

VOLUME 17 • #15 • AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 7, 1997

ESTABLISHED 1981

MUSICROW

NASHVILLE'S MUSIC INDUSTRY PUBLICATION

Navigating The Charts

Promotion
Captains
Discuss
Radio

SPINS

Enhanced CDs
The Buzz
Word Nashville
CMA Nominees

*Trisha
Yearwood*

\$3.50

*****CARR-RT-SORT**C-020
3127
PAUL KINGSBURY
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NASHVILLE TN 37203-4321

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Stephony's Symphony

EMI Music Publishing **congratulates**
our writer and friend **Stephony Smith**
on her **history-making** single **"It's
Your Love,"** the first record in 20 years
to be **#1** on **Billboard's** Hot Country
Singles chart for **six** consecutive weeks.

Billboard[®] **HOT COUNTRY** **SINGLES & TRACKS** JULY 12, 1997

1	1	1	10	IT'S YOUR LOVE J.STROUD,B.GALLIMORE,T.MCGRAW (S.SMITH)	★★★ No. 1 ★★★ 6 weeks at No. 1	◆ TIM MCGRAW (WITH FAITH HILL) (C) (D) (V) CURB 73019	1
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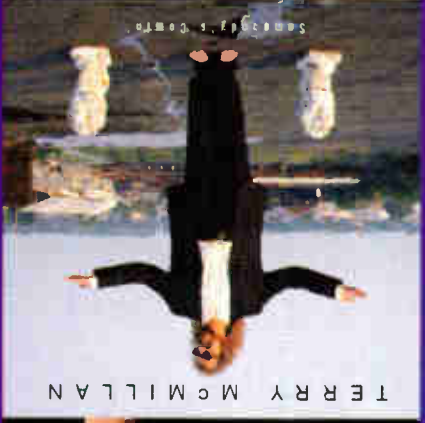
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World Radio History



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Daryle
SINGLETARY

Regina
REGINA

Terry
McMILLAN

Rebekah
DEL RIO

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COVER ARTIST



Artist Name: Trisha Yearwood
Label: MCA
Current Single: "How Do I Live"
Current Album: *Songbook: A Collection Of Hits*
Current Video: "How Do I Live" (from the movie *Con Air*)
Current Producers: Tony Brown, Garth Fundis
Hometown: Monticello, GA
Management: Ken Kragen & Co.
Booking: CAA
Publicity: FORCE
Awards: Pollstar/Best New Country Artist (1991); American Music Awards/Favorite New Artist, Country (1992); Academy of Country Music/Top New Female Vocalist (1992); CMA

Awards/Album of the Year for *Common Thread: Songs Of The Eagles* (1994); Grammy Awards/Best Country Vocal Collaboration for "I Fall To Pieces" with Aaron Neville (1994)
RIAA Certs. To Date: Platinum: *Trisha Yearwood* (2x), *Hearts In Armor*, *The Song Remembers When*, *Thinkin' About You*. Gold: *Everybody Knows*.
Birthdate: September 19, 1964
Birthplace: Monticello, GA
Outside Interests: Antiques, cooking
Musical Influences: Patsy Cline, Elvis, Linda Ronstadt
Favorite Records: Changes daily!

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved top and gold sequined pants, sits on a grand, dark wooden staircase. At the top of the stairs, a statue of an angel with wings is illuminated. The name 'MATRACA BERG' is written in a large, white, serif font, arching over the woman.

MATRACA BERG

SUNDAY MORNING TO SATURDAY NIGHT

Some Voices Are Meant To Be Heard... Some Moments You Never Forget

Her Debut Album On Rising Tide In Stores September 23rd

"THAT TRAIN DON'T RUN" the premiere single ... hear the rumble.

Listening For Airplay August 11th

Management: Mike Crowley



RISING TIDE
Country's Next Wave
A Universal Music Co.



SPINS

Interactivity—free wheels too



Despite the checkered past of enhanced CDs (ECDs), several factors are converging to make the format a viable marketing tool for Nashville artists. ECDs incorporate traditional digital audio with computer-accessible multi-media information, but technical problems and the lack of a uniform standard plagued the first generation of the discs.

According to John Frech with Final Stage Interactive, the development of the Blue Book Enhanced CD standard has eliminated ECD's past problems. "Part of our battle has been educating people on the new standards," he says. A division of the Sound Stage Group, Final Stage Interactive has recently completed ECDs for Bob Carlisle, Amy Grant, Collin Raye and many others.



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and many others. "As far as we know, we're the only company in Nashville focusing on enhanced CDs," says Frech. A full year of testing and development has confirmed that the new standard makes ECD compatible with all audio CD players and 90% of CD-ROM drives—Mac and PC. "We wanted to make sure all of the bugs were worked out before we went forward with clients," he says.



Perhaps the most important aspect of Final Stage's initial success has been their ability to deliver quality interactivity for a price well below what labels expect to pay. "If [labels] had heard anything about enhanced CDs, it was that they cost \$50,000 to \$100,000." Pre-existing ele-

ments can be incorporated in an ECD to reduce cost, plus Final Stage has taken pains to keep prices in line with Nashville budgets. "Part of that is us taking that whole year out and making sure we're able to be organized and efficient. Enhanced CDs can be done for anywhere from \$2,500 to \$10,000. You can go as high as you like, but for \$50,000 we throw in a car," Frech laughs.

Part of the renewed interest in the platform

—Chuck Aly



ONE SOUND FOR TWO EARS

"There are two ways to get growth in a genre," says Word Nashville GM/VP of A&R Jeff Teague. "One is to keep segmenting it stylistically. The other is to expand the fan base—that is where our interest lies."

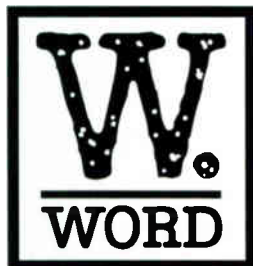
The mainstream country music arm of Word Entertainment aims to break artists through country channels while reaching a new audience through Word's Christian division. "We aren't trying to be two things to two cultures—we have one sound for two ears," Teague says. In addition, Word Nashville is providing Christian market access to other country labels.

A partnership with Magnatone launched a Kenny Rogers Christmas album which sold well last holiday season, and the label is releasing Collin Raye's *Direct Hits* on August 26

in conjunction with the Epic release. "The arrangement with Sony is a passion-driven, reciprocal agreement. If we do take something or vice versa, there's enthusiasm for the product—it doesn't show up in a distribution channel just because of an agreement."

The joint ventures enable the label to slowly build its own roster, which includes Skip Ewing and the upcoming "From The Ryman" series. "We're a country music label that does not want to be held hostage by having to sell and promote country music through one venue," Teague concludes. "To prove ourselves to country radio and the industry, we're quietly building a roster of high-quality artists that we'll take to both worlds, while helping established country artists expand their fan base."

—Chuck Aly



Nashville

THE BUZZ

SONGS OF SUMMER

For a few glorious days, the heat broke, and *Music Row* staffers were reminded what it felt like to breathe oxygen. But it didn't take long for the humidity to return and push us back indoors. At least we have the music to get us through.

Volume

Input



Tim McGraw—"It's Your Love"
Timeless classic? We're still not sick of it.



Pointer Sisters—"We Are Family"
Families, even large ones like the labels, tend to agree on things. But when The Brady Bunch block votes, at least they all have different handwriting.



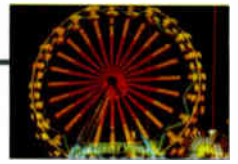
Garth/Trisha—"In Another's Eyes"
No one's heard it. MCA, fearing radio will dump "How Do I Live" for the duet, didn't advance the album.



Martina McBride—"Broken Wing"
Next single from new album soars. She may be little, but she's loud!



Bill Heard Trucks Jingle—
Better than some of the songs on the radio. Short, snappy—hey, put it in heavy!



NASHVILLE'S NEWSPAPER SINCE 1876



Nashville Banner

Orr Receives CMA Media Award

By Chuck Aly
MUSIC ROW STAFF REPORTER

Nashville Banner music writer Jay Orr is this year's recipient of the Country Music Association's Media Achievement Award. Orr has become one of country music's most respected and well-liked journalists while exhibiting a passion for the music he covers.



Jay Orr

"I am from the South and grew up around country music," he says. "It was when I was out of the country for my junior year in college that I began to hear country as something indigenous and unique to the culture I came from." He studied folklore before a stint at the Library of Congress led him to the Country Music Foundation.

While working at CMF, Orr began contributing to several publications including *Billboard*, *New Country*, *Request* and *Music Row*. He started at the

Banner in October of 1989 and his approach to the job is equal parts pragmatism and ardor. "You want to be fair, accurate and tell the story clearly. In my case, I have to help the lay reader understand why what happens on Music Row matters. I also hope we encourage people to experience the music. That's really the first reason I wanted to write—to share my enthusiasm for music with others."

Orr is greatly appreciative of the CMA's accolade. "I'm deeply moved. This is concrete evidence

that at least some of what I'm doing is effective and appreciated. That's gratifying because there are days you wonder whether you're reaching anybody.

"There are a lot of people that help out. Editors, photographers and the publisher here is very supportive. The publicists help out a bunch and, if we're passing out accolades, my lovely wife, Judy, is key to the whole operation.

"I love this job, I love this community and I feel very fortunate to get to do what I do."

One Nod At A Time

George Strait and Deana Carter each earned five nominations for the 31st Annual CMA Awards, to be telecast live on the CBS Television Network September 24 at 7 p.m. (CT) from the Grand Ole Opry House. Final nominees are:

• ENTERTAINER

Brooks & Dunn, Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, George Strait

• MALE VOCALIST

Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, Collin Raye, George Strait, Bryan White

• FEMALE VOCALIST

Deana Carter, Patty Loveless, LeAnn Rimes, Pam Tillis, Trisha Yearwood

• HORIZON AWARD

Trace Adkins, Deana Carter, Terri Clark, LeAnn Rimes, Lee Ann Womack

• VOCAL GROUP

Alabama, Diamond Rio, The Mavericks, Ricochet, Sawyer Brown

• VOCAL DUO

Bellamy Brothers, Brooks & Dunn, Raybon Brothers, Thrasher Shiver, John & Audrey Wiggins

• ALBUM

Blue, LeAnn Rimes, MCG/Curb,

Prod—Wilbur Rimes; Carrying Your Love With Me, George Strait, MCA, *Prod—Tony Brown*, George Strait; *Did I Shave My Legs For This?*, Deana Carter, Capitol Nashville, *Prod—Chris Farren*, Jimmy Bowen, John Guess; *Everybody Knows*, Trisha Yearwood, MCA, *Prod—Garth Fundis*;

Everything I Love, Alan Jackson, Arista, *Prod—Keith Stegall*

• MUSICIAN

Eddie Bayers (Drums), Paul Franklin (Steel Guitar), Brent Mason (Guitar), Matt Rollings (Keyboards), Brent Rowan (Guitar)

• SINGLE

"All The Good Ones Are Gone," Pam Tillis, Arista, *Prod—Billy Joe Walker, Jr.*, Pam Tillis; "Carried Away," George Strait, MCA, *Prod—Tony Brown*, George Strait;

"It's Your Love," Tim McGraw (w/Faith Hill), Curb, *Prod—Byron Gallimore*, James Stroud, Tim McGraw;

"One Night At A Time," George Strait, MCA, *Prod—Tony Brown*, George Strait;

"Strawberry Wine," Deana Carter, Capitol Nashville, *Prod—Chris Farren*

• VOCAL EVENT

CDB w/John Berry & Hal Ketchum, "Long Haired Country Boy," Blue Hat Records;

Clint Black & Martina McBride, "Still Holding On," RCA;

George Jones & Kathy Mattea, "You've Got A Friend In Me," Disney;

Lee Roy Parnell featuring The Fairfield Four, "John The Revelator: *Peace In The Valley*," Arista;

Tim McGraw (w/Faith Hill), "It's Your Love," Curb

• SONG (Award to the Songwriter)

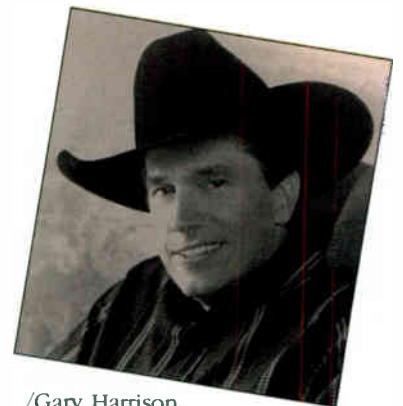
"All The Good Ones Are Gone," Dean Dillon/Bob McDill, Acuff Rose Music/PolyGram International/Ranger Bob Music;

"Blue," Bill Mack, Ft. Knox Music/Trio Music;

"Butterfly Kisses," Bob Carlisle/Randy Thomas,

Diadem Music/PolyGram International Publishing;

"Strawberry Wine," Matraca Berg



/Gary Harrison, Longitude Music/August Wind Music/Great Broad Music/Georgian Hill;

"Time Marches On," Bobby Braddock, Sony Tree Publishing

• MUSIC VIDEO

"455 Rocket," Kathy Mattea, Dir—Steven Goldmann;

"All The Good Ones Are Gone," Pam Tillis, Dir—Steven Goldmann;

"Every Light In The House," Trace Adkins, Dir—Michael Merriman;

"It's Your Love," Tim McGraw (w/Faith Hill), Dir—Sherman Halsey;

"Strawberry Wine," Deana Carter, Dir—Roger Pistle □

Would it be asking too much
for one more?



CURB
RECORDS

SAWYER BROWN

CMA Vocal Group of the Year Nominee

Reigning ACM Top Vocal Group • Reigning TNN/Music City News Top Vocal Band

Going for Country Music's Triple Crown



MUSICAL CHAIRS

by LISA BERG

Schreiber Heads Lyric Street Promotion

FAST BREAKS

► **Carson Schreiber** has joined the new Nashville-based Disney/Hollywood Record label, Lyric Street, as Senior Vice President of Promotion and Product Development. He was previously Vice President of Curb/Universal Records based in Los Angeles.

"I'm excited to be reunited with **Randy [Goodman]**," Schreiber said. "We've been in the trenches together in the past and we know each other's strengths. Only Randy and a company the caliber of Disney could attract me away from **Mike Curb** and the Curb family of labels..."

► **Bart Herbison**, Congressman **Bob Clement's** Chief Administrative Officer for Tennessee, has been named Executive Director of the Nashville Songwriters Association International. Herbison, a 1996 graduate of Leadership Music, will oversee the daily operations of NSAI, the nation's largest not-for-profit trade association devoted to the service of songwriters, with 4,500 members worldwide...

► The *Tennessean* has reported that television broadcast rights to the Academy of Country Music awards show have been purchased by CBS. Previously airing on NBC, the West Coast-based ACM show will air next April on the same network that hosts Nashville's CMA Awards, scheduled for September 24...



Carson Schreiber

BUSINESS NEWS

Brian Kagan joins Starstruck Entertainment as Vice President of Marketing and Development. "We are very excited to have Brian involved with Reba's career. His experience in both retail and music will allow us to grow in many different areas," said Starstruck CEO **Narvel Blackstock**...

Pamela L. Lewis, President/CEO of PLA Media, has reorganized and expanded her Nashville and Los Angeles offices. In the

Nashville office, **Lewis** is joined by **Gary Griggs**, who serves as the company's Vice President. Also in the Music Row offices are **Twana Burns**, Account Manager; **Scott Porter**, Media/Marketing Coordinator and **Leah Bartley**, Media/Marketing Coordinator. The West Coast office operates under Senior Publicist **Gloria Boyce**...

Julie Dove has joined Marco Promotions as the Secondary Impact Station Promoter. Dove formerly worked at KPLX in Dallas, TX as Programming Assistant...

Music industry veteran **Mike Hyland** has formed Cabana Management to represent singer/songwriter **Ryan Robertson** and singer/songwriter/actor **Jason Petty**. Robertson and his Ryan Robertson Band perform daily at Six Flags Over Georgia in Atlanta. He is also a frequent performer at The Bluebird Cafe. Petty is currently starring in *Lost Highway—The Music And Legend Of Hank Williams* at the Ryman Auditorium. Hyland also owns Full Court Press public relations. 615-244-7224...

Joe Diffie has formed Third Rock Entertainment to handle the professional affairs of his career. **Mark LeMaster**, **Rusty Koelle** or **Georgia Mabry** are the contact persons. 615-320-1219...

Otari Corporation of America, a leading manufacturer of recording consoles and digital recorders, is opening a full-time, factory-direct office in Nashville. The new Otari Southeast office is staffed by three pro audio industry veterans—**Melody Rhodes**, office manager; **Duncan Rowe**, sales manager; and **Jeff Glixman**, product



Greg McCarn

specialist. 209 10th Avenue South, 615-255-6080...

Vince Gill has signed a two-year contract to host the annual CMA Awards telecast. The 1997 broadcast of the CMA Awards will mark the sixth consecutive hosting stint for Gill, who has won 17 CMA Awards—more than any other artist. The 1996 show was the second-highest rated special out of 212 aired during the 1996-97 television season, ranking only behind the Motion Picture Academy Awards...

Thirty-six new members have been named to participate in the ninth class of Leadership Music. The eight-month program is designed for established leaders in the entertainment industry to create an in-depth discussion, to facilitate communication and further the connection of industry leaders.

The course, which starts in September, includes an opening retreat, six monthly program days targeting the latest issues regarding songwriting/publishing, talent, studio, radio, media and record companies. The year ends with a closing retreat in May, 1998. The new members are:



Debbie Schwartz

Grant Alden, Co-owner/Editor, *No Depression Magazine*; **Marilyn Arthur**, Vice President of Media & Artist Relations, RCA Label Group; **Brown Bannister**, President, RBI Productions; **Ken Biddy**, President/CEO, Copperfield Music Group; **June Brody**, President/COO, SJS Entertainment; **Alison Brown**, President, Compass Records; **Margaret Callihan**, Senior Vice President, SunTrust Bank; **Kurt Denny**, Creative Director, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.; **Martin Fischer**, President/CEO, High Five Entertainment; **Fletcher Foster**, Vice President Artist Development, Arista/Nashville; **Marty Gamblin**, Vice President Nashville Operations, GC Management; **Teresa Hairston**, President/



Marion Williams

continued on page 24

ADMIT ONE

Artist	\$Gross	Tix Sold	%Full	Venue	City, St.	Date
Alan Jackson/Mindy McCready	223,500	9,227	100	Van Andel Arena	Grand Rapids, MI	6/27
Riders in the Sky	168,343	5,654	90	Chastain Park Arena	Atlanta, GA	7/4
Lyle Lovett/Robert E. Keen	162,286	7,048	100	Filene Ctr., Wolf Trap Frm. Pk.	Vienna, VA	7/7
Vince Gill/Bryan White	145,414	17,515	100	Starwood Amphitheatre	Antioch, TN	6/28
M.C. Carpenter/Gillian Welch	135,190	4,097	72	Universal Amphitheatre	Universal City, CA	7/6
SC Chapman/S Patty/B.Duncan/ T. Paris/C. Morgan/Avalon	129,380	5,496	40	Pine Knob Music Theatre	Clarkston, MI	7/9
Hank Jr./T. Tritt/CDB/J.D. Messina	125,728	5,419	64	Mesker Amphitheatre	Evansville, IN	7/12
L.Texas/M.McBride/B. Dean/C. Bernard	122,870	9,235	60	Pine Knob Music Theatre	Clarkston, MI	6/13
A. Krauss & U.Station/T. O'Brien	113,875	6,003	87	Filene Ctr., Wolf Trap Frm. Pk.	Vienna, VA	7/13
C. Raye/D. Carter/D. Kersh/Lonestar/B. Gentry	88,843	16,862	94	Sandstone Amphitheatre	Bonner Springs, KS	6/29
Wynonna/Jeff Wood	80,689	2,870	100	Westbury Music Fair	Westbury, NY	7/12
Anne Murray	76,759	2,806	97	Finger Lakes Perf. Arts Ctr.	Canandaigua, NY	7/6

source: amusement business

Navigating The Charts

Promotion Captains Discuss Radio

by David M. Ross

Promoting records seems like an easy task. Call the stations, keep the programmers informed on the record's progress and be sure to have a clean shirt and a pleasing speech for the #1 party. That's every promotion person's dream, but the reality is quite different.



Larry Hughes



Jack Lameier



Bill Mayne



"It's as stressful as it can be at this particular moment," says Mercury VP of National Promotion, Larry Hughes. "You have to explain to your bosses, artists and managers why a record is not getting airplay, or if you do get airplay, why the record is not researching well."

In many ways, the promotion heads at each label are like captains of a ship. Orchestrating their crew (regional promotion team) to navigate a course to the top of the charts. Sometimes this demanding responsibility can be a thankless challenge. If a record stiffs, promotion is one of the first groups to receive blame, and conversely, if a record does sail up the charts, conventional wisdom often says, "the record was a smash and it promoted itself."

Senior Epic VP of National Promotion, Jack Lameier, adds to the maritime analogy. "The steerage way is becoming more narrow, and the Pillars of Hercules are closing in. To weather the trip, you need to maintain your course and stick to the sea lanes that you know from experience are available. Maintaining the credibility of your music and staff is like having a good compass and enough fuel to make the journey."

"It's a challenging time, but I'm optimistic," adds Warner Bros., Giant and Reprise Senior VP of Promotion, Bill Mayne. "History has proven we are in a cyclical business, and sometimes when the waters get rough, a bit of negativity appears. The broadcast business has been through an immense amount of change, especially with the Telecom Bill and deregulation. We try to build relationships and get programmers to focus on music so they can tell us what they think about the music in

their marketplace. As a result of all the consolidation, however, these poor folks don't know who they're going to be working for tomorrow. Their lives have been dramatically affected. Fewer people are being asked to do more, and that puts stress on people. So these alterations have added some chop to the water, if you will. But there is some great music being made today, and the way I see it the cream does rise to the top."

The following frank discussion with Larry Hughes, Jack Lameier and Bill Mayne outlines some of the strengths and weaknesses in the promotion process, strategies to help deal with those issues and personal observations.

MR: *What are the main issues with respect to promoting records in today's marketplace?*

Larry Hughes: Overcrowding and competition. There are too many artists out there and not enough spots at radio. The folks at radio are so scared of being wrong that they can't afford to be creative and possibly wrong. Lose a rating point and you could lose your job, so they opt to keep things right down the center. If I was in their shoes, I'd probably be doing the same thing.

Jack Lameier: Radio would like to have everything they play be completely familiar to their audiences as soon as they play it—to keep them tuned in. That's what their business is all

about, keeping listeners tuned in. More and more we're seeing a tightening of the number of currents played. Some of the stations, and the consultants that service them, have gotten it into their heads that the music flow is not what they are looking for, and they

want to adjust it to their needs. That's fine, but being on the record side of the industry, we have to be true to our artists and present to radio what we consider as our best product at that moment in time.

Bill Mayne: The primary problem is getting people to listen to the music. If it were only as simple as sending them the product and knowing that they would listen and give you feedback on it when you called, everyone's life would be so much simpler. But with the increasing number of labels putting product on everyone's desk and radio consolidation putting more demands on everyone's time, it doesn't work that way. Whereas, a person may have been the program director of an AM and an FM, they may now be responsible for 3 FMs and 3 AMs in their marketplace and be expected to do five times as much work in the same number of hours.

"If the music isn't there, then shame on A&R and shame on promotion, but in some cases it's shame on radio for not giving it a chance."

A radio programmer's job is to listen and find the best music they can to garner the largest audience possible for their stations. We have seen a complete shift at radio regarding the ratio of females to males for airplay exposure. I remember when the attitude was you couldn't play two females back to back. Today the marketplace is exploding with female acts. The impact of all the consolidation has been a real reduction in inventory space, and the first area impacted when playlists get trimmed is current music.

So we are seeing an increase in recurrent music and markets cutting back to a 25 song list.

MR: *The promotion man's toolbox still contains pretty much the same assortment of hardware. The showcase, promotion giveaways and of course the artist radio tour. How are they holding up?*

JL: The first country showcase I was involved with was for Lynn Anderson around 1979. Things haven't changed. The message doesn't work unless the music is there. You showcase acts to get attention and bolster respect if you have enough faith in the artist to invest the time, money and the clout of the label. But if the music isn't there, then shame on A&R and shame on promotion, but in some cases it's shame on radio for not giving it a chance.

My heroes are the A&R department. I'm in awe of how they find something rough and envision what it's going to be when it's finished. It gets heavy measuring an act against today's yardstick, but by the time the development process is done, which can be a couple of years, often things have changed and you could have that hot new sound.

BM: Those tools still exist, but their effectiveness depends upon the artist. If you've got a great communicator who works well one-on-one, they can go in and captivate folks. If they are just average



in that area, then the impact won't be so great.

The same thing is applicable with live showcases. Is the live performance in that situation is a captivating experience? There are numerous examples where it's worked, but many more where it hasn't. It has less to do with the vacation aspect or a fancy location. Radio has had a big drain put upon their disposable time availability. That's one of the issues that has made our job so difficult.

It's no secret that as the cost of doing business has escalated, everyone is having to look at their resources. Video is always a question because it is such a high line item expense on everyone's budget, and probably every company has cut back on the total number of videos made in the past year. Research shows that a video will not make a weak song shine. But we have seen that for the right song, CMT is like a very large radio station that can reach a great number of people.

LH: Contest and promotion budgets have been slashed at radio, and that's where some independent promoters in other formats have been able to come in and make a stand for themselves by providing dollars that go right to radio's bottom line. Country is becoming more like other formats where the promotion can be as important to the radio station as the record. I can add this song or that—what kind of promotion do you have with yours? Can we fly some listeners to Las Vegas to see a show? But is this a direction in which we should be heading? Is this the right way to take country music?

MR: *Strategy and the charts—beauty and the beast?*

JL: The charts are as good as the paper they're written on.

I'm tickled with the word on the Kinleys in this week's *SongPower Index*, but if they weren't at the top of the chart, I probably wouldn't be so tickled. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

The automatics are getting harder to work. When one of those acts gets a hit, they get lodged at the top. Radio and the listeners get comfortable with them, so they let it run. In the old days, there wasn't anybody strong enough to hang up there that long and get away with it. There was a lot more control

and more generosity on radio's part towards breaking new acts and keeping existing acts going.

Only a few new

acts have gone up this year—but is that the way we should be measuring things? Does it count that there are some other acts that didn't go Top 10 on their first release, but will on their second or third? Should they be considered less of an artist?

It's my job to make the charts work in the best interest of my artists and company. As long as radio has a say on the charts then I have no problem. Sometimes I don't like the weighting or which stations are involved, but that hasn't changed. We're getting more stations under the control of less people, so it's getting tighter. We've been through that before, but not to this degree. My strategy hasn't changed—get there first with the most and best.

LH: Radio wants more from our superstars. This fall looks promising. I'm assuming that there will be a Garth Brooks LP coming, we know there will be a Trisha Yearwood single which is going to be great, and we have Shania scheduled for a single in September and an LP in October. Those releases are going to help radio for the fall book. But we're also seeing unfamiliar artists breaking through, such as Lila McCann.

One strategy is to sign those familiar names and voices, but we're also not going to stop trying to sign new artists that could possibly break through and be the next Shania. You hear people say, "I wish that labels would stop trying to develop new talent and develop the talent they already have." And we are trying to do that. But our resources are limited, and the costs of both development and finding new acts are enormous.

A problem I have with the charts is that one or two programmers can hold you hostage. If something happens to upset that wonderful marriage between the station, label, artist and/or management, a programmer can decide, "I'm not going to play this record—I'm dropping it." Then you can be unfairly stymied on the charts.

BM: Any sort of measurement can be limiting, especially charts which are quantitative. They are supposed to be reflective of what's happening in the marketplace, but unfortunately some people let the tool use them instead—they let it dominate their perspective. There are times when the pendulum swings a bit further one way or another, but as a result of the inventory shrinkage and the large proliferation of product out there, the bar has been raised. You've got to have great material to be successful today, and that is not a bad thing. We should be pressed to do our best work.

The approach we've always used is to focus on the music—

"If it were only as simple as sending them the product and knowing that they would listen and give you feedback on it when you called, everyone's life would be so much simpler."

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that's where the magic is. I've been here almost 10 years now and was in the radio business prior to that, so I have relationships out there that have spanned decades. People know we are a long-term player. I can see where that would be a disadvantage perhaps for some other labels who have not been in the marketplace and don't have those relationships. Radio has come to grips with the fact it takes longer for a new act to break now, so we're seeing records that can last up to 20 weeks where not too long ago we lived with a twelve-week mentality.

The good news is that radio is coming to realize that records can remain lateral and/or move backwards. There is more fluidity in the chart today than there used to be.

MR: *Many of the acts which did make top ten out of the box this year are struggling at the cash register. Should we be more gutsy in our choice of singles, and look for emotion?*

JL: You use quality and class to get through and a great deal of planning, but if the music and personality from the act isn't there, then you've got a problem. When a disc doesn't sell after going top ten, all you can do is go on to the next song. But there can be a lot of reasons—for example, the identity factor—does anyone know who they are? A lack of back announcing makes it difficult for listeners to get to know new artists.

When it comes to picking singles, everyone involved with the project should have a say before it goes out. Everyone in this business has their own ears. People listen for different things—hits, music consumers will buy, and/or music that can be played on radio. There has to be an ultimate decision maker, and here that is our President, Allen Butler. He has the final word.

BM: When you get into conservative times, you find that call-out research has a tendency to cut off the highs and lows. So records that test well for radio very often don't sell well. If you go back over the past year, there are probably a number of examples of records that performed well on the radio charts but had negligible sales impact. A great record will transcend all and any tactical hurdles in the marketplace.

We have to stretch the envelope to develop the art form, and we've seen that happen before. I was on the radio side of things in the mid-'80s when the *Urban Cowboy* era went bust and we bottomed out. People have a tendency to not want to mess with success. Then we wear everybody out on a formula and things ebb to a point where we've got to do something, necessity being the mother of invention. We have to try and capture the imagination of the listener and record buyers.

Every company has its own style for picking singles. Our process is to provide as much input as possible to the artist and

management team for the decision-making process to take place. It's their career and it's my responsibility to let them know what the landscape is, but the final decision on which single to release has to rest with them.

LH: Picking singles is a group effort, an art and not a science. Should we kick out the boundaries more? Yes and no. There are some programmers that do want to get gutsy, but it is tough to do when so many dollars and butts are on the line. It's a matter of how far into the toilet you take the format before somebody goes, "We've got to try something, anything." Then the pendulum begins to swing out of it.

Does it count that there are some other acts that didn't go Top 10 on their first release, but will on their second or third? Should they be considered less of an artist?

MR: *What does the future hold?*

Jack Lameier: The charts are going to get tighter, and it will get tougher to break new acts. It's up to radio. Companies will only present different things if they think they can make a buck on it. And that's one of the dangers when things get this tight. If everything sounds the same, perhaps no one

will be happy.

Larry Hughes: I'm optimistic that this format will continue to resume its growth pattern. All of us are trying to come up with the combination of hit artists and songs that, with proper radio exposure, will spur sales again. We're moving in the right direction. Radio has their act together—they're selling themselves much smarter than they ever have and they're starting to make some pretty good dollars on the radio side. It still goes back to a hit song and record—it's the simplest thing in the world. And you don't necessarily have to have a hit act to get airplay. But you put two or three or four of those great songs in a row, then you can establish an act.

Bill Mayne: There are going to be some new availabilities. We haven't seen the shakedown from the Telecom Bill yet. The Spring Arbitron results show an improvement in the erosion of radio shares that took place over the last 24 months and I see a willingness on radio's part to open themselves to new music as well as support established artists. I'm optimistic. As radio's role changes, so will ours. □

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DISCLAIMER

by ROBERT K. OERMANN

No Depression At The ForeFront

The Americana/No Depression/alternative country/whatever-you-call-em folks ruled this listening session. They're making most of the real country music these days. It seems to me.

You know something's up when all of your contenders for a **Discovery Award** are not from Music Row. Let's see, that would be Whiskeytown, Seconds Flat and the winners, **Rank Outsiders**. All are Carolinians and all are worth your ears.

The **Disc of the Day** also comes from outside the mainstream. Heaven knows that **Ray Wylie Hubbard** has tried to fit in. But let's face it, a track like "Dangerous Spirits" is simply too interesting, too listenable, too exciting, too adventurous, too dadgummed creative to fit in the "country music" establishment. After all, we couldn't displace "You Light Up My Life" for something authentic, could we?

And Ray wasn't alone out there on the fringe. His fellow nominees for the Disc prize all came from completely outside the worlds of country and even Americana—Nashvillians Victor Wooten, The Honeyrods and Self, with a first runner-up award to CCM's Geoff Moore & The Distance.

And that brings us to the **Label of the Day**, the pop/rock Christian outfit **ForeFront Records**. With Moore, Audio Adrenaline and Grammatrain, they batted a thousand.

COUNTRY

BILL ENGVALL & JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY "Warning Signs"

Writers: Bill Engvall/Scott Rouse/Ronnie Scaife; Producers: Csaba Petocz/Doug Grau; Publisher: Twin Spurs/Shabloo/PolyGram/Virgin Timber, BMI; Warner Bros. 8923.

Isn't there anybody besides me who thinks it's weird that a guy who talks with a hick accent makes fun of stupid people for a living? A little of this goes a lo-o-o-o-ong way.

BRADY SEALS "Natural Born Lovers"

Writers: Brady Seals/T.J. Seals/Troy Seals/Eddie Setser; Producers: Rodney Crowell/Brady Seals; Publisher: Gypsy Outfit/Love Society/Irving/Baby Dumplin'/Kybama, ASCAP/BMI; Reprise 8099.

This really grew on me. The more I got into the stuttering guitar, stop-and-go chorus, "beep beeps" and cute attitude, the more I liked it. Appealingly different.

KEITH PERRY "When I Could Fly"

Writers: Stanley T./Alan Whitney; Producers: Mike Hollandsworth/Nelson Larkin; Publisher: Zomba Songs/Shepherd's Gate/Storytown/Keatunes, BMI; Curb 77884.

He's a little on the nasal side, but there's so much personality at work here I don't mind. This is just so wonderfully honest and true. And I melted for the message of the tough man who's still a whole lotta tender inside. Truly touching.

SONS OF THE DESERT "Hand of Fate"

Writers: Michael Lunn/Michael Noble; Producers: Johnny Slate/Doug Johnson; Publisher: WB Music/Lunn/Warner Tamerlane/Under the Bridge, ASCAP/BMI; Epic 78577.

I'm totally into this boy's singing and I love the vivid little details in the lyric. This band has everything it takes.

PATSY CLINE

"When My Dreamboat Comes Home"

Writers: Dave Franklin/Cliff Friend; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; MCA 11579 (track).

The recording quality isn't the greatest, but a listen to any previously unavailable song sung by The Cline is an undeniable event. In addition to her hits, elsewhere on this *Live at the Cimarron Ballroom* disc, you'll find her working out on "Shake Rattle & Roll" and "Stupid Cupid." The year was 1961. She was singing like a star.

WADE HAYES "Wichita Lineman"

Writer: Jimmy Webb; Producer: Don Cook; Publisher: PolyGram, ASCAP; Columbia/DKC 78653.

It's unquestionably one of the all-time great songs. But if you're gonna sing it, you'd better improve on Glen Campbell. This doesn't in the slightest. An unnecessary record.

LEANN RIMES "You Light Up My Life"

Writer: Joe Brooks; Producers: Wilbur C. Rimes/Chuck Howard/Mike Curb; Publisher: PolyGram/Curb, ASCAP; MCG-Curb 1385.

Unnecessary? Did someone say unnecessary? Okay, she does sing it better than Debby Boone. But the song's still complete schlock. That ticking sound you hear is her 15 minutes of fame winding down.

J.D. MYERS "When I Think About You"

Writers: J.D. Myers/Mike Noble; Producer: Barry Beckett; Publisher: Warner-Tamerlane/Under the Bridge, BMI; Asylum 9865.

Blam, blam, blam, blam. Unless you've been out on the dancefloor boot scootin' to it, you'll feel like this rhythm track has been beating you about the face and neck with a blunt object. If it comes on the radio, I'll punch the button.

DENNIS MANN "Montana Moon"

Writer: Dennis Mann; Producer: Cham Laughlin; Publisher: none listed, BMI; Red Gate 9701 (track).

You're essentially a simple, straightforward western music maker. My advice is to strip it back down to its cowboy roots, get rid of the fancy production and echo chamber and start over.

POP/ROCK

STELLA "Ascension"

Writers: none listed; Producers: Glenn Rosenstein/Curt Perkins; Publisher: none listed; Beggars Banquet 193 (track).

The next time somebody tells you Nashville can't rock, put this on and crank it up to 10.

When their ears stop bleeding, they'll give in. As intense and hard as it gets.

DANA COOPER

"Standing In My Own Way"

Writer: Dana Cooper; Producers: Josh Leo/Dana Cooper; Publisher: Dog Eared/Dillon's Future, SESAC; Compass 74144 (track).

I've talked about this marvelous *Miracle Mile* CD before in these pages. In recent weeks, this particular track has become hooked in my brain with a barb that won't come out. Dana's lyrics and tenor delivery are thrilling enough. Leo's production and hooky guitar work push every pleasure button in me. And if you want a real eye opener look at the credits—he played every instrument on the track except Dana's rhythm guitar.

THE HONEYRODS "Love Bee"

Writers: Honeyrods; Producer: Matt Hyde; Publisher: EMI/Beaujangles/Spinjolly/Where's Dino/Crazy J/Party Mike, SESAC/BMI/ASCAP; Capricorn 314536030-2 (track).

The melodic center in the chorus is bookended with choppy rhythms and quasi-rapped verses. The extended percussion passage is particularly nifty. Nashville band mixes strong electronic effects with clear vocals for striking audio results.

SELF "Joy the Mechanical Boy"

Writer: Matt Mahaffey; Producer: Matt Mahaffey; Publisher: Release the Kracken/Spongebath, BMI; Spongebath 006 (track).

Tape loops, electronic tweedles, drum programs, sound collages, tube compressors and quirky lyrics are the recipe of one of Middle Tennessee's most imaginative music makers. This is from his new second album *The Half Baked Serenade*. As before, Mahaffey is a one-man band.

R&B

VICTOR WOOTEN "What Did He Say"

Writers: Victor L. Wooten/J.D. Blair/Kurt Storey; Producers: Victor L. Wooten/J.D. Blair/Kurt Storey; Publisher: Vix Lix/J.Darrell Blair, ASCAP/BMI; Compass 742452 (track).

On his last outing, Flecktones man Wooten emphasized the many sounds of his bass. This time around we've got chanting and jazz scat singing bubbling over an r&b groove. Doesn't it make you feel proud to know that a world-class jazz talent walks among us here in Tune Town?

AMERICANA

RANK OUTSIDERS "Come to Me"

Writer: Bill Noonan; Producers: Chris Keaton/Tim Coats; Publisher: none listed; Rank 02 (track).

Plenty of misterioso twang. Marvelously stark production. Throaty expressive, sexy alto lead vocals. I think I'm in love. Band hails from North Carolina. Album is titled *Checkpoint* and it's everything that makes "No Depression" music so much more interesting and so much more "country" than what generally passes for same on Music Row.

SECONDS FLAT "Fire and Brimstone"

Writers: none listed; Producer: Brian Aberne; Publisher: none listed; Redbird 2126 (track).

More left-field country from the Carolinas, this time from SC. This boasts gritty Earle/Springsteen lyrics delivered with an appealingly soft drawl and raggedly instrumental drive. Very rootsy. Very cool. Album, which appears Sept. 9, is self-titled. Band is booked with the above mentioned Rank Outsiders at The Sutler on Aug. 21.

WHISKEYTOWN "16 Days"

Writer: David Ryan Adams; Producer: Jim Scott; Publisher: Barland, BMI; Outpost/Mood Food 30005 (track).

What is this? Carolina day? This band from the Tarheel State recorded at Woodland Sound here in Music City.....which goes to show you that spirited, high quality country-rock is a state of mind, not a state in the union. Album is titled *Strangers Almanac*. Splendid rootsy work.

JOY LYNN WHITE "Why Do I Love You"

Writer: Jim Lauderdale; Producers: Pete Anderson/Dusty Wakeman; Publisher: Mighty Nice/Laudersongs, BMI; Little Dog/Mercury 179.

The album, *The Lucky Few*, is top-10 on the Americana charts. Country music is so dumb it doesn't even know what it's missing. This ballad wailer sounds like a night when a '60s soul revue found itself playing in a hillbilly roadhouse. Hot stuff.

FELIX WILEY "No Place Out There"

Writer: Lynn Taylor; Producers: Felix Wiley/Ben Lewis; Publisher: Assless Band, ASCAP; Auspicious Knave (track) (615-366-8982).

Is there such a thing as alternative bluegrass? Mentally mix some drawled folkie, Guthrie style vocals with some attitude and acoustic instruments and you'll have the general idea.

RAY WYLIE HUBBARD "Dangerous Spirits"

Writer: Ray Wylie Hubbard; Producers: Brian Hardin/Lloyd Maines; Publisher: Chocktau Rain, ASCAP; Philo 4955 (track).

Caribbean rhythm, twangy guitar, country-rock locomotive propulsion, Texas storyteller vocal. I'm wild for this. This man practically invented Americana. Play the fire outta him.

TWO DOLLAR PISTOLS "I Flew Over Our House Last Night"

Writer: Tom T. Hall; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; Hep Cat 8167 (track).

These alterna-twangers turn Hall's classic into a dirge-like waltz. That, plus the lead singer's how-many-ways-can-I-bend-this-note delivery take a little getting used to. Album is called *On Down the Track*.

AUDIO ADRENALINE "Some Kind of Zombie"

Writers: Mark Stuart/Barry Blair/Will McGinniss/Bob Herdman; Producer: John Hampton; Publisher: Up In the Mix, BMI; ForeFront 25177 (track).

Beatlesque mix features a mix of raucous rock guitar, post-modern string section and kookie vocal textures. Musically playful. Extremely listenable.

MISS ANGIE "100 Million Eyeballs"

Writers: none listed; Producers: Oran Thornton/David Zaffiro; Publisher: none listed; Myrrh (track).

Techno all the way. If you can get past the eer, peculiarity of hearing "Lord God Almighty" to a disco beat with occasional outbursts of whispering, speaking and "na-na-na-na" nonsense singing, you'll be a slave to the rhythm.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

- Skip Ewing/Answer to My Prayer/Word
- The Thompson Brothers/Drive Me Crazy/RCA
- Wade Richardson/Another Lover/Sirius
- Stephen Doster/Outside World/Villa Muse
- Deana Jo/It Was You/Rain
- Little Texas/The Call/Warner Bros.
- Doc Watson & David Grisman/What Is Home Without Love/ACD
- John McVey/Circle of Friends/BWE
- Kick In the Asphalt Band/No Bull/Thunder
- Grammatrain/Sell Your Soul/ForeFront

CHRISTIAN

GEOFF MOORE & THE DISTANCE "Threads"

Writers: none listed; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; ForeFront 10784 (track).

Gently brushed guitar strings, hypnotic percussion and whispered organ and keyboard whistles. He's singing like an angel on wings. In a sea of new faces in this field, it's somehow comforting to know that a veteran act like this can still show the underclassman what truly great pop sounds like.



ROW FILE

ANNIE PRICE

Director of Video Production
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"I love the film community here," gushes Annie Price, Warner/Reprise Director of Video Production. "There are some of the most creative, talented and genuine people in Nashville. We truly have another community of artists here in our film community."

Price came from a family of journalists—her grandfather even taught at the famed University of Missouri School of Journalism. However, Price received a scholarship from Washington State to study film. "The first day I got there," she recalls, "they said, 'we're sorry, your film program has been discontinued. If you want to continue, you have to go into broadcasting.' So try as I did to get out of journalism, I ended up right back there."

She honed her skills as a hard news reporter in Boise, ID and Spokane, WA; worked as a feature reporter in Portland, OR for *PM Magazine*; and finally wound up in Music City working for the short-lived WSMV-TV show *Five O'Clock With Dan Miller*.

"I'd always really enjoyed music and been involved in bands just for fun," she relays, "and thought I might like to investigate what the music business was all about. So I took the job in Nashville just to get to Nashville and to try and figure out a way to get in the music business."

After numerous freelance jobs and a 2 1/2 year stint at TNN working as a reporter and fill-in anchor, Price joined Warner/Reprise in May, 1995. "It took me ten years through broadcast journalism and reporting to get back to film," she laughs.

Price supervises all the aspects of making a music video, from coordinating an artist's imaging with the marketing department to soliciting treatments and hiring the directors and production company. While her job depends on the visual medium, she acknowledges that questions remain about the true worth of music videos.

"We're having to really examine the benefits of video," she says. "It's meaningful for establishing a new artist, because first impressions are very important. As artists become more successful and advance further into their careers, it's important to reinforce their imaging. But you really have to weigh the advantages with the cost, because we spend an awful lot of money on music videos, and we don't have any way to prove that they sell records. Some people would call music video a necessary evil. I don't know if it ever occurred to the music business that they'd be in the film business, too."

"But I think we're going to settle at a happy medium that will accomplish our marketing goals," she continues, "because after all, video is a marketing tool. We're not making movies. We're not starting acting careers for these people. What we're doing is using another outlet to get the artist's image and music out there."

—Lisa Berg



FINANCIAL

by Ellen Porter, O'Neil Hagaman, A Professional L.L.C.

Life Insurance - What Kind and How Much?

Winston Churchill once said that while he was ready to meet his Maker, "whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter." We know that death is an inevitable part of life, and preparing for this eventuality is the responsibility of everyone on whom others rely. Yet there is nothing quite so difficult to plan for. Not only is the prospect unpleasant to consider, but the decisions to be made are complex, requiring some difficult projections of future needs and a knowledge of that least favorite subject of all—life insurance.

Very often life insurance is one of the first important decisions the head of a family makes, and may represent a substantial continuing cash commitment over the course of his or her life. It is also one of the most flexible financial planning tools available. It can accommodate the needs of large estates and businesses as well as those with lesser requirements: individuals, small business owners and their employees. Depending on the type of policy chosen it can provide the opportunity for saving with safe, tax deferred capital accumulation, and can generate liquidity for survivors to pay taxes, retire debts, and enjoy a lifetime of financial freedom and security.

Types of Policies: Life insurance policies are generally divided into two basic types, term and permanent, although there are many variations within each. In general, term policies are quite straightforward; premiums are paid to the company, and the company pays a death benefit to the beneficiary when the insured dies. Because the mathematical likelihood of dying increases as we get older, the cost of coverage goes up as we age, and can become prohibitively expensive later in life. For this reason, term insurance should be considered when the need for death protection is temporary or decreases over time, such as to cover a home mortgage or to provide support for children until they are self sufficient.

Permanent insurance combines the coverage available under a term policy with a cash accumulation element. The premiums are substantially higher than with term coverage, and this "excess" premium, the amount paid that is greater than is needed for the death benefit, becomes a kind of sav-

ings account that can grow over time. Thus a permanent insurance policy may be the appropriate choice for those who wish to combine long-term death protection with accumulation of cash value.

How much to buy: Most life insurance is purchased for the purpose of replacing the lost earning ability of the insured to meet the ongoing needs of the survivors. Less simplistically, the amount needed can be expressed as follows:

plus	postmortem expenses (funeral costs & estate taxes)
plus	future living expenses of the survivors
plus	occasional costs (such as new cars)
plus	unique costs (such as education)
less	all current debt
less	assets available for expenses
less	assets expected to be acquired (such as through inheritance)
less	future earned and investment income of the beneficiaries

All of these amounts must be adjusted for estimated inflation and for their "present value," the difference in current value between dollars earned or spent today and in the future. And they should be updated every few years, to account for the ways in which your family's financial needs change over time.

For most of us, accumulating, estimating, and analyzing the information needed for this deceptively simple calculation is a daunting prospect. Of course your insurance agent will be happy to assist you, but his incentive for keeping coverage and premiums to a minimum is not powerful. Your financial planner, business manager, accountant, or other financial professional should be able to help you organize and assess your current and future financial situation. Regardless of whom you decide to ask for help, be sure they are reputable, responsive to the specifics of your situation, and have your best interests in mind. Careful planning now and periodic review in the future will help insure that your family's needs are met. □

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Bobby Karl... WORKS THE ROOM

Justice was served, along with Mexican hors d'oeuvres.

The CMA threw a surprise party at La Paz to give **Jay Orr** its Media Achievement Award (7/30). And as presenter **Kathy Mattea** pointed out, it was "long overdue." Orr's readership at *The Nashville Banner* isn't the biggest in the world of country music, but no one can touch him for class, taste, talent, vision and insight.

And no one deserves this honor more.

"Your integrity is the reason you got this award," Mattea told the surprised scribe. "The journalist who has the perspective of a scholar is getting to be more and more rare in our business. The person who calls back twice to make sure the facts are right is also getting more and more rare."

CMA exec **Ed Benson** lured the Jaymaster to the event under the pretext of giving him an after-hours scoop. As he entered the restaurant's back room we chanted, "Jay! Jay! Jay! Jay!" in unison. "It's a Jay Love Fest," decreed **Caroline Newcomb**, one of the bazillion publicists who were there. The sound level in the room was deafening at times, with so many magpies in attendance. "This is my vision of hell," declared **Susan**

Niles as she surveyed the jabbering attendees.

That would include **Martha Moore, Jeff Walker, Angie Watson, Norma Morris, Alison Auerbach, Marion Williams, Jennifer Bohler, Cathy Gurley, Lorie Lytle, Nancy Wise, Ronna Rubin, Ben Payne, Sandy Neese** (see what I mean about so many publicists?), **Ellen Wood, Liz Thiels, Mike Hyland, Mandy Wilson, Nancy Russell, Teresa George, Toni Miller, Judy McDonough, Melissa Matthews, Kevin Lane, Lisa Wahnish** (are you believing this list?), **Kim Fowler, Brenna Davenport Leigh, Jim Hester, Ray Crabtree, Erin Morris, Kay West, Mike Crawford, Wes Vause and Tom Adkinson.**

"I'm really overwhelmed," said the honoree. "I'm a shy guy. This is rough for me."

Even though it was a journalist award, journalists weren't invited. Go figure. The CMA did phone a few, offering last-minute invitations—so **David Ross, Marjie McGraw, Calvin Gilbert, John Lomax III, Hazel Smith and Ed Morris** were there to whoop it up, chow down and sample adult beverages, as were *Banner* staffers such as **Michael Gray, Steve Lowry and Tim Ghianni.**

The summer Starwalk induction at Opry-

land was the usual shake and bake (7/29). Glad-handing in the heat were **Judy Mizell, Joyce Rice, Tim DuBois, Mike Dungan, Pete Fisher, Clarence Spalding, Jerry Bradley, Brian Williams, Paul Corbin, John Sturdivant, Bill Ivey, Jimmy Gilmer, Maude Gilman, Katie Gillon, Jack Weston, Donna Hughes, Danny & Bridget Petraitis, Fletcher Foster, Nancy Shapiro** and a bunch of sweltering fans.

Gary Chapman hosted. He quipped, "To get in this, you have to actually *win* a Grammy—not just be nominated—which is why *I'm* not in here." The honorees were **Randy Scruggs, Brooks & Dunn and Earl Scruggs**, who received a long, heartwarming standing ovation. **Kix Brooks** continually deferred to the banjo master, which was nice. After signing in the wet cement, Kix put in a shoe from the horse he rode in the "My Maria" video. **Ronnie Dunn** branded the cement with the B&D logo.

Afterward, we schmoozed in the backstage green room of the Celebrity GEO Theater, which isn't terribly well designed for parties.

The **Michael Peterson** listening party (7/15) was staged at the Warner/Reprise conference room, which was designed exactly for

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that. Thus, working the room is a breeze. WSM's **Kevin Anderson**, CAA's twinkling trio **Ron Baird, John Huie** and **Rod Essig**, **Ron Huntsman**, **Bruce Bouton**, **Josh Leo**, **Robert Ellis Orrall**, **Matt Williams**, **Ken Tucker**, **Gary Falcon**, **Dale Bobo**, **Michael Hight**, **Rosemary Young**, **Steven Goldmann**, **Holly Gleason**, **Angelo**, **Jim Ed Norman** and **Chuck Aly** were among those grooving and schmoozing, as were **Dewayne Blackwell**, **Forest Borders** and **Michael Puryear**. "They were the three guys who gave me the time of day when I first came to town four years ago," the grateful Peterson reported.

The gig was well timed. Peterson's "Drink, Swear, Steal and Lie" had hit the top-10 that very week.

Perhaps not so well timed was the annual NSAI Songwriter Achievement Awards show (7/23). Despite superb performances by **Michael McDonald**, **Guy Clark**, **The Nashville Bluegrass Band**, **Steven Curtis Chapman**, **Maura O'Connell** (buy her new album) and **Beth Nielsen Chapman** (ditto), the Ryman Auditorium was far from full. Several of Music Row's major publishing houses were conspicuously absent. What happened?

RKO and **K.T. Oslin** co-hosted, wearing a variety of party hats. New NSAI executive director **Bart Herbison** was introduced. Oslin mangling NSAI president **Wayland Holyfield's** name became the evening's schtick. **Roger Sovine**, **Larry Willoughby**, **Erika Wollam-Nichols**, **Sandy Knox**, **David & Karen Conrad**, **Pat Higdon**, **Stan Moress**, **Ryan Reynolds**, **Jeff Hanna**, **Bill Anderson**, **Hank Cochran**, **Joe Allison**, **Don Wayne**, **Gary Burr**, **Randy Goodrum**, **Bobby Braddock**, **Max D. Barnes**, **Sharon Vaughn**, **Danny Dill**, **Laura Powers**, **Mark Ford** and **Norro Wilson** were among those sharing the evening's fellowship. Among the big winners were **Mark D. Sanders** and that "Strawberry Wine" team of **Matraca Berg** and **Gary Harrison**.

Bobby Karl took his act on the road this month. One trip was to Macon to check out the groovy Georgia Music Hall of Fame (7/17-20). At the suggestion of **Charlie Daniels**, we also investigated the home cooking of **Mama Louise** and her Allman Brothers shrine at the H&H Restaurant, just up the block from the old Capricorn headquarters.

The other trip was northward to the sixth annual Pepsi Country Music Festival in Cleveland (7/25-27). We hit the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame, then met Cleveland International Records exec **Steve Popovich**. He guided us to **Mike and Bernie Sokolowski's** University Inn, a faboo Polish eatery. The owners are a guitarist and keyboardist with super musical taste. Steve is trying to turn them into a polka band. Anyway, we ran into the legendary **Jane Scott** there. She has been covering music for the

Cleveland Plain Dealer since the day after Allen Freed staged his first Moon Dog rock 'n' roll ball in 1952. And at 80-ish, she's still going to shows today. Yikes. After that schmooze we headed to Hotz Bar, which has been there since 1919.

On Saturday we snatched **Ronnie Pugh** up for a romp through the Cleveland-Style Polka Music Hall of Fame, massive Italian lunch, then a visit to WELW with **Tony Petkovsek**, who has been doing a daily polka show there since 1961. That's gotta be the world's record. Out at the festival we hung out with **Barry Gabel**, **Jules Belkin**,

Blue Miller, **Bob Santelli** and WGAR's **Chuck Collier**. **Aaron Tippin** was rocking the joint and **Billy Dean** closed to a cheering throng that night. More than 20,000 went through the turnstiles at the fest. We closed the night down in The Flats twirling to the sounds of **Akoostik Hookah** at The Nautica. On Sunday we caught **The Ranch**, **Kevin Sharp** and **Deana Carter** and communed with fellow journalists **Michael Norman** and **Doug Fulmer**.

And since communing with scribes was where we came in, I bid you adieu until our next installment. □

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Good Wine In The Big House

NSAI AWARDS A FINE "WINE"

Celebrating 30 years of songwriting, the Nashville Songwriters Association International's Songwriter Achievement Awards Show at the Ryman Auditorium (7/23) consisted of 33 awards presented to songwriters in the categories of country, gospel, pop, rock, adult contemporary and urban contemporary. Music industry journalist **Robert K. Oermann** and singer/songwriter **K.T. Oslin** hosted the evening and kept the mood light with their witty banter and constant chapeau changing (including donning halos before winners in the gospel category were announced).

Top honorees were **Vince Gill** as Songwriter/Artist of the Year, **Mark D. Sanders** as Songwriter of the Year and "Strawberry Wine," written by **Matraca Berg** and **Gary Harrison**, as Song of the Year. Winners were chosen by NSAI's 4,500 members worldwide.

Artists with no ties to previous Songs of the Year took their turns with the former award-winning cuts, such as **Michael McDonald** crooning "Before The Next Teardrop Falls," **Steven Curtis Chapman's** take on "I Swear," **Beth Nielsen Chapman's** outstanding "Always On My Mind" and even a bluegrassy

version of "Achy Breaky Heart" by **The Nashville Bluegrass Band**.

Hall of Fame songwriters including **Bill Anderson**, **Bobby Braddock**, **Marijohn Wilkin** and **Norro Wilson** served as award presenters, as did **Lari White**, **Russ Taff**, **Karen Staley**, **Bob DiPiero** and others.

—*Lisa Berg*

STAYIN' FOR LEAVIN'

There's something soul-satisfying about witnessing a bunch of folks having a blast on a stage. Their carefree energy can be infectious. I was "infected" all night last Thursday (7/24) when I had the distinct pleasure of seeing **The Leavin' Bros.** at the Sutler and **Big House** at the Ace of Clubs.

The Leavin' Bros were celebrating their one-year anniversary and, with a growing fan base and a couple of label reps in the audience, are starting to enjoy a wider "attention span." The group's humorous, light-hearted looseness and clever, often tongue-in-cheek material make their shows more of a party than a concert. Though it is entirely a group effort, **The Leavin'** nucleus consists of blood brothers **Evans** and **Charles Davis** (age before beauty, even in billing), who came to Nashville from south Alabama to write songs. When they started hanging and writing with **Robert "utility man" Harrell** (vocals/dobro/guitar/percussion) and **Matt Getken** (lead guitar/vocals), the harmonies started happening, so they added **Mike Spellman** (bass) and **Craig Riches** (drums) and took it to the clubs.

With elements from **The Band**, **BlackHawk** and **Little Feat** permeating their stylistic mix, **The Leavin' Bros.** jumped right into their set with the band anthem, "Leavin'," and proceeded to recount homespun tales about "Loretta Lou Ann," "Fast Johnny Fast" and "Claudine." My favorite has got to be "Love Budget (Spendin' My Time With You)," but they also debuted some new tunes, including "Tag, You're It" (an interesting approach to the "once in a life love" theme) and "Travelin' Clean," which was reminiscent of the **Rolling Stones'** country side. In a shameless attempt to "get ink," they also slightly amended an early-seventies **Dr. Hook** hit and sang a down-home version of "Cover Of The Music Row." In keeping with their fun-loving spirit, all the band members have fictional names like **Hill B. Leavin**, **Yule B.**, **I.B.**, etc. From a critical standpoint, all I would say they lack is a strong lead singer, but the harmonies are so enticing, the band interaction and personality is so prominent and the material is so interesting, it's easy to overlook any flaws. (Besides, were **The Band** leaders **Levon Helm** and **Robbie Robertson** ever considered

Hall of Fame vocalists?) The longer they sang (or the more I drank), the better they sounded, especially together—one encore, "Where Paradise Lays," featured **Charles** strumming his mandolin, surrounded by seamless four-part that silenced the packed house.

It sounds like **The Leavin' Bros** will soon receive financial support for an EP-like project, slated to be produced by songwriter **Ashe Underwood**. **John Drioli** from **Decca Records A&R** was present; **Crossfield's Tricia Walker** and writer **Davis Raines** sat at a table near the back; at the cheerleading table up front sat **Best Built Songs'** writer/artist **Marc-Alan Barnett** and executives **Larry Sheridan** and **Robin Ruddy**, who have supported **The Leavin's** since the start (**Charles** even presented M.A.B. with a plaque naming him an honorary Leavin' Brother). Though they might be a hard sell to mainstream country, **The Leavin' Bros.** carry on a country/rock legacy whose resurfacing is long overdue.

—*Michael Hight*

BIGGER HOUSE

There was a cool buzz about **Big House** even before advance CDs went out. Then it grew a bit when everyone heard the left-of-center, rockin' style the group was importing from California. Yeah, I liked what I heard on CD, but nothing could have prepared me for the on-stage onslaught this group delivered at the **Ace of Clubs** (7/24). Considering half the **MCA** staff was on hand, plus it was open to the public, by the time I got there, they needed a bigger house.

Like so many successful bands, **Big House** has to be seen to be appreciated. Though lead singer/guitarist **Monty Byrom** was certainly the main focus, extended jam sections opened up plenty of instrumental opportunities for harmonica blower extraordinaire **Sonny California** and guitarists **David Neuhauser** and **Chuck Seaton**. This band puts out enormous energy, and their "blues-progression" country brought out the dancing bug in scores of people up front. I never heard a raw note come from **Byrom's** throat—and he hit some high ones, plus he traded off on some pretty quick lead licks. **Big House** was also tasteful in its dynamics—it wasn't all high volume and heavy drums.

Standouts included "You Ain't Lonely Yet," "Whose Baby Will You Be Tonight" and the raucous, full-tilt "Road Man," which really solidified their "band bond." Of course, the **MCA** staffers were visibly excited—after all, they get paid to support one of their own. The rest of us needed concrete convincing, but it was a small task in the hands of **Big House**.

—*Michael Hight*

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OZ Audio & Post
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The Proffitt Center.....264-1819
Quad Studios
1802 Grand Ave.....321-4067
Rowen Music Studio
1019 17th Ave S.....321-2121
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Bobbe Seymour Studio II
11 Music Sq E #101.....259-4488
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MUSICAL CHAIRS

continued from page 9

RIAA CERTIFICATIONS

S E P T E M B E R

MULTI-PLATINUM LPs

Bob Carlisle/*Butterfly Kisses/Shades Of Grace* (2M)

Deana Carter/*Did I Shave My Legs For This?* (3M)

Jimmy Buffet/*Songs You Know By Heart* (6M)

PLATINUM LPs

George Strait/*Carrying Your Love With Me*

Vince Gill/*High Lonesome Sound*
Terri Clark/*Terri Clark*

GOLD LPs

Mark Chesnut/*Greatest Hits*
Point Of Grace/*Life Love & Other Mysteries*

Clay Walker/*Rumor Has It*
Tom T. Hall/*Greatest Hits Volume II*
God's Property/*God's Property*

GOLD SINGLE

Bill Engvall/"Here's Your Sign"
The Raybon Brothers/"Butterfly Kisses"

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Golden Books Children's Publishing Group, a division of Golden Books Family Entertainment, plans to partner with McSpadden-Smith Music to publish a book based on the chart-topping song, "Butterfly Kisses" by **Bob Carlisle**. The book will be offered in three formats: a Little Golden Book, a Little Golden Storybook and an audio book, all scheduled to be available in November...

The Nashville entertainment Association (NeA) is kicking off a three-month long talent search to find the best country music performers nationwide. Now in its sixth year, *Music City Music97* will showcase the best undiscovered traditional, contemporary and alternative country performers before music industry representatives in Nashville's

downtown music venues on October 9. 615-327-4308...

LABEL NEWS

At RCA Label Group/RLG Nashville, **Greg McCarn** and **Debbie Schwartz** were both upped to Associate Director of Artist Development from Promotion Manager. **Marion Williams** was promoted to Associate Director of Media Relations and Artist Development from Manager of Media Relations and Artist Development...



Kim Sexton

Former Imprint Southwest Regional Promotion Manager **Enzo DeVincenzo** joins Decca Records as Director of Regional Promotion Southwest...

MCA Records Nashville's **Kim Sexton** was upped to Manager of Gavin Promotion from Promotion Assistant...

ARTIST NEWS

Brooks & Dunn will release *The Greatest Hits Collection* on September 16. The 19-song compilation will include many of the hits that established them as the second best-selling duo in music history (behind Simon & Garfunkel) as well as three new songs...

The Bellamy Brothers recently extended their long-term distribution pact with Intersound Inc. Intersound has distributed Bellamy Brothers recordings throughout North America since 1992, and this contract will continue the partnership through the year 2000...

Warner Bros. artist **Michael Peterson** has signed with Flood, Bumstead, McCready & McCarthy, Inc. for business management representation...

HighTone Records artist **Dale Watson** recently received four nominations in the international section of the British Country Music Awards. He was nominated for Best Male Vocalist, Best Album (for *I Hate These Songs*), Rising Star and Best Artist on an Independent Label. Winners will be announced November 16 at a special ceremony in Birmingham, England...

Trace Adkins has been named spokesperson for Chevy Trucks in selected areas of the Southern U.S. Adkins will appear in radio and television commercials in selected areas of Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Kentucky, beginning this fall...

Joy Lynn White's new CD, *The Lucky Few*, was recently in its second week atop the Gavin Americana chart. White will be touring throughout the year to support her latest release...

This has been a busy writing year for **Steve Wariner**. Not only will he have a cut ("Long Neck Bottle") on **Garth Brooks'** new album, *Sevens*, but he also penned two tunes with **Clint Black** on Black's new pro-

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THE SONGPOWER INDEX

MONDAY • AUGUST 4, 1997 • #042

Songs are ranked by SPI points.
Ties are ranked according to highest Add Factor Averages.

SPI = ADD FACTOR + PASSION

SPI	PREV SPI	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL (# of reports)	ADD FACTOR	PASSION
7.18	6.97	LEE ROY PARNELL/You Can't Get There.../Career/(43)	3.65	3.53
6.88	6.69	JAMES BONAMY/Naked To The Pain/Epic/(41)	3.51	3.37
6.79	•	WADE HAYES/Wichita Lineman/Columbia/(44)	3.45	3.34
6.69	6.40	RAYBON BROTHERS/The Way She's Looking/MCA/(39)	3.51	3.18
6.68	•	MATT KING/A Woman Like You/Atlantic/(40)	3.48	3.20
6.59	6.27	KATHY MATTEA/Love Travels/Mercury/(42)	3.40	3.19
6.55	6.36	RIVER ROAD/Nickajack/Capitol/(44)	3.25	3.30
6.35	5.79	SKIP EWING/Answer To My Prayer/Word Nashville/(43)	3.19	3.16
6.19	6.71	JEFF CARSON/Here's The Deal/MCG/Curb/(47)	3.28	2.91
5.71	•	SEMINOLE/She Knows Me By Heart/Curb/Universal/(45)	2.91	2.80
5.46	6.05	TAMMY GRAHAM/Cool Water/Career/(47)	2.89	2.57
5.38	5.45	MATRACA BERG/That Train Don't Run/Rising Tide/(40)	2.55	2.83
5.21	5.44	JOHN FOGERTY/Southern Streamline/WB/(43)	2.47	2.74
5.16	•	B. ENGVALL/J.M. MONTGOMERY/Warning.../WB/(37)	2.86	2.30
4.85	5.19	RODNEY ATKINS/In A Heartbeat/Curb/(45)	2.56	2.29
4.74	•	BELLAMY BROTHERS/Over The Line/Intersound/(15)	2.27	2.47
4.71	•	BRADY SEALS/Natural Born Lovers/Reprise/(37)	2.30	2.41
4.60	•	JD MYERS/When I Think About You/Asylum/EEG/(35)	2.34	2.26
4.16	4.27	BRYAN SMITH/Texas Twist Her/SOR/(31)	2.19	1.97

SONGPOWER METHODOLOGY/RESEARCH

The SPI panel is asked to evaluate songs based on two factors: Add Factor and Passion. Using a 1 to 5 scale (1 being lowest), programmers rank songs based on how likely they are to add a song (5=add) and how passionate they are about it. Numbers for each song are averaged and combined for the final SPI score. Preliminary SPI research reveals a strong correlation between peak SPI number and ultimate chart success:

SPI Peak	Billboard Result
8+	82% chance of charting Top 10 • 65% chance of charting Top 5
7-7.9	30% chance of charting Top 20 • 26% chance of charting Top 10
6-6.9	10% chance of charting Top 40 • 0% chance of charting Top 20

ject, *Nothin' But The Taillights*, and has a song ("One Small Miracle," a co-write with **Bill Anderson**) on **Bryan White's** upcoming album, *The Right Place*...

Mindy McCready, Collin Raye, Ricky Van Shelton, Martina McBride and **Sara Evans** recently appeared at the National Cable Forum for the Television Critics Association meeting in Pasadena, CA to tout the TNN special, *Long Live The King—Country Salutes Elvis*, to the 100-plus TV critics gathered at the annual event...

Clint Black was slated to answer fan questions in an hour-long live chat July 29 on America Online, corresponding with the release of his new studio effort, *Nothin' But The Taillights*...

Tanya Tucker was selected for *Esquire* magazine's tenth annual "Women We Love" issue this month. Tucker appears with the likes of **Fiona Apple, Patricia Arquette, Christine Baranski, Katharine Graham, Anne Heche** and **Kristen Scott Thomas**...



Dale Dodson

PUBLISHING NEWS

Dale Dodson has been promoted to Director of Creative Services at Sony/ATV/Tree. Dodson will also continue to create new copyrights for Tree as a staff writer. He formerly served as Manager of Creative Services...

Jodie Parks has joined Copperfield Music Group as Executive Assistant to President/ CEO **Ken Biddy**. She was formerly employed by KYCY-FM in San Francisco, CA...

Michael Settle has joined Janal Music Group as Creative Director...

Jennifer Schott has filled the Front Desk/Receptionist position at Collins Music...

Tom Long, Vice President of Balmur Entertainment's publishing division, and **Steven Weaver**, Nashville entertainment attorney, were recently awarded the Georgia Music Industry Association's "Cotton Carrier Award of Excellence" for their contribution to Georgia music as co-founders of the Atlanta Songwriters Association...



Jodie Parks

BOOKING/TOURING NEWS

Martina McBride is scheduled to join **Tim McGraw** on his "Everywhere" tour beginning October 30. She will be a part of McGraw's fall tour through December 6 for a total of 18 shows...

BR5-49 was slated to hit the road this month for a tour with rock legend **Bob Dylan**...

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- ◆ *Hagfish* of London Records
- ◆ *Artist Development* for Sony and Virgin Records

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LP RELEASES

S E P T E M B E R

ARISTA/CAREER

Brooks & Dunn/*The Greatest Hits Collection*

ASYLUM

JD Myers/*Like A Train*
Bryan White/*The Right Place*

ATLANTIC

Matt King/*Five O'Clock Hero*

BNA

Jason Sellers/*I'm Your Man*

OECCA

Mark Chesnut/*Thank God For Believers*

EPIC

The Kinleys/*Just Between You And Me*

FOREFRONT

Geoff Moore & The Distance/*Threads*

INTERSOUND

Crystal Gayle/*TBA*
Eddie Rabbitt/*The Eddie Rabbitt Collection: Past And Present*

MCA

David Lee Murphy/*We Can't All Be Angels*
Ray Stevens/*Through A Different Window* (Christmas project)
Chely Wright/*Let Me In*

MERCURY

Tom T. Hall/*Home Grown*
Brent Mason/*Hot Wired*

MYRRH

Amy Grant/*Behind The Eyes*
Miss Angie/*100 Million Eyeballs*
Amy Morriss/*Within The Sound Of Your Voice*
Fernando Ortega/*This Bright Hour*

REUNION

Gary Chapman/*This Gift*

RISING TIDE

Matraca Berg/
Sunday Morning To Saturday Night

SPARROW

Tennessee Ernie Ford/
Amazing Grace: 25 Treasured Hymns
Various Artists/*God With Us* (Christmas project)

STEP ONE RECORDS

The Emeralds/*Polka Party*

SUGAR HILL

Tina Adair/*Just You Wait & See*
Aubrey Haynie/*Doin' My Time*
Kenny Smith/*Studebaker*

WARNER/REPRISE

Fire Down Below/*Soundtrack*

TOP OF THE CHARTS CHRISTIAN

Christian Hit Radio

"How Do You Do That" • The Waiting • Sparrow

Adult Contemporary

"Lay It All On The Line" • 4HIM • Benson

Inspirational

"Sweet Peace of God" • Cheri Keaggy • Sparrow

Mainstream Album Sales

God's Property • God's Property from Kirk Franklin's Nu Nation • B-Rite

Christian Album Sales

God's Property • God's Property from Kirk Franklin's Nu Nation • B-Rite

(Source: July 28, 1997 issue of *CCM Update*.
Reprinted by permission.)

"Cowboy" Jack Clement, Dickie Lee, Paul Craft and Thom Bresh were scheduled to perform together August 19 at Caffé Milano...

The World Vision Youth Ambassadors, a group comprised of 50 singers and musicians from throughout the world, ranging in age from 18 to 20, were to perform July 26 on the Grand Ole Opry. The group "invokes a positive message on global unity and peaceful co-existence..."

Atlantic recording artist **Matt King** has been chosen to perform on the **Patty Loveless/Bryan White** tour this fall...

David Lee Murphy will perform in Brazil on October 10 and 11 at the Red Eventos rodeo. Coverage will be aired on CMT/Brazil...

OTHER FORMATS

"Music of the World: The VISA Classical Concert Series" will soon return to the Ryman Auditorium for its second season. The 1997-98 series, running from November to April, 1998 is slated to feature Tafelmusik, Ensemble Project Ars Nova, Vienna Choir Boys, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. For information, call the Ryman at 615-254-1445...

RADIO NEWS

The CMA has announced the finalists for the 1997 Station of the Year and Broadcast Personality of the Year awards. Winners will be recognized during the 31st Annual CMA Awards on September 24. Station of the Year finalists are: *Small Market*: KEAN, Abilene, TX; KYKZ, Lake Charles, LA; WBBN, Laurel/Hattiesburg, MS; WPOR, Portland, ME; WQCB, Bangor, ME; *Medium Market*: KASE, Austin, TX; KDRK, Spokane, WA; WSSL, Greenville, SC; WUSY, Chattanooga, TN; WZZK, Birmingham, AL; *Large Market*: WCOL, Columbus, OH; WFMS, Indianapolis, IN; WSIX, Nashville, TN; WSOC, Charlotte, NC; WWKA, Orlando, FL; *Major Market*: KMPS, Seattle, WA; KNIX, Phoenix, AZ; KYGO, Denver, CO; WGAR, Cleveland, OH; WQYK, Tampa, FL. Broadcast Personality of the Year finalists are: *Small Market*: **Dixon, Roberts & Gregory**, WMUS, Muskegon, MI; **Gene Michaels/Allyson Scott**, WBBN, Laurel/Hattiesburg, MS; **Hot Rod & JB**, KAYD, Beaumont, TX; **Johnson & Johnson**, WKXC, Augusta, GA; **Scott Wynn/Tom O'Brien**, Lakeland, FL; *Medium Market*: **Bearman & Ken Hicks**, WUSY, Chat-



"Don't Let 'Em Push You Pop"—Loretta Lynn offers sage advice to new Decca artist Lee Ann Womack, backstage at the *Country Weekly Awards*. (L to R) Lynn, Womack, Decca VP/GM Shelia Shipley Biddy.

tanooga, TN; **Bill "Dexter" Poin-dexter**, WUSY, Chattanooga, TN; **Bob Cole/Sammy Allred**, KVET, Austin, TX; **Ellis & James**, WSSL, Greenville, SC; **Jeff Roper/Andi Weber**, WCOS, Columbia, SC; *Large Market*: **CC McCartney**, WSIX, Nashville, TN; **Dale Carter**, KFKF, Kansas City, MO; **Jim & Kevin**, WFMS, Indianapolis, IN; **Mary McKenna/Bobby Quinn**, KFKF, Kansas City, MO; **Paul Franklin**, WTQR, Winston-Salem, NC; *Major Market*: **Chuck Collier**, WGAR, Cleveland, OH; **Duke Hamilton**, WUBE, Cincinnati, OH; **Jeff West**, KMLE, Phoenix, AZ; **Jim Mantel & Crew**, WGAR, Cleveland, OH; **Murphy & Cash**, WMZQ, Washington, DC...

Billboard and *Airplay Monitor Magazine* have bestowed award nominations on two of SW Networks' weekly syndicated radio shows, *Country's Most Wanted With Carl P. Mayfield* and *hardDrive*. The weekly, two-hour *Country's Most Wanted* was nominated for the third consecutive year as Network/Syndicated Program of the Year, while the show's host, **Carl P. Mayfield**, was also nominated as Country Personality of the Year. *hardDrive*, another two-hour weekly program, airs on Active Rock and Alternative stations nationwide. **Lou Brutus** of WRCX/Chicago, the show's host also received a nomination for Rock Air Personality of the Year...

BENEFIT NEWS

The CMT Presents Wal-Mart Country Music Across America concert series featured free performances by **Trace Adkins** and **Royal Wade Kimes** in Hopkinsville, KY recently, and more than 2,000 local fans donated items to Feed The Children that overflowed from ten shopping carts. The items were distributed to families in the Hopkinsville area...

The 6th Annual **Diamond Rio** Celebrity Golf Classic is slated for September 25 at the Hermitage Golf Course in Nashville. Funds raised by the event will benefit the

Writer's Notes

THOM McHUGH

BIRTHPLACE: Nashville, TN

YEARS IN NASHVILLE: 34

PUBLISHER: Thomahawk Music

HITS/CUTS/CHART ACTION: "You Can't Lose Me," Faith Hill; "Holdin' Heaven," Tracy Byrd; "It Won't Be Over You," Steve Wariner; "Life Goes On," Little Texas; "This Is Me," Randy Travis; "Holdin' On To Somethin'," Jeff Carson; "Day In Day Out," David Kersh; cuts by John Michael Montgomery, Tracy Lawrence, Neal McCoy and John Berry

FAVORITE SONG YOU WROTE: "Worthless Works Of Art"

FAVORITE SONG YOU DIDN'T WRITE: "Heart Of The Matter," Don Henley

ON WHAT INSTRUMENT DO YOU WRITE: Guitar and piano

INFLUENCES: Lennon & McCartney, Jimmy Webb, Mac McAnally, Dave Loggins, Don Schlitz

ADVICE TO WRITERS: Persistence, persistence, persistence. Every "no" is one step closer to "yes."

LITTLE KNOWN BIOGRAPHICAL FACT: I was in a Valu-Jet plane crash.

ISSUES FACING SONGWRITERS TODAY: Competition is stiff, slots are few.



Thom McHugh

American Lung Association's asthmatic programs for children...

The 8th Annual **Vince Gill** Celebrity Basketball Game and Concert is scheduled to be held November 3 at Belmont University's Striplin Gymnasium. Over the past seven years, the event has raised approximately \$325,000 for the school...

Belmont University's 2nd Annual Driven By The Music celebrity benefit concert is scheduled for Monday, September 8 at the Grand Ole Opry House. **Gary Chapman, Point Of Grace, 4 Him, Donna Summer, Kenny Rogers** and former Belmont students **Larry Stewart, Lee Ann Womack** and **Trisha Yearwood** will perform. Reservations for the "Summer Supper," which includes a reception, dinner and premiere seating for the concert, can be made at 615-460-6408...

Fishbone Fred has recorded an album of songs centered on children's safety rules entitled *Fishbone Fred's Safety Songs For Kids*. The March of Dimes will receive a portion of the album's proceeds. 888-4-FISHBONE...

TV/FILM NEWS

VH1 was scheduled to present **Garth Brooks: Town Hall Live**, an exclusive one-hour live special, on August 4. Broadcast before a small audience at the VH1 New York studios, the special featured Brooks answering questions from the audience, plus those submitted live via a 1-800 num-

ber and on the Internet via e-mail...

Mark O'Connor was slated to appear on the sixth annual *Disney's Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra* telecast August 2 on the Disney Channel. The show featured 82 outstanding young musicians between the ages of eight and twelve across the United States and England...

CHRISTIAN NEWS

Following the overwhelming response to **dc Talk's Welcome To The Freak Show** long form video release, which debuted as the top-selling Christian music video and #2 on *Billboard's* Top Music Videos retail chart, ForeFront Records is slated to release *Welcome To The Freak Show—dc Talk Live In Concert* on CD and cassette August 26. Featuring all tracks from the video plus three previously unreleased cuts, the project includes over 75 minutes of live dc Talk music...

Sparrow Records is scheduled to release *Amazing Grace 2: A Country Salute To Gospel* on October 7. The album features gospel recordings from country artists such as **John Berry, Bryan White, Billy Ray Cyrus, Lari White, Ricky Van Shelton, Charlie Daniels, Kim Richey, Trace Adkins, Gary Chapman** and others...

Cindy Morgan recently hosted a benefit concert for The Tennessee Prison for Women and Yeshuw'ah Prison Ministries—a Nashville-based organization which serves over 1,500 female inmates throughout Tennessee, Texas and Ohio...

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JOHN ANDERSON/ Takin' The Country Back

(Mercury 314-536 004-2)

Producer: Keith Stegall

Prime Cuts: "Somebody Slap Me," "Small Town," "Takin' The Country Back," "It's A Long Way Back"

Critique: Anderson sings: *It's high time we face the facts/Heart and soul slippin' through the cracks/We're takin' the country back.* Amen, brother. *Takin' The Country Back* is a shining example of everything that is right in Music City and should have his previous label scratching its collective head wondering exactly how they came to the decision to let him go. The disc's mesmerizing melodies and Stegall's punchy production are the perfect complement to inspired songwriting and Anderson's incomparable vocal gift. The first single, "Somebody Slap Me," is as close to bottled fun as you'll ever come. I've played it dozens of times and still can't get enough—somebody...well, you know. While the concept and lyrics for "Small Town" aren't quite revolutionary, they bear an understated authenticity—after all, it isn't cosmopolitan Manhattan of which Anderson writes. Likewise, the song's melody is as comfortable and vital as lazy Saturday mornings spent with the family. "It's A Long Way Back," the album's shiver-inducing closer, left me feeling like Anderson is meat and potatoes to the Twinkie filling "stars" currently withering on the sales charts. More from the title track: *Down to earth where the music's real/Singin' 'bout what the people feel/Timeless truth, now that's the deal/We got to pass it on, y'all.* John Anderson wants to take country music back? Wrap it up and give it to him. The genre couldn't be in better hands.

—Chuck Aly



DWIGHT YOAKAM/Under The Covers

(Reprise 46690) Producer: Pete Anderson

Prime Cuts: "Train In Vain," "Tired Of Waiting," "Wichita Lineman," "Things We Said Today"

Critique: To paraphrase Monty Python: *"And now for something completely different."* In the recent past there have been many tribute albums, but for the most part they've been faithful renderings of various country artists' favorite songs. Knowing Yoakam's maverick tendencies, his first full album of non-original songs contains a dozen uniquely sung and arranged tunes, including some obvious choices and some from left field. As Yoakam fans would expect, the material ranges wildly; from a bluegrass arrangement of the Clash's "Train In Vain" and a chicken pickin'-spiked rendition of the Rolling Stones' "The Last Time" to a horn-flecked, Sheryl Crow-assisted, R&B take on the Sonny &

Cher classic "Baby Don't Go," and a pounding version of the first single, Roy Orbison's "Claudette." While only 11 tracks are listed, don't touch that dial, as Johnny Horton's "North To Alaska" segues into a version of Jimmie Rodgers' "T For Texas." The collection of favorites works not only because the covers are cool, but because of Yoakam's unique spin on each. The stand-out, and most unusual by far, is the singer's Las Vegas-y take on the Kinks' "Tired Of Waiting." However big the surprises, there's at least one disappointment. A rather disaffected cover of "Good Time Charlie's Got the Blues," an early club fave of Pete and Dwight's, is oddly enough pretty lame. But

that's it. My only wish is that Dwight and Pete would have tackled a Doors song, like maybe "Soul Kitchen" or "Hello, I Love You." Perhaps with *Under the Covers'* success, there will be a second such album from this amazing team.

—Ron Young

BURNIN' DAYLIGHT/ Burnin' Daylight

(Curb D2-77850) Producers: Mark Bright, Burnin' Daylight

Prime Cuts: "Some Hearts (Get All The Breaks)," "Cut And Run"

Critique: Burnin' Daylight has the makings of a country supergroup, featuring ex-Exiler Sonny LeMaire, former Southern Pacific member Kurt Howell and hot shot writer Marc Beeson. Their hook is that they started the group as a vehicle to pitch songs and—before you know it—wound up with a record deal. The threesome combined to pen nine of the eleven songs collected here, an album of uptempo pop country with a few ballads thrown in for good measure. Unfortunately, as with most supergroups, Burnin' Daylight doesn't live up to its hype. There aren't bad tunes on the album; there aren't great ones either. They were lucky enough to be given creative freedom by Mike Curb, who didn't assign them a producer. However, the record still sounds as big and polished as many of the other CDs in the bins these days. I hoped for something different, something fresh, and while the hooks are catchy, the melodies are pleasant and the harmonies are dead on, the same can be said of a lot of stuff out now. With this much competition out there, someone needs to break away from the pack, and Burnin' Daylight just hasn't done it.

—Joey Butler



KENNY CHESNEY/I Will Stand

(RCA 67498-2) Producers: Buddy Cannon, Norro Wilson

Prime Cuts: "She's Got It All," "A Chance"

Critique: Rarely do I completely trash an album. First of all, if I don't get it after a few listens I tend to look for something else. More importantly, I am philosophically opposed to the notion that a conglomeration of the world's most talented musicians, songwriters, vocalists and producers could spend several months creating something with no redeeming qualities whatsoever. Unfortunately, that theory's been shot full of holes and I had no other review options when the Chesney disc hit my desk. To be fair, the first song and single, "She's Got It All," totally works for me. The downside is the rest of the album—a masterpiece of mediocrity. I think I heard the second song, "You Win, I Win, We Lose," on the last Little Texas album, only it was called "Bad For Us." The third song, "She Gets That Way," sounds familiar as well—think "Neon Moon" meets "Sometimes She Forgets," but watered down. I really dialed in the next song thinking, "Okay, track four, title track, here's the good stuff." Nope. Played it a half-dozen times and all I came away with is the certainty that the piano melody was lifted from "Just When I Needed You Most." Interestingly, the extended guitar intro to "Steamy Windows" could substitute for the soundtrack

to one of the sex scenes on TV's *Melrose Place*. The last few songs make a stab at salvaging the disc—an acoustic version of Chesney's biggest hit, "When I Close My Eyes," is even included—but it's like trying to put out the Hindenburg fire with a garden hose. Oh the humanity.

—Chuck Aly



EDGE OF THE ROW

by RUSTY RUSSELL

“... any ‘local flavor’ is likely the result of some employee failing to wash his hands . . .”

A few days ago I was wandering around in a town just south of Nashville, trying to locate an address from memorized (and, it turns out, *wrong*) directions. Fortunately, I'd scribbled down the phone number on a scrap of paper, so after a while I whipped into a strip mall to look for a pay phone. (Cellular phones are for weenies and should be illegal to use in a moving vehicle, unless I need to borrow yours sometime, in which case I think they're marvelous and I applaud the good sense you show by owning one.) So I look around at this strip mall, and it hits me that this little wad of commerce is *exactly* like the one near my house. *Exactly*. Same video place. Same submarine sandwich shop. Same dry cleaner, same pizza delivery joint, same, same, same. Now, this little burg was founded in the mid/late 1700s. It has—or used to have—a flavor of its own. Things were built a certain way, done a certain way; the town's personality grew out of the needs and preferences of its citizens, influenced by realities like topography, climate, geology and cultural backgrounds. (Ha! And you thought I wasn't paying attention in Social Studies class, Mr. Poole!) Nowadays, because everybody and his dog is running around out there with an MBA and a keen eye for the bottom line, homogenizing everything in the interest of profitability, parts of this place are utterly indistinguishable from thousands of other places around the country.

Years ago, some guy in this little town who was skilled as, say, a baker might have opened a bakery just off the town square. He knew his stuff from the *inside*, and it tasted like *his* stuff. Today, some cell-phoner in some office in some city several hundred miles away who knows, say, pizza from the *outside*, from the salability side, looks at some stack of data and decides that one of his company's pizza joints could turn a profit in the little town. Zap! Another pizza joint in another strip mall. Its stuff will look and taste just like the stuff in all the company's other joints all over the country. (Note: Any “local flavor” is likely the result of some employee failing to wash his hands.)

Okay, by now, you know the drill—I'm gonna compare the situation described above to the music business somehow. This time it isn't much of a stretch. Used to be you stuck a mic in front of musicians because what they were doing sounded unique or interesting or profound or funny or whatever, and you could make a living by sharing that with a record-buying audience. Today, many records are made because some stack of data indicates profitability. Zap! You release “The Strip Mallers,” the amazing debut album from the amazing new band that sounds amazingly

like all the other bands.

What keeps me fairly calm about all this is that there are still some people out there making records the way the baker made bread. Take **David Grisman**, and his Acoustic Disc label. Mandolin mainstay Grisman has, over the past couple decades, recorded all manner of interesting folks—from Jerry Garcia to Bonnie Raitt to Doc Watson to Jethro Burns to Martin Taylor to 96-year-old mando-composer Rudy Cipolla. Whew! The tiny label boasts 24 titles in all, and you can get a good overview from their 3 samplers, *Acoustic Disc, 100% Handmade Music, Vols I, II & III*. No one's going to love *everything* the label puts out, of course, but there is probably something here that nearly everyone will like. And the *big* point is, Acoustic Disc is taking something *real* and finding a way to market it, rather than gathering up a bunch of artists who can be molded to fit a preconceived marketing concept. *There* you go! P.O. Box 1014, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

Also pretty much defining his own little world (universe?): **Victor Wooten**. Man! His latest, *What Did He Say?* (Compass), is like our baker guy with laser technology. Wooten's re-invention of the electric bass continues; originality, depth, humor, funk,

beauty, sensitivity, power... how can anyone with such supernatural chops sound so human? “Cherokee,” the old bebop warhorse, goes by with such blinding speed—I thought my speakers were finally giving out; turned out to be the *bass* solo. Bzzzz. Victor's known around town as one of the true nice guys in the biz, and you can actually *hear* the joy he brings to his music. This is *not* merely an album for musicians. You need it, a lot worse than you need a cellular phone. ☐

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THANKS FOR PACKING THE HOUSE!!



Bobby Braddock, who had his first big hit in the sixties with Tammy Wynette's version of "D-I-V-O-R-C-E" (co-written with Curly Putman), has re-signed his songwriting contract with Sony/ATV Tree in Nashville.

Braddock, who also has to his credit hits such as "Golden Ring" (co-written with Rafe VanHoy), "He Stopped Loving Her Today" (co-written with Putman) and "Time Marches On," has penned twelve No. 1 singles and numerous other chart hits. (L to R) Sony/ATV Tree Senior VP Don Cook, Braddock and Sony/ATV Tree President & CEO Donna Hilley.



RCA recording artist Martina McBride shares the spotlight with the creators of her new album, *Evolution*, scheduled for release August 26. (L to R) Songwriters Kevin Montgomery and Annie Roboff, Senior Vice President A&R Thom Schuyler, writer Sam Hogin, Senior Director A&R Renee Bell, Senior Director A&R Sam Ramage, McBride, Richard Leigh, Co-producer Paul Worley, Ed Hill and Tony Martin.
Photo: Glen Rose



Acclaimed songwriter A.L. "Doodle" Owens recently inked a publishing deal with Magnatone Publishing. (L to R) Tommy Williams, Creative Director; Leslie Turnbull, Assistant to VP Betty Rosen; Betty Rosen, VP Publishing & Film Music; Owens; Madelyn Tillis, Administrator; and Colin Stewart, CEO/President, Magnatone Entertainment.



The Recording Industry Association of America recently hosted a reception to welcome the Country Music Association's Board of Directors, who held their quarterly board meeting in Washington, D.C. (L to R) Wayne Halper, Head of Label Operations, Dreamworks Records—Nashville; Scott Hendricks, President & CEO, Capitol Nashville; Jay Berman, Chairman, RIAA; and Joe Galante, Chairman, RCA Label Group—Nashville.
Photo: Matt Mendelsohn

INDUSTRY EVENTS CALENDAR

AUGUST

21 1997 Tennessee State Final—True Value/Jimmy Dean Country Showdown, Wilson County Fair, Lebanon, TN 615-443-2626

SEPTEMBER

8 CCMA Awards Hamilton, Ontario
11-14 National Association Of Recording Merchandisers' 1997 Mid-Year Conference, Marriott's Laguna Cliffs Resort, Dana Point, CA 609-596-2221
15 Music City News Country Scramble Golf Tournament, Pine Creek Golf Course, Mt. Juliet, TN 615-329-2200
19-22 7th Annual T.J. Martell Music Row Celebrity Tournaments, Various Nashville Venues 615-256-2002
24 31st Annual CMA Awards, The Grand Ole Opry House, Nashville, TN 615-244-2840
25 6th Annual Diamond Rio Celebrity Golf Classic, Hermitage Golf Course, Nashville, TN 615-329-9394
29-Oct. 1 SRO '97, The Nashville Convention Center, Nashville, TN 615-244-2840

OCTOBER

13-19 International Bluegrass Music Association's Trade Show '97/Fan Fest '97, Galt House, Louisville, KY 502-684-9025
16 8th Annual International Bluegrass Music Awards Show, Kentucky Center For The Performing Arts, Louisville, KY 502-684-9025
17-19 4th Annual MusicWomen International Convention And Showcases, Nashville, TN 615-860-4084
20 15th Annual Academy Of Country Music Bill Boyd Celebrity Golf Classic, De Bell Golf Course, Burbank, CA 213-462-2351
24-25 CRS-West, Radisson Hotel Sacramento, Sacramento, CA (615) 327-4487
24-26 Songwriters Expo 20, The Burbank Airport Hilton And Convention Center, Burbank, CA 800-826-7287

NOVEMBER

3 8th Annual Vince Gill Celebrity Basketball Game And Concert, Belmont University, Nashville, TN 615-460-5513

FEBRUARY

11-15 10th Annual Folk Alliance Conference, Memphis Cook County Convention Center, Memphis, TN 202-835-3655

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