I just got a ring from a new man in my  
life,  
Who says he'll be my everything.

—Ric Florka



## George in Dots

Jimmy Taylor, a member in Harker Heights, Texas, is a big George Strait fan. Jimmy says he's always glad to see George rank so high on our members' polls. He did this take on George using pointilism, an art term meaning that the entire picture is made up of a series of dots. "All except the hat," quips Jimmy, adding that his original is 25x30 inches. That's a lot of dots!

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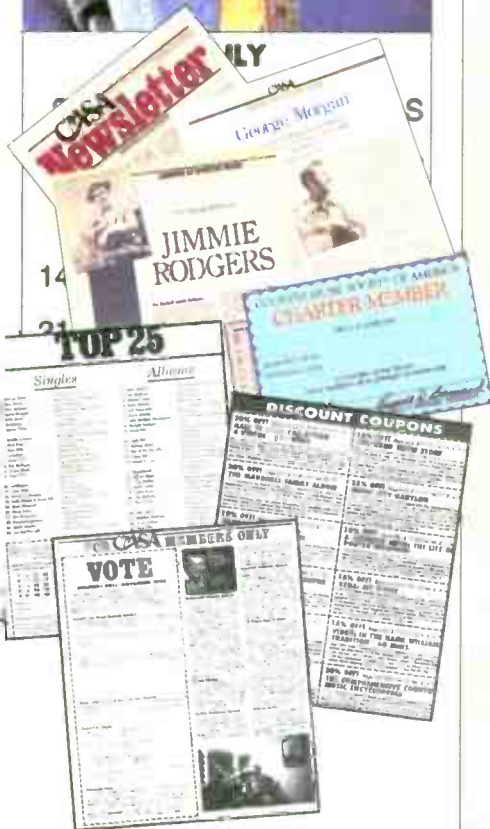
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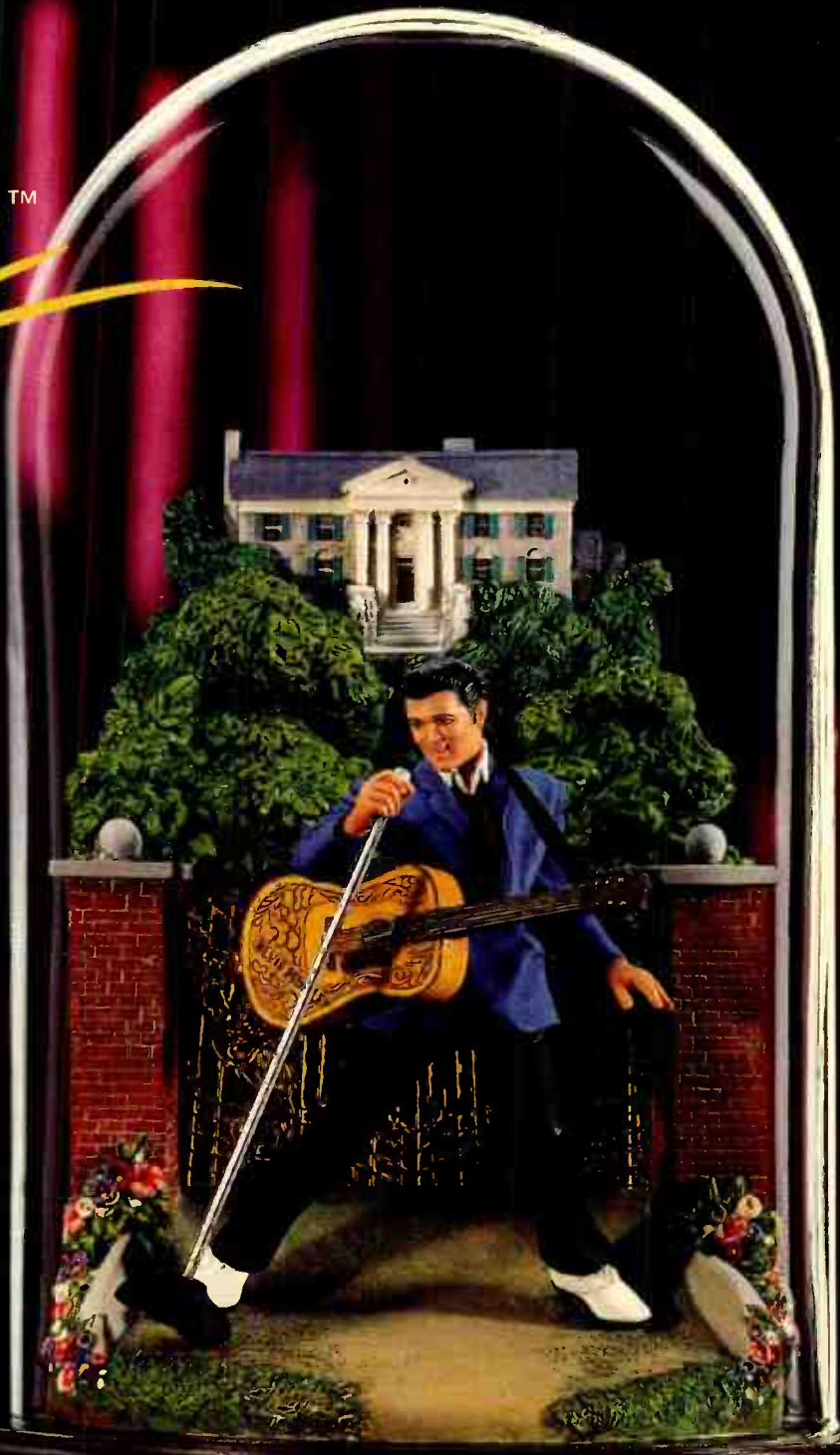
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# THE BUSINESS OF

# Dead Reckoning

*The artists behind Nashville's maverick label give the music business a run for its money.*

*By Patrick Carr*

**S**inger/songwriter Kieran Kane, recently a major-label solo artist and before that half of The O'Kanes, the acoustic duo who rode the New Traditionalist movement of the early 80's to considerable success, is explaining why he and a small group of friends have launched a record company owned and run by themselves, not music businessmen:

"...The other day, we got a check from record sales in Norway, and I was able to deposit our record company's share into the record company's account, and my share as an artist into my account. That was a glorious moment for me, for many reasons. One of them was that here was a record company actually paying me. You see, I've been on four major labels and I've sold hundreds of thousands of records, but that's the first royalty check I've ever seen.

"...Every record I've ever turned in to a record company, they have a meeting where they all sit there listening to it, and whatever doesn't sound like a single, everybody starts getting kinda fidgety and moving around. They really want to fast forward it, just skip over all this other stuff.

"...I still get royalty statements from my past record deals, and in one way they're just hilarious, because we're talking about hundreds and hundreds of

thousands of dollars in each situation. But the records themselves, the music, are just gone. Out of print. I mean, I have one copy each of The O'Kanes albums and that's it. I can't get them. I don't even have copies to hand down to my kids."

There's a lot more, and anyone who's been around the music business for a while (Kane's been at it almost 15 years) can fill it in for you. The pressure to bend your music into a fashionable shape, the legions of advisors and consultants and executives making six- and seven-figure salaries, the creative accounting, the chaos that comes into your career when one big shot's agenda replaces another's. It's tiresome, at the very least, but it's just the way things are, the game Nashville's major-league musical players have to play. It may not, however, be the only game in town. That's what Kieran Kane is betting on.

**T**o understand how Kane's initiative is different, you have to know the Nashville norm: how the recording/marketing end of the big-time country music business works.

When an artist signs a recording contract with a company like MCA, Arista, Sony or any of the other major labels, he or she is giving that company control over manufacture, marketing, promotion, advertising and most other aspects of the





Tammy Rogers, Kieran Kane, Mike Henderson, Kevin Welch and Harry Stinson join forces in *Dead Reckoning*. How to do business in Nashville the new-fashioned way.



**Welch and Kane “at home” in the studio in suburban Nashville. From production to manufacturing to packaging and publicity, the Dead Reckoning crew remains in control. They also play on each other’s albums to keep costs down. The music is never compromised.**



“product”—his or her recorded music. In a somewhat more murkily defined manner, the artist is also ceding control of the music itself, or at least some aspects of the music-making process.

For the artist, the advantage of this arrangement is that he or she doesn’t have to do all the work, most of which is beyond his or her experience. The average singer has never had to bird-dog a CD manufacturing foreman, sweet-talk a radio program director, strong-arm a distributor, persuade Kostas to give him his best new song, or convince the hottest studio musicians in town that his sessions are the ones to work. Singers can be involved in some of these processes if they want to be, and if their careers are spectacularly successful, they can even dominate them, but much more often they’re in the position of going along for the ride. That’s particularly true of everything that happens after a record has been fed into the record company’s manufacturing/marketing/promoting machine.

The finances of the average deal reflect that picture. Basically, the record company covers most of the expenses and

reaps most of the rewards, pulling in the lion’s share of revenues from tape and CD sales, while the artist can claim only ten percent (or thereabouts) of the retail price of each unit sold, payable semi-annually as a “royalty.”

In theory that can mount up—a buck and a half per unit isn’t so bad—but in practice nothing like the whole ten percent ends up on the artist’s side of the table. Between expenses the company charges against him—everything from the cost of publicity and fees for the packaging of CD’s and cassettes to the entire recording budget and half the cost of video production, plus a battery of accounting tricks to dazzle even the most jaded aficionado of institutionalized larceny—the average recording artist emerges from the average record deal seriously in the red. It’s actually possible—in fact it’s routine—for a singer to have a legitimate Gold album and earn no royalties at all. That, plus a few other nasty little surprises, helps explain the somewhat shell-shocked demeanor of all those nice, recently starry-eyed young famous people running around Nashville.

So how do recording artists get rich, or even get by? Well, for a start, they get cash up front. When they sign their deal with the record company, they get an advance—a lump sum which in effect is a loan secured by their future royalties, and which comes either as a straight advance or as a “fund” with which the artist pays for production of his or her record, keeping what’s left after all the bills are paid.

In either case every dime is “recoupable”—the record company will deduct it from the artist’s ten percent once money from sales starts coming in—but at least the artist has some cash in hand. That cash, moreover, never has to be actually paid back: the company recoups it if the record sells well, but if the record stiffs, they’re out of luck (until next time, anyway. If the artist makes a second, more successful album with them, they recoup their “losses” from that one).

Advances for beginners aren’t fortunes, but they’re not peanuts either. They run between \$15,000 and \$30,000. At the other end of the success scale, they can be downright significant. An act of Garth/Reba/Vince magnitude will get a recording fund of one to 1.5 million per album, which makes for a tidy little chunk of change even after really splurging on recording costs.

All the same, advance money doesn’t compare to what a performer can make on the road from concert fees and concession sales. In an average year on the road, a platinum-selling act can rake in five to six times what he or she can make from tape and CD sales. And that’s the bottom line. That’s how you get rich. First and foremost, the records are lures to get people in the door. If you’re smart and lucky, they’ll also make you some extra dough once your career has been up and running awhile. If you write your own songs, that adds to your extra dough (and can become your retirement income once the crowds go thataway).

For many artists the system works fine, just as long as they don’t dwell too long on all those middlepersons living high off their work. If the mainstream country audience is their target, the major-label route gives them a good shot, and it doesn’t actually cost them a dime. Plus, of course, it’s their only option: there’s no route into the country mainstream but country radio, and country radio won’t play anything but major-label records, and major labels won’t deal with artists on anything but the usual terms.

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MAGAZINE

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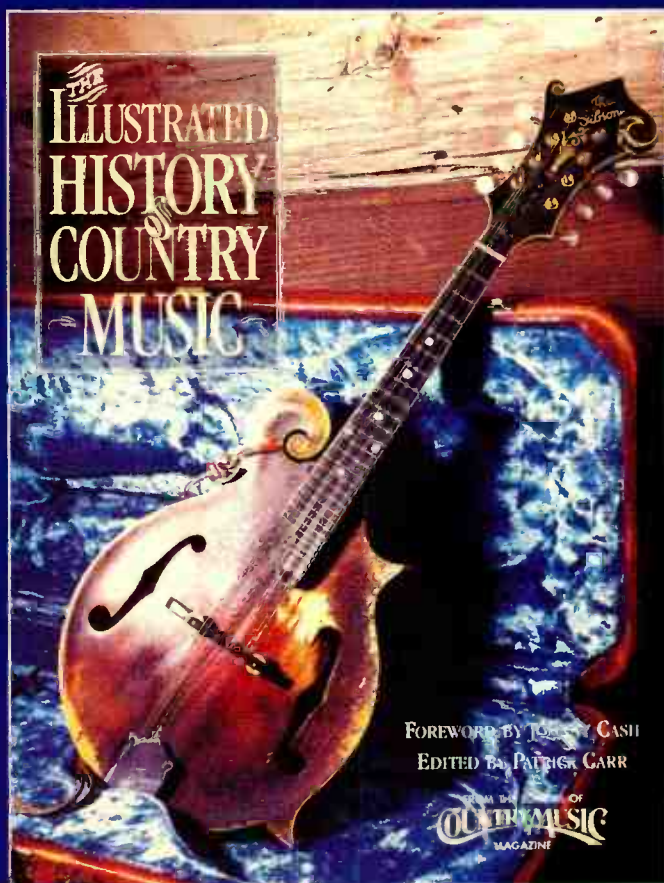
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This highly-anticipated edition is an unparalleled look at country music—the music of America’s rural working people. And who better to tell this colorful story than the people who have brought you America’s favorite country music magazine for more than 20 years? With over 650 photographs, some rare and never seen, some so familiar they’ve become classics, this account traces the music from its origins through to its present blossoming into a billion-dollar industry.

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BY JOHNNY CASH:

*“To me, The Illustrated History of Country Music is a valuable document. Through it, I touch my roots, and in doing so, find a strong kinship with the minstrels and troubadours of old.”*

The editors of *Country Music Magazine* bring to life the voices, sounds and feelings evoked by the music of each era, from the Great Depression through the World War II boom to the Nashville Sound. They revisit the folk revival of the 60’s, the Outlaw movement, the Urban Cowboy craze and beyond. Hundreds of artists are here, from The Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Williams, and Hank Snow, to today’s stars like Dwight Yoakam and Garth Brooks.



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What, though, if the mainstream isn't your goal, or you don't belong there? If that's the case, there's really no way things are going to work out for anyone. Radio's not going to play you, your records aren't going to fill the corporate coffers, and, after varying degrees of frustration and even rancor, your label's going to dump you. Then the game's over, unless another label makes the same mistake and you go along for that ride. And all the way along the road, you have to deal with pressure to make music country radio will like, to keep trying to ram that square peg into that round hole, to sell way beyond your natural audience potential of a hundred thousand albums (or two or three) until you hit the current worth-the-company-effort bottom line of half a million plus. In the end, you'll probably emerge with little more than an education, a headache and a spell in the high life.

Kane speaks graphically about the artist's side of the process. "When I was on a major label, when my records would come out, we only stayed at four-star hotels and ate in four-star restaurants, and everywhere we went was in a limo...I found myself several times with my record company publicist going, 'Look, I know how this works. I know they're not going to get my record on the radio, so let's enjoy ourselves while we can. Spend whatever you want against my account. I don't care, 'cause I'm not going to be here in a year. They'll just send me this stack of paperwork every six months, telling me I still have a debt of \$300,000, and I've earned \$2.87.'"

That's funny in its own twisted way, but the basic themes are still waste, excess, conflict and frustration, and the end product is often great music which appears briefly and then vanishes, sometimes forever. That's a mess, and in the past decade or three it's compromised the careers of many, if not most, of the more talented artists country music has seen, a whole litany of nonconformist names from hitmakers like John Anderson and Rodney Crowell to commercial "failures" like Joe Ely, Steve Earle, Delbert McClinton, Paulette Carlson, Jo-EI Sonnier, Marty Brown and Kelly Willis. The system just chewed those folks up.

So what's the answer? In the past decade or so it's been simple: either you bend your music to fit the mainstream (never a long-term solution, often a short-term disaster) or you leave town, at least as far as the recording business goes. Head for Austin or someplace else where they have small, independent record labels—Texas, New York, California, Virginia, Massachusetts, wherever (not to mention Branson) and do your thing there. Forget country radio, forget seeing your CD's in the big stores, forget Nashville.

Basically, then, what we have today is a two-channel system for getting country music from its makers to its consumers. In Channel A, artists willing and able to aim at mass appeal go through the major labels to country radio, and you can buy their wares at the big chain stores. In Channel B, everything is much smaller, from the record companies themselves to their executives' salaries, their recording budgets, the number of radio stations that will play their music and stores that will stock their product, and the number of units their product can be expected to sell. Relatively recent developments in the two-channel system include a dramatic drop in the number of Channel A slots



Producer/musician/record exec Harry Stinson.

available to artists as mainstream radio playlists grow shorter and shorter, and an ever-widening gap between channels as their audiences A and B diverge. We seem to have arrived at, or been led to, a place where the Brooks & Dunn fan and the Ely & Earle fan are so different in age or origin or outlook that they could never really be friends (though neither of them would be caught dead in Branson).

**T**here are some signs that the two-channel system is becoming unnaturally strained—for instance, when multi-CMA-Award-winning Alison Krauss can't get country airplay because she refuses to move from Rounder Records to one of the major labels, that's trouble—but for now the status quo holds and never the twain shall meet.

Regardless of what they don't share, the great majority of Channel A and Channel B artists do have something in common: a boss, or at the very least an equal partner. Somebody else always makes at least some of the key decisions.

Somebody else always has at least half the power. It's in that respect—no boss, no dude with a Mercedes and a marketing degree saying it really would be better if the CD had ten songs instead of 14 and were released in June, not April, and maybe you should get a new hairdo—that Dead Reckoning Records is not just different, but revolutionary.

**"K**evin was looking for a new record deal, and so was I, and we'd both had some offers," says Kane, beginning the story of how he, singer/songwriter Kevin Welch, drummer/producer Harry Stinson, fiddler Tammy Rogers and singer/songwriter Mike Henderson put Dead Reckoning on the Nashville map.

"The offers we had came from people who had left major labels and were starting up new labels. One guy sent me the business prospectus for a new label, and I remember reading this thing and thinking it was pretty alarming. They were talking about raising two, three million dollars to start this thing up, and saying, 'The first year we'll sell a quarter of a million records. By the third year we'll be in the black.' In other words, they were talking about being millions of dollars in debt before they even opened the doors!

"I just went, 'Nooooo, this is not the way to do this.' These people were so top-heavy, they were just doomed to failure—I mean, an overhead of ten, twenty, fifty thousand dollars a month, and no records? So we decided to start at the other end of things: get the music together first, and keep the overhead down to nothing."

That's what they did. To produce the first Dead Reckoning record, Kane's own *Dead Reckoning*, they rented studio time on weekends, when the rates are lowest because the major-label stars are out on the road; played the instruments themselves, or had friends sit in for the lowest permissible union pay scale; recorded harmony vocals on Kane's DAT setup; and so on, to the point that he and his partners spent only \$12,000 to achieve a master tape ready for the pressing plant. They did their paper and phone work themselves, from their homes. Kane's oldest son handled the mail in exchange for auto insurance through college.

# VIDEO SALE

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This is Randy Travis' newest home video release, and it's a must for every fan. It features eight of his best hit songs including "Heroes and Friends," "Better Class of Losers," "If I Didn't Have You," "Look Heart, No Hands," "An Old Pair of Shoes," "Cowboy Boogie," "Wind in the Wire" and "Before You Kill Us All." Item No. V9T - \$19.95

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Here are both of Lorrie's Number One video hits, "Something in Red" and "Watch Me." It also features "I Guess You Had to Be There," "Half Enough," "My Favorite Things," "My Night to Howl" and "If You Came Back from Heaven." Item No. V2Y2 - \$16.95

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**Keeper of the Stars—20 mins.**

Included on this hot new video are "Someone to Give My Love To," "Holdin' Heaven," "Lifestyles of the Not So Rich and Famous," "Watermelon Crawl," "The Keeper of the Stars" and "Walking to Jerusalem." Item No. V10N - \$14.95

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**The Woman in Me—25 mins.**

This new video includes "The Woman in Me (Needs The Man in You)," "Any Man of Mine," "Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under," "You Lay a Whole Lot of Love on Me," "Dance with the One That Brought You" and "What Made You Say That." Item No. V10M - \$14.95

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Yesterday's legends, today's brightest superstars. For one magical night, they share the spotlight of country music's greatest spectacular—the Country Music Hall of Fame 25th Anniversary Celebration. There are classic Hank Williams favorites performed by Alan Jackson, Randy Travis and Tanya Tucker...Clint Black sings and plays the guitar of Jimmie Rodgers...Emmylou Harris, Patty Loveless and Pam Tillis tribute Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn and Kitty Wells...and so much more. Item No. V10Y - \$19.95

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*Red Hot & Country* captures a historic concert at the legendary Ryman Auditorium. This once-in-a-lifetime event brings together top contemporary superstars like Billy Ray Cyrus and Clint Black with legendary performers like Waylon Jennings and Carl Perkins. There are 17 great songs. Item No. V10R - \$24.95

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**Kris Kristofferson—90 mins.**

Here is the extraordinary career and life of the actor, songwriter and performer. It includes interviews with such notables as Willie Nelson, Dennis Hopper and Johnny Cash and features such songs as "Me and Bobby McGee," "Sunday Morning Coming Down" AND LOTS MORE! Item No. V6H - \$19.95

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**Pieces of Time—40 mins.**

Dwight's latest video features 11 songs, including "Suspicious Minds," "The Heart That You Own," "Turn It On, Turn It Up, Turn Me Loose," "Takes a Lot to Rock You," "You're the One," "Ain't That Lonely Yet" AND MORE! Item No. V9P - \$19.95

## NEW! DON WILLIAMS

**Video Collection Vol. 1: Echoes—55 mins.**

Here is Don's first-ever video collection featuring 14 of Don's favorite songs. Included are "Good Ole Boys Like Me," "The Ties That Bind," "That's the Thing About Love," "Till the Rivers All Run Dry," "It Must Be Love," "I'm Just a Country Boy" AND MORE! Item No. V10E - \$19.95

## COUNTRY OUTLAWS LIVE—23 mins.

Here is a rare look at eight of country music's best, live in concert, with such hits as "I Always Get Lucky With You"/George Jones, "Louisiana Saturday Night"/Porter Wagoner, "You're Out Doin' (What I'm Here Doin' Without)/Gene Watson, "Behind Closed Doors"/Charlie Rich, "It's a Cheatin' Situation"/Moe Bandy, "Don't the Girls All Get Prettier at Closing Time"/Mickey Gilley AND MORE! Item No. V3W - \$14.95

## SECOND FIDDLE TO A STEEL GUITAR—107 mins.

*Second Fiddle to a Steel Guitar* is a rare production featuring 17 old-time artists and 30 great songs including "Born to Lose," "Jambalaya," "Hello Walls," "Don't Let Me Cross Over" and "Two Worlds Collide." You'll see stars like Lefty Frizzell, Dottie West, Bill Monroe, Webb Pierce, Faron Young, Minnie Pearl and others, both on-stage and backstage. Item No. V7E - \$29.95

## LORETTA LYNN

**Honky Tonk Girl—60 mins.**

This personal portrait follows Loretta from rural Kentucky to the clubs of the Northwest, from her first Grand Ole Opry appearance to the 1970's Country Music Entertainer of the Decade award. This video features never-seen home movies and photos and over 20 songs and performances. Item No. V8A - \$24.95

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**Live in Tennessee—54 mins.**

Taped live from the Knoxville Civic Coliseum, this video shows George thrilling the audience with 15 big hits including "I Don't Need Your Rockin' Chair" and the Number One country song of all time, "He Stopped Loving Her Today." There's also "The Race Is On," "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?" "Bartender's Blues," "One Woman Man" AND 7 MORE! Item No. V1X - \$24.95

## THE STATLER BROS.

**What We Love to Do—40 mins.**

Celebrating their 30th anniversary last year, The Statlers released their first video in over a decade. It features "Elizabeth," "My Only Love," "What We Love to Do," "Atlanta Blue," "Maple Street Memories," "Sweeter & Sweeter," "You've Been Like a Mother to Me," "Let's Get Started" AND MUCH MORE! Item No. V6A - \$19.95

## NEW! MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER

**MY RECORD COMPANY MADE ME DO THIS—25 mins.**

The seven videos on this documentary spotlight Mary Chapin's extraordinary career. It features hits like "Shut Up and Kiss Me," "He Thinks He'll Keep Her," "Passionate Kisses," "I Feel Lucky," "You Win Again" and "This Shirt." Item No. V10L - \$16.95



## NEW! REBA McENTIRE

**Live—60 mins.**

This video from her tour includes "Respect," "Is There Life Out There," "The Greatest Man I Never Knew," "Walk On," "For My Broken Heart," "Why Haven't I Heard From You," "Does He Love You" (with Linda Davis), "Take It Back," "Till You Love Me" and "Fancy." Item No. V10X - \$24.95

## NEAL McCOY

**You Gotta Love That!—45 mins.**

This young star's career really took off with his RIAA Gold *No Doubt About It*, which yielded two Number One country singles (the title track and "Wink") and the Top Five hit, "The City Put the Country Back in Me." This video also includes "If I Built a Fire," "This Time I Hurt Her More (Than She Loves Me)" AND MORE! Item No. V4N - \$19.95

## NEW! LIGHT CRUST DOUGHBOYS

**Texas Swing—40 mins.**

At last, the long-awaited history of Texas swing as told around the story of The Light Crust Doughboys. This just-released video includes rare film footage of Bob Wills and W. Lee O'Daniel, plus uncut musical performances and celebrity interviews never seen before. Item No. V10Z - \$19.95

## JIM REEVES

**Golden Memories—50 mins.**

Here are some of Jim's biggest hits in a never before released collection of his most memorable television performances. Each song is performed in its entirety. This video is the most requested item by Jim Reeves fans and collectors. Item No. V4G - \$29.95

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*“At one point, I found myself sitting there going,  
‘This is the environment I’ve always wanted in my life.  
Here it is. This is like Heaven.’”*

A couple of points about all that. First is that your ears can't distinguish, sound-quality-wise, between the \$12,000 Dead Reckoning and the average major-label Nashville album, which costs around \$175,000; that extra \$163,000 translates to nothing, zero, banknotes in the wind. As to what happens between your ears...well, there's substance and meaning to Dead Reckoning. Kane writes wonderful songs, and he and everyone else on the record worked from the heart. More often than not, Nashville's finest are working from their wallets when they show up to cut those radio hits.

You can hear the difference, and it's there in all the Dead Reckoning product. A free, excited spirit moves through Tammy Rogers' and Don Heffington's graciously instrumental *In the Red*, Kevin Welch's *Life Down Here on Earth* (the equal of his two superb Warner Brothers albums), and Mike Henderson's passionate, very appropriately titled blues/rock/country *Edge of Night*.

The flourishing of such a spirit is easy to imagine in Kane's account of one day in the life of Dead Reckoning, when Emmylou Harris and The Fairfield Four gospel group came over to his house to record vocal overdubs on his one-good-microphone/one-good-DAT machine setup. "It was a snowy day, very quiet outside, and my lady friend is a caterer, so there were pots of stew and chili sitting in the kitchen for us. We started work in the afternoon, then took a break and sat around and talked about all kinds of stuff, and then we said, 'Okay, maybe we'd better go back at it' and worked on into the night. At one point, I found myself sitting there going, 'This is the environment I've always wanted in my life. Here it is. This is like Heaven.'"

A couple of points about all that. The Dead Reckoning setup includes an informal house band which, with a shift here or there when appropriate, plays on all the records. Tammy Rogers' fiddle is all over Kane's album, and Kane's guitar is all over hers, and both of them contributed mandolin work to Kevin Welch's *Life Down Here on Earth*. Harry Stinson drummed on that album, and co-produced it too, as he did *Dead Reckoning*. Both albums feature Mike Henderson's electric guitar, and Rogers, Stinson and Kane all sat in on Henderson's *Edge of Night*. Bassist Glenn Worf played on everything but Rogers' and Heffington's *In the Red*.

"It's become almost like a staff band, almost like Stax," says Kane, referring to

the legendary unit that backed Otis Redding and his Stax Records labelmates back in Memphis in the 60's. The Dead Reckoning band, though, doesn't have a "sound" the way Steve Cropper and the boys did; they play to the material.

Given their experience, that figures. They've all come a long way from around the musical compass to get to Dead Reckoning. Tammy Rogers, the youngest of them, has fiddled, played mandolin and sung backup in Patty Loveless' and Trisha Yearwood's bands, and recorded and performed with an ever-growing list of worthies including The Mavericks, Emmylou Harris, Randy Travis and Vince Gill. She's done a lot of work in L.A. as well as Nashville, and so has Harry Stinson. He traces his country career back to drumming for Dottie West in the 70's, but he's also played with Al Stewart, Peter Frampton, J.D. Souther, and (!!!) Etta James. He was one of Steve Earle's Dukes in the 80's (that's him on *Guitar Town*), and since then he's played with Joe Ely, Rosanne Cash, Buck Owens, Conway Twitty, Marty Stuart and a whole bunch of others. He has also produced prolifically (most notably and recently Martina McBride's *Wild Angels*), and from time to time he writes a hit.

For his part, Mike Henderson has been playing far too hot guitar around Nashville for a decade now, and writing and singing to boot. His 1994 RCA release, *Country Music Made Me Do It*, was hailed by *Rock and Rap Confidential* as "the best country music album of the 90's" (this mag liked it, too), and both Delbert McClinton and Tracy Nelson showed up to sing with him on his new cut of Pops Staples' "This May Be the Last Time," which should tell you something.

Kevin Welch and Kieran Kane really shouldn't need any introduction. Welch has been writing country hits since the late 70's and making critically acclaimed albums since the late 80's, and Kane's been a constant presence as both a songwriter and recording artist since his days with Jamie O'Hara in The O'Kanes.

Here, then, we have people who have been around most of the blocks musicians need to travel before they know how their business really works. That makes the Dead Reckoning cooperative doubly unique. Small, artist-owned/operated record companies have been part of the landscape in rap and rock for several years now, but in most cases their owner/

operators have been business neophytes, often drug-addled youngsters barely out of their teens—which typically (though not universally) has made them easy meals for the music biz big dogs. That might not happen to Dead Reckoning, whose other uniqueness is of course its status as the only company of its kind in country music today, or ever.

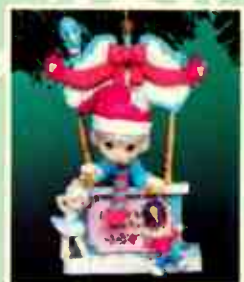
Their setup, and their mission, is indeed different. Each partner shares in the company profits, if any, and bears its losses. If a Kevin Welch album does very nicely, Kane, Rogers, Stinson and Henderson all benefit, not just Welch. If Kane's second CD fails to make back the money put into it, everybody loses, not just Kane. That's radical. So is the Dead Reckoning policy of never putting an album out of print. If the company is still around ten years from now, you'll still be able to order their first, or seventh, or 25th release.

In many ways their task isn't as difficult as it might seem. Distribution, the major problem for small labels, is handled by Rounder Records, which feeds Dead Reckoning product into its well-established nationwide web of "alternative" music stores and some of the bigger, better chains (the Tower stores being the most visible). That leaves Dead Reckoning due the typical record company share of each tape and CD sold, about \$8 per CD and \$4 per tape. That income has to fund production, manufacturing, packaging, publicity and promotion into the College/Adult Album Alternative/Americana radio market, but apart from manufacturing, which is a fixed cost, Kane and company's approach to these expenses is infinitely more cost-effective than a major label's. It also helps that in the realms of publicity and promotion, the people on the receiving end are often very receptive. Most music writers are fans already, at least of Kane and Welch, and so are most of the people in the radio web.

Once you cook all this down to the bottom line, you find that each Dead Reckoner stands to have a lot more than that \$1.50 major label royalty coming to him or her. You can also be pretty sure that if they're due it, they'll get it.

And there's something else you can be sure of: that all the Dead Reckoners, individually and collectively, really wanted to make the music they're sending out to us, and really gave it their all. For that alone—no matter how their initiative fares or whether it does or doesn't influence business as usual in Nashville—they are to be applauded. Loudly. ■





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## The Hamilton Collection

4810 Executive Park Ct., P.O. Box 44051, Jacksonville, FL 32231-4051

Since he arrived in Nashville from Oklahoma a few years ago, things haven't just gone well for Wade Hayes. They've gone incredibly well.

Like everybody, Hayes had the requisite hard times—a couple of months of them, anyway. He banged nails and played guitar in the clubs for a while to make ends meet. But, unlike most Music City wannabes, he never went through the humiliating process of passing tapes around and getting turned down by a dozen different labels. Within nine months of his arrival in Nashville, he was already signed to Columbia Records and was being produced by Don Cook, one of Music Row's hottest producers, whose current clients include The Mavericks and Brooks & Dunn.

Hayes was clearly on a roll, and it still hasn't stopped. "Old Enough to Know Better," a song he'd co-written which became his debut single as well as the title tune of his first album, hit Number One shortly after its release in November 1994. His second single, "I'm Still Dancin' With You," which he also co-wrote, catapulted to the Number Four spot. *Old Enough to Know Better*, his debut album, quickly surpassed the half-million-sales mark and nearly went platinum.

Yet, for all his flashfire success, the youthful-looking, 27-year-old singer admits that he agonized over his initial decision to come to Nashville for several years before finally summoning up the courage to make the move. As he explains, "I'd already seen the scary, heartbreaking things that can happen to somebody if it doesn't go right."

You see, Hayes is really the second generation from his family to dream small town dreams about the country music big time. In the early 1980's, his father, Don Hayes, a builder and Oklahoma club singer of some repute, packed up the family and moved, lock, stock and barrel, to Music City.

In Nashville, the elder Hayes cut a couple of sides for an independent label and seemed well on his way. But then the label went belly-up, just as the economy started going south.

"We were up here about a year," Hayes remembers. "My parents had bought a house here in Nashville, but after the label folded, both of 'em had trouble finding work. It just ended up that they lost the house and everything. It was hard. It was a rough time all around. We had to find a way to get back to Oklahoma and start again. It was scary. It made pursuing music a little more difficult for me. I would have probably come here sooner if I hadn't watched my father go through all that."

As he recalls those hard years, Hayes is seated at the console at Sound Stage Studios, just a couple of blocks down the street from the Country Music Hall of Fame. It's dark outside, the end of a long day of cutting instrumental tracks for his second album. The large studio is deserted; practically everyone else has gone home. Hayes watches through the studio glass as a production assistant packs up his prized guitar: a 1952 Telecaster reissue that bears the autographs of his three all-time musical heroes: Merle Haggard, Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson.

"Those are really the only three signatures I want on there," he notes with a grin. "I personally got all three of them to sign it, and had a chance to chat with them all when we were doing shows together. That just kinda shows you what a great year it's been for me."

In person, Hayes doesn't look nearly as baby-faced as his publicity photos make him out to be. He's six feet tall, incredibly lanky and slightly roughhewn. Dressed in Levis and a gray corduroy shirt, he wears his brown hair swept back and slightly slicked up. He almost looks like a young Waylon Jennings.

What's even more impressive is his soft-spoken modesty and impeccable politeness. At times, he admits to being somewhat humbled, and having mixed reactions to his sudden burst of good luck—the dizzying speed with which he went from pounding nails to sharing show bills with his Hall of Fame heroes. At times, he seems almost stunned by it all. Yet he also conveys the belief that it was somehow all destined to happen.

"I do like to stop and sit down sometimes and think about what all has happened to me," he confesses. "But I honestly can't do it for very long, because my heart starts pounding and I feel like I'm gonna pass out. I was thinkin' the other day, about my life, about how much I've really been blessed. People who I love as artists, most of 'em I can just call on the phone now and see how they're doing and just chat. Guys that I listened to before I got my record deal and really liked now are good friends of mine. Tracy Lawrence. Joe Diffie. Brooks & Dunn. They all mean a lot to me. They're good guys, and I've learned a lot from them. They've been really good and really patient with me, and helped me every time I've asked them for help or advice. Plus, I just dig hangin' around 'em. They're funny guys. They're enjoyable."

"But I also believe God let me come here when I was supposed to come here," he adds thoughtfully.

"That's really the way I look at it."

Hayes, who hails from Bethel Acres, Oklahoma, about 30 miles from Oklahoma City, recalls there never was a time in his life that music wasn't at the center of things. His parents have pictures of him at age three, posing with a toy guitar. When he was 11 and went off to church camp, he recalls how he saw another kid with a guitar, and what a big impression that made. "He only knew a few chords, but the girls were all gathered around him," laughs Hayes, who is today an accomplished enough guitarist to have played quite a few of the lead parts on his second album. "That impressed me. I went home and started playing and never stopped. Even today, I spend a lot of time practicing."

Within a few years, Wade was playing in his father's band as Don Hayes cranked out the tunes of Gene Watson, Lefty Frizzell, Waylon Jennings, Gary Stewart and other honky-tonk heroes at local clubs like Charlie's Palace. Meanwhile, he was buying up tapes of his own, not only singing along with them, but puzzling out the lead guitar parts as well. "I would drive my parents absolutely crazy, running around the house playing Waylon Jennings songs," he re-

# WADE HAYES

## On A Roll

◆ By Bob Allen ◆

*With his first album a huge success, Hayes is hoping that Number Two will keep him in the big leagues.*



calls with a chuckle. "We had some eight-tracks of his, and I just wore 'em out!"

"Music, to me, has always been such a powerful thing in my life," he adds earnestly. "I've cared more about it than anything. I'll be the first to tell you I'm not the best singer, or player, or writer. But the difference is, I think people realize how much I love the music, and how much I respect it."

Wade was in his mid-teens when his family had its brief, ill-starred fling in Nashville. It not only smashed Don Hayes' dreams, but set his son back a few notches as well. When the Hayes family returned to Oklahoma, Wade played in various local bands—as lead singer or lead guitarist, and sometimes both. Locally, he opened shows for Steve Wariner, John Anderson and Eddie Raven. Yet, after high school, he opted for college instead of a music career.

"I went through four years of college and majored in business administration. Then, at one point, I wanted to go into fire science, and then environmental science. I was just all over the gamut as far as wanting to do something. Basically, I was miserable. I tried all kinds of things, and none of them felt right. I realize now that I was just runnin' from what I was supposed to do, which is what I'm doing now.

"Then I was watching the CMA awards one night in 1991 and Ricky Skaggs was on there," he adds. "For some odd reason Skaggs said, 'All you young performers out there need to stick with your music, because that's what you've been called to do.' And I knew the instant he said that, it was meant for me to hear. That was the moment I decided to move to Nashville. The moment. I started making preparations the very next day.

"A couple of months after that, a friend of mine was coming to Nashville to do a showcase and asked me to come play lead guitar. So I had \$450 in my pocket, and I loaded up my pick-up and drove up to play on his showcase. And I made some good friends really quick. Don Cook was at the showcase, and that was the first time I met him. Looking back, it all just makes me realize even more that it was just time for me to come, and that God was really taking care of me."

Of course, once in Nashville, the gears soon kicked into overdrive. Through one of his musician friends from Oklahoma, he met songwriter Chick Rains. Rains used Hayes on some of his demos, and the two began co-writing. The first song they completed was "I'm Still Dancin' With You." Ultimately two more of their co-compositions ended up on *Old Enough to Know Better*. It was Rains who eventually steered Hayes to Don Cook, who, in turn, brought the young singer to the attention of Columbia Records executive Paul Worley.

At every step of the way—his first studio sessions, his first appearance at Fan Fair, and the party to celebrate his first Number One single—Hayes' parents have been on hand, proud that their son was able to find the dream that eluded them. "It's great to be able to share all that with them," Hayes says with a warm smile. Like most young artists, he knows that the biggest challenges are still ahead. That's why he insists that, despite the success of *Old Enough to Know Better*, his sophomore album will be a change-up of sorts. "It's a lot different. I feel a lot more focused this time, and I'm playing a lot of my own lead guitar, whereas Brent Mason, who I think is maybe the best guitar-player in the world, played most of it on the first album. The first album was pretty eclectic, while this one's getting down to more to what I feel I'm all about," he adds. "It's a lot more along the lines of what I did with 'I'm Still Dancin' With You' and 'Old Enough to Know Better.'"

Mainly, though, the champagne-like headiness of his sudden burst of fame has left him hungry. "The last year and a half has been a lot of hard work, and the competition right now is unbelievable. But I sure wouldn't trade it for anything. It makes you want more!" he laughs. "Makes you greedy! It also makes me want to become a better singer, and a better player. It's a great challenge, and I'm ready to embrace it." ■

# Letters

## Yearwood in Depth

I am very pleased to receive my first issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I just wish I would have known of this nicely packed magazine before this.

I loved the article on Trisha Yearwood in the January/February issue. It lets you get to know her and the career in depth instead of her personal life. To me career is achievement, rewarding and time-consuming. Stars behind the stage should be just that personally unless they themselves personally want to be revealed.

I also like the Record Reviews section. I get to hear these great albums on the most spectacular radio station, B 93.7 FM out of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Ronda Glennie  
Vestaburg, Michigan

## Ely and Earle a Treat

What a treat to have back-to-back articles on two of my all-time favorites in the same January/February issue. Both Joe Ely and Steve Earle are severely underappreciated and largely ignored. It's unfortunate that their talent is so unknown to the folks in radio.

Speaking of underappreciated artists, how about some ink for the late great Gram Parsons? (You brought it up first, mentioning him in your Earle article.) Without Gram's influence, we might never have heard of Emmylou Harris, Ricky Skaggs, Rodney Crowell or The Desert Rose Band as we now know them. He died way too young, but left a vast body of work that has endured for over 20 years.

Kevin Wilson  
West Rockport, Maine  
See *Final Note*, and stay tuned.—Ed.

## Earle Clean and Sober

Thank you for the wonderfully honest write-up on Steve Earle in the January/February issue. I think he is a true artist. He's not afraid to speak his mind even when it may not be popular to do so. He's been through a lot of hard times, but he's back now stronger because of all that he's been through. I'm so proud of him to be clean and sober now.

Johnny Cash wrestled with his demons and survived to become a legend. Steve Earle has the same potential. I believed in Steve even when he didn't believe in himself.

Tom Anderson  
Birmingham, Alabama



## Describing Dwight

Regarding your November/December 1995 cover story on Dwight Yoakam: Few words describe a person like Dwight, such as inspiring, fabulous, exciting, mysterious, incredible, gorgeous, masculine, intelligent and "wonderful in leathers!"

What a special man Dwight is. Patrick, you did a great job on enlightening us on what was thought to be a dark side of Dwight. Maybe soon *Country Music Magazine* can do a centerfold, too!

Thanks for the thrill!

Miss Vicky  
Southern California (Dwight Country)  
*Dwight centerfolds to date: JIF 90, M/A 94. Back issues available.—Ed.*

## First Timer for Dwight

I'm a first time writer and a relatively new fan of country music, which began with Dwight Yoakam and blossomed into many country favorites. This is why I enjoyed your interview with Dwight Yoakam in the November/December 1995 issue. I'm a big fan of Dwight, and it was great to learn more about him. I found him to be interesting, intelligent, and thought-provoking. I love the new CD, *Gone*, and I began being a fan of his when I first heard the song, "The Heart That You Own," on the *If There Was a Way* CD. His music just keeps getting better. So please print more of Dwight in the future, and to Flo Eyestone from

Urbana, Illinois, whose letter I saw in the November/December issue: "You're right, he does have a perfect fanny."

Colleen Budzien  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## Recognition for Dwight

Recognition of the talent abiding within Dwight Yoakam has been a slow, winding road. Since 1987, I have watched Yoakam's popularity rise, yet it seems he remains trapped by some in the image of a bumpkin with leather encasing his long legs. Thanks for Patrick Carr's phenomenal article that dispels the myth that his pants were the only thing to get him noticed. Yoakam proves his intelligence time and again, not only here, but lyrically in all of his work. This Kentucky boy won't be saddled with ignorance. He understands the depths of the soul and mirrors the smashed heart. I know that in my own struggles, his music helped me through some tough times, when I needed to cry in my cola.

Nikki Jarnagin  
Surgoinville, Tennessee

## November/December Round Up

I loved seeing Dwight on the cover of my November/December 1995 issue. Not to mention the Toby Keith centerfold. Wow, it made my week. All six of your feature stories were so interesting. Enough about how I love your mag. How about giving me and many, many other David Lee Murphy fans a real treat by doing a feature story on him or centerfold, or make our year and give him a cover story.

Karen Simmons  
Reinholds, Pennsylvania

## Talking Back to Travis Tritt

As a long time subscriber to *Country Music Magazine*, I have always appreciated the fact that in both articles and the Letters section you add footnotes to correct misinformation or add information for clarification. Therefore, I was quite surprised that you allowed Travis Tritt to make such a blatant misstatement as "...being the only country music artist from Georgia who still lives in Georgia," in 20 Questions with Travis Tritt in the January/February issue. If Mr. Tritt would take just a second to look past the end of his own nose, he would find that The Forester Sisters, only *the* most talented group in country music, are

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QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the May/June 1996 issue.

1. What is the name of Wynonna's new husband?
2. Who was Mark Chesnutt's son named for?
3. Which "hillbilly rocker" is working with Connie Smith on her new record?
4. Kieran Kane, one of the founders of Dead Reckoning Records, was a part of what 80's duo?
5. Wade Hayes' debut single made it to Number One. Name it.
6. Chevy's new S-Series was designed from the inside out. The optional bucket seat includes what feature to cradle your back?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:

1. Five
2. *Train a Comin'*
3. Bruce Springsteen
4. Back-up singer
5. Exhaustion
6. Randi, Lady and Roam
7. Chevy's Full-Size Extended-Cab Pickup includes an option for comfortable, form-fitting leather seats.

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still happily living in their hometown of Trenton, Georgia. The Forester Sisters are much too proud of being Georgians for this statement to stand undisputed.

Marcia Daines

North Las Vega, Nevada

*We stand corrected.*—Ed.

**Emmylou, Americana and More**

Thank you for 20 Questions with Emmylou Harris in the November/December issue. I've purchased *Wrecking Ball*, her latest CD. It's nice to hear how it came about. I also enjoyed your article on Dwight Yoakam, as he is an interesting individual. I'm hoping you will do an article on the Americana chart, as anyone who is anyone will soon be heard there. Have you heard Maura O'Connell's new CD, *Stories*? A great collection of songwriting. "Stories," Paul Brady, "Hit the Ground Running," Dana Cooper, "Love Divine" by Jimmy McCarthy, "An Ordinary Day," Hal Ketchum and Darrell Scott and "Wall Around Your Heart," Mary Chapin Carpenter, and "Poetic Justice." Funny how Scots-Irish music and bluegrass music and "Cowboy-Western" music are considered "folk"—Adult Alternative—when they along with R&B and blues are the foundations of "country" music. Too many labels.

I'd like to know where to tune to find radio stations devoted to the "Adult Alternative." Thus an article on Americana?

Denise Boudreau

Barboursville, West Virginia

**Dial A for Americana**

Will you please let me know how to "dial either Americana or Triple-A." This reference is made on page 22 of the Emmylou Harris review in Record Reviews in the January/February issue.

Bob Brownlie

Corte Madera, California

*Hunt and peck. When you hit a station that's playing Emmylou, or Earle, or Ely, you've found it.*—Ed.

**Kristofferson 100, Millard O**

Bob Millard, who reviewed Kris Kristofferson's new album, *A Moment of Forever*, in your November/December issue, must have a personal vendetta against Kris. His review comes across as if he feels slighted by something Kris said to him in the past and this was his way of getting even. We don't feel you should allow critics to review artists if they have chips on their shoulders before they even begin writing. Please read his review again and see how he practically admits that he is reviewing Kris' political feelings rather than his songwriting talents. Kris has always supported the downtrodden poor people of the world, not always to our government's liking.

We happen to agree with *Billboard Magazine* that Kris' new album is fantas-

tic. We urge everyone who has ever been a Kris fan to judge the merits of this album for themselves. They will have a pleasant surprise.

Lynn Williams

Milltown, New Jersey

**Consistently Inconsistent**

I can't believe how consistently inconsistent you are with your reviews. Granted, they're written by different people, but still...For instance, I see you blast Trisha Yearwood every chance you get, then in one review (John Berry's in the May/June 1995 issue), she's suddenly the best of the new "pop-country," while John Michael Montgomery is the worst. You stayed consistent long enough to blast his album in the September/October 1995 issue—then rave about Faith Hill, of all people, in November/December.

Faith Hill's got a nice voice, but not an exceptional voice. She does nice songs, not exceptional songs. But, frankly, I think she looks like a Barbie doll and sings with about as much heart and soul. When she first started out, I thought she'd be another Trisha Yearwood—who, country or not, went beyond the cute "She's in Love with the Boy" to do songs with more substance, that proved she can really sing. I think Faith may be stuck in the cute stage—whatever the lyrics say is lost in her nice but terribly bland delivery. (And I feel bad saying so, because she seems so darn nice in her interviews!)

Dale LaGue

Mechanicville, New York

*Each reviewer speaks for himself. Trisha made the cover in January/February. See also 20 Questions this issue.*—Ed.

**Outraged by Review**

I am outraged by Bob Allen's review of Tim McGraw's album, *All I Want*, in the January/February issue. He obviously doesn't like the younger generation of country music. Tim McGraw is a great singer. And this album was Number Two on the Top 25 in the same issue. Maybe Bob should just go back to reviewing the older generation, which he obviously likes much better.

Debra Carr

Chappell Hill, Texas

**Get the Titles Right**

I am writing in regard to Bob Allen's January/February review of *All I Want*, Tim McGraw's new album. You need to replace him with someone who can hear a little better. And read a little better, too. The song he seems to like the most, the title song, is not called "All I Want in Life." It is called "All I Want Is a Life." Well, I just bought this album, and I think it's pretty damn good! After reading his review, I will never judge an album by what someone like Bob has to say about it.

Chandra Bouchillon

Columbus, Mississippi

*Song title was an editing error.*—Ed.

### CMM's Nuts

I'd like to comment on Michael McCall's review of Clay Walker's *Hypnotize the Moon* in the January/February issue. I have never read such vicious, mean writing in a magazine. You get a mental picture of this guy shaking, clutching his pencil as he slowly goes off the deep end. First he carries on about a black hat, dark brooding look...what any of this has to do with the music beats me. What is really amazing is this magazine keeps these nuts.

J. Silver  
Ankeny, Iowa

### Hit Clay on the Head

I'd like to take the time to tell you that you hit the nail on the head in your review of Clay Walker's *Hypnotize the Moon*. I really think it's cute that you review artists like Clay, JMM and Tim McGraw along side real artists like Emmylou and Dwight Yoakam—real cute.

Cory Schwent  
Bloomsdale, Missouri

### BRC in Centerfold

I can't believe it! I can't believe it! When I opened the January/February issue, what should I find but a feature on the best singer ever to set foot in a Nashville studio. Yes, I mean *Billy Ray Cyrus*. Thanks for the pull-out poster. Good work. You should publish your magazine every month.

Susan Hofer  
Thompson, Manitoba, Canada

### TNN Not the Same #1

I just read your Final Note article on Lorianne Crook and Charlie Chase in the January/February issue of *Country Music Magazine*. To answer your question under Crook & Chase's picture: No, TNN's airwaves will never be the same. I miss Crook & Chase a lot. I watched their show every night for as long as it was on. Loved it. I watched the new show with Tom Wopat. It stinks.

Maureen Bishop  
Lincoln Park, Michigan

### TNN Not the Same #2

Ever since Crook & Chase went off the air, our evenings have not been the same. We are both retired now, and really looked forward to their show. We watched the new Dick Clark production, and we do not like it, so we will not be watching TNN. Just wanted someone to know how a few viewers feel. Thanks.

Beth Sorgen  
Monroeville, Indiana

### C&C Did Their Best

As a new subscriber to *Country Music Magazine*, but a long-time viewer of TNN, I was surprised and disappointed by your write-up on *Music City Tonight* (Final Note, January/February) by Patrick Carr. His catty remarks about

Lorianne Crook and Charlie Chase were uncalled for. Their shows were not great all the time, but they could not be expected to get the top country talent on their show night after night, considering the stars' busy schedules.

J.M. Jones  
Autaugaville, Alabama

### Another Take on TNN

I read your Final Note in the January/February issue with much interest and agreement. The demise of country music on TNN started when Ralph Emery's show, *Nashville Now*, was removed. *Music City Tonight* helped the demise along. Their objective was, it seemed, to emulate Regis and Kathy Lee. And now the new one with Tom Wopat puts the final nail in the coffin.

Keep country simple and direct!

H. Scougal  
Palmer, Alaska

### Ricky 'n' the Radio

Today I got to hear on radio my favorite singer, which was unusual even when requested. Radio has cooled off playing Ricky Van Shelton.

I sure did enjoy Hazel Smith's "RVS, Sing Me a Song" in the People section in the November/December issue. Thanks, Hazel. I've been a country music listener for over 60 years and loved it, but slowly I am beginning to wander away from the music played today. I just doesn't send me. And I'm not the only one, many of my friends won't listen anymore.

Just want you to know I'll cast my vote for Ricky Van, Randy Travis and Billy Ray any day.

Mary Mataya  
Abingdon, Maryland

### Reactin' to Garth

I read in another (God forbid) country music publication that Garth Brooks had a nauseating experience while recording his new album and actually threw up. Well, I can really feel for him because after hearing what is supposed to be the first single release, I threw up also, and am still very nauseated.

I guess what makes me feel so bad is that Garth did this to me. It's like my best friend has just turned their back on me and just said, "So what?"

Don Griffin  
Denton, North Carolina

For more on Garth Brooks, see *People* section and *Record Reviews*.—Ed.

### Lookin' fer Ferlin

My wife and I are both fans of Ferlin Husky and seeing how great country music is going these days, we are wondering how come very little is said about this great early country entertainer. My wife and I are both in our 70's and from St. Louis, Missouri. In fact, my wife lived

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My wife and her sister Kate appeared on the stage with Pappy Cheshire and His Gang. We moved to California in the early 50's and watched Ferlin on Cliffie Stone's *Hometown Jamboree*. We believe Ferlin belongs in the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Robert A. McDonald  
Costa Mesa, California

Feature on Ferlin Husky due soon in our sister magazine, *The Journal*.—Ed.

#### Ms. Kitty Wells

In answer to the letter "Reba a Riot" in the November/December issue, I feel that ladies like Reba and Loretta were and are the great, great singers of all time, but in my mind, and I'm sure others, there is and always will be only one Queen of Country Music, and that is Kitty Wells!

Jerome Weldele  
Buffalo, Minnesota

#### More Women

I've been reading *Country Music Magazine* for many years. Excellent work. I would like to see more women featured. Is it just me? How about a tally? I would like to see more country women singers in the center picture, too.

The cover picture of Reba on the Sep-

tember/October 1995 issue was right on! That's getting the idea. How about Barbara Mandrell. Yes!

Phil Bellingham

East Hartford, Connecticut

*Two ladies in a row, right on the cover: Trisha 'n' Wy. See also 20 Questions in this issue. Danke.—Ed.*

#### Calling for Country Comedy

As I look through my *Country Music Magazine* collection that begins in 1993, I came upon three magazines that caught my eye. The last three magazines of 1994 featured covers of the older artists: Waylon, Willie and Johnny Cash. George and Tammy also appeared on the cover of the July/August 1995 issue. What puzzled me is that your magazine routinely neglects country comedy. They do make money and sell records!

Jerry Clower may not be a singer, but he's someone I'd like to see on the cover when he celebrates, in 1996, 25 years as a comedic storyteller. In 1993, Ray Stevens was awarded a Gold album for his *Ray Stevens Live!* video and a triple platinum album for his *Comedy Video Classics* that won 1993 *Billboard's* Video of the Year award. Ray also released a video in 1995 called *Get Serious!* and it went Gold two months later. Jerry Clower has two Gold albums and one platinum. This is why I ask if CMM neglects quality comedians.

Jerry McDaniel  
Leesburg, Ohio

#### Son of Stonewall

Thanks for your excellent article on Stonewall Jackson in *Legends of Country Music* in the CMSA *Newsletter* in the November/December 1995 issue. We appreciate you recounting the hard times Stonewall came up from against all odds.

We continue to work the Opry (about 40 weeks a year) when we are not on a road date. We are gearing up heavy for Stonewall's 40th anniversary on the Opry. We have an all-star edition of *The Minutemen*, all session pickers and producers in their own right, and we have even put a new interior in the bus.

We are ready to mix in '96.

"Turp" /Stonewall Jackson Jr.  
Nashville, Tennessee

#### Sweeps Winners

August/September 1995 \$1000 Renewal Sweeps winner is Alda Sanders of Tilton, Illinois. October/November 1995 \$1000 Renewal Sweeps winner is Eddy DeMello of Carle Place, New York. Congratulations to you both. And stay tuned for more winners!

Send Letters to the Editor to *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, CT 06880. Mark your envelope, Attention: Letters. We reserve the right to edit for space and style. Bye bye.

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# Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

**Brenda Lee:** From 1956 to 1962 Brenda Lee evolved from adolescent rocker to mature, teenage pop ballad vocalist. Bear Family's *Little Miss Dynamite* (BCD 15772), a 122-song, four-CD boxed set, chronicles that evolution, and proves the abilities of Nashville producers Paul Cohen and Owen Bradley (who replaced Cohen in 1958) and local studio musicians to tackle rock 'n' roll. It begins with the first 1956 session that produced her tough version of "Jambalaya," continues through rockers "One Step at a Time," "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" and "Dynamite" to the hit ballads, "I'm Sorry," "Sweet Nothin's," "Emotions" and "All Alone Am I," and others on her Decca LP's.

A number of rarities show up as well, such as the seldom-heard 1957 "Doodle Bug Rag," and the unreleased numbers "Tables Are Turning," "Funny Feelin'," "Just Forget," "Careless," "That's All," "She'll Never Know," "Let Me Be the One," "Sweet Lovin'," "Time Is Not Enough" and the pop number, "Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart." The collection, produced with Brenda's cooperation, comes with an 84-page hardback book. An outstanding biography by Paul Kingsbury, based on new interviews with Brenda, is complemented by ample photos and color reproduction of her 1957 *Brenda Lee Souvenir Album*, along with a definitive discography by Richard Weize and Don Roy.

**Merle Haggard:** Koch's Merle Haggard Capitol reissues conclude with three of his earliest 12-song Capitol LP's, *Strangers*, *Swinging Doors* and *Sing Me Back Home*, with original notes and cover art, session personnel and new notes. Bear Family's *Untamed Hawk* box also covers all the above, but it's pricy; these CD's provide the complete original LP's in far less expensive packages.

*Strangers* (KOC 3-4053) is Haggard's Capitol album from



1965. Ten of the songs were originally recorded for Tally Records, including the title song and "Sing a Sad Song." All the Tally masters were purchased by Capitol's Ken Nelson. Aside from "Walkin' the Floor Over You," Ralph Mooney's "Falling for You," Liz Anderson's "The Worst Is Yet to Come" and Tommy Collins' "Sam Hill," the rest are Haggard originals: "Please Mr. D.J.," "I'm Gonna Break Every Heart I Can," "I'd Trade All of My Tomorrows" and "If I Had Left It Up to You."

The 1966 *Swinging Doors* (KOC 3-4052) was Haggard's first truly great Capitol LP, showing for the first time the beginnings of Haggard's spin on the Bakersfield sound. It's particularly apparent on the hit title song and "The Bottle Let Me Down," now honky tonk standards. He dipped into Tommy Collins' repertoire for "High on a Hilltop," a song Collins and Buck Owens had also recorded (separately) years earlier. None of the other numbers, from "The Girl Turned Ripe" and "No More You and Me" to "I Can't Stand Me" ever became hits, yet they revealed beyond question Haggard's own individualistic stance, one that would go on to make him a fountainhead.

*Sing Me Back Home* (KOC 3-4054) first appeared in 1967. Again, it was a mix of Haggard originals, covers of others' hits and material from others in the rich Bakersfield musical well. The title song was based on his own prison experiences

at San Quentin, where he saw Death Row inmates firsthand. He wrote "Good Times," the honky tonker "I'll Leave the Bottle on the Bar" and "Look Over Me" alone and "Wine Take Me Away" with Tommy Collins. "My Past Is Present" was penned by Hag and Wynn Stewart (not Bob Wills as the back composer credits state). "Mom and Dad's Waltz" was an obvious tribute to Lefty Frizzell, while Bakersfielders accounted for "Son of Hickory Holler's Tramp" (Dallas Frazier), "If You See My Baby" (Bob Morris and Eddie Miller) and "Where Does the Good Times Go" (Buck Owens).

**Ray Price:** I annotated this collection, so facts only. *Ray Price and His Cherokee Cowboys: The Honky Tonk Years: 1950-1966* (BCD 15843) is a ten-CD, 266-song box (with unreleased songs and alternate takes) covering Price's complete honky tonk career, from his first mediocre 78 for Bullet Records through all the Columbia material, ending with "Danny Boy." That symphonic 1966 hit marked his move to easy listening country-pop, which expanded his audience but cost him many of his original fans. The Columbia years began in 1951 with his early Dallas sessions and his 1952-53 Hank Williams sound-alike period. Hank had befriended him, got him on the Opry in 1952 and took him on tour. All that gave Price two hits: "Talk to Your Heart" and "Don't Let the Stars Get in Your Eyes," neither very dis-

tinctive. The next phase came in 1954, when, after two years of touring and recording with Hank's Drifting Cowboys, Price, seeking a more distinct sound, hired the Texas-based Western Cherokees, Lefty Frizzell's old band, as his first Cherokee Cowboys. The new sound began to gel that year with "I'll Be There (If You Ever Want Me)." It was fully realized two years later with "Crazy Arms," its famous shuffle beat becoming a permanent component of honky tonk.

Sticking to that style despite rock and the Nashville Sound, Price persevered with better and better material such as "Heart Over Mind" and "Night Life." The Cherokee Cowboys became a finishing school for singers and musicians including Johnny Paycheck, Johnny Bush, Darrell McCall and Willie Nelson, all of whom played on these sessions along with fiddlers Wade Ray and Keith Coleman and pedal steel wizards Jimmy Day and Buddy Emmons. He first used strings on his 1959 sacred LP, *Faith*, and in the early 60's, occasionally added small string arrangements before gradually embracing the complete change heralded by "Danny Boy." The set includes an 80-page, photo-laden hardback book with rare photos (such as unpublished color snaps of Willie and Paycheck) and a complete discography.

**Vernon Oxford:** Remember Marty Brown? We critics all loved that raw Kentucky singer who recorded three MCA albums before anemic sales led the label to drop him (having given him more of a chance than most major labels would have). Vernon Oxford went that route 20 years ago, making great gutbucket hill-billy music for RCA, earning a few minor hits and one larger one in 1976 with "Redneck! (Redneck National Anthem)." As with Brown, country radio largely ignored him, and only Oxford's traditionalist fans and

critics cared. The 142-song, five-CD *Keeper of the Flame* (Bear Family BCD 15774) covers Oxford from his 1965 RCA signing (the Opry, of all places, rejected him for membership, considering him "too country") through 1981. Later material for such tiny labels as Stop, Meteor, Omni, Rich-Tone and Bear Family are here, as are his magnificent Rounder sessions.

Even if he'd tried, Oxford couldn't have moved into smoother music. Though he eventually conquered drinking problems, he also quit full-time performing (he sticks to gospel nowadays). That doesn't diminish Oxford's magnificent achievements, and this set is a long-deserved celebration. The booklet features biographical essay by Colin Escott, photos and complete discography.

**Jean Shepard:** The Country Music Foundation compilation, *Jean Shepard: Honky Tonk Heroine* (CMF-021D), is the first-ever overview of Oklahoma-born Shepard's raw, searingly direct 1952-1964 Capitol recordings. After Rose Maddox, she was the next great female singer to emerge from California. The 24 songs begin with two from her first 1952 session: the swinging "Twice the Lovin' (In Half the Time)" and "Crying Steel Guitar Waltz." Speedy West's pedal steel shines on both. Her megahit 1953 duet with Ferlin Husky, "A Dear John Letter," the 1955 "A Satisfied Mind" and "Beautiful Lies" as well as her 1964 Number Five single, "Second Fiddle to an Old Guitar," all will attract fans. To compiler Dan Cooper's credit, he also picked strong non-hit performances, among them the Curly Fox-Texas Ruby "Sad Singin' and Slow Ridin'" and Harlan Howard's "A Thief in the Night." Shepard always declared herself hard country, and her live version of "He's My Baby" confirms her view she didn't rock very well. The packaging is excellent (though the photos are way too small), and Dan Cooper's notes feature ample insights from Shepard. The only glaring error is the statement that guitarist Billy Strange played pi-

ano on Shepard's first Capitol session. L.A. musicians' union files for the session list Billy Liebert as pianist and Strange as rhythm guitarist.

**Capitol Vintage Collections:** Capitol-Nashville's latest releases in their on-going series of Vintage Collections were released in January. Available on CD or cassette, they are part of a new effort to dig deeply into Capitol's vaults. I annotated and worked on all four of these, and co-produced the Williams, so details only.

**Merle Haggard:** The 20-song Haggard collection includes some (not all) of the obvious hits: "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive," "Branded Man," "Swinging Doors," "Sing Me Back Home," "Hungry Eyes," the studio version of "White Line Fever," "The Bottle Let Me Down," "Daddy Frank (The Guitar Man)" and "Someday We'll Look Back." Also featured is the live medley of "Okie From Muskogee" and "Fightin' Side of Me" from his live 1971 *Fightin' Side of Me* LP. Several obscure LP cuts appear, such as "Making Believe" and "Blues Stay Away From Me." "They're Tearin' the Labor Camps Down" and "Turnin' Off a Memory" came from the 1973 *Let Me Tell You About a Song* LP. "Family Bible" originally appeared on his live *Land of Many Churches* double album. Three songs have never been issued: the 1969 ballad "Streets of Berlin," Hag's 1970 original "Worried, Unhappy, Lonesome and Sorry" and Jimmie Rodgers' "Mississippi Delta Blues." He

recorded the latter in the studio for his planned 1974 LP, *Dixieland*, but later scrapped that album for the live *I Love Dixie Blues* album.

**George Jones and Melba Montgomery:** George Jones once said the singer most compatible with his style was Melba Montgomery, whose raw, backwoods Appalachian voice earned her the title "the female George Jones." After their first effort, "We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds," became a hit on United Artists in 1963, producer Pappy Daily continued teaming them for singles and two LP's, most hard country, some with heavy bluegrass overtones. This 20-song collection covers the high points, among them "I Let You Go," "Flame in My Heart," "Suppose Tonight Would Be Our Last," "I'd Dreamed My Baby Came Home," "I'd Jump the Mississippi" and the 1963 Top 20 hits, "What's in Our Hearts" and "Let's Invite Them Over." The bluegrassers (with five-string banjoist Curtis McPeak added) are "Blue Moon of Kentucky," "Please Be My Love," "Dixieland for Me" and "Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms" (which at that time wasn't as overdone as it is now). Their gospel output is represented by "Don't Go," "I'd Be There to Welcome You Home," Hank Williams' "House of Gold" and The Louvin Brothers number, "She's My Mother." Melba's own comments and insights came from a 1995 interview done for this collection.

**Tex Williams:** *Tex Williams and The Western Caravan* is

the first compilation to examine the career of the West Coast Western bandleader who took much of Spade Cooley's original band in 1946 and the next year gave Capitol its first million seller with "Smoke! Smoke! Smoke" (That Cigarette). The collection draws from singles and the Capitol transcriptions (recorded exclusively for radio). While several of his biggest hits, like "Suspicion," "Never Trust a Woman" and "That's What I Like About the West" appear, others are more obscure. Among these are "I Got Texas in My Soul," "The Leaf of Love," "I Lost My Gal from Memphis" and "Wild Card" (with guitarist Jimmy Bryant). Previously unreleased are "Brother Drop Dead" and "Western Jamboree," which showcased the band. The transcriptions explore The Caravan's skills on "Fiddle Time," "On the Double," "Campbells Are Comin'" and "Steel Guitar Rag," a showcase for Joaquin Murphey. The two later selections come from the Liberty LP, *Tex Williams at the Mint*, recorded in 1962 in Vegas with a small band featuring guitarist Glen Campbell, who rips loose on "My Window Faces the South."

**Wanda Jackson:** The Wanda Jackson compilation begins with her first country hit, "I Gotta Know," from 1956. Her rockabilly classics get ample attention, including "Hot Dog, That Made Him Mad," "Cool Love," "Fujiyama Mama," "Mean, Mean Man" and "Rock Your Baby." "Making Believe" is typical of the country-style flip sides of her rock singles. She dipped into Elvis' repertoire for "Hard Headed Woman" and "Let's Have a Party" (Elvis had urged her to try rock). Though by 1961 she and producer Ken Nelson had refocused on country material, even at the session where she recorded her big country hit, "Right or Wrong," she recorded The Robins' R&B favorite, "Riot in Cell Block #9." Also here are "In the Middle of a Heartache" and Stonewall Jackson's "Why I'm Walkin'," plus "Let's Stop Kickin' Our Hearts Around," a song she wrote for Buck Owens.

### How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: Brenda Lee, *Country 1960-1966* (BCD 15772), a four-CD boxed set, \$149.95/Merle Haggard, *Strangers* (KOC 3-4053), *Swinging Doors* (KOC 3-4052) and *Sing Me Back Home* (KOC 3-4052), \$12.95 each cassette, \$21.95 each CD/Ray Price, *The Honky Tonk Years: 1950-1966* (BCD 15843), a ten-CD boxed set, \$329.95/Vernon Oxford, *Keeper of the Flame* (BCD 15774), a five-CD boxed set, \$149.95/Jean Shepard, *Honky Tonk Heroine* (CMF-021D), \$13.98 cassette, \$21.98 CD/Capitol Vintage Collections, *Merle Haggard* (33838), *George Jones and Melba Montgomery* (33832), *Tex Williams* (36184) and *Wanda Jackson* (36185), \$11.95 each cassette, \$19.95 each CD. Send check or money order payable to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 030496, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, Tennessee 37229. Add \$3.95 postage and handling. Canadian orders, add an additional \$3.00 postage. **CMSA Members, see For Members Only page for discounts.** Offer expires July 31, 1996

# Essential Collector by Rich Kienzle

## ■ Books ■

**Various Artists:** Hank Williams biographer Colin Escott's book, *Tattooed on Their Tongues: A Journey Through the Backroads of American Music*, explores the work of several well-known and many more obscure country, rock and rockabilly artists and four record companies. The mix itself tells the tale: Dwight Yoakam, Ersel Hickey, Billie Jean Horton Berlin (widow of both Hank Williams and Johnny Horton), Marty Stuart, rockabilly Dale Hawkins, Don Everly, guitar legend James Burton. Several of Escott's subjects died tragically young, among them singer-songwriter Tim Hardin, Tommy Blake and suicidal guitar legends Danny Gatton and Roy Buchanan.

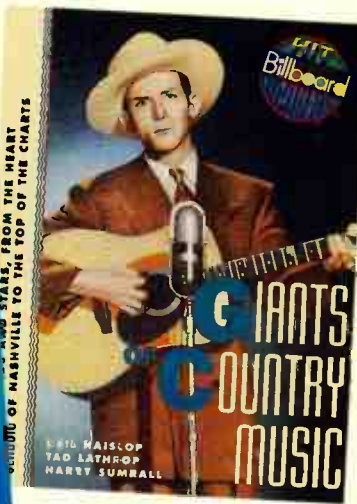
To collectors of Bear Family reissues, details in several essays may prove familiar, since Escott's chapters on Marvin Rainwater, Johnny Horton, Jimmie Logsdon, Jimmy Swan and Melvin Endsley, among others, use research and interviews he did writing liner notes for reissue sets of these artists' work, many on Bear Family, as he frankly states in the introduction. Recycling liner notes into books (or magazine articles) isn't necessarily a bad thing. A mass-market book's distribution will inevitably reach those unable to find (or afford) Bear Family releases, which have limited U.S. distribution. Mixing biographical information with comments about the artists' career and recordings, Escott peers into the histories of Decca Records (now MCA), Hi Records of Memphis, King Records of Cincinnati (and its colorful, if unscrupulous, founder Syd Nathan) and Pappy Daily's Texas-based Starday label which wound up in Nashville, headed by Don Pierce. Among the better moments are those with Billie Jean, who has stories to tell



about both Hank and Horton (including the fact Hank was a Horton fan). R&B singer Roy Head's tough, kick-ass personality is both impressive and hilarious in Escott's profile.

**Giants of Country:** *Giants of Country Music* is part of *Billboard Magazine's* "Hitmakers" series of reference works, focusing on top hitmakers in various fields. In country, the results are mixed. Authors Neil Haislop, Tad Lathrop and Harry Sumrall zeroed in on 180 old and new artists that constitute country's top hitmakers of the past and present with a few innovators thrown in. They don't claim this to be an encyclopedia, yet their facts are largely accurate. Their pro-industry bias is occasionally annoying, such as the comment that criticism of Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart" came mainly from critics and "a few detractors among performers." Why not mention the Travis Tritt-Cyrus flap to balance the quote from producer Jimmy Bowen defending the song? Though Bowen didn't produce "Achy Breaky," his rock-flavored production style with Garth paved the way for Cyrus.

There are also problems of priorities, such as giving a seminal artist like Lefty



Frizzell a shorter entry than his brother David, who had more hits but not membership in the Country Music Hall of Fame like Lefty. I can't believe that in the authors' eyes, Johnny Horton deserved less of an entry than Faith Hill, credited (at the time) with exactly two chart singles. Tim McGraw hardly rates more space than a long-lived hitmaker like Sonny James, who by the authors' own calculations, held the record for the most Number One country records until Conway Twitty passed James up. Occasional misconceptions creep in, such as comparing Hank Thompson to Bob Wills even though Thompson, a honky tonk singer, mainly used Western swing to give his vocals a unique sound. Though the book touts "dozens of never-before-published interviews," none of the quotes are identified by date or circumstance, which would have been helpful.

## ■ Videos ■

**Opry Legends:** A couple of years back, Shanachie Video released an impressive set of 35-millimeter color-filmed performances of various Grand Ole Opry greats including Chet Atkins, Webb Pierce, Ray Price, Marty Robbins and

so on. Filmed from 1954 to 1956 by Al Gannaway, the *Grand Ole Opry Time* shows, recently issued by another video company, were done in black and white, featuring entirely different performances by Opry stars and other artists rarely (if ever) seen on film. Each show (there are two per tape) was filmed in Nashville, some segments done at Vanderbilt University, others at the legendary Bradley "Quonset Hut" studio (which today has been absorbed by Sony Nashville's Music Row complex).

*Volume 1* begins with co-host Ernest Tubb doing an intense, funky "Kansas City Blues" and "When the World Has Turned You Down." Co-host Faron Young sings "Just Married." One song each comes from Grandpa Jones (his RCA recording of "The New Vitamine"), The Carter Family, George Morgan ("Room Full of Roses"), The Wilburn Brothers, Bill Monroe and His Blue Grass Boys ("A Voice from on High"). Carl Smith sings a blazing version of the Bob Wills favorite, "Betcha My Heart I Love You." Even more impressive is a stomping "There's a New Moon Over My Shoulder" done by Opry artist Moon Mullican, a performer rarely seen on film. Comedy segments came from Lew Childre, Lonzo & Oscar (with Cousin Jody), Minnie Pearl and her longtime Opry partner Rod Brasfield, who perform a funny routine centered around Brasfield pretending to play guitar to impress Miss Minnie (the real picker, Chet Atkins, sits nearby picking a then-new Gretsch Atkins model solidbody guitar—a rarity for Chet).

*Volume 2*, hosted by Ray Price and Faron Young, features more impressive performances. ET weighs in with "Give Me a Little Old Fashioned Love." Price sings "Release Me" and "Don't Let the Stars Get in Your Eyes." Chet

Atkins let fly with crisp versions of "Barber Shop Rag" and "Country Gentleman." After a comic segment with June Carter, Little Jimmy Dickens does a version of "Bonaparte's Retreat" (really not his kind of song) that spotlights the blazing music of his Country Boys, with their new pedal steel player, Buddy Emmons. Webb Pierce and Red Sovine perform their 1956 hit song, "Little Rosa." The highlight of Sovine's teeth-gnashingly bad recitation (anticipating his later hits like "Giddyup Go" and "Teddy Bear") was his clumsy stab at an Italian accent. Pierce fares better alone on "I Don't Care." Again, Rod Brasfield does the comedy.

*The Country Show* is basically the same production under a different name. Two shows are included on the tape. The first features Jim Reeves as host, doing "Caribbean" and "Bimbo." While Marty Robbins' version of his first hit "I'll Go On Alone" is intense, his cover of Elvis' "That's All Right (Mama)" is energetic, though spoiled by an overzealous lead guitarist who solos over the top of Marty's vocal (knowing Marty, the errant picker probably heard about it later on). Ray Price taps his own hits of the day for "You Never Will Be True" and "Sweet Little Miss Blue Eyes," a song that, according to co-writer steel guitarist Don Helms, he and fiddler Red Taylor wrote while touring with Ferlin Husky, after seeing that title in a photo caption in an "adult" magazine of the day. Grandpa Jones sings two songs, one a duet with wife and guitarist Ramona.

The second show features Faron as host. His performance of "It's a Great Life (If You Don't Weaken)" is nearly as invigorating as Justin Tubb's version of "You Nearly Lose Your Mind," done with an arrangement far wilder than his dad's version. Minnie Pearl (in rarely-seen cowgirl duds) and the Duke of Paducah handle the comedy. What must be one of the only filmed appearances of the Louisiana duo of Jimmy and Johnny caps the

video. As they sing their 1954 hit, "If You Don't, Somebody Else Will," Jimmy Lee, slinging a Fender Telecaster, reveals himself as one hot Atkins/Travis style picker.

**Doc Watson:** The Merle Watson Memorial Festivals, held in North Carolina, honor Doc Watson's son and longtime performing partner, who died tragically in a 1985 accident. These shows have been a source of some interesting video of various festival performers in recent years. *Doc's Guitar Jam*, produced by Vestapol Videos, focuses on Doc himself from the 1992 gathering. A true master of acoustic flatpicking for decades, here he's joined by some younger disciples who constitute the very best of the next generation. Jack Lawrence and Steve Kaufman both play with a traditional edge while Dan Cray is a bit more individualistic and Tony Rice, mixes the traditional with progressive, jazz-influenced material. All five shine on their ten-number set. They begin with "Ragtime Annie," then, with Kaufman doing the vocal, move into the old favorite, "Blue Ridge Mountain Blues." Kaufman and Lawrence make "St. Anne's Reel" an impressive guitar duet. They perform the traditional "More Pretty Girls Than One," and Doc sings "Walk On Boy" (misspelled "Walk On By" on the tape sleeve). They drew most of their remaining numbers, "Little Sadie," the fiddle tunes "Black Mountain Rag," "Billy

In the Low Ground" from tradition, along with "Going Down This Road Feeling Bad."

Two songs feature Doc with an impressive all-star lineup of non-guitar picking luminaries, among them mandolinist David Grisman (on one song), progressive banjoist Bela Fleck, fiddler Mark O'Connor, Tim O'Brien, mandolinist Roland White and Dobroist Jerry Douglas jamming with Doc and his regular bass player T. Michael Coleman. Together they perform "What Does the Deep Sea Say" with Grisman, and with a slightly altered lineup, "Ramshackle Shack." The final number, a performance of "Wildwood Flower," features Doc with Coleman, Rice, Kaufman and Lawrence."

## ■ Magazines ■

**South Atlantic Quarterly:** A qualifier: in one chapter of this publication, both *Country Music Magazine*, its sister publication *The Journal*, and myself, all receive praise, as do CMM Contributing Editor John Morthland and *Journal* Contributing Editor Charles K. Wolfe. With that out of the way, it's best to examine everything but that essay.

The *South Atlantic Quarterly*, published at Duke University, is one of those prestigious academic magazines that few read, but professors love being published in. It looks great on resumes, come pay raise time. The Winter 1995 issue features the condescendingly titled *Readin' Country*

*Music: Steel Guitars, Opry Stars, and Honky Tonk Bars*, a series of articles analyzing aspects of country music by professors and other academic types. The Guest Editor is none other than good ol' Vanderbilt University English professor Cecilia Tichi, whose book, *High Lonesome*, tried putting an academic spin on country music and fell flat.

The best work here comes from contributors who truly know this music, among them Wolfe, Mary Bufwack and Dr. Pete Peterson. The rest don't come close. Many academic essayists are clearly slummin' with the 'billies, trying to scrutinize music they like but barely comprehend, as well as its symbolism, image, etc. They often treat it not as working class, rural-based American music, but as if it's *War and Peace* or other classic literature, a comparison doomed to failure. One essay analyzes the myth and symbolism of Hank Williams (and, to a lesser extent, Hank Jr.), plowing plenty of old ground and going nowhere. Worse is Theresa Goddu's bizarre "Bloody Daggers and Lonesome Graveyards: The Gothic and Country Music." Another unreadable article analyzes "Gender, Class and Region in the Star Image of Dolly Parton." Tichi, always the dilettante, and a Vanderbilt music prof fill 15 pages blathering about Paul Martin Zonn, a Nashville chamber musician and composer who also plays bluegrass. Another Tichi piece, a telephone dialogue between she and Bill Malone, mainly consists of her fawning over Malone and, at one point, speculating over any updates of his book *Country Music U.S.A.* and the anthology *Stars of Country Music*. Reading it, I wondered if she truly understood Malone's seminal country music scholarship. But I saved the best for last: "My Name Is Sue. How Do You Do?" Johnny Cash As Lesbian Icon." No. I'm not kidding. Yes, it's as bizarre an article as it sounds. Another career milestone for ol' J.R. at age 64.

### How to Get These Collectibles

**Books:** Colin Escott, *Tattooed on Their Tongues: A Journey Through the Backroads of American Music* (B10C), \$25.00/Neil Haislop, Tad Lathrop and Harry Sumrall, *Giants of Country Music* (B9B), \$21.95. **Videos:** Various Artists, *Grand Ole Opry Time, Volume 1* (V10K), \$29.95/Various Artists, *Grand Ole Opry Time, Volume 2* (V10H), \$29.95/Various Artists, *The Country Show* (V10G), \$29.95/Doc Watson, *Doc's Guitar Jam* (V11A), \$29.95. **Magazines:** *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Winter 1995 (Volume 4, Number 1), \$10.00, order this product directly from Duke University Press (Phone: 919-687-3653). For all other products, send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 030496EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, Tennessee 37229. Add \$3.95 postage and handling per order. Canadian orders, add \$3.00 extra for postage. **CMSA members, see For Members Only page for discounts.**

*Offer expires July 31, 1996*

# VOTE

## MEMBERS POLL/MARCH 1996

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

### Bought Any Good Records Lately?

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Your Choice for Album of the Month

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

Singles (list 5 numbers)	Albums (list 5 numbers)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

### Do You "Surf the 'Net"?

5. a. Do you own a home computer?  Yes  No  
b. If yes, what brand?  Compaq  Dell  IBM  
 Gateway 2000  Macintosh  
 Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
6. Do you own a modem?  Yes  No
7. Do you use any On-Line services? If yes, which ones?  
 Prodigy  America On Line  
 CompuServe  Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
8. Do you use the Internet?  Yes  No

### Who Can Vote

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

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

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

### Elton Britt in Legends

As most members are aware, this space usually includes information on recordings available by artists appearing in the Legends feature of the *CMSA Newsletter*. Unfortunately, in the case of this issue's Legend, Elton Britt, nothing is available. All of his albums and singles are long out of print, and no reissues have turned up recently. Best bet on finding Britt's hits—such as the million-selling 1942 release, "There's a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," 1946's "Someday," or his later Top Tens like "Chime Bells" and "Beyond the Sunset"—are used record stores or record collector shows. Sometimes these shows and shops can turn up real bargains. Case in point: the album we used as an illustration in the piece, *The Wandering Cowboy* (recorded for the ABC-Paramount label with Zeke Manners' band), was found at a record show by Senior Editor George Fletcher—for just \$2.00!

### Buried Treasures Special

An excellent batch of reissues are featured this time out, and members get a discount on all of them. On the Brenda Lee and Vernon Oxford boxed sets, members may deduct \$20.00 from prices listed. On the mammoth Ray Price box, which includes a hardcover book by Rich Kienzle, members get a truly special offer: deduct a whopping \$80.00—pay just \$249.95! For all other items, members may deduct \$2.00. Include membership number if taking discount. See ordering instructions in *Buried Treasures*.

### Essential Collector Special

CMSA members are entitled to a discount on items featured in this section as well. Deduct \$2.00 off the prices of everything ex-

cept the *South Atlantic Quarterly* academic publication. That one is being sold directly by Duke University Press. Since we're not selling it, we can't offer a discount. To order other products and take your discount, include membership number and see details on the Essential Collector page.

### 10 Years Ago in CMM

The March/April 1986 issue of *Country Music Magazine* featured a cover story on The Oak Ridge Boys, at the time one of the hottest acts in the biz. (And ten years later they're still making news—see People in this issue.) Another top group of the times, Alabama, was featured in a special format interview wherein readers asked the questions. Dwight Yoakam's major label debut, *Guitars Cadillacs Etc. Etc.*, was released, and John Morthland called Yoakam "the most exciting new development in country in many a moon." The wise Morthland also wondered whether someone so traditional would get a fair shake in the industry. Happily, Dwight's still kicking—and kicking good—despite the industry. Big news items in People were the Opry's 60th, and the vandalization of Bill Monroe's home, including his prize mandolin. At the top of the charts were Hank Williams Jr.'s album, *Greatest Hits Volume II*, and Juice Newton's single, "Hurt."

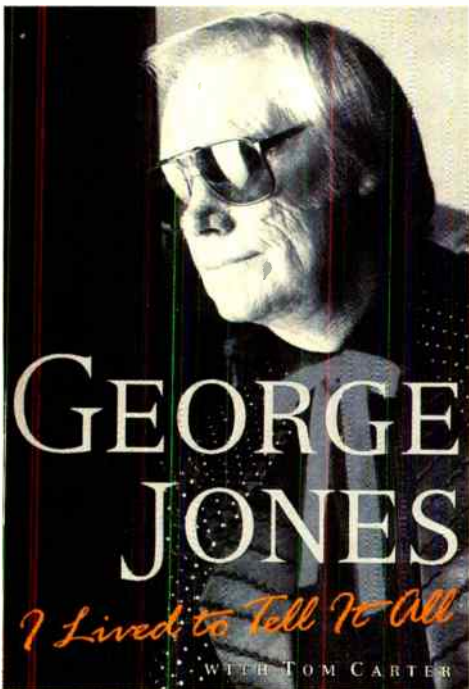
### Classic Photo

Here's a look at The Original Beverly Hillbillies, the California radio stringband Elton Britt joined in 1930. Some have identified the man standing at rear as Britt, though research is inconclusive. This is just one of the many classic, rare photographs that appear in our new book, *The Illustrated History of Country Music*.





# EDITOR'S CHOICE



**PRE-PUBLICATION SPECIAL!  
THE LONG-AWAITED GEORGE JONES  
AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

Boozing. Womanizing. Brawling. Singing. For the last 40 years, George Jones has reigned as country's king—the singer many have called the Frank Sinatra of country music. And for most of that time, his career has been marked by hard-living, hard-lov-

ing, and hard luck. From his early east Texas recordings through his marriage to Tammy Wynette to his latest acclaim as solid citizen and “high-tech redneck,” Americans have been fascinated with Jones, never even knowing whether he'd show up for his next concert performance.

For the first time, in his new autobiography, *I Lived to Tell It All*, Jones delivers a no-holds-barred account of his excesses and ecstasies. How alcohol ruled his life and performances. How violence marred many friendships and relationships. How money was something to be made but never held on to. And, finally, how the love of a good woman can ultimately change a man, redeem him, and save his life.

Notorious for evading the press, the subject of two unauthorized biographies and countless cover stories that have offered little in the way of first person revelations, George Jones finally comes forward with his own story, told to Tom Carter (highly respected co-author of books with Ralph Emery, Reba McEntire and others). Complete with never-before-seen personal photos, George Jones' memoir is a classic, candid story of an unforgettable star.

Scheduled for an April release, reserve your copy now and you'll **SAVE OVER \$2.00!** Ask for Item #B10A. Regularly \$23.00, NOW just \$20.95. This is a **ONE-TIME-ONLY** discount offer, so don't miss it. If you read only one biography about one personality this year, make sure it is this fascinating George Jones autobiography.

**CHET ATKINS VIDEO INSTRUCTION COURSE: GET STARTED ON GUITAR**



Here is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn to play the guitar (or sharpen your existing skills) with one of the grandmasters of guitar pickin'. With the acclaimed Chet Atkins Instruction Course, *Get Started on Guitar*, beginners can have fun learning the basics, and advanced players will discover a goldmine of helpful hints and ideas. The set includes a one-hour video cassette, a 112-

page instruction book and a 40-minute audio cassette—all three components cross-referenced to each other and packaged in a sturdy plastic case for convenient carrying and access. The instruction book will guide you through the music Chet plays in the video. Each tune has its own chapter complete with advanced tips and basic information. There are also special easy-to-read reference sections

titled “Playing Chords,” “Finger-Picking Chords,” “Playing Melodies” and “Playing by Ear.” The video shows split-screen close-ups so you can see exactly how the techniques are done. You receive the video, audio cassette, instruction booklet and the binder case all for only \$69.95. It's a great gift idea. When ordering ask for Item #B2G.



**NEW! THE TALKING WATCH**

Featuring a large LCD display, stainless steel back and rugged wrist band, at the touch of a button this talking watch announces the exact hour and minute in a pleasant sounding voice. Battery included. Item #G10A, only \$14.95.



**NEW! THE TALKING ALARM CLOCK**

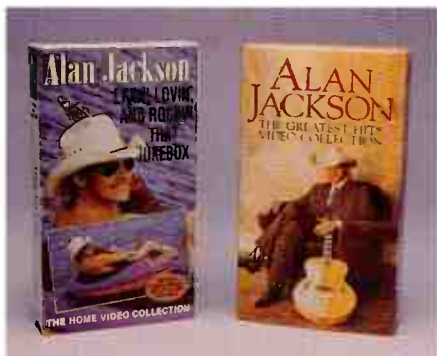
It features a snooze alarm, can be set to announce the time hourly and has a five-level volume control. Operates on two “AA” batteries. Item #G10B, only \$14.95.



**NEW! CHRONO MULTI-ALARM WATCH**

Sporty, unisex design functions include multi-alarm, date, hour, minutes, seconds, month and day plus chronograph with lap time to 1/100th of a second. Battery included. Item #G10C, only \$14.95.

**SPECIAL! Order Any Two Time Pieces For ONLY \$19.90—SAVE \$10.00!**



**BRAND NEW! ALAN JACKSON: GREATEST VIDEO HITS—75 MINS.**

Here is Alan's best home video yet, featuring "Blue Blooded Woman," "Here in the Real World," "Wanted," "Chasin' That Neon Rainbow," "Don't Rock the Jukebox," "Midnight in Montgomery," "She's Got the Rhythm (And I Got the Blues)," "Summertime Blues," "Tall, Tall Trees," "Someday" AND 8 MORE! Item #V10J, \$29.95.

**ALSO...LIVIN', LOVIN', & ROCKIN' THAT JUKEBOX—28 MINS.**

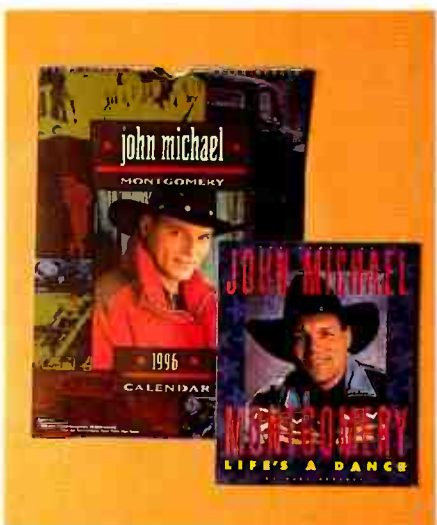
Here are seven #1 videos from two double platinum albums including "Chattahoochee" and "Mercury Blues." Item #V6K, \$19.95.

**NEW! JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY BOOK: LIFE'S A DANCE**

Journalist Paul Prather takes you along on John Michael's astounding rise, from a childhood on the wrong side of the tracks to years of paying dues as a barroom picker to an incredible surge in fame. You'll listen to John Michael's family and friends talk about his growing up. And you'll meet John Michael himself, as he describes the joys and tribulations of a life devoted to making great music. There are more than 100 photos, many never before seen. Item #B2V, \$14.95.

**NEW! JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY 1996 CALENDAR**

You're also going to love this brand new, 33" x 11 3/4" Calendar with 12 candid photographs. Ask for Item #G6G, \$10.99.

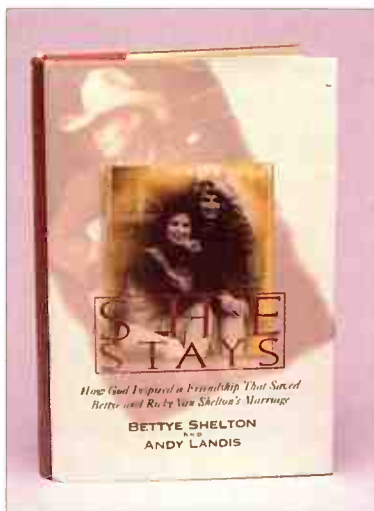


**NEW VIDEOS! GIANTS OF COUNTRY MUSIC—53 MINS. EACH**

Here are some of today's new stars and old favorites singing and playing their most popular songs. **Volume 1** (Item #V10S) features "We Both Walk" (Lorrie Morgan), "Achy Breaky Heart" (Billy Ray Cyrus), "If It Will Be" (Hank Williams Jr.), "Rockin' Years" (Dolly Parton & Ricky Van Shelton), "If I Knew Me" (George Strait), "Goin' by the Book" (Johnny Cash), "Fancy" (Reba McEntire), "You're the One" (Dwight Yoakam) and six more! **Volume 2** (Item #V10T) features "She Don't Know She's Perfect" (The Bellamy Brothers), "Drift Off to Dream" (Travis Tritt), "Same Ol' Me" (Ricky Skaggs), "Fall" (The Oak Ridge Boys), "We



Tell Ourselves" (Clint Black), "Richard Petty Fans" (Alabama), "Time Passes By" (Kathy Mattea) and eight more! \$19.95 each, or both for only \$34.90. **YOU SAVE \$5.00!**



**NEW! THE BETTYE AND RICKY VAN SHELTON STORY: SHE STAYS**

*She Stays* takes you behind the scenes of the dream-come-true romance of Bettye and Ricky Van Shelton to a world of personal struggle and turmoil that threatened to destroy their marriage and everything they held dear. When co-author Andy Landis picked up the phone to call a woman she scarcely knew, she entered into what would culminate in a friendship of shared confidences, tears and triumph that Bettye believes could only have been part of God's wisdom and plan. In *She Stays*, which is also a featured song on the new album, *Common Ground*, and pays tribute to Bettye's courage, you'll see firsthand the impact of shared burdens and reaching out to others in pain. Visible throughout the Sheltons' separation and reconciliation, as well as Andy's sometimes troubled relationship with Ricky's longtime producer and friend, you'll find an overwhelming faith in God and prayer, and witness the strength

to be gained from having God's hand, as well as a fellow human's, to hold during times of despair and crisis. *She Stays* also brings you face-to-face with a woman's commitment to her marriage and the pain of forgiving what to many would be unforgivable—including infidelity and alcoholism—unless you knew that what you had was really worth keeping. Hardcover, 286 pages, eight pages of photos. Item B6M, only \$16.99.

**COUNTRY MUSIC T-SHIRTS**

With the warmer months just ahead, now is the perfect time to get the widely recognized *Country Music* logo on a 100% cotton Champion T-shirt in navy blue or red. The logo is in white. Or pick our "I Love Country Music" T-shirt. This navy blue shirt features a guitar and banjo with red and white lettering. They are \$10 each. For the *Country Music* Logo T-shirt in navy blue, ask for Item #G2P. For red, ask for Item #G2Q. The "I Love Country Music" T-shirt is Item #G2O. Order sizes S, M, L, XL and now, XXL.

**I LOVE COUNTRY MUSIC CAP (NOT SHOWN)**

Also get our popular adjustable "I Love Country Music" Cap. The message on the Cap matches the design on the T-shirt in the picture. Ask for Item #G2N, \$8.95.





### DOLLY PARTON DOLL

This replica of Dolly Parton stands one-and-a-half feet tall. She's wearing a red leatherette dress accented with gold and white lace. In her gold-toned belt is a red, ruby-like stone, and the whole ensemble is topped with a gold-tone necklace. Of course, it wouldn't be complete without Dolly's trademark big, beautiful blonde locks, decorated with a red lace bow. **The Dolly Parton Doll** makes a great gift for both young and old—plus it's an invaluable collector's item! And if you order right away, we'll give you an early Dolly album, *Just the Way I Am...FREE!* You'll receive this Dolly favorite on cassette. The Dolly Doll costs \$49.95, Item #D1A, and includes a stand. The **FREE** cassette is Item #R4A. When ordering, include both codes.



### NEW CLASSIC COLLECTIBLE VIDEOS!—50 MINS. EACH

Celebrate country music's glorious past with these three newly released black & white videos. First, there's *Grand Ole Opry Time, Volume 1* (1954). Direct from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, you'll hear classic performances by Ernest Tubb, Bill Monroe, The Carter Family, Faron Young, Carl Smith, Minnie Pearl, Grandpa Jones and so many more. Item #V10K. *Grand Ole Opry Time, Volume 2* (1956), features Ray Price, Webb Pierce, June Carter, Chet Atkins and others. Item #V10H. Finally, there's *The Country Show* (1956), two great episodes of the show that highlighted the biggest stars of the Grand ole Opry, featuring Jim Reeves, Minnie Pearl, Faron Young, Marty Robbins, Ray Price, Justin Tubb and many more. Item #V10G. \$29.95 each, two for just \$56.95, all three for only \$83.95.

### NEW COMPACT BOOK! GEORGE STRAIT: AN ILLUSTRATED MUSICAL HISTORY



This is one of the first releases in this brand new series of compact books from the Putnam Publishing Company. Edited by *New York Times* bestselling author Dave Marsh and authored by David Cantwell, the book lets fans follow the story of this boy from a small Texas town who made it big in Music City. Photos, timelines, historical data and musical criticism combine to make it absolutely indispensable for the serious George Strait fan. And the unique CD package design is a perfect touch. This compact gem is scheduled for a spring release. Reserve yours now so you're sure not to be left out. Item #B10B, \$7.95.

## NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE ORDER FORM

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SIGNATURE	Add \$3.00 postage and handling for first item and \$.95 for each additional item.				
TN residents add 8.25% Sales Tax/Canadian orders add \$3.00 extra.					
					Amount due \$

# TOP 25

## Albums

1. Shania Twain ..... *The Woman in Me*
2. Alan Jackson ..... *The Greatest Hits Collection*
3. Garth Brooks ..... *Fresh Horses*
4. Vince Gill ..... *Souvenirs*
5. Faith Hill ..... *It Matters to Me*
6. Tim McGraw ..... *All I Want*
7. Garth Brooks ..... *The Hits*
8. Reba McEntire ..... *Starting Over*
9. John Michael Montgomery ... *John Michael Montgomery*
10. Jeff Foxworthy ..... *Games Rednecks Play*
11. Travis Tritt ..... *Greatest Hits—From the Beginning*
12. Collin Raye ..... *I Think About You*
13. Bryan White ..... *Bryan White*
14. Clay Walker ..... *Hypnotize the Moon*
15. David Lee Murphy ..... *Out With a Bang*
16. Vince Gill ..... *When Love Finds You*
17. George Strait ..... *Strait Out of the Box\**
18. Alison Krauss ..... *Now That I've Found You: A Collection*
19. The Mavericks ..... *Music for All Occasions*
20. Terri Clark ..... *Terri Clark*
21. Aaron Tippin ..... *Tool Box*
22. Martina McBride ..... *Wild Angels*
23. Dwight Yoakam ..... *Gone*
24. Tim McGraw ..... *Not a Moment Too Soon*
25. Blackhawk ..... *Strong Enough*

## Singles

1. Shania Twain ..... *(If You're Not In It for Love) I'm Outta Here!*
2. Faith Hill ..... *It Matters to Me*
3. Terri Clark ..... *When Boy Meets Girl*
4. John Michael Montgomery . *Cowboy Love*
5. Doug Supernaw ..... *Not Enough Hours in the Night*
6. Joe Diffie ..... *Bigger Than The Beatles*
7. Blackhawk ..... *Like There Ain't No Yesterday*
8. Collin Raye ..... *Not That Different*
9. Reba McEntire ..... *Ring On Her Finger, Time On Her Hands*
10. Wade Hayes ..... *What I Meant to Say*
11. Martina McBride ..... *Wild Angels*
12. Garth Brooks ..... *The Benches of Cheyenne*
13. George Strait ..... *I Know She Still Loves Me*
14. Alan Jackson ..... *I'll Try*
15. Tim McGraw ..... *Can't Be Really Gone*
16. Tracy Lawrence ..... *If You Loved Me*
17. David Lee Murphy ..... *Out With a Bang*
18. Patty Loveless ..... *You Can Feel Bad*
19. Sawyer Brown ..... *'Round Here*
20. Wynonna ..... *To Be Loved By You*
21. Ty Herndon featuring  
Stephanie Bentley ..... *Heart Half Empty*
22. Bryan White ..... *Rebecca Lynn*
23. Kenny Chesney ..... *Grandpa Told Me So*
24. Diamond Rio ..... *Walkin' Away*
25. Jeff Carson ..... *The Car*

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

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

Add \$3.00 postage and handling. Circle numbers you want from album list above. Offer expires July 31, 1996

1	6	11	16	21
2	7	12	*	22
3	8	13	18	23
4	9	14	19	24
5	10	15	20	25

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I want to join the CMSA and get Member's price. I'm adding \$16 for membership which includes an extra year's subscription to *Country Music Magazine*. **030496T**

\* Item unavailable for sale through this offer.

## A 25% Discount For CMSA Members Only

Here it is, folks! Your quick and easy order form for your choice of the Top 25 **Albums** currently on the country music charts. Everyone may order, but members of *Country Music Magazine's* own Country Music Society of America get 25% off list price. Albums listed on this page are available on CD or cassette. **Sorry, no singles, LP's or 8-track tapes available.** To order, fill out coupon on this page and include your check or money order. Be sure to specify format. Allow six to eight weeks for delivery. To join the CMSA and save 25% on every CD or cassette you buy, send \$16 to cover membership dues and use members' prices. Dues entitle you to an additional year of *Country Music Magazine*, the CMSA *Newsletter* with every issue, membership card, discount coupons, other merchandise discounts and more.



## What's the Alternative?

I've been wandering around the Alternative Country woods, trying to find out what's what and who's who and which music, if any, to take home.

Now, "Alternative Country" is a dangerously elastic term, begging as it does the question, "Alternative to what? Reba McEntire? Twenty guys with big hats and nice bottoms? Bill Monroe?" Let's not get metaphysical, though. Let's just say that there are all kinds of "country" and (therefore?) all kinds of "alternative."

That's certainly true from a musical-stylistic point of view. BR549, The Derailers, Big Sandy and His Fly-Rite Boys, and probably other soon-to-be-heard-from TradRev (Traditional Revival) outfits sound very much like the *Billboard* country charts between, oh, say 1935 and 1970. Junior Brown, Don Walser, Dale Watson, Buddy Miller and Heather Myles suggest the existence of country music that's been progressing since then in another, better universe. Uncle Tupelo, now defunct, made it seem that instead of OD'ing to death when he did, Gram Parsons joined the "Wild Horses"-era Rolling Stones, who then merged with The Velvet Underground to form a kind of twang/drone/attitude subsect with just the right tone for the slacker generation. (The units into which Uncle Tupelo actually fractured, Wilco and Son Volt, took the progression further, with Wilco picking up the tempo and Son Volt delving deeper into the drone). Cracker, another Generation X band, romped through some pretty twisted country for one album—that was funny stuff—and The Bottle Rockets seem set to do something like the same, only with (how to put this?) enhanced sincerity. In The Bottle Rockets' tunes from *Smalltown, USA*, a certain *joie de vivre* lightens the standard Gen X themes of enraged despair, pointless rebellion, etc. And no wonder: Brian Henneman, the band's lead singer/songwriter, has said that his very favorite album of all time is *Buck Owens' 20 Greatest Hits*.

If you're interested in this stuff, I'd suggest that you check out Uncle Tupelo's *Anodyne* (Sire/Reprise 9 45424), The Bottle Rockets' *The Brooklyn Side* (TAG Recordings 92601), and Cracker's *Cracker* (Virgin America 91816). Those are the albums I've brought home, anyway, plus one I consider a real find. Donna The Buffalo's very fine, mild-mannered eponymous CD—"eponymous" meaning precisely what "self-titled" never will, no matter how much music critics misuse it—can be had by sending \$15 to Donna The Buffalo, P.O. Box 287, Trumansburg, New York 14886.

Of course, once you're into the "alternative" side of Gen X music, you're into an acoustic/organic/country-rootsy movement that's already a few years old, so you can start mentioning all kinds of people I won't. Instead I'll go back to the meaning of "Alternative," which actually has more to do with what music is saying to whom than with how it sounds.

Take Gram Parsons, the artist from whom most things Alternative in the country pantheon are said to have descended (a contention which underplays the importance of the much more recently departed Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead). During Parsons' all too brief heyday, he *sounded* a great deal more country than the hits coming out of Nashville at the time (re-



Fallen Angels: Gram and Emmylou, 1974.

member "Rose Garden"? "Behind Closed Doors"?), but the only people listening to him were middle-class urban/suburban baby-boomers. It's the same today. Don Walser and Junior Brown sound a whole hell of a lot more like Hank Williams and Ernest Tubb than anybody on the country charts today would dare to, except maybe Alan Jackson, but try finding Walser and Brown on the radio in the machine shop, or out in the barn.

Ah, get used to it, Carr.

Okay. All right. But there's one angle to this Alternative business that gets me. It's the way reviewers in *Rolling Stone* and *Newsweek* and other yuppie rags put real country music down while building Alternative country up. It's understandable—urban people just don't get it, do they?—but all the same, when they go on about real country music being "mawkish" and "sentimental" and "hypocritical" while the Alternative is "honest" and "gritty" and "unpretentious," I just want to cry.

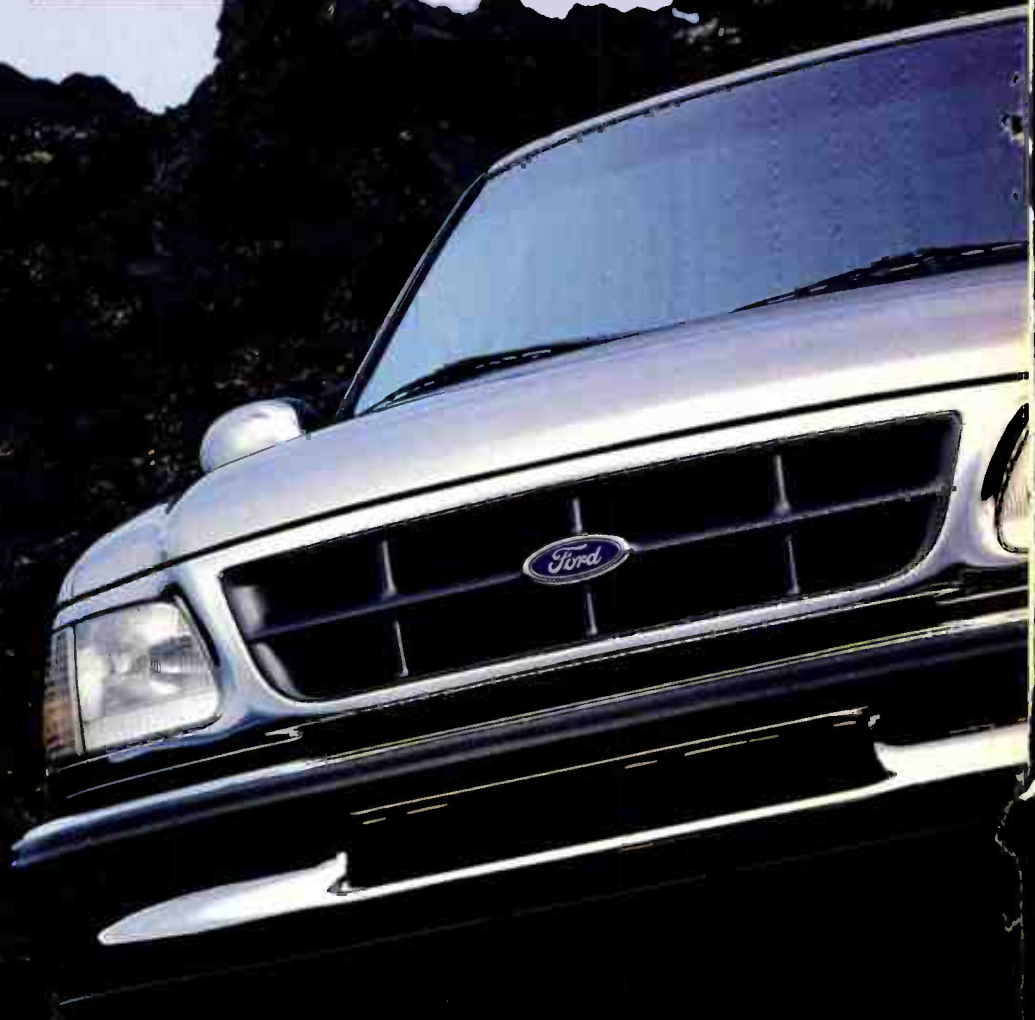
In the last few weeks, for instance, I've

been really moved by some events in my country music life. One was listening to a CD (\$15, Sierra Records, Box 5853, Pasadena, CA 91117) of a 1974 live broadcast from a Long Island radio station by Gram Parsons and his Fallen Angels (including Emmylou Harris). It's wonderful, heart-breaking, and it brought home to me the realization that Parsons, like Hank Williams and precious few other singers, ever—certainly nobody Alternative—was able, just by opening his mouth, to convey the whole universe of pain, loss and yearning (particularly yearning) at the heart of the white man's blues. Sentimentality had nothing to do with *that*, and neither did cynicism, indifference, irony, or any other Alternative-style attribute. It's worth remembering, you know, that Parsons himself really wanted community with the country audience. That, not the hippie culture, was where he felt he belonged.

The other events were my talk with Connie Smith (see 20 Questions) and the televised 70th Anniversary of the Grand Ole Opry the next night. Watching Richard Nixon playing with Roy Acuff's yo-yo on the stage of the new Opry House on March 16, 1974, I could see Connie, then still a young woman, standing with the rest of the Opry cast right behind Nixon, just as I saw her on the night itself—I was on the floor, five rows back, very close to where the camera must have been—and that whole deal just resonated within me. Being there that night two decades ago; being at the Ryman's closing the night before; being here still, 20 years of miracles and tragedies later, to be pleased by the Ryman's renovation, gratified by the Opry's survival, and thrilled by the prospect of new Connie Smith music; and yes, still loving the very best country, such as hers, more than any other kind of music—all this compels me to answer the detractors.

Sure, Nashville has its cons and snakes and pretenders, and yes, there's a certain level of hypocrisy. It's inevitable in a community of show people playing to a traditionally conservative audience at the other end of the social spectrum from, say, grunge rock fans (who might be offended if their heroes *didn't* do heroin, assault, and suicide). But at the bottom line, I don't see sentimentality where country's critics do. I see the opposite, in fact: real, genuine feeling way beyond the traditional rock limits of lust, ecstasy and anger. Country has that basic triad too, but it also has respect, faith, trust, guilt, sorrow, and maybe even love. ■

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