

Music Row®

Nashville Music News Directory

Masters Touch
Studio Supplement
(See pg. 24)

VOL. 4, NUMBER 7
OCTOBER 1984

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OPRY CELEBRATION:
Schedule Of Events

**VIDEO MUSIC
REVIEWS**

**THE PLIGHT OF THE
INDEPENDENT LABELS**

A Roundtable Discussion

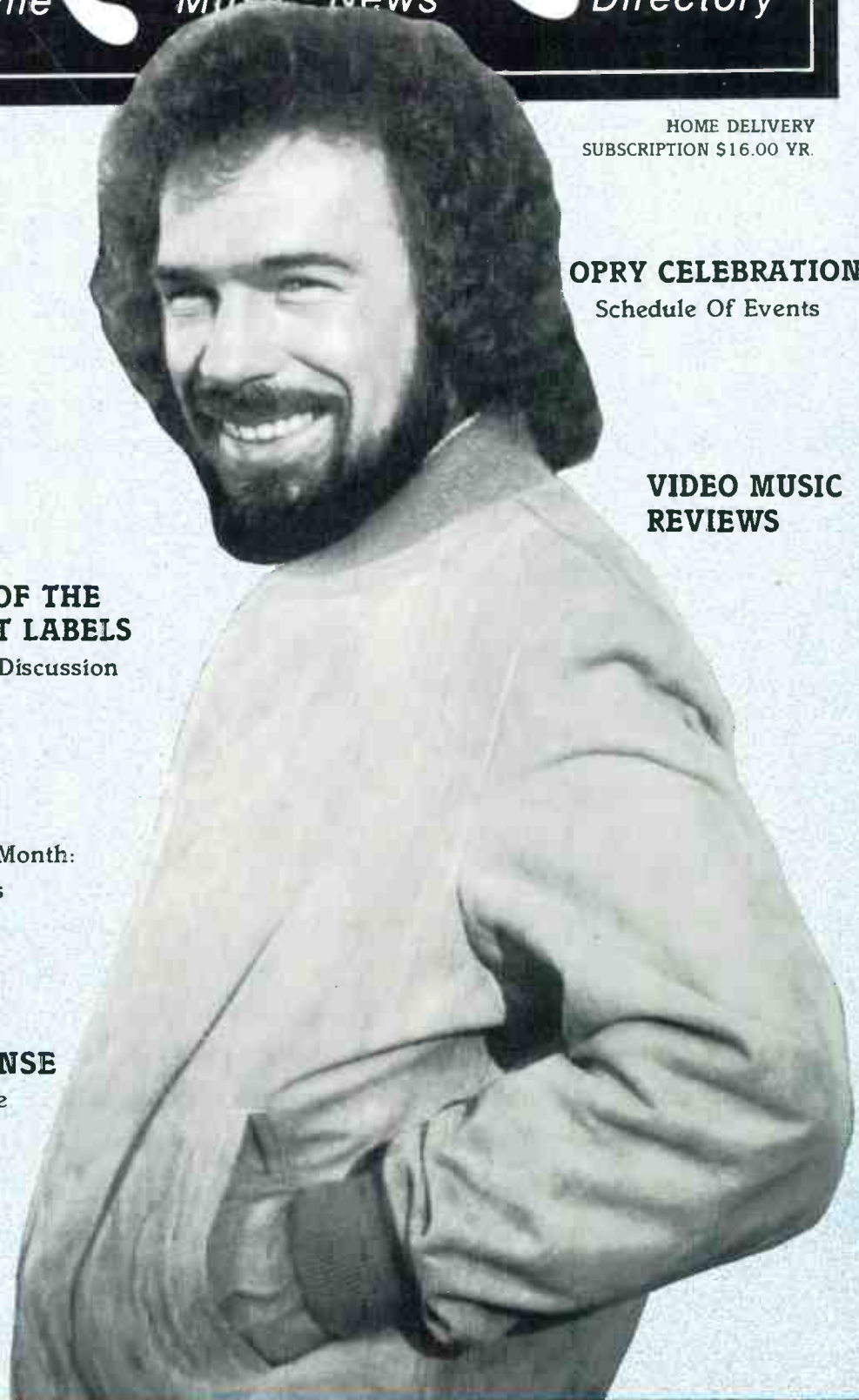
45 RPM

Single Of The Month:
George Jones

DOLLARS & SENSE

Financial Advice

**And
More!**

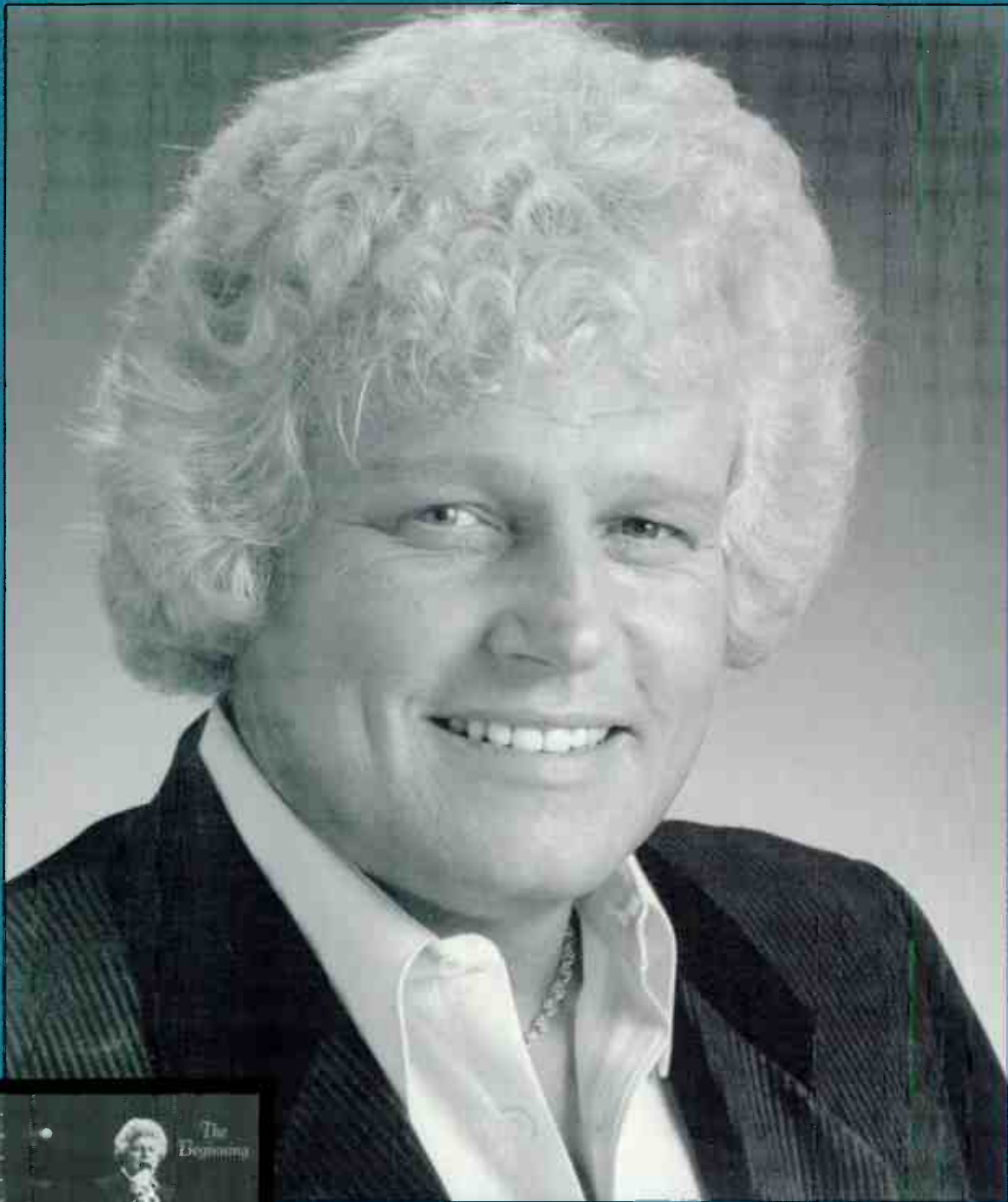


Gene Watson

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Music Row

Nashville Music News Directory

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MUSIC ROW is distributed to studios, publishing companies, recording companies, pro audio stores, musician's unions and many other music industry related organizations in the Nashville area. In addition copies are sent out monthly to over 300 key reporting country music radio stations all over the U.S.A. We would appreciate receiving press releases concerning items of interest to the professional music community.

MUSIC ROW
\$16.00 Yr.
NASHVILLE'S
MUSIC INDUSTRY NEWSPAPER

To receive the next 12 issues of Music Row, send name, address, plus \$16.00 for postage and handling to: Music Row, P.O. Box 158483, Nashville, TN 37215.

ALL ABOUT THE COVER

Numerous hit records have marked the career of Texas born and bred **Gene Watson**. Criss-crossing the East Texas plains, his family (with seven children) traveled in a remodeled school bus, and by the time they settled in Paris, Watson was sure he was going to be an auto mechanic. "Even while I was still in school I was workin' in the automobile wrecking yards in the evenings and on Saturdays" Gene confided. "Singing was something I did all the time anyway, I couldn't image anyone getting paid for it."

Watson made his first professional appearance, on Ft. Worth's "Cowtown Hoedown" with his brother Jessie. Later, at 19, he and his wife, Mattie, moved to Houston, where he worked as an autobody repairman by day and singer by night. Together with friends and relatives he formed "Gene Watson and the Other Four", recording several records locally. Those discs didn't amount to much, but they did attract the attention of Russ Reeder and Roy Stone, who formed a partnership and brought Watson to Nashville. After several lukewarm vinyl attempts, the partnership split up and Reeder went on to produce Watson's first chart record, "Bad Water." The next single "Love In The Hot Afternoon," became the #4 country song of the year and led to his first major recording contract, with Capitol Records.

Watson continues to live in Houston and cut records in Nashville, now with MCA Records, using his touring group, The Farewell Party Band to record with in the studio. His sparse, smooth country sound has earned him #1 chart positions on such songs as "Should I Come Home (Or Should I Go Crazy)", and "Fourteen Carat Mind" as well as numerous other hits.

Gene's latest single, "Got No Reason Now For Goin' Home" has just been released and his new album "Heartaches, Love & Stuff" will be out this month. "To me a song is like a play or like real life," says Gene. "I've got to live the part and believe in it or I can't do it. You've got to touch people and let them know the feeling is there." Needless to say, Watson's fans are delighted he decided to swap his torque wrench for a guitar.



Paul Henry

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Letters To The Editor

ROBLIN REVIEW QUESTIONED

I am a big fan of your magazine. However, I must admit I was surprised at Andrew Roblin's unenthusiastic review of Karen Taylor-Good's new video, "We Just Gotta Dance".

Fortunately, HBO/Cinemax, Showtime, CMTV, and countless other video outlets from Goodnite LA to the Video Music Channel in Atlanta, love Karen's video. CMTV is currently airing it, and HBO, Showtime, etc. will be airing the video in October.

Besides, Andrew, Karen and Michael J. have a deal—she won't break dance and he won't do the 4 corners!

Linda Wilson
Vice-President,
Karen Taylor-Good Fan Club
Nashville

LOOKING GOOD

This letter is in regard to your latest issue of *Music Row*. September 1984. As you know, I have been following the directory for a number of years and am so proud of you. The magazine is taking on a slick, professional look that is attributed to your hard work and dedication. You are to be commended and congratulated on a job well done.

You have always kept an open mind and

have responded to suggestions on how to improve the magazine. The results are obvious. I feel that you are on the verge of financial success and am happy for you. I highly recommend your magazine to all that ask and to some that don't ask.

Yesterday, I had a manufacturer in to discuss the possibilities of Valley Audio representing their line of products. He noticed the *Music Row* lying on my desk and asked about it. He had been in town for a day and a half and said that everywhere he had been, the office and the person he had an appointment with was deeply involved in reading *Music Row*. His statement was, "this must be the most-read trade magazine in town, with the exception of *Billboard*." Hey David, pretty good company, huh!

Good job, my friend! Keep on cookin'!

Emil Handke
General Manager
Valley Audio
Nashville

OUTRAGED OVER OERMANN

I have been a part of the Nashville music business since 1963, and have enjoyed your magazine since its inception. It is only because I think it has been an asset to our music business that I am writing you.

I fully understand that critics should be

given the freedom to voice their opinion on whatever subject they are reviewing, however, I think there is a line that separates class from crap, and I think that Robert K. Oermann has crossed that line, which is a direct reflection on your magazine. It was bad enough when a previous review of an Eddie Arnold single not only pot-shotted the song and record, but insulted Eddie himself. Oermann would not be here making a living if it weren't for artists like Eddie Arnold who started Music City.

The review of Vince Gill's single in the September issue of *Music Row* appears to have nothing to do with the single itself but more a chance for Oermann to insult; 1 - Country Music fans, calling them non-record buying fat housewives, watching TNN and slobbering; 2 - Artists, by calling them sludge MOR lounge singers, 3 - Nashville produced records calling them bombastic over produced ballads, and 4 - most insulting of all, referring to Music City as Mucus City.

I think it is evident that R.K. Oermann is using his record reviewing to take out all his hard feelings about the Nashville music industry, the very industry that welcomed him and provides his income.

Sincerely,
Johnny MacRae
Vice-President
Combine Music

Johnny: Eddy Arnold's name is spelled E-D-D-Y; and I completely agree that he is one of the reasons Nashville is Music City today.

CHARTBOUND ★ ★ Cathy Buchanan

"Sometimes Love Is A Pain In The Heart"



Despite her early years, Cathy does not suffer from a lack of experience. Even at the age of seven she was enrolled at the Marion Meese School Of Dance and the Bob Pemberton School of Performing Arts. This training helped strengthen her natural talents, and gave her a secure foundation on which to build.

Every performer needs a break when getting into the business and Cathy's came when she was noticed singing at a Richmond restaurant by country music specialist, Jack Carter. Impressed with her potential, Carter arranged for the young artist to work with Bakphil Enterprises, a Nashville based production company. Sessions were scheduled in early 1984 with well-known producer, Harold Bradley, who together with the production company's help was able to secure Cathy a recording contract with Rustic Records.

Cathy Buchanan's new single "Sometimes Love Is A Pain In The Heart" was produced by Harold Bradley for Rustic Records. With this record she is taking the first step towards realizing her dream . . . and hoping that radio will give her a chance to share it with the world. For more information contact: Bill Wence, Rustic Records, 615 Durrett Dr., Nashville, TN 37211. (615) 833-1457.

Chartbound is a paid promotional feature, to give exposure to new artists.

Having a dream and pursuing that dream are two necessary ingredients required by talented people wishing to find a career in country music. Many have the dream but not the tenacity to go after it. Born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, **Cathy Buchanan** has been interested in pursuing a musical career for as long as she can remember. The fourteen year old, hazel-eyed singer, now in junior high school, is anxiously looking forward to the time when she will have her education behind her and can concentrate exclusively on music.

EVENTS CALENDAR

October 5-7

CMA Talent Buyers Seminar, Hyatt Regency Hotel. \$125 members, \$175 non-members pre-registration before Sept. 7.

October 8

Jefferson Starship plays Municipal Auditorium, Nashville. Sound Seventy Prod.

October 30-31

Administrators of Gospel Music annual meeting and workshops held at BMI.

November 5

2nd Marty Robbins Memorial Golf Classic. Burbank, Calif. Sponsored by the Academy of Country Music.

November 29

NMA Master Award honoring the Jordanares, Radisson Hotel, Nashville.

March 7-9

16th Annual Country Radio Seminar at Opryland Hotel, Nashville.

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THE STREETS OF MUSIC ROW

OPRY SETS 59th ANNUAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

WSM's Grand Ole Opry, Nashville, will be hosting its 59th Annual Birthday Celebration this year, Oct. 9-13, and final plans for the 1984 event include the addition of a special television concert, which will be open to all registrants. Talent already set to perform on the show includes Waylon Jennings, Jessi Colter, George Jones, Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson, Roger Miller, Mickey Newberry, Webb Pierce, Faron Young, and Hank Williams, Jr.

Further variations in this year's activities include the addition of two cocktail receptions on the Opry grounds, as well as the broadcast of a Network Radio "Spectacular" at the Opry House.

As in previous years, the Celebration will afford participants the opportunity to see an array of country music performers, while simultaneously enjoying the pure tradition of this annual occasion.

Exceptional response to the free "Hot-Line" Radio Reports in past years has also commanded the return of that service to broadcasters for 1984. These special reports, which are fed daily to stations via phone lines, cover all the major activities of the week and also include personal comments from many of the country music artists and Grand Ole Opry stars. These reports will be available Oct. 9-12, however, telephone equipment limitations will allow for only 150 stations to be serviced. Requests for this free service will be accepted on a first-come basis, and anyone interested must write: Hot-Line Reports, 1514 South Street, Nashville, TN 37212.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9

11 am - 12 Noon	CMA/Opry/DJ Brunch	Opryland Hotel
12 Noon - 4 pm	Artist/DJ Tape Session	Opryland Hotel
7 pm - 10 pm	Earlybird Bluegrass Concert	Roy Acuff Theater

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10

2 pm - 5 pm	"Best Of Country"	Roy Acuff Theater
7 pm - 11 pm	"The Door Is Always Open" TV Concert	Grand Ole Opry House

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11

9 am - 12 Noon	CMA Membership Meeting	Opryland Hotel
2 pm - 4 pm	"Country Music Showcase"	Grand Ole Opry House
4:30 pm - 6 pm	Reception	Grand Ole Opry House
7 pm - 10 pm	Music Country Radio Network, "Country Music Month Spectacular"	Grand Ole Opry House

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12

1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Artist/DJ Tape Session	Opryland Hotel
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Grand Ole Opry Cocktail Reception & Disc Jockey Hall Of Fame Presentation	Opryland Hotel

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13

9:30 pm - 12 Midnight	Grand Ole Opry 59th Birthday Celebration Show	Grand Ole Opry House
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14

10 am - 12 Noon	Sunday Mornin' Country	Opryland Hotel
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Another favorite feature of the Opry Birthday Celebration will include special broadcast hook-ups at the Opryland Hotel, which will enable stations to broadcast "live" from the hotel lobby.

One-half of the registration fee of \$50 for the Birthday Celebration will once again be donated to the Opry Trust Fund, which was established in 1965 for the benefit of needy musicians and

their families. Recipients do not have to be members of the Opry.

Since its inception, the Trust Fund has paid a total of \$955,579 to persons throughout the United States, who were considered to be destitute individuals within the music world. During the past year alone, the Trust Fund has distributed \$91,800 to 35 families.

REORGANIZATION AT LAVENDER AGENCY

Barbara Lavender, chairman of the Lavender Agency, has announced a restructuring and expansion of the Nashville-based booking agency.

John McMeen joins the agency as general

manager, replacing Dan Wojcik. McMeen worked for Shorty Lavender during the 70's for 7 years, and most recently has been responsible for guiding the career of George Jones. Also join-

ing is agent Louie Dunn. More staff additions are pending. The agency has relocated at 1008 18th Ave S., Nashville, 327-9595.

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of Vanderbilt Plaza



Linda DeMith Conroy



Charlie Daniels discusses career plans with ICM executives at a recent reception welcoming him to the agency. (L. to R) ICM chairman, Ralph Mann; ICM vp Alex Hodges; agent Rick Alter and Daniels.

SUE BREWER TV TRIBUTE, FUND FOR NEW SONGWRITERS

Waylon Jennings has announced that he and other country music artists and songwriters will donate their time and talent to tape a television special entitled "The Door Is Always Open," as a tribute to Sue Brewer. Brewer, who died of cancer in June 1981, was instrumental in helping Nashville songwriters in the 1960's and '70's with a place to sleep, something to eat, and needed encouragement.

Among the performers who will join Jennings, and who also benefited from Sue Brewer's hospitality, include (in alphabetical order) Richie Albright, Hank Cochran, Jessi Colter, Harlan Howard, George Jones, Merle Kilgore, Kris Kristofferson, Red Lane, Basil MacDavid, Roger Miller, Willie Nelson, Mickey Newbury, Webb Pierce, Shel Silverstein, Billy Swan, Mack Vickery, Hank Williams, Jr., and Faron Young. Jennings will perform as well as host the show.

Plantation Productions of Nashville will produce the show, which will be taped at The Grand Ole Opry House in two segments: a concert setting to be taped on Oct. 10, and a guitar pullin' which will be taped Oct. 11.

The concert segment is open to the public and

will feature Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, George Jones, and Hank Williams Jr. Tickets for the taping are \$10 for general admission, with a limited number of reserved seats priced at \$25 each. The tickets were to go on sale Oct. 1 at all Nashville area Centratik locations, and are available at the Opry House box office beginning Oct. 8. The guitar pullin' segment will be closed to the public and will feature all the aforementioned artists and writers.

Proceeds from the concert will be used to establish The Sue Brewer Fund, which is being established in Sue's name to continue to help and assist new songwriters. The fund will be administered by The Songwriters Guild Foundation, which has worked in similar capacities during the past 10 years. The Songwriters Guild, with offices in Nashville, New York, and Los Angeles, was established more than 50 years ago to aid and protect songwriters' rights.

The Guild, in conjunction with Jennings, will be establishing a set of guidelines for unpublished songwriters who will be able to take advantage of the fund through studio time to make demos, have their demos critiqued by a panel of industry professionals, with additional plans to be announced at a later date. An official kick-off date

for implementation and utilization of The Brewer Fund will take place in January 1985.

The television special, which will air in 1985, will be directed by Norman Abbott, produced by Jennings and Jack Thompson, and written by Thompson and Tom C. Armstrong.

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Terri Gibbs joins the Warner Bros. 'team.' Captain Jim Ed Norman and Shortstop Steve Buckingham will produce her album due for release in early '85. Shown in the bullpen are; (L to R standing) Eddie Reeves, general manager; Nick Hunter senior vice-pres.; Dan Goodman, vice-pres., Top Billing; and (seated) Jim Ed Norman, executive vice-pres.; Terri Gibbs, and co-producer Steve Buckingham.

WOJCIK FORMS ENTERTAINMENT ARTISTS

Dan Wojcik, previously with the Lavender Agency, announced the formation of Entertainment Artists, Inc., a full-service booking agency with offices at 819 18th Ave S., Nashville, 320-7041.

Wojcik announced the following staff appointments: Raymon Singer, vice-president; Kay Williams, administrative assistant; and Margret Bessone, executive assistant. The company will commence business with a roster including Hank Williams Jr., Merle Kilgore, Leon Russell, the Burrito Bros., and McGuffey Lane.



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MUSICAL CHAIRS

Warner Bros. recently signed Terri Gibbs, The Forester Sisters, Jessica Boucher, Del Shannon, and Dennis Bottoms. Also in the wings is a new group as yet unnamed which contains 2 former Doobie Bros., and an ex-Eagle . . . Marie Osmond and Con Hunley have been signed to Capitol/EMI . . . Steve Wariner is a new arrival at MCA . . . Lynn Anderson signed a booking agreement with Jack McFadden Assoc. and will be the voice behind the '85 Chevrolet ad campaign . . . Dave Woodward has formed Walkwood Publishing. Open door policy, 320-5492 . . . Polygram's Tari Hensley is sifting through 200-300 recipes for her upcoming Ozark Mountain Cookbook . . . Kathy Mattea's video "You've Got A Soft Place To Fall" aired on Showtime during Sept. . . . Ronnie Prophet won the Canadian Country Music Award's "Entertainer Of The Year" citation . . . Tom C. Armstrong was signed by Plantation Prods. to co-write with Jack Thompson, "The Door Is Always Open," a 2-hour special hosted by Waylon Jennings . . . The Hyland Co. has relocated on their first anniversary, 2 Music Cir. S., same phone. . . Gary Hart formed Gary Hart Assoc. and will continue to co-manage Vern Gosdin with Robert John Jones . . . Jim Ed Brown signed with Limeliter's for booking

representation . . . "Happy New Year's From Opryland" will air Dec 31 live nationally, hosted by Buck Owens and Roy Clark. Produced by Gaylord Productions . . . Pat Duke and Randy Wachtler have formed Six-Fifteen Productions to do concepts, jingles, and post scoring for films. They did the Nashville ABC-TV affiliate, WKRN's campaign "Let's Get Involved" . . . Helen Cornelius is opening for the Statlers on the road . . . Lisa Keeling, former operations manager for Lorenz Creative Services, has opened the Keeling Co. offering complete copyright and song catalog administrative services, 331-8351 . . . Vince Gill will be singing about Dr. Pepper . . . Gary Morris got the part in "La Boheme" opposite Linda Ronstadt . . . Dottie West signed to Dallas-based Permian Records . . . Eddie Rabbitt and Hillary Kanter cut a duet, "Every Night I Fall In Love With You," to be on Eddie's next album . . . Dan Goodman named vice-president at Top Billing Int'l. . . . The Oak Ridge Boys were the first group ever to sell out 2 shows in advance at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Va. . . Stargem Records has formed a new country label, Kristal International Records, designed to feature only those artists considered to have international appeal . . . Bil VornDick's studio outboard rental unit The Rack has

added a 01-A Digital Reverb . . . Becky Hobbs performed for 500 K-Mart managers in Atlanta at a regional meeting hosted by the Handleman Co. . . . John Sturdivant has moved from ASCAP to the position of general manager at Music City News. . . Lane Brody is singing jingles for Beatrice Foods and Old Style Beer.

"As a result of the success of the weekly series," Owens noted, we are producing and distributing a two-hour spin-off of the program to be entitled, "This Year In Country Music." The special will be an overview of the year 1984, with performances of the top 20 songs, interviews with country artists and capsulized news segments which deal with the major happenings in country music.

"This Year In Country Music" is scheduled to be taped in the Grand Ole Opry House in late October. Jim Owens Television will handle production.

'MUSIC CITY LIVE' VARIETY SHOW

WKRN Channel 2, Nashville, is introducing a new live entertainment variety show. It's called "Music City Live" and airs Saturday evenings from 6-7:00 pm.

Hosted by Rob Roblin, the program will showcase different types of talent available in Nashville—from jazz to rock to gospel—as well as country. Each show will feature a headlining artist; a gospel segment; a comedy segment (courtesy of the local Zanies Comedy Showplace); and, most importantly, an up-and-coming artist. A studio audience will also be on hand.

An integral part of the show is the eight-piece house band—four horns and four rhythm—directed by well-known session musician Paul Ross.

The show debuted Sept. 29. For booking formation call producer Susan Acklen at (615) 248-7256.

MUSIC ROW BEGINS COMPUTERIZED TYPESETTING

Beginning with last month's issue, Music Row began sending articles directly into the typesetting computer at Copies Unlimited via a telephone modem hook-up. This means that edited copy no longer has to be retyped by typographer Freida Crawley, thereby shortening the amount of time needed for the publication's production schedule. Writers simply key the final draft of their articles onto the office computer using word processing. The information can then be easily edited on the computer and sent to typeset, without having to re-type the data at the typesetter, as is still done at most trade publications, such as Billboard, Cashbox, and R & R.

It is hoped that the improvement will result in a better publication for our readers.

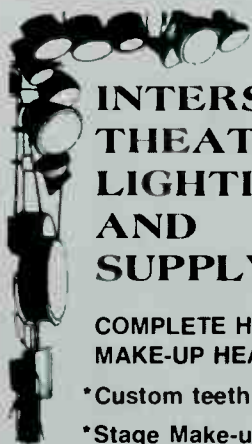
TWICM CELEBRATES FIRST YEAR

Last month marked the first anniversary of "This Week In Country Music." Not only did the show survive, it quickly rose to the #1 rated country half-hour series, pointed out Jim Owens, president of Jim Owens Television, who attributes the program's success to "its ability to better serve all segments in the programming chain."

"We help sell their most important current releases," Owens continued, "and none of the other nationally distributed programs really does that. Since we produce a new program each week, we are able to promote newly issued songs shortly after release."



Tom T. Hall hands lovely WSM am/fm music director Cathy Martindale a rose to promote his new single "P.S. I Love You." Looking on is Mercury/Polygram promotion director Frank Leffel.



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CMA/NARM P-O-P CAMPAIGN

Over 110,000 point of purchase promotional pieces have been shipped for the 1984 CMA/NARM record merchandising campaign. The early orders nearly double the entire amount printed in last year's debut effort. The theme of the 1984 campaign is "Country's Brightest Stars." This year's in-store pieces include bin toppers and cards, flats, posters and divider cards which feature the theme line in four color artwork, highlighted by silhouettes of major artists outlined as stellar constellations.

The campaign will serve to focus attention on the Country Music Association Awards coming up on Oct. 8. Its main purpose, however, is to permit merchandisers to prominently display Country product throughout September and Oc-



RCA's Keith Whitley has signed with both Tree Publishing and BMI as an exclusive writer. (L to R) Roger Sovine of Tree, manager Don Light, and Harry Warner of BMI.

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tober. Heightened consumer awareness is expected to result in increased sell off.

Kraft, which is the sole sponsor of the televised CMA Awards, has created a nationwide consumer sweepstakes to help promote the show. Over two million special sweepstakes forms to be available at record outlets have been ordered to accompany many shipments of the point of purchase materials. The sweepstakes, featuring a \$20,000 grand prize, will also be publicized in a print campaign of 48 million circulation in six national magazines and in grocery stores nationwide. Winners for the contest will be drawn with entrants who can guess the "CMA Entertainer of the Year" entitled to bonus prizes.

Helping to assure the success of the "Country's Brightest Stars" campaign, representatives from six major record labels will monitor its use

CMA PRESENTS BYLAWS CHANGES AT OCT. MEET

The Country Music Association, Nashville, will hold its annual membership meeting Oct. 11, during the Grand Ole Opry Birthday Celebration, in the Knoxville Room of Opryland Hotel. The agenda will include election of new directors, a vote on bylaws amendments, and presentation of several awards, in addition to the president's annual address.

Another addition to this year's meeting will be an opportunity for discussions between CMA members and directors of their respective categories. Scheduling of events for the 1984 Celebration provides more time for the annual meeting. The Board is therefore providing the opportunity for direct communication between CMA members and their directors.

During the meeting, awards will be presented to the CMA Journalist of the Year, Broadcast Personalities of the Year, as well as the Founding President's Award and newly designed plaques to the producers of the CMA Award winning Album and Single of the Year.

Although voting is restricted to CMA members, non-members may attend the meeting.

in retail chains and with the rack jobbers. Labels participating are CBS Records, Capitol/EMI-America, MCA Records, Polygram Records, RCA Records and Warner Brothers Records.

WORTH MENTIONING

★ The N.A.R.A.S. tribute to Brenda Lee, who received their Governors Award, sparkled with genuine emotion and style. Hosted by MC Ray Stevens, Sept. 6, the evening featured captivating video clips of Brenda's career, and special toasts from a multitude of her friends. Brenda sang a moving medley of 20 or so of her greatest hits at the finale. Writer of the show, Bob Tubert, take a bow.

★ Starring Tommy Lee Jones and Martha Plimpton, "The River Rat" features a soundtrack album packed with RCA country acts. Written by Tom Rickman (of "Coal Miner's Daughter" fame), the film features a mixture of realism and Mark Twain-esque storytelling, which takes place on the Mississippi River and holds your attention.

★ All of Alabama's 5 RCA lp's have gone platinum. "The Closer You Get" is close to triple platinum and "Feels So Right" and "Mountain Music" have achieved quadruple platinum status.

★ Kathy Gangwisch & Associates' current public relations client roster reads like a who's-who: Roy Clark, Janie Fricke, Larry Gatlin, Lee Greenwood, Gary Morris, Oak Ridge Boys, Eddie Rabbitt, Ricky Skaggs, T.G. Sheppard, Steve Wariner, Don Williams, Hank Williams Jr. and Tammy Wynette!

★ Jack McFadden companies, McFadden and Assoc. and McFadden Artist Corp., broke ground on construction of a new 5,000-sq.-ft. office building at 818 18th Ave. S.

★ Neil Young played the Grand Ole Opry House on Sept 18. His emphasis on new country material and the presence of RCA brass have led to rumors that he will shortly announce a label deal with the RCA country division. The audience listened to Young's country excursion, but as he sang the words, "Old man look at my life. I'm a lot like you," the fans who had seemed a little lost, found their way and swarmed towards their hero.

★ MCA sock-hopped a 50's-type welcome for new signee Steve Wariner, complete with oldies music, the Vandy cheerleading squad, and held in the Alexander Looby Gym. Label head Jimmy Bowen presented Wariner with a MCA letter sweater.

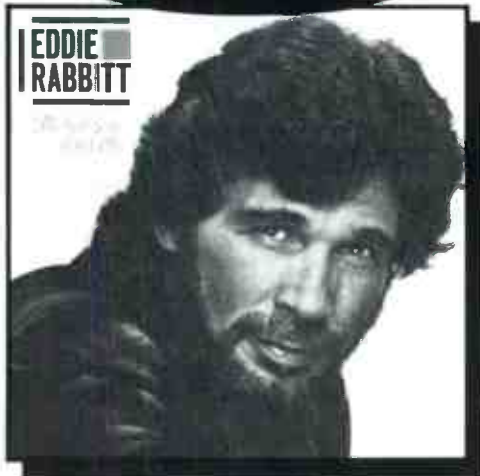
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EDDIE RABBITT The Best Year Of My Life 14 25151

The all-new studio album features "The Best Year Of My Life" 7-29186, the latest Eddie Rabbitt single, and "B-B-B-Burnin' Up With Love," a Top 3 hit. Produced by Even Stevens, Eddie Rabbitt and Jimmy Bowen.



JOHNNY LEE Workin' For A Livin' 14 25125

"You Could've Heard A Heart Break" 7-29206 is the first single from an album which also includes "Rollin' Lonely." Produced and recorded by Jimmy Bowen for Lynwood Productions.



T.G. SHEPPARD One Owner Heart 14 25149

Featuring "Home Again," a duet with Judy Collins produced by Michael Masser, and "One Owner Heart," "You're Going Out Of My Mind" and "Later On," produced by Jim Ed Norman for JEN Productions, Inc. On Warner/Curb Records and Cassettes.



sheathe the axe handle and hand Hall the wreath: some of the songs on here (like "Famous In Missouri" (written by Robin Williams and Jerome Clark) and "Before Jessie Died") are the best he's done in a long time. The problem is, it's been so long, I doubt many people will notice.



NORMAN BLAKE
"Nashville Blues"
 Rounder Records, 0188

BOB: It was in the mid-1970's when Norman Blake abandoned his role as one of Nashville's most accomplished session guitar/banjo/assorted fretboard players. In the years since then, he has recorded a dozen or so albums for various independent labels and carved out a fascinating, slightly peculiar, and above all, fiercely independent musical niche for himself.

Nashville Blues, which was recorded at the Studio By The Pond, is Blake's fifth album for the Massachusetts-based Rounder Records. Once again, he has called upon his own refined yet determinedly bluesy-folksy guitar and singing style to reawaken and reinterpret a handful of moments from America's musical heritage. The title cut is an old Alton Delmore song; and there are also several fine numbers of his own, including the evocative "In The Spring Of The Year", a sad traditional-style story ballad of betrayal, death and fatalism. Practically every one of the cuts is buttressed by the quiet vitality of Blake's intricate guitar work, which embraces everything from straight-up country-blues picking to intricate Django Reinhardt-type jazz stylings. He is backed by a handful of outstanding acoustic guitar, mandolin and fiddle players, along with his wife, Nancy, whose cello serves as the bass instrument and often gives the music an eerie coloring that is, at once, classical yet old-worldly.

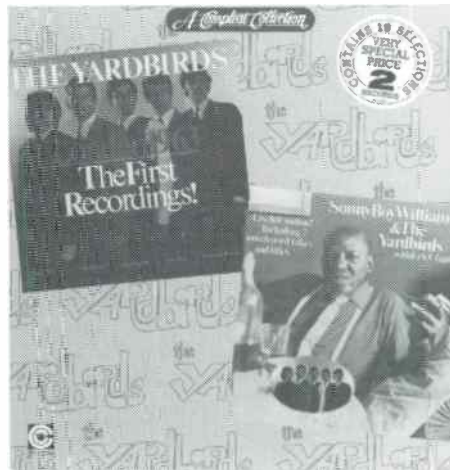
On *Nashville Blues*, Norman Blake has once again proven that sometimes, the further away you can get from Nashville's slick, insipid, hackneyed musical mainstream, the better off musically you are.

ED: Allen, you traditional trollop, you'll get no veto out of me if you insist on conferring knighthood on Norman for this noble effort. The music is uniformly good and outstandingly performed. Happily it is free from one of Blake's common tendencies—and that is launching into endless jazz-like riffs, which, while pretty in segments, are tiresome in total. These songs may not

bring integrity back to country AM radio, but at least they're the right length.

Balancing the starkness of "In The Spring Of The Year"—which you very laudably laud—are such wisks of whimsy as "My Name Is Morgan (But It Ain't J.P.)" and "I was Born 4,000 Years Ago." Many's the time I've slapped a youthful knee (often my own) at hearing these rustic boffos.

Stout fellow, Norman!



THE YARDBIRDS
"London, 1963, The First Recordings!"
 Compleat Records, CPL-2-2002

BOB: On the heels of two fine retrospective collections of blasts from the past by The Kinks (*The Kinks: A Compleat Collection*, and *The Kinks, 20th Anniversary Edition*), Nashville-based Compleat Records has come through with flying colors once again. This time, the goods come in the form of a fine two-LP retrospective of formative material by the Yardbirds, yet another vastly influential formative English rock group.

These 19—a few of them previously unreleased—early live cuts and studio tracks by the Yardbirds (a group that served as a stepping stone for such rock notables as Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page and Robert Plant) were recorded in 1963. At this time, the band included the late Keith Relph, Eric Clapton, Chris Deja, Paul Samwell-Smith and Jim McCarty. This was some time before the group had landed its first recording contract, and was still toiling away at the Crawdaddy, the London club out of which the Rolling Stones also launched their career.

On quite a few of the live tracks, the band is heard backing an American blues singer, Sonny Boy Williamson. There is some confusion here in so far as the LP jacket shows a picture of the Sonny Boy Williamson; yet, in the liner notes, it states that this Sonny Boy Williamson, "was not quite the Sonny Boy Williamson, but an imposter/successor." If there is one big problem that I have with this package is that question is never really resolved to my satisfaction—even though it sure as hell sounds like the real Sonny Boy to me!

London, 1963, The First Recordings will probably be of most importance to collectors and curators of early British rock. The tracks on here, in fact, do illuminate beautifully, the influences, roots and adolescent fire of a band that would,

only a short time later, become one of the driving wheels of English rock 'n' roll.

ED: I've always thought the real source of the blues was the performers' awareness that they had only one melody to work with. That notion continues to serve me here. Historically, the reissue is probably as important as you say it is; but, as a piece of sustained entertainment, it's a real dozer.

Even in the best cuts here, there is so little literacy, wit or musical variety that I strain to discover what all the critical excitement is about. Compared to the Norman Blake album, this collection barely registers a heartbeat—and I say that even after re-listening to that admirably direct tune, "Honey In Your Hips."

Maybe I'm just irretrievably country, but I know what I lack.

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Andy DiMartino
(Moon Shine
Records)

Don Tolle
(Noble Vision
Records)



A Roundtable Discussion with:

Moderator: David M. Ross

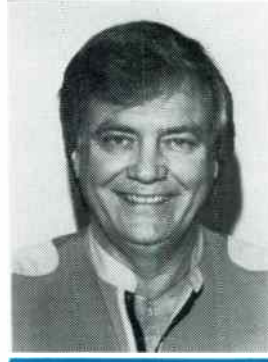
Jeff Walker
(Aristo Music Associates,
Independent Publicist)



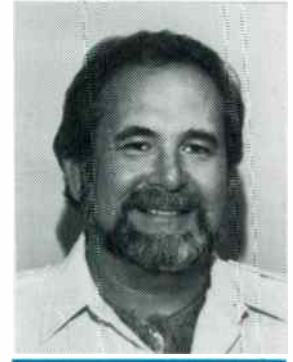
Taylor Sparks
(Mesa Records)



Johnny Morris
(Evergreen Records)



Wayne Hodge
(IRC)



Moderator: Gentleman, we'd like to thank you all for being here with us today to discuss the joys, pitfalls, and problems in making an independent label successful. Recently, several independent records have broken through the seemingly solid, major label wall that surrounds the top twenty on the charts.

Artist Jim Glaser on Noble Vision rang the bell at the very top of the chart (#1) with "You're Gettin' To Me Again" and Moon Shine Record's Rex Allen Jr. release "Dream On Texas Ladies" is #18 bullet as of this moment. Both Mesa Records and Evergreen Records have been able to place their artist's videos on high exposure national outlets such as Showtime, HBO, and Cinemax where play-

list decisions are based on the clips themselves and not the size of the label that produced them. Also there is a new Independent Records Chart (IRC).

Are the independents getting more skilled, spending more money, has the charting system changed, are the majors letting down, or is radio reconsidering their importance???

Perhaps we could begin the discussion with some general comments. Would anyone care to begin?

Taylor Sparks: The independent is sort of like a poor man who pulls up to the table to play poker with four millionaires. He takes his life savings and somehow gets enough to put his

ante in (or put a record out), but the first bet around the table is another \$40,000 and he doesn't have it. We cannot beat them at their game. Looking at it now I think the money an indy has would be better spent working to become hot in a region of say, 5 states, than lukewarm nationally. To work national you need tons of money . . .

Johnny Morris: Sometimes I get the feeling that we're flying a piper cub in TWA competition! Its a numbers game, and with the system they use we don't really have much of a chance to get our records heard by the public. There's 100 records on the charts and only 128 Billboard stations reporting what they're playing,

Photos by Alan Mayor

so it really doesn't give the country music lovers of America much chance to hear the product that independents have to offer.

Andy DiMartino: Radio still equates you with the losers that have come and gone. Even though Moon Shine's been in business 3 years and we've charted almost every record we've put out. It's only now that we've broken through with the Rex Allen Jr. record. Independents have to put out really good records, better than the majors, otherwise we don't get played. If you do that and continue to hang in there then you can break through.

Don Tolle: The toughest problem is establishing credibility. Perception is everything. When we launched Jim's career 2 years ago there was that perception that independent labels had inferior product, and even if they did get lucky once they could never do it again. Everyone knew that indys didn't have hit records anymore, they were the dinosaurs of the past. Jim and I believed that it's great music that has to be the beginning and the end of it, not the size of the label. Of course you have to have a lot of expertise for this or any business to be successful. It calls for a lot of hard work, timing and a spot of luck. We were aided because of the Glaser name and there was curiosity about just what we were doing on this little independent label out of Atlanta.

Jeff Walker: Being an independent publicist, several of my clients are usually independent labels. I find that the most successful are those who have a strong in-house structure and supplement their personnel with outside consultants such as promoters, publicists, distributors and the like.

Wayne Hodge: We felt that there could be a great deal of strength shown by quality independents in the marketplace if they could organize and work together, and so we started the Independent Record Charts. It's grown much faster than we anticipated because there seems to be an even larger demand for quality independent product than we thought. Our IRC system now has 312 reporting stations over the entire country. Our list of stations more than doubles the air coverage of the Billboard/Cashbox reporters. Our goal is to reach 600 stations.

Moderator: Clearly in order to sell records, you need exposure, which usually means airplay, to create a demand. But in order for that demand to be satisfied, your record must have been supplied to the store and available for the customer to buy. It sounds a little like the old chicken-egg circle, how do you solve it?

Andy DiMartino: Everybody thinks distribution is the key. It's not. A distributor doesn't promote your records, so you only need them after your record is being played, which comes through promotion. All they are is a service to see that the record gets in the stores at a certain time when it is successful. If our record isn't being played and getting calls, then you can't get the distributor to take it for free. If you create the excitement, then you can get dis-

tribution, and you'll have stores calling you to find out how to get the record.

Johnny Morris: The main difference between a major label and an indy is that they are able to get their records to point of sale much quicker and in greater volume than we are. What we've done to offset this is to locate 13 distributors and zero in on certain regions of the country using promo men out in the field to tell our story and help get our product placed in the marketplace. We're also using about 10,000 jukebox operators and making a tremendous effort at getting secondary airplay.

With each record you release you wind up using 5, 6, 7, promotion people to try and get through that mangled mess of numbers out there and get on the Billboard reporting stations playlists. We want that, but we're also concerned with getting airplay on the 500 and 1000 watt stations, because what we need is airplay not just chart numbers. The average layman on the street doesn't know anything about the trades or charts and could care less, but they do know when they hear a record on the air if they like it or dislike it. The secondary stations have worked for us, we're selling records like that.

Taylor Sparks: It all boils down to money. The problem is that you can't sell your second ten records if you haven't sold your first ten. For example: Somebody hears my record. They go to their local store and ask "Do you have this record?" The store says "No." Naturally, they will not start to jump up and down yelling "We've got to find that record" until ten people ask for it. Then they call their distributor and request ten copies. The distributor of course, is used to selling in lots of 100 so he doesn't get too interested until ten stores each ask for ten copies. In the meantime 4 to 6 weeks have gone by before the requests work their way back to the label, and unfortunately, the radio stations who have been playing the record say, "I've been playing this record for 6 weeks and none have been sold. I guess nobody likes it." So by the time you finally get your records out, the radio station has already dropped it, and three months later all the records which you paid to press come back because they arrived too late. I can't afford to just press up 20,000 records on the chance that the record will get airplay and sales, I have to wait a little and see if any requests come in. The majors on the other hand can afford to eat the 20,000 singles if they don't sell, so they send them out right away. The majors cash in on their first ten sales, but I can't.

Wayne Hodge: When we started IRC 2 years ago I wanted to have a distribution setup at that time. I had called a meeting with a number of independent labels and that seemed to be one of the most important issues to them. But I felt that the first step was to create airplay, and create a demand for our product before the distributors could fit in. In the past 3 months we've started setting up a marketing division, Crown Marketing. We have 3 distributors now and we're shooting for 10. It's basically a regional approach. Our first record is about to be distributed through this network. Any indy product

which is approved by the IRC board can hire this service.

Jeff Walker: Many stations will not give a record a chart # until they know that it will be available to the listeners in their market. They are reticent about independent labels and their ability to get product into the stores. The last thing a music director wants is to get hundreds of calls from listeners asking where to find a record.

An in-house staff can work with radio and insure that particular markets are covered with product. They can assure a music director that if he gives their record a number, they will stock that market.

Moderator: How hard is it to collect your money if you do sell product?

Don Tolle: Collections are a problem for independents and majors as well. We worked very closely with our distributors, were consistent, and gave them one hit after another. We dealt with them on a weekly basis with our own in-house team. In order to work closely with someone you've got to know them. Picking up the phone once every 6 months doesn't mean anything. I personally communicate with these guys each week. It didn't come overnight, but I'm pleased with our progress.

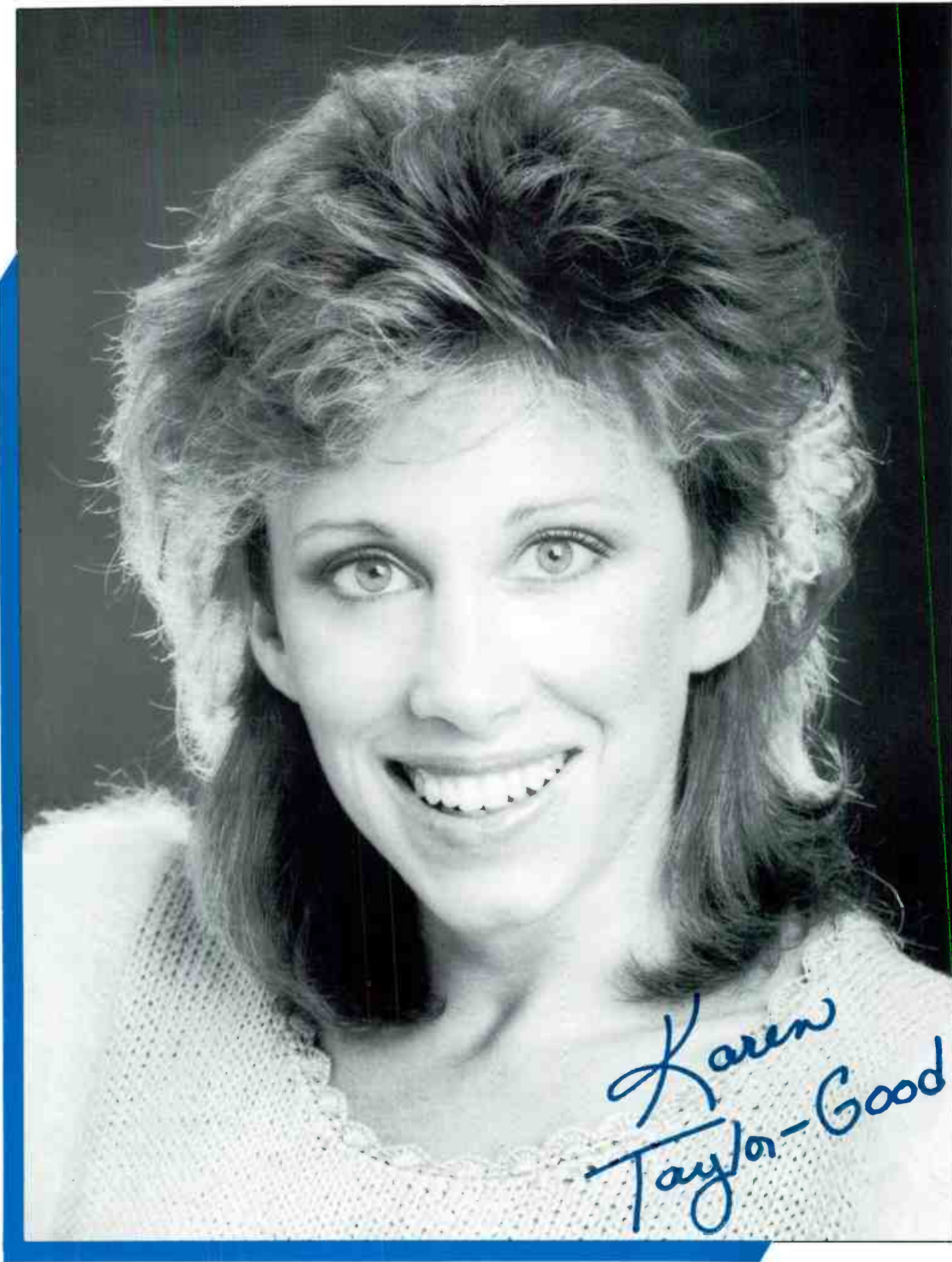
It's happened so many times before with Earl Thomas Conley, Alabama, Elvis, that conventional wisdom said you couldn't be serious about building a real label, therefore you must be just trying to launch an artist's career and jump to the major label deal. That's another thing we had to overcome which we tried to do with hit records, and by releasing an album.

Timing was good for us because the independent distributors were at rock bottom when we needed them. They'd lost Motown, Arista, and Chrysalis all in the same 6 months. All of a sudden we came along and they started to sell quite a few records, and they realized that country can sell.

Johnny Morris: You have to have staying power to find that hit. Distributors will pay you but you have to have consistently good product. We have two people who do nothing but sell plastic and concentrate on a line of communication with the distributors and the reporting stores. At this point however record sales are merely a help in offsetting costs.

Moderator: What kind of results have you experienced from the use of video?

Taylor Sparks: The records I put out have to compete with the best records in the world, but I'm handicapped by all the problems of distribution etc., which makes people a little less excited about my record as compared to Dolly's or George Jones' new one. However, I can use money that might be wasted trying desperately to get on the charts, and perhaps create a video that will excite a lot of people, at a time when videos are not the main focus of the industry. I'm sitting here with my current video, "We Just Gotta Dance" by Karen Taylor-Good, and it's real obvious to me that the exposure and value of its being shown on Showtime and lots



of outlets nationwide far outweighs the value of the same product on record.

Johnny Morris: For our artist Robin Lee the video has meant more than anything we've done. We got it on HBO and Cinemax, and its opened so many doors. We mailed over 200 videos to country radio promoting the single and it gave them a chance to see her in a different light. As a result she's gotten the chance to do a lot of TV shows. Our business is rapidly becoming a visual business and in the not too distant future we'll be caught up promoting video like we do now with records.

Moderator: Wayne you mentioned that to work with IRC an Indy has to be approved by the IRC board. Could you explain how that works, and also I'm sure many of our readers would be interested as to how your top 30 chart is compiled.

Wayne Hodge: It is important to us that each record we distribute, and/or promote passes the IRC quality standards, so that our stations are not loaded down with records they can't possibly play. The IRC board is a rotating group of 4 people made up of independent writers, label owners, publishers, etc. We try to use as many people in the industry as we can, and stay out of it ourselves. Records are reviewed on 4 areas: overall vocal quality, the mix, instrumentation and musicianship, and pressing quality (not too many pops and crackles). We do not attempt to judge if the record is a hit. That's up to radio and the fans. All four board members must agree that the record meets standards or it's rejected. We tell the label why, and if it's something they can fix they are welcome

to resubmit the record. The last board consisted of John Denny, Andy DiMartino, Mary Reeves Davis, and Bill Holmes.

The chart is based on information returns from our network of reporting stations. We have a weekly printed playlist we send, and stations list their top independent product. If they're only playing 1 indy record or if it's 20 we want to know the rotation and what the numbers are. To become a reporter a station must agree to listen to all IRC product that comes in, to accept promotional calls, and to send in their weekly playlist reports. Whether or not to play a record is of course strictly up to the station.

The chart methodology is as follows: each station is weighed equally. Records in heavy rotation or with chart numbers of 1-20 are given 4 points. Medium rotation of chart numbers 21-40 get 3 points. Light rotation, chart numbers 41-65 get 2 points. Anything below that in extra status gets 1 point. Points are then totaled and the chart compiled. I must point out that those top thirty are not all IRC approved product, we don't discriminate, if it's being reported it gets added in.

The top thirty chart is printed in **Music Row** each month at our expense, but stations are sent a new chart update every two weeks.

Moderator: From what we've been hearing about distribution it certainly sounds like record sales are not a large source of income for the independent. What about publishing?

Taylor Sparks: The revenue from publishing is crucial because the initial money that comes from any record is off airplay. Sales revenue

only begins to kick in when you hit the forties on the national charts, and if your record dies around 40 that's it. It creates a problem because its easy for me to advise an independent to get publishing, but just as importantly, is it a good song, will it get airplay? For example, an independent says "I've got to have a hit." So he goes to Combine or some other big company to get that special song which they may or may not play for him, because they know the artist is on an indy label and won't get as far as the major label act who they'd rather have record the song. But if he does get a great song, he will have a record that will get very hot and receive lots of airplay, but when it comes time that in order to continue climbing the charts he needs sales . . . the distribution breaks down, he loses the record and the publisher gets all the money. When it's time to reinvest for the next single, there's nothing to put back.

Jeff Walker: Many independents are locked into their own publishing situations just in order to survive. Back a few years I was involved in running Con Brio records and we were very dependent on our own publishing as a major source of revenue for us. Even though there were other songs which came along that might have been better it simply wasn't economically feasible to use them.

Wayne Hodge: Many of the so-called secondary stations are more open to playing independent records. We've found with artists on our own label that through IRC promotion we've gained a considerable amount of airplay and exposure that is reflected in performance royalty statements.

Moderator: Andy, you look like you've got something you want to add. Let's hear it.

Andy DiMartino: Unfortunately there are so many hypes going on today, and that is hurting the music. People aren't concerned enough about putting out good product. 75% of the records out there aren't hits in my opinion!

You have categories. The out-and-out monster hits like "Swingin'", "Elvira", "Nobody" which are few and far between. Right now there are none on the charts. Next there are the superstars who show up regularly on the charts regardless of what they put out. However, unless these second category records are solid efforts, then even though they are played and chart top ten they aren't going to do anything for the ratings of the stations that play them, or sell well for the distributors and manufacturers. If the stations would only say, "Hey, we don't care who you are, if it's not a good record we're not going to play it" it would force everyone to work harder and give us better product which would move people and sell more records. I'm talking about what is best for the fans and would actually elevate us all.

We've made up a list of 44 artists who automatically get played. If you're on that list you will have a record out almost at all times during a given year, which means that as one of your records peaks in the top ten (where the people on this list usually go) another one is being released. Add to that a duet or two. Ex-

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ample; Lee Greenwood and Barbara Mandrell. So by the time you saturate the market to get whatever sales are out there, (and it's like squeezing blood from a turnip) with these 44 artists going up and down, and with country radio playing only 30 or 40 records in big metropolitan markets that should be playing 65 . . . where are you going to find room to get exposure for your artists and everybody else in the category #3?

Radio has a philosophy. If you're playing a name artist you won't have any tune-out factor. Even if people don't like the record they still say "Oh yeah, but I don't feel bad because I'm listening to Charlie Pride." But if they're listening to Hermie Glick and they don't like the record they say "Who the hell is that?" and boom they punch a button to another station. That's radio's great philosophy. If you're unknown or if you don't have a track record, chances are they won't play it unless they're real sure it's hot.

So when you see Moon Shine Records with Rex Allen Jr. getting into the teens on the charts, you've got to ask why, how? And there is no logical explanation as to how we're up there. Of course I could tell you how hard we work, how smart we are, all our street sense, our better product . . . but the reality to it is there's no real answer.

Moderator: Another source of exposure and revenue is public appearances. Are the independents able to take advantage of this avenue?

Jeff Walker: Many of the independent artists are not affiliated with national booking agencies, so these artists don't have a chance to go to the key markets to get exposure, and this hurts their potential for airplay. If/when radio does play an independent they often only mention the name of the song and not the artist, so the public invariably becomes more interested in an artist they see live. There again indys are disadvantaged because they don't have the funds or booking contacts to fly the artist into particular markets to do free shows in cooperation with the radio stations. However, the independents can sometimes compensate by being innovative. For example, Mesa Records got Coors beer to co-sponsor Karen Taylor-Good's latest video.

Wayne Hodge: We tried to pass along a lot of information to some of the talent agencies in town as to where their artists were getting a lot of airplay, and they didn't seem to be too interested in it. So we decided to begin a booking program ourselves. The detailed information we have as to which markets are giving a particular artist airplay can be used to then zero in on good booking opportunities. It's a whole lot easier to book an artist into a town where his record is being heard on the radio and people are already familiar with the name.

Moderator: Gentleman, we'd like to thank you all for taking the time to share your thoughts with us. Would you care to leave us with some closing thought?

Andy DiMartino: As an independent it gives me the greatest satisfaction to look at my record

on the chart and say "I'm ahead of EMI-America, Epic, Warner Bros., Columbia, RCA," that I can do it. Because the one thing they can't take away from us is when you put that record on and someone says "God, I like that, it's great." I don't care what the label is—you've still got to use your ears . . . and if it makes you feel good you might want to go out and buy it. It doesn't cost anything to listen on the radio, but if you're going to bring it home it's got to be special.

Johnny Morris: Someone has got to give blood in this business to get an artist there. No more fairy tales where you just throw a record out and if it's a hit it will come home. An indy can make it today if they've got good product, super distribution, solid promotion and they really want to bust their butts. You've got to have what you believe is a hit record or else you're kidding yourself . . . then go out and turn over every stone.

Taylor Sparks: The reason I survived is I didn't start a label to sell records. It was as a career development tool for an artist that I believe in, and manage, and as we create a demand for I can capitalize on that demand. Too many labels start without thinking about things like publishing, distribution, artist development, and publicity.

Wayne Hodge: We've become a clearinghouse for radio. When they see the IRC logo on a record they know they're going to find quality independent product. It doesn't guarantee airplay but at least they'll listen.

Our idea is to offer the independent label a complete coordinated support program to assist their in-house team acting as a support arm with distribution, promotion, booking, or in whichever of those areas they might need us.

Jeff Walker: 25 years ago the movie industry was all in-house production, the era of the big studios. Now these studios act as distribution arms. I'd like to see the record industry go that way . . . it would give the independent artists more of a chance. Distribution and marketing is becoming more complex with the advent of videos, bar coding, etc., and this is what the majors are great at. I think there are a lot of very talented people out there who are not being given anywhere near their maximum potential exposure primarily due to the distribution problems inherent in the system.

Don Tolle: It's more competitive than it's ever been, and our industry is more sophisticated, especially with video playing a part. It's easy to lose sight of the fact that the most important thing is that music moves people, and it's people that make things happen. If you have a great record and you have a dream and you're willing to go out there then you can make it work. That's what this industry was built on and the fact that we just had our first #1 record proves that it hasn't changed! The guy that says something can't be done is likely to be interrupted by someone who's doing it.

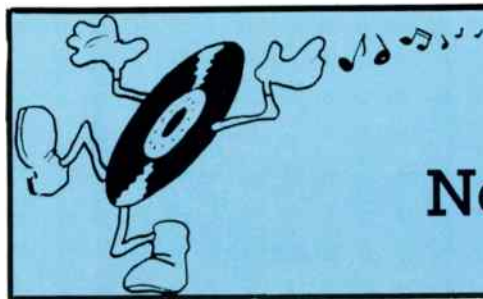


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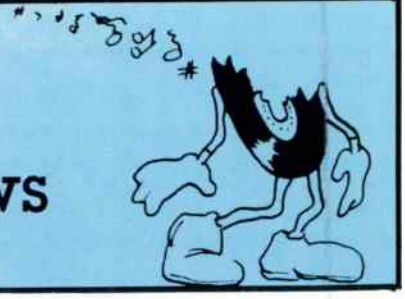
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New Single Reviews

Robert K. Oermann



October, as we all know, is Country Music Month. I guess that's why I'm so happy to report that a great many of this month's singles are musically country, rather than records made in Nashville that are being marketed country.

It is with pleasure that I'm naming MCA Records Label of the Month, since that roster is widely regarded as being the most "country" of all the majors. There's no arguing with the excellence of that company's releases by Gene Watson, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Barbara Mandrell, The Bellamy Brothers, and Roy Clark.

Continuing in this vein, hand the man who's known as the World's Greatest Country Singer, the Single of the Month honor. "She's My Rock" will be ranked by history as one of the most perfect singles in the long and distinguished career of George Jones.

What's interesting about the four candidates for DISCOVERY of the Month is that all five write their own material; and three of them are self-produced. Sandi Burnett, Kathy Shepard, and Rick Hanson have all come out with discs they wrote and produced, the latter two on a commendable Music Row newcomer label, Ric Rac. The Stenmark-Mueller Bandsings its own songs, too. And Kim & Karmen show songwriting promise as well.

Since all five are so strong, I went with the best voice; and it sounds to me like that belongs to former Opryland performer and present Louisiana Hayride starlet Sandi Burnett.

Enjoy the weeks of festivities of the Talent Buyers Seminar, The National Quartet Convention, and The Grand Ole Opry Birthday Celebration. Barefoot Bob has no words of wisdom to guide you through the madness except, "Keep it country."

Whether I love 'em or hate 'em, I promise I'll give 'em an honest evaluation . . . So keep those 45s coming in to: Music Row, P.O. Box 158483, Nashville, TN, 37215.

JIMMY LEE HUFF

"Ball and Chain"

Writers: Elton John, Gary Osborne; Producer: Jack Eubanks; Publisher: Intersong, ASCAP, AMI 1918.

Nice try, but I think Earl Thomas Conley has already cut the definitive country cover on this tune. Some stacked harmonies might have helped the somewhat bland vocal.

GAIL DAVIES

"Jagged Edge of a Broken Heart"

Writers: Walker Iglehart, Mike Joyce; Producer: Gail Davies, Leland Sklar; Publisher: Black Note/Greaser, ASCAP/BMI, RCA 13912.

Wow! Spin this all the way through to experience the most stunning, striking finale that's been heard on a country single in years. Davies remains one of the most innovative, refreshing record-makers in contemporary country music.

GEORGE STRAIT

"Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind"

Writers: S. D. Shafer, D. Shafer; Producer: Jimmy Bowen, George Strait; Publisher: Acuff-Rose, BMI, MCA 52458.

Two-steppin' across the dance floor to the strains of one of the great "hurting" singers wailing a super song. Everything that's beautiful and right and true about country music.

JEANNIE C. RILEY

"Return to Harper Valley"

Writer: Tom T. Hall; Producer: Alan Kaufman; Publisher: Hallnote, BMI, Sapphire 4001.

I still dig Jeannie's country vibrato voice. So I think she deserves a better fate than endlessly recycling her biggest hit. And I do mean "endlessly." This record is way too long.

J. D. CATHELLE

"The Rest of My Nights"

Writer: John D. Lauterbach; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Lydian Pines, ASCAP, Three Leaf 1004.

Monotonic.

SANDI BURNETT

"First Stop To Amarillo"

Writer: Sandi Burnett; Producer: S. Burnett, S. Weller; Publisher: none listed, BMI, Parachute 007.

I'm not crazy about the song or the production, but I'm ecstatic over her performance. Beautiful brunette Burnette can really belt one. This may not be starlight, but it's something almost as bright and flashy.

VICTORIA SHAW

"I've Changed My Mind"

Writer: Dave Steen; Producer: Rockin' Ray Taylor; Publisher: Chapel, BMI, MPB 5011.

Shaw, whom we've encountered on small labels in this column several times before, continues to breathe fire into singles, no matter how ploddingly produced.

CINDY ROBYNS

"It's Hard to Keep a Rounder Hangin' 'Round"

Writer: Pebe Sebert; Producer: Ted Baron; Publisher: Boquillas Canyon/Atlantic, BMI, Soundwaves 4735.

That's three-for-three—another strong-voiced newcomer. And this one's got the benefit of a nifty song.

ROY CLARK

"Another Lonely Night With You"

Writers: R. Clark, C. Anderson; Producer: Jerry Kennedy; Publisher: Seductive Lady/Sweet Streets, BMI/ASCAP, MCA/Churchill 52469.

Wistful and sad. Could be a strong comeback record for ol' Roy.

KIM & KARMEN

"Honky Tonk Lullaby"

Writers: Kim Reid, Harold Reid; Producer: Jerry Kennedy; Publisher: Statler Brothers, BMI, Compleat 130.

Predictably, I like the honky-tonk aspect of this better than the lullaby part. When the bass and dobro kicked in on the chorus, I loved it. The soft tinkly piano on the verse wasn't so exciting. Still and all, this is a most imaginative debut disc that deserves attention.

KIMBERLY SPRINGS

"Old Memories Are Hard To Lose"

Writers: J. Fuller, J. Self; Producer: Jerry Fuller & John Hobbs; Publisher: ATV/Wingtip, BMI, Capitol 5404.

I was absolutely nuts about "Slow Dancin'." This is another tough little record from these folks that I'm really gonna love hearing on the radio. Sign me up for the fan club.

STEVE & DEBBIE BROWN

"Country Man, Country Lady"

Writer: Steve Brown; Producer: Charlie Fields; Publisher: Mountainwood, BMI, Charta 189.

Well-sung and catchy, but fundamentally simple-minded.

MARGO SMITH

"Thin Ragged Edge"

Writer: Larry Burton; Producer: George Motola; Publisher: Galleon/Winston, ASCAP, Bermuda Dunes 108.

A fine melody with a spectacular lyric. Alas, not too good a record.

DENNIS LEDBETTER

"Bayou Self"

Writer: Dennis Ledbetter; Producer: James Straud; Publisher: HitKit, BMI, Soundwaves 4739.

Quintessentially Southern, with a nice backbeat and a warm, macho vocal.

DANNY DAVIS & THE NASHVILLE BRASS

(BILL WHITE, vocal)

"Cajun Trumpet Man"

Writers: Danny Davis, G. S. Paxton; Producer: Danny Davis, G. S. Paxton; Publisher: Daydan/M. U. D. A. S. A., ASCAP, Warrance 727.

This sounds like it was a lot of fun in the recording studio. The instrumental work is top-notch. Davis & Paxton may be the most unlikely combination since Coe teamed up with Bill Anderson, but it works.

NORMAN WADE

"Close Every Honky-Tonk"

Writer: N. Stevenson; Producer: Johnny Elgin; Publisher: Acuff-Rose, BMI, AMI 1919.

A throw-back to the early '50s; which is, of course, okay by me.

BILLIE J. HELMKAY

"You're Spreadin' My Hurt Around"

Writers: Inez Polizzi, George Allen; Producer: Patti Parker; Publisher: Rocky Bell, BMI, Comstock 1755.

Helmkay performs respectably, but it's the little production touches that make this pop-ish item perculate.

MOE & JOE

"Boys Night Out"

Writers: J. Stampley, T. Stampley, D. Rosson; Producer: Blake Mevis; Publisher: Muller/Ban-Ron, BMI, Columbia 04601.

I'm sorry, but this groove is starting to sound worn out to me.

WORLEY MAX

"Bread & Butter"

Writers: L. Parks, J. Turnbow; Producer: Eddy Fox; Publisher: Acuff-Rose, BMI, General Delivery Ltd. 1944.

This has never been on my list of oldies deserving of revival. I defy you to listen all the way through.

JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ

"Rose of My Heart"

Writer: Hugh Moffat; Producer: Richie Albright; Publisher: Atlantic/Boquillas Canyon, BMI, Epic 34-04628.

There are few more pleasing experiences to a country music lover than hearing Johnny coupled with a masterpiece song. Thank you, Hugh.

KEITH WHITLEY

"Turn Me To Love"

Writers: Wayland Holyfield, Norro Wilson; Producer: Norro Wilson; Publisher: April/Ideas of March/Blackwood/Easy Days, ASCAP/BMI, RCA 13810.

So close to Lefty and Merle, it's almost scary.

THE BELLAMY BROTHERS**"World's Greatest Lover"**

Writer: David Bellamy; Producer: David & Howard Bellamy, Steve Klein; Publisher: Bellamy Brothers, ASCAP. MCA/Curb 52446.

Wonderfully sexy Caribbean rhythms. A trip to a tropical dreamland.

LEON RAUSCH**"Route 66"**

Writer: Bobby Troup; Producer: Tommy Asup; Publisher: London-town/Edwin H. Morris, ASCAP. Southland 7314.

Veteran Rausch shows today's western swing pretenders how it's really done, complete with big band horns and a classy, lazy, jazzy vocal. Off the beaten track; and a welcome change of pace.

JOEY SCARBURY**"The River's Song"**

Writers: Stephen Geyer, Mike Post; Producer: Mike Post; Publisher: Famous/Darla/April/Ensign, ASCAP/BMI. RCA 13913.

The earthy acoustic guitar sound of wood and steel, the soft soar of strings, the breathing and sighing of heavenly harmony voices, the carressing of a superb lead singer: the atmosphere of a hit.

SUSAN RAYE**"Put Another Notch In Your Belt"**

Writer: Mac Davis; Producer: Billy Sull; Publisher: Screen Gems. BMI. Westexas America 1.

Raye chose a clever little song for her comeback. The production's a mite weak, but there's still plenty to listen to here.

MARK GRAY**"Diamond In The Dust"**

Writers: M. Gray, S. Lemaire; Producer: Bob Montgomery, Steve Buckingham; Publisher: Warner-Tamerlane/Daticabo, BMI. Columbia 38-04610.

As if to answer critics who maintained that Gray was a soul singer in search of the same home in country music that Greenwood found, he's released a solid gospel-influenced country toe-tapper. Extremely well produced.

THE JUDDS**"Why Not Me"**

Writer: Harlan Howard, Sonny Throckmorton, Brent Maher; Producer: Brent Maher; Publisher: Tree/Welbeck/Blue Quill, BMI/ASCAP. RCA/Curb 13923.

Add one more voice to the chorus of joyous shouts that are greeting the hottest new act in country music. What a haunting, mesmerizing thing this is! I absolutely can not wait for the album.

GEORGE JONES**"She's My Rock"**

Writers: S.K. Dobbins; Producer: Billy Sherrill; Publisher: Famous/Chappell, ASCAP. Epic 34-04609.

I used to love Stoney Edwards' singing of this; and when I heard Jones was covering both that one and Brenda Lee's fine version I must admit I had my reservations. I should've known better: This is a masterpiece.

JUICE NEWTON**"Restless Heart"**

Writers: Van Stephenson, Tim DuBois, Dave Robbins; Producer: Richard Landis; Publisher: Warner House of Music/WB Gold, BMI/ASCAP. RCA 13907.

Nothing of much interest here, except maybe a case study on how to make a good song sound dull.

DAVE JAMES & TRILOGY**"Shadow People"**

Writers: R. August, R. Tranham; Producer: J. Hernandez & B. Al-lecca; Publisher: Delev/Al Jolson Black & White, BMI. Surprise 2.

A good black Philadelphia dance club record written on Music Row. Add "Shadow People" to your disco playlist at once: The sooner more people realize the diversity of music in Music City, the better off we'll all be.

GENE WATSON**"Got No Reason Now For Goin' Home"**

Writers: J. Russell; Producer: Russ Reeder & Gene Watson; Publisher: Welk, BMI. MCA/Curb 52457.

... But let's face it, this is still what we do best. And there are few who do it as well as this master stylist. I think I could do nothing but listen to Gene Watson sing for a solid week and still not have enough.

HANK WILLIAMS JR.**"All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight"**

Writer: Hank Williams Jr.; Producer: Jimmy Bowen, Hank Williams Jr.; Publisher: Bocephus, BMI, Warner/Curb 7-29184.

... And speaking of rowdy rockin' ... This, friends and neighbors, is one very hot track. It's party time.

JUDY COLLINS & T.G. SHEPPARD**"Home Again"**

Writers: Michael Masser, Gerry Goffin; Producer: Michael Masser; Publisher: Prince Street/Screen Gems, ASCAP/BMI. Elektra 69697.

It's a pretty song and they both sing it very well; but I find myself feeling cheated when a "duet" doesn't harmonize.

JOE LOFTIS & THE PINKS**"Marie, Marie"**

Writer: D. Alvin; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Twin-Duck/Ron-Weiser, BMI. Wee Rock 6.

Plenty of raw energy, propelled by a rockabilly piano & guitar. Joe sounds like Elvis at 21 careening through Memphis at midnight, full of youth and spirit.

JERRY LAWLER**"Wimpbuster"/"World's Greatest Wrestler"**

Writer: Ray Parker Jr., Tom Nuntery; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed. Wimpbuster 17607.

It's confession time: Besides loving all the loonies on Music Row, I am also a big wrestling fan. I picked this up at the matches at the Fairgrounds recently, just for the pleasure of hearing King Lawler mouth off along to Ray Parker's track on one side and boast dramatically (?) to a 2001 disco beat on the other. Fun for fans.

HANDSOME JIMMY VALIANT**"Son of a Gypsy"**

Writer: Jimmy Valiant; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed. Boogie Woogie 053.

He sings in a hilarious ham-fisted roar that has about as much finesse as you might expect from someone who spends most of his time in the ring. Sounds like he's ready to brawl; and I guess that's what rock & roll is all about. More fun for wrestling fans.

CURTIS POTTER**"Time To Turn the Page"**

Writers: Dennis Wilson; Producer: Penray Productions; Publisher: Tree, BMI. Step One 335.

Pedestrian.

THE STENMARK-MUELLER BAND**"Strangers To Lovers To Strangers"**

Writer: K.J. Stenmark; Producer: Jerry Fuller; Publisher: Al Gall-ico, BMI. Envelope 7001.

Separately, they both have finely-tuned singing chops. Together, their excellent control of their vocal pipes makes for harmonies that tingle. Stenmark's song's a winner. And it doesn't hurt to have producer Fuller on your team either. A real tasty debut.

BARBARA MANDRELL**"Crossword Puzzle"**

Writers: S. Dean, F. J. Myers; Producer: Tom Collins; Publisher: Tom Collins Music/Collins Court, BMI/ASCAP. MCA 52465.

Get well soon, little lady. We miss you on Music

Row; and we need for you to come sing for us like this a lot more.

HONORABLE MENTION:

DANNY NEWSOME/"I'd Think You Were Cheating Tonight"/Rustic

JOHN ARNOLD BAND/"How We Gonna Know"/Compleat

MOGOLLON/"Shea Roc"/RCR

WILLIE NELSON & HANK WIL-

SON/"Wabash Cannonball"/Paradise

BOB CHANDLER/"Love Isn't Love"/Eagle International

SAWYER BROWN/"Leona"/Capitol

REBA McENTIRE/"How Blue?"/MCA

GLENN BARBER/"First Love Feelings"/Tudor

REBECCA LYNN & CHARLIE MACALEX-

ANDER/"It Takes Two"/Hey Ho

DOUG LAVALLEY/"D.W.I. "/Hillton

MICKEY GILLEY/"She Cheats On Me"/Paula

VINCE HATFIELD/"Love Has Made A Woman

Out Of You"/Soundwaves

DANNY MAXEY & TEXAS

SHOOTOUT/"She's Got That Special

Touch"/NSD

KATHY SHEPARD/"Mama Sing Us a

Song"/Ric Rac

NAT STUCKEY/"The Rebel"/Krystal

STEVE WARNER/"Don't You Give Up On

Love"/RCA

KEN POLLARD/"Alabama Shine"/Eagle Inter-

national

GARY WOLFE/"Gettin' Into Tennessee

Tonight"/Mercury

McCAIN BROTHERS/"Three Little

Words"/Rise & Shine

WYALON JENNINGS/"America"/RCA

DAVE ATWOOD/"Sweet Love Af-

fair"/Comstock

RONNIE DUNN/"Jessie"/MCA-Churchill

J.C

CUNNINGHAM/"Love Was Made To Be

Made"/Viva

LARRY ELKINS/"The Rounder Called Cotton

Eyed Joe"/Universal

EDDIE RABBITT/"The Best Year of My

Life"/Warner Bros

SHAUNA SMITH/"Wishing It Was

You"/Buckboard

ADAM BAKER/"The Best Thing I Ever Did

Wrong"/Signature

CATHY BUCHANAN/"Sometimes Love Is a

Pain In the Heart"/Rustic

RICK HANSON/"Laced With Love"/Ric Rac.

RICK HANSON/"Laced With Love"/Ric Rac.

DON'T GIVE UP YOUR DAY JOB:

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VIDEO VISION

Video Music Reviews by Andrew Roblin

A funny thing happened to Alabama's video of "(There's A) Fire In The Night" on its journey from the record label to American living rooms. RCA recalled the clip just two days after most television programmers got it.

"We got the new Alabama video a couple of weeks ago," says Megan Mengaith, producer of the widely syndicated "Country Express" video show. "I thought it was pretty bold. Let's put it this way: I was surprised by it."

The first time I called RCA to ask why the clip had been called back, a label spokesman said there had been problems getting a synchronization license for the video from the song's publisher, Sable Music.

"Who told you that?" asked Jamey Ryan, Sable's copyright administrator, when I told her RCA's explanation for the recall. "We were never contacted in any way for a sync license. We don't want people to think we wouldn't grant one," adds Ryan. "It's important for us to have record companies do videos of our songs."

Later, RCA had a different story. "We're not pursuing a synchronization license," said a different label spokesman. "We sent the video out to our field people to look at so we could

get their feedback."

The video is said to include revealing shots of an actress's breasts. Video programmers also say that the final scene depicts a snake (tattooed on a man's body) as it crawls up his throat. Several programmers I spoke with suggested that the content of "(There's A) Fire In The Night" had more influence on RCA's decision to recall than the quest for a sync license.

HANK WILLIAMS, JR. "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight"

Producer: Tom Thacker. Warner Bros.

You've heard the hype. You've read the publicity. Congratulations to Hank, Warner Bros. and director John Goodhue: the video actually surpasses the p.r. Hank can't find his ringing telephone. But his caller, Paul Williams, sends over a bevy of beauties from an all-star aerobics class to prepare Hank and his house for a bash to end all bashes. One cutie jumps in Hank's lap; others dust, mop and dance as the guests begin to arrive. Willie, Waylon, Kris Kristofferson, Cheech and Chong and a lengthy list of other celebrities arrive for more fun. Dy-

namite stuff. "All My Rowdy Friends" is set to go into light rotation soon on MTV, says Warner Bros.

MOE BANDY & JOE STAMPLEY "Boys Night Out"

Producer: Jim Owens Entertainment. Columbia.

After a hot and dirty day working at the garage, Moe and Joe punch out for a night of carousing. They pick up their redneck waitress girlfriends and head for the nightlife as the ladies slip out of their working duds in the backseat. Although "Boys Night Out" won't overwhelm your senses like many rock clips do, the editing moves along at a brisk tempo and creates a pleasant flood-of-images effect. Moe, Joe and director Rod Thompson are on a roll. Good sound effects, humor and the duo's personalities make this a good one.

WAYLON JENNINGS "If She'd Leave Her Mama"

Producer: RCA Video. RCA

Director David Hogan lets us watch as a little girl dabbles in her mother's make-up and stumbles around in a pair of oversize high heels. Before our eyes, the stumbling girl turns into a full-grown lady hitchhiking into town. Local rocker Will Rambeau gives her a ride, and the couple soon check in at their urban lodging: Nashville's Sam Davis Hotel. She can't stand the place for long and soon dumps Will to take up a career as an exotic dancer. Waylon never appears in the video that bears his name, making this something of a first, but the well-developed plot fits the song perfectly.

MEL TILLIS & GLEN CAMPBELL "Slow Night"

Producer: Jim Owens Entertainment. MCA.

How does a director make a song that describes an empty nightclub interesting? By introducing colorful characters and by using interesting camera viewpoints the way Rod Thompson does here. Mel and Glen sing their song to a handful of listless patrons. A flower vendor comes in, but finds no customers, so he leaves a flower for the bartender, who's busy eyeing a round, firm waitress. The tip jar's untouched and most everybody stayed home, but this video effectively portrays the pathos facing entertainers without an audience.

ALABAMA "I'm Not That Way Anymore"

Producer: Marty Garfunkle. RCA.

It's awfully hard to get excited about a performance video—even a relatively good one like



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this. "I'm Not That Way Anymore" is better than most performance clips due to its nostalgic, conceptual elements. Black-and-white excerpts from "American Bandstand" and photographs of Alabama's members in their high school yearbooks drift across the screen as the lyrics detail the changes wrought by the years. The group does the best they can in the performance segments, but a stronger story would increase this video's appeal.

WAYLON JENNINGS "Never Could Toe The Mark"

Producer: RCA Video. RCA.



Melanie Greenwood and husband Lee practice their steps as director Ed Fussell prepares the shot, for an instructional dance video, "Melanie Greenwood's Hot Country Dancin'."

Oh, no. Not another performance video! Sweating roadies roll equipment here and hoist it there. Waylon and Jessi Colter wander onto the set, and soon Waylon and his band are playing the song. Luckily for him, his visual presence is powerful enough to keep some

viewers interested in watching him lip-synch. He fakes his mandolin part and a member of the band pretends to blow harp. That's the peak of this clip's excitement.



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The studio's log cabin construction gives you a clue that you're about to walk into a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. If you're lucky enough to arrive as the pickers are running down the final song of a session, then you'll also get to smell the delightful aroma of owner Mabel Birdsong's home cooking floating out from the kitchen as she prepares one of her specialties for everyone.

Chief engineer Joe Wilson explains, "There's plenty of studios that can beat our price, and plenty that can equal or maybe even better our sound, but I don't know of any that can do both! We're trying to make it possible for people to come in and take the hours they need without having to spend a fortune. The hourly rate is not what we're going after, we don't worry about the clock and sit here and log down every

minute. What we're trying to do is send out a superior product, something really good. The bottom line is that if we cut a monster record there's gonna be more. I just don't think we have to make it all in one swoop."

THE EQUIPMENT

The Masters Touch equipment story starts with a Sphere Console, and MCI 24-track/2-track recorders. The studio also owns the EMT 250 digital reverb,

LIST OF EQUIPMENT

- * Crown
- * Linn Drum * Oberheim DMX
- * Tama Drums
- * Yamaha Grand
- * Fender Rhodes
- * AKG * Shure * EV
- * Neumann * PZM * Beyer
- * Valley People
- * Sphere Console
- * MCI 24 Track
- * MCI 2 Track
- * Sony PCM F-1 Digital 2 Track
- * UREI Monitor
- * McIntosh
- * Scamp
- * Syclavier II
- * Roland J-P8 * Prophet 5
- * Yamaha DX-7 * Korg Organ
- * Simmons Drums
- * Eventide Harmonizer H-949
- * DBX 165 Limiter
- * Roland Chorus-Echo SRE-555

* EMT 250 Digital Reverb

\$65/hr. with engineer

and Sony PCM F-1 digital 2-track recorder, which is becoming very popular for mix down. Naturally, there is a complete assortment of outboard gear, special effects and microphones.

Also available for use are a wide range of instruments and synthesizers. In addition to keyboards such as the Fender Rhodes, Yamaha Grand Piano and DX-7, the studio offers the incredible new Synclavier II. This revolutionary new computer-operated keyboard can record and create an unlimited array of sounds. Being a digital instrument, it is perhaps the only synthesizer in its class that has such wide tonal response and unlimited flexibility. For different percussion needs, there are a set of Simmons drums, an Oberheim DMX drum machine, and a Linn Drum computer as well as a set of conventional Tama drums.

THE STUDIO

The studio is a large, rectangular 25-by-50-foot room with high ceilings and a large, raised platform stage that stretches across the far end. The stage was designed especially for recording string sections and groups that wish to record live. Joe explained, "If a group is well rehearsed, they can come in and really go for that live-album-type sound. Sometimes, having everyone together on a stage helps capture the energy in a way that can't always be done with overdubs. Using the digital 2-track a group could cut several versions of each song, edit between them if necessary and come up with a direct-to-disc type sound."

The spacious stage and recording room also lends itself to use as a showcase venue for private performances, or for recording a live album in front of an invited audience. Chairs could be arranged in front of the stage to allow an ample audience to participate. Naturally, there are fully equipped kitchen facilities for catering such an affair.

A large 12-by-10-foot drum room features more than enough space to stretch out, and several windows, so that the drummer can maintain visual contact with the other pickers and the engineer. There is also a special piano booth. All of the piano is inside this booth, except for the keyboard. With this arrangement, the picker sits in the room with all the other musicians while the sound of the piano (leakage) is kept separated from the other tracks. There is also a large vocal booth that faces into the room, allowing the singer to be in close contact with both the players and the control room.

The exposed hardwood logs of

which the building is constructed interact with the sound in a very pleasing way, giving both the highs and the lows a natural feeling, which translates extremely well on tape.

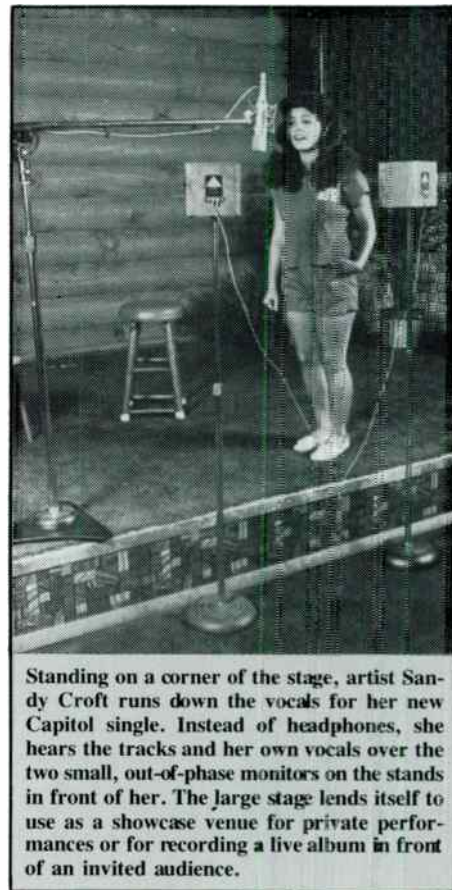
In one corner of the room are the two small monitor speakers mounted on music stands, which Joe likes to use instead of headphones when they cut vocal tracks. The two speakers are wired out of phase so they cancel out at the vocal mike. Using this system, the vocalist hears the tracks and themselves much in the same manner as when they are performing, instead of getting lost in a headphone world of reverb, echo and floating pitch.

SELF-CONTAINED

Masters Touch Studio is really only one part of a growing and self-contained music business operation. In addition to the studio, there are a publishing division, management and booking operation, and record label. Angelsong Records was the starting vehicle for 15-year-old Sandy Croft, who is now signed to Capitol Records, and they have recently signed new artists Byron Walls and Michael Jarmillo. Besides the many in-house projects with which the staff writers are involved, the publishing company is also becoming more active on the outside, pitching songs and working material.

* * *

"I believe I understand the needs of the producers who are trying to hit the target", Joe summarized. "There is a large market of artists on independent



Standing on a corner of the stage, artist Sandy Croft runs down the vocals for her new Capitol single. Instead of headphones, she hears the tracks and her own vocals over the two small, out-of-phase monitors on the stands in front of her. The large stage lends itself to use as a showcase venue for private performances or for recording a live album in front of an invited audience.

and major labels who have not yet arrived to the point where the label can give them unlimited funding. So to make a competitive record, they need the highest quality at the lowest possible price. And that's the void which we want to fill, by offering the best possible combination of price, service, and quality. For more information contact: Mabel Birdsong (615) 297-2246.



The crew quiets down as artist/writer/producer Paul Davis experiments with the Synclavier II and prepares to overdub on some freshly cut rhythm tracks. From left are Paul Davis; owner Mabel Birdsong; guitarist Fred Newell; engineer Joe Wilson, and artist Sandy Croft.

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Dollars & Sense

UNCLE SAM MOVES INTO THE DRIVER'S SEAT

by Kerry P. O'Neil, CPA
Kraft Bros., Esstman, Patton & Harrell

Alas, if you haven't already heard, Congress has passed a new tax bill. It's called The 1984 Deficit Reduction Act (that's their deficit, not yours that's being reduced). The Act made a number of significant changes—almost all negative. In this article, I'm going to discuss the changes in the tax treatment of business autos.

Let's look at an *example*:

Ned Newmoney recently had a string of top-ten hits. After waiting 9 months, his first sizeable check comes in from BMI. His lifelong dream has been to buy a new BMW. The price tag is \$40,000, and his business use is expected to be 75%.

Generally, *under the old law*, he could depreciate the auto over 3 years using percentages: 25% the first year; 38% the second year; and 37% the third year. An investment credit of 6% of the cost of the auto was allowed in the year of purchase. These deductions and credits are based on 100% business use; any personal use would reduce them proportionately.

Under the new law, the percentages remain the same; however, depreciation deductions are limited to \$4,000 the first year and \$6,000 thereafter until the auto is fully depreciated. The investment credit is still 6% of the auto's cost, but it is capped at \$1,000. These deductions and credits are also based on 100% business use; any personal use will reduce them proportionately. Also, if the auto is used less than 50%

for business, no investment credit is allowed and 5-year straight line depreciation is required.

Now let's see the difference in tax benefits under the old law vs. the new law for Ned Newmoney's BMW:

	Old Law	New Law
Tax Deductions:		
1st year depreciation	\$ 7,275	\$ 3,000
2nd year depreciation	11,058	4,500
3rd year depreciation	10,767	4,500
Total Tax Deductions	\$29,100	\$12,000

Tax Savings:

Tax savings or depreciation deductions (assuming 50% tax bracket)	\$14,550	\$ 6,000
Plus investment credit	1,800	750
Total Tax Savings	\$16,350	\$ 6,750

Net Auto Cost:

Purchase price	\$40,000	\$40,000
Less tax savings	(16,350)	(6,750)
Net Cost	\$23,650	\$33,250

DIFFERENCE **\$9,600**

As you can see, the tax savings is reduced dra-

matically under the new law. What's the bottom line? The new law doesn't mean you can't buy the new BMW. It just means that you have to use more of your money—and less of Uncle Sam's.

Good luck and take care.



John McEuen's 'Fourth Annual Rocky Mountain Opry' assembled a line-up that included, the Belamy Brothers, the Denver Symphony Orchestra and (L to R) McEuen (Nitty Gritty Dirt Band), Eugene Fodor (violin virtuoso), and Donovan.

Did You Know?



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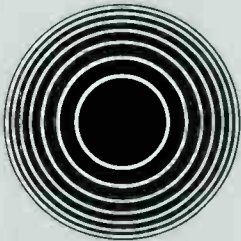


TRACK FACES: Artist Katie McKinzie and KCBQ's Fuzzy Heron; Producer Pete Drake and Ronnie Robbins; Newly launched Music City Queen; Bandana chats with WWVA's David Farrell.

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The Almo/Irving staff gave a big welcome to Rhonda Fleming-Gill who was recently added to their Nashville roster of songwriters. Toasting (l. to r.) are: Mary Del Frank, Ronnie Brooks, Kent Robbins, Paul Kennerly, Fleming-Gill, David Conrad, and Teresa Grier.

AND NOW TO THE STUDIOS . . .

Mt. Juliet's own **Charlie Daniels Band** has been laying tracks for their new album with **John Boylan** producing and **Paul Grupp** and **Ken Criblez** behind the board at **WOODLAND SOUND**. **Dwayna Litz** is recording new tunes with producer **Bill Walker** overseeing and **Tim Farmer** and **Fran Overall** en-

gineering. **Sylvia** cut a new single with **Tom Collins** producing and **Les Ladd** engineering - and producer **George Richey** has been mixing **Loretta Lynn's** new live album with **Billy Sherrill** at the board. Canadian artist **Gary Buck** cut tracks with **David McKinley** engineering. **Ken Criblez** was assistant engineer on the previous three projects. **Big Al Downing** has been recording with producer **Ray Baker**, as **David McKinley** and **Tim Farmer** set the controls for the heart of the sun. **Milton Brown** has been mixing tracks on **Leon Raines** with **Travis Turk** behind the board.

THE NASHVILLE STRING MACHINE has played on sessions recently, including a **Piedmont Airlines** jingle and a song for **Pennsylvania Tourism**. Artist sessions include **The Jordonaires**, **Dave Koblish**, **Dennis Morgan**, **David Clydesdale**, **Lloyd Lundstrum**, **Lar-nelle Harris** and **Tony Alamo**.

Lee Peterzell and **Joe Funderburk** engineered projects for **Andy Tolbird**, **Lanny Wolfe**, **Ken Harding**, **Gary Volzone** and **Cheryl Pruitt Blackwood** this month at **CREATIVE WORKSHOP**. Projects by **Steve Dorff**, **Charlie Black** and **Austin Roberts** were all en-

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Pianist **Dave Galloway** is cutting a new project at **POLLYFOX**, as are the **Original Church of God Ensemble**. **Jay Holbrook** and **The Beals** were in recording, and balladeer **Gil Brandon** was in to record some tunes as well.

Joe Bob Barnhill and **Buzz Stone** were in recording recently at **FROG POND**.

Alabama was in at **MUSIC MILL** recording the theme for the upcoming movie "The Bear," based on the legendary coach. **Roger Miller** is working with producer **Harold Shedd** on a new lp also. These two projects are being engineered by the big team of **Jim Cotton**, **Joe Scaife** and **Paul Goldberg**. **Shedd** is also working with **Mel Tillis**, as **Bob Bullock** and **Paul Goldberg** handle the board duties. **Emory Gordy** is producing a new **Vince Gill** record and **Stan Silver** is in mixing a single for **Donna Fargo**. **Gus Hardin** is working on her next record with production help from **Mark Wright**.

At **SOUND EMPORIUM**, **Steve Cheek** with **Dimension Sound** was working on a project with **Jim Williamson** and **Tony Migliore** at the board. **Sonya Yancey** is being produced by **Ed Penney** as **Gary Laney** engineers . . . and **Don Tweedy** and **Bob Wilson** were working together with **Rick Horton** at the faders. **Joe Talbot** and **Mike Leach** cut tunes with engineer **Neil Wilburn**; also **Tina Carol** and **Nashville Satin** are in the studio being co-produced by **Jim Williamson** and **Tony Migliore**.

At **SOUND STAGE MCA's** **Tony Brown** and **Jimmy Bowen** are producing new tracks on **Steve Wariner** with **Steve Tillisch** and **Mark Coddington** boarding and also on **Razzy Bailey** with **Dave Hassinger** and **Mark Coddington** engineering. **Rick** and **Janis Carnes** are being produced by **Chip Hardy** and **Jimmy Bowen** while **Steve Tillisch** and **Tim Kish** handle the knobs. **Jim Glaser** is working on his vinyl follow-up with producer **Don Tolle** and engineer **Bill Deaton**.

James Stroud, **Paul Overstreet**, and **Tom Schuyler** were recording a project together at **MASTERS TOUCH**. Artists **Sandy Croft** and **Byron Walls** each cut singles with producer **Joe Wilson**, who also finished an album for **Steve Mason**. **Paul Davis** and **Jennifer Kimball** cut



Razzy Bailey's success with "Knock On Wood" and "In The Midnight Hour" prompted him to add two horns to his band. Shown here performing on **WSMV-TV's** "Channel Four Magazine."

several song demos together, and **Chips Moman** was in doing overdubs. Performer/writers **Pam Rose** and **Mary Ann Kennedy** were cooking up some new material with producer **James Stroud**. The studio is being used as a location for the movie "Children Of Winter," to be shot in October.

Slim Wooten recorded a tribute to **Ernest Tubb** recently at **CATFISH BAY**. Demos by **Latham Hudson**, **Tim Bryant** and **Richard Law** were all on the agenda as well.

At **SOUND SHOP** the new studio manager is now **Pat McMakin**, who also handled the engineering on some recent **Terri Gibbs** sessions. **Ronnie McDowell** cut tracks with strong vocal back-up from **The Jordanares** as **Ernie Winfrey** checked the meters. **Travis Turk** produced and engineered a project on **Bonnie**

Nelson, and also engineered sessions on **David Frizzell** and **Shelly West** produced by **Steve Dorff**. **Timmy Tappan** produced a new project on **Jon Washington**, who was a member of **The Fortunes**; **Mike Bradley** watched the **VU's**.

SOUND CONTROL hosted **Roger Ball**, **John Riggs**, **Mark Morton** and **Richard Carpenter**, **Donnie Sanders** and **Billy Thundercloud**. **Roger Hamilton** was in producing **Steve Smith** - and **Loud Cry Productions** was working on a project as well.

Rosanne Cash finished her album with producer **David Malloy** at **EMERALD SOUND**. Just starting work is **R.C. Bannon** wearing the producers hat for **Tracey Lindon**.

At **FIRST TAKE** **Steve Brown** and **Friends** cut tracks, as did **Kossi Gardner** and **Gary**

TOP INDEPENDENT COUNTRY SINGLES

As reported by The **IRC** Network Reporting Stations

Survey Ending October 1, 1984

Weeks on Chart	Chart Position	Song - Artist
13	1	DREAM ON TEXAS LADIES -Rex Allen Jr/Moonshine
7	2	GETTING OVER YOU -Mason Dixon/Texas
7	3	WE JUST GOTTA DANCE -Karen Taylor-Good/Mesa
3	4	I'M GLAD YOU COULDN'T SLEEP LAST NIGHT -Narvel Felts/Evergreen
9	5	COME ON HOME -Tony Arata/Noble Vision
3	6	THE THIN RAGGED EDGE -Margo Smith/Bermuda Dunes
7	7	SPECULATION -Bill Anderson/Southern Tracks
3	8	MIDDLE OF THE ROAD -Lois Johnson/EMH
13	9	GOOD TIME CHARLIE'S GOT THE BLUES -Leon Russell/Paradise
5	10	NOTHING'S CHANGED, NOTHING'S NEW -Ray Pennington/EMH
7	11	MAKING LOVE TO DIXIE -Younger Bros./ERP
5	12	BUSY -Dianne Cherry/Stargem
3	13	BALL AND CHAIN -Jimmy Lee Huff/A.M.I.
#	14	SOMEBODY'S BACK IN TOWN -Chris Hillman/Sugarhill
5	15	HEARTACHES -Victoria Shaw/MPB
5	16	EVERYDAY PEOPLE -Kikki/Moonshine
9	17	COLD IN JULY -Robin Lee/Evergreen
#	18	THE REBEL -Nat Stuckey/Kristal International
3	19	STRAIGHT FOR YOUR LOVE -Backwater/A.M.I.
7	20	SHE TOOK IT TOO WELL -John W. Ryles/17th Ave
5	21	LOVE ON A BLUE RAINY DAY -Buzz Cason/Evergreen
#	22	I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY GOODBYE -Terry Dan/Volant
11	23	I GOT A BAD ATTITUDE -Gary Stewart/Red Ash
9	24	LOUISIANA HEATWAVE -Bobby Jenkins/Zone 7
#	25	NO LOVE LINE -Charlie Albertson/Hilltop
5	26	SLEEPING BACK TO BACK -White Water Junction/Jungle Rogue
#	27	THE FRENCH SONG -Jimmy C. Newman/Stargem
3	28	WHEN MY BABY'S ROCKING ME -Mickey Martin/TMW
11	29	PIECE OF MY HEART -John Hartford/Flying Fish
#	30	COUNTRY MAN, COUNTRY WOMAN -Steve and Debbie Brown/Charta

"The IRC Chart is compiled from over 300 IRC Network Reporting Stations"

New Entry



INDEPENDENT RECORD CHARTS

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This chart is compiled and paid for by the Independent Record Charts of Nashville, TN and represents the reported playlists as submitted by the IRC Radio Network to IRC.

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Newly signed ASCAP writer, Lisa Angelle (L) is an exclusive writer/artist at Collins Court Music. Sitting next to her after the signing is her producer Tom Collins, and looking on is ASCAP's Connie Bradley and Bob Doyle.

Jobe. Autumn started a new project and the **Ralph Brothers** horn section overdubbed some melifluous tones. **Chris Dodson** was also in.

Bob Krusen engineered everything and produced demos for **Marc Bellin** and **Tony Crow** at **FAT TRACKS**. **Tom Nance**, **Jim Daddario** and **Don Huber** were all in to record.

And . . . **J.L. Allison** of the **Crickets** cut a few tunes. Big time.

At **STARGEM** **Wayne Hodge** produced an lp on **The Chattertons** and singles on **Sandy Skaggs** and **Al Bradshaw**. **Paul Melton** cut new demos and **Michael Meyers** recorded a few jingles. **Vince Rundus** and **Roy Melpon**

are producing an album on **Drew Thomas**. As always, engineering was handled by **Dennis Richie** and **Alton Dellenger**. **Duke Duczer** engineered projects for **Tyrone Edmonds**, **Henry Cory** and **Gordon Ely** recently at **AL JOLSON**. **Chuck Robinson** brought his band in for some quick jam recording as well.

Recent sounds from **A.M.I. STUDIO** have included **Backwater** cutting tracks with producer **Bernie Vaughn**. Producer **Michael Radford** and engineer **Randy Best** were working on tunes with **The Baxters**, and the **Boys From Indiana** who were cutting a bluegrass lp with **Steve Chandler** controlling the board action.

Ed Bruce has completed his new album with new producer **Blake Mevis**; **Bill Harris** engineered at **MUSIC CITY MUSIC HALL**. **The Kendalls** are in the midst of recording their latest lp with **Brien Fisher** producing. **Leon Everette** is in the studio putting finishing touches on his next single, **Doug Crider** engineering. **Primo** songwriter **Dennis Morgan** is producing the duet team of **Susan Taylor** and **Mike Wells**.

At **GRAND CENTRAL STUDIOS** **Pat Patrick** produced **Marilyn McCoo** and **Amy Grant** on tracks for a Christmas television special; **Kent Madison** engineered.

ALLSTAR AUDIO SYSTEMS has been doing sound for numerous artists lately, including **Johnny Lee**, **Terri Gibbs**, **Sylvia**, **Gary Morris** and **Eddie Reasoner**.

DISC MASTERING INC. and **Randy Kling** have recently mastered a **David Wills** single, a **Kendalls** single, **Moe and Joe's** single, and the new **Ed Bruce** lp. Also in the works is a new song from **Bobby Vinton**.

The **A STRINGS** have been all over town doing sessions for **John Conlee**, **Marietta Wolfe**, **Rick Yancey**, **David Allan Coe**, **Tony Joe White**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Lani Wolfe**, and **Doug Oldham**. In addition to those record sessions, they also worked on numerous jingles including; the **Nashville Network** and a company which should be real popular this Thanksgiving . . . **Shadebrook Turkeys!**

Recent projects at **MASTERFONICS** included: **Waylon Jennings**, **Reba McEntire**, **Carl Jackson**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Wright Brothers**, **Merle Haggard**, **Shelly West**, **Curtis Mayfield**, all of which were mastered by **Glenn Meadows**, and product for **Rocco Marshall**, **Steel Anchor Band**, **Victor Vic**, mastered by **Benny Quinn**.

During the week of Sept. 24, 1984, **Masterfonics** had mastered 42 out of 100 of **Billboard's** **Country Singles** chart, including 7 of the top 10.

RADIO

THE UNITED STATIONS radio network has named **David Landau** vice president/sales.

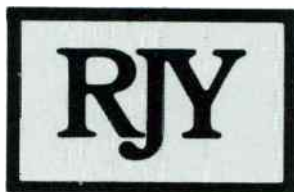
GAYLORD BROADCASTING CO. has named **Bob Meyer** new general manager at **WKY Radio** in **Oklahoma City**. He was formerly sales manager at **WSM AM-FM**.

—Tommy Tittsworth

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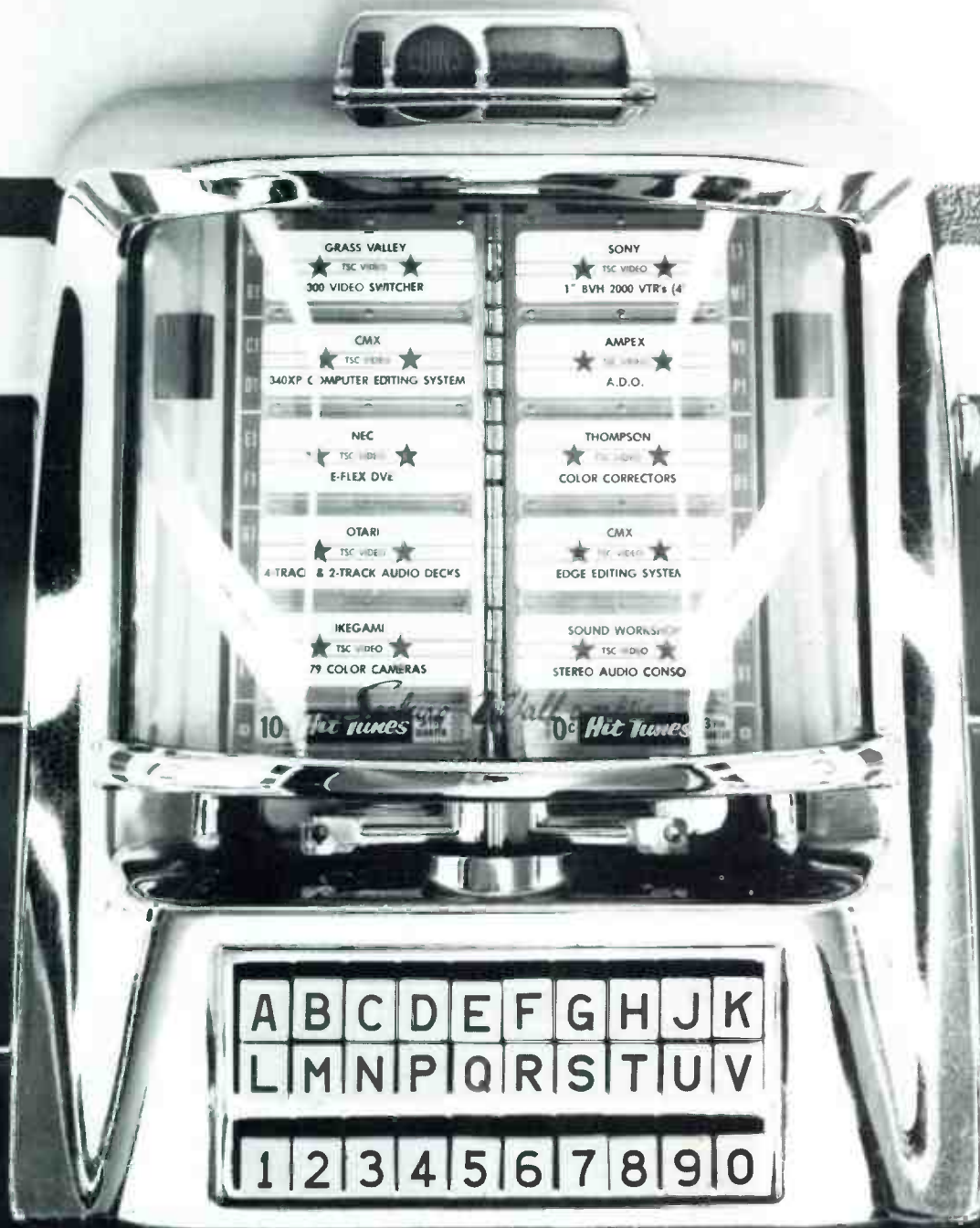
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