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# COUNTRY MUSIC

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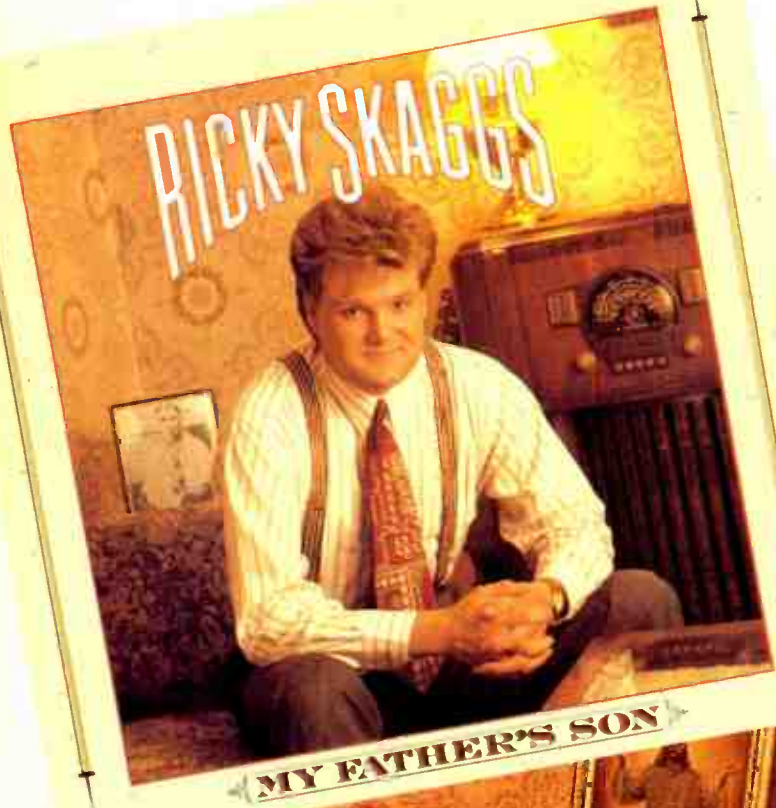


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# Record Reviews

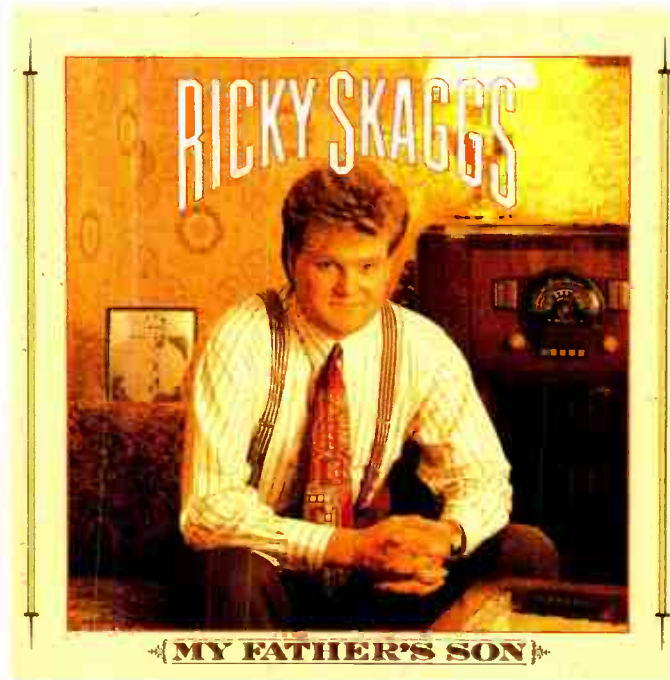
## Ricky Skaggs *My Father's Son* Epic 0901

**R**icky Skaggs is one of those popular artists who's never quite let go of the noble, if somewhat naive, notion that one's music should *mean* something: that it should enlighten listeners, or at least strive for some higher purpose or subtle spiritual awakening beyond mere entertainment and sentimentality.

On *My Father's Son*, Skaggs' latest album, the singer's die-hard idealism and abiding sense of musical perfectionism have once again served him well. Indeed, you'd have to go all the way back to the beginning of Skaggs' major-label recording career to find a Skaggs album that reverberates with such well-intentioned and well-focused idealism and such ferociously good musicianship.

From the first few bars of "Life's Too Long (To Live Like This)," the opening cut, the musical hot licks fly fast and furiously. Skaggs himself sings and plays as if he were a man on fire with his own enthusiasm and sense of mission. And on all 12 cuts, he never really lets up, just keeps pouring it on, going for broke.

Throughout *My Father's Son*, Skaggs is given able instrumental support from an array of top-flight Nashville session musicians (Brent Mason—guitar, Eddie Bayers—drums, Roy Huskey Jr.—slap bass, among many others), and a familiar ensemble cast of "newgrass" super-pickers (Jerry Douglas—dobro, Sam Bush—fiddle, Bela Fleck—banjo and Stuart Duncan—fiddle), as well as members of Kentucky Thunder, his own



tried-and-true road band.

There's ample first-class vocal assistance as well. Co-producer Mac McAnally matches Skaggs note for note on soaring harmonies throughout, and Skaggs' wife, Sharon White, lends her voice to one cut, "Hold on Tight (Let It Go)." There's even a sassy duet with Waylon Jennings on the old Jennings chestnut, "Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line," where Skaggs also turns in some nimble electric lead guitar work.

If there's a supporting star on *My Father's Son*, it's Mac McAnally. A gifted singer/songwriter and some-time recording artist in his own right, McAnally proves the perfect foil for Skaggs, both at the soundboard and in the studio. He contributes some superior vocal harmonies, one original song ("Simple Life") and some solid acoustic guitar work. Moreover, his presence seems to give Skaggs an added edge of confidence, and nudges his

musicianship a notch or two higher.

*My Father's Son* would, of course, not be a Ricky Skaggs album if there weren't at least some sort of implicit moral or message lurking between the grooves. The unifying themes here are familiar ones; and Skaggs, to his credit, makes his points gently and insistently, instead of flogging us over the head with them. "Life's Too Long (To Live Like This)," "Simple Life" and "You Can't Take It With You When You Go" all speak to the challenge of hanging on to the fundamental values of family and home in a materialistic contemporary world that conspires to strip them away.

A trilogy of songs on side one—"Same Ol' Love," "From the Word Love" (which has an especially haunting arrangement) and "You Don't Count the Cost"—all deal with the terribly exacting but redeeming power of human bonds. The title song is the lone

Skaggs original on here (co-written with G.M. Green). It's a lovely, moving revisitation of Skaggs' bluegrass/gospel/Appalachian roots that explores the almost mystic connections between generations.

"Give Us a Happy Home" is a heart-rending ballad with a beautiful acoustic guitar arrangement and an especially earnest and poignant performance by Skaggs, as he reveals the sadness and devastation of a broken home from a child's point of view. The finale, "Somebody's Praying," is a full-blown gospel song that features another rootsy Skaggs vocal tour de force over an evocative pop/piano arrangement.

In short, *My Father's Son* is vintage Ricky Skaggs: the musicianship is bold, impeccable and inspired; the lessons are clear, simple, unequivocal and—particularly in these troubled times—well worth heeding. —BOB ALLEN

## Garth Brooks *Ropin' the Wind* Capitol 96330

**B**y what standards should we measure Garth Brooks? Is he, perhaps, today's Hank Williams, or the Johnny Cash of the future, or the new Kenny Rogers, or Merle Haggard with sales? Or, as his press and promoters have yet to tire of attesting, is he a phenomenon so phenomenal, an artist so loaded with consumer appeal (this album entered the *pop* charts at Number One, for pity's sake!), that nobody like him has ever been seen on Music Row?

The question at the heart of that dilemma is the wrong question, however, because it has very little to do with the

# Record Reviews

people who make music, and everything to do with the people who buy it (and sell it). So instead of pondering emergent trends in young-adult suburban-contemporary consumerism, let's just ask a simple music maker's question: measured by the standards he himself has set, how is Garth's new work?

For a start, it's all over the place. Garth is still demonstrating his fluency in several musical languages and his readiness to learn more, and here again he offers us everything from twang and swing to pure-cut pop. If anything, he's delving more deeply into each style rather than moving toward a center: "Rodeo" is more formula-country than anything he's done before, "We Bury the Hatchet" more country-camp, "Shameless" (the Billy Joel song) more boldly urban-pop. So the theme behind the title of Garth's mega-album, *No Fences*, continues here; the multi-market phenomenon is a genuinely multi-generic musician. "Shameless," by the way, succeeds very nicely. It's one of Billy Joel's least trite or manipulative songs—it actually has an honest ring to complement its craftsmanship—and Garth approaches it with a big, bold, almost theatrical (and very appropriate) intensity. Yo. Stand back! *That's* new. Is this the Elton John of Oklahoma?

Well, no. Elton writes his own material, whereas Garth co-writes only some of his, and that's another new thing about *Ropin' the Wind*: Garth co-wrote seven of the ten songs here, as opposed to four on *No Fences*. And he co-wrote three of the new ones with women, which is also different.

So where has all this co-writing, and a little song-picking, left him? Has he surpassed himself?

Well, no. There isn't one song on *Ropin' the Wind* that measures up to "The Dance," "The Thunder Rolls," "Two of a Kind (etc.)," "Friends in Low Places" and "Unanswered

Prayers," or the handful of other ultra-strong songs Garth has recorded so far. "Papa Loved Mama," perhaps the most original and certainly the most creatively liberated song on the new album—an intense little gag tune wherein Dad snuffs Mom by piling his semi into her cheatin' heart motel room—is a gas, but it's a lightweight. "Cold Shoulder" is passably original, but its central lyrical device—using the term 'cold shoulder' as the location of a lovelorn truck stranded by the side of the highway in a snowstorm (get it?)—is a notion Garth should have allowed to pass on by as soon as he glimpsed it in the, ah, rearview mirror of his mind.

Three other songs, "What's She Doing Now?," "Burning Bridges" and "We Bury the Hatchet," all suffer a similar malaise. Although they're catchy, cleverly constructed, compellingly performed and thoroughly commercial—they hook around standard-issue, heavy-rotation song factory puns, wordplays and extended metaphors—they're really nothing special: fun in their various ways, especially the stylish and sardonic "We Bury the Hatchet," but neither very

original nor very memorable.

That last point is true even of the two very high-tone pieces which bring *Ropin' the Wind* to a close. "In Lonesome Dove," a nicely written Old West story song, falls flat because it recounts its tale in precisely the wrong emotional key—murder, mayhem and revenge rendered here with gentle, preciously folksy formality—until it just collapses under the weight of its own atmosphere. "The River," a kind of mainstream-motivational goal affirmation set to music, rides a basically mundane metaphor a long way and succeeds in saying not very much at all despite its nice way with words, Garth's gently passionate performance, a lovely arrangement and a moving melody. The song offers us a gift Garth has given us before, the illusion of depth, and it forces a conclusion *Ropin' the Wind* suggests in many of its most important moments: that here is an artist who can dress up some pretty modest visions with some awfully ardent brushwork.

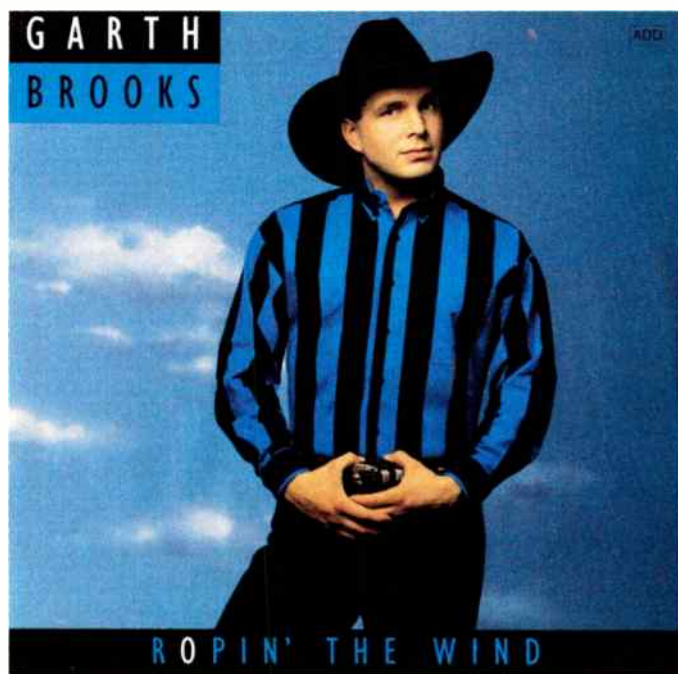
Which is an awfully disappointing conclusion. The most exciting creative element of *No Fences* was its deft packaging of great style and unusual

substance, and that substance was the most exciting factor in the work's immense commercial success: the fact that some original, off-brand ideas were circulating in the mass marketplace was encouraging. So it's a shame that Garth hasn't done as well on that level this time out.

He's done very well on most other levels, though. The range of *Ropin' the Wind*'s material is wide and intriguing, Allen Reynolds' arrangements and productions are very nicely designed, and Garth's performances are impressive; any singer who can move you as gently as Don McLean, Western-swing you almost as well as Merle Haggard and pump up big-hall emotionalism approaching Elton John's, all on one disc, is doing okay and then some. And, of course, the videos will add a lot; many of these songs are indeed very videogenic. So in scope and technique and delivery, *Ropin' the Wind* is fine product. By contemporary country-pop standards it's actually a very good album. But those aren't the standards being applied in this review, and by this review's standards—the benchmark of Garth's best work—there is a shortfall here.

It's certainly not a failing of either talent or execution. It's more, I think, a matter of creative ambitions not quite fulfilled, song ideas not given enough time or effort, that kind of thing. I can only speculate, but when Garth calls this album his "postcards from the edge," I interpret 'postcards' as 'quick work under pressure' and 'the edge' as a place out there in new-star land which has probably caused the man's head to spin faster than one of those little *No Fences* laser discs which brought the madness upon him. I hope that's what happened, anyway (because the alternative explanation is that Garth has lowered his creative sights, or someone has lowered them for him), and I hope he settles down again soon.

—PATRICK CARR





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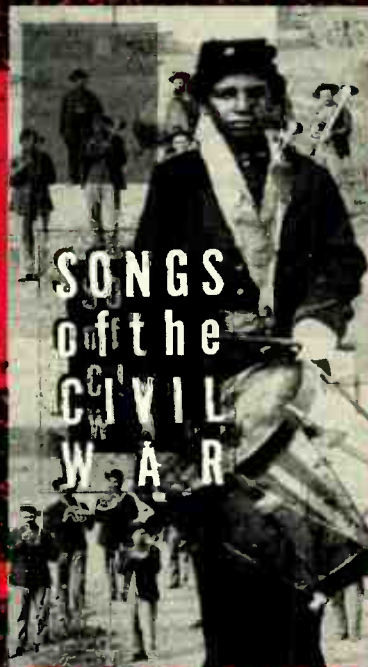
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# Record Reviews

## Keith Whitley *Kentucky Bluebird* BMG/RCA 3156-2-R

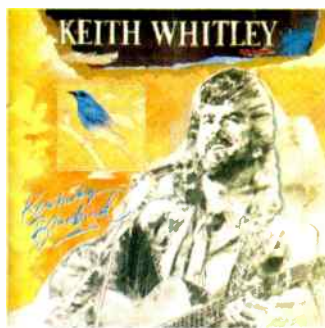
**S**ince Keith Whitley's death in May 1989, it's been common knowledge among his fans that there was at least an album's worth of unreleased material in the vaults of RCA (his record label) and elsewhere.

Of course, there was always some question as to whether or not Whitley would have wanted this material posthumously released. (It was his decision to shelve it when he was alive.) And, there have been some half-hearted assurances from RCA that, in deference to Whitley's own wishes, it would not be released. Yet with record companies and the forces of commerce being what they are, everybody sort of assumed that sooner or later it would see the light of day.

Thus, nearly two and a half years after Whitley's death and the release of *I Wonder Do You Think of Me*, his final studio album, comes *Kentucky Bluebird*. This latest Whitley release is a thoughtfully packaged, re-mixed and partially re-recorded "best of" compilation drawn mostly from the unreleased Whitley archives.

In the hands of a less talented and sensitive producer, *Kentucky Bluebird* might have been the sort of aesthetic disaster—a haphazard collection of sloppily produced rejects, outtakes and filler cuts—that would have made Whitley roll over in his grave.

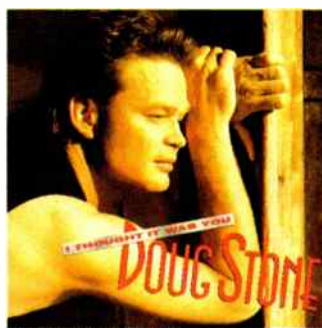
But producer Garth Fundis, who also co-produced (with Whitley himself) Whitley's two finest, most commercially successful, and last albums (*Don't Close Your Eyes* and *I Wonder Do You Think of Me*), has done something remarkable here. Drawing from material spanning more than half a decade and originally recorded by a handful of different producers, he's come out with an album that not only stands on its own merits as one of Whitley's



strongest song collections, but is also a worthy successor to the albums mentioned above. *Kentucky Bluebird* also serves as a fitting tribute to and retrospective on the life and work of the late, great singer.

The core of *Kentucky Bluebird* is four songs—"Going Home," "That's Where I Want to Take Our Love," "Somebody's Doin' Me Right" and "Brotherly Love" (a duet with Earl Thomas Conley)—from an unreleased album that Whitley completed with producer Blake Mevis (of George Strait and Moe Bandy fame) in the late 1980's. Three songs—"I Want My Rib Back" (co-written by Whitley and Fred Koller and previously recorded by Gene Watson), "Backbone Job" (co-written by Whitley and Kix Brooks) and the album title song—were originally recorded as demos for Tree International, the song publishing company to which Whitley was under contract as a songwriter. The remaining selections have been previously issued, two of them on compact disc only.

The unifying thread in this varied material is Whitley's outstanding vocal performances. In order to achieve a sense of unity, bring the overall production quality up to snuff and better enhance Whitley's singing, Fundis recorded new instrumental tracks for most of the previously unreleased selections. Stripping the original recordings down to the vocal tracks, he went back in the studio with the same handful of musicians he used with Whitley on *Don't Close Your Eyes* and *I Wonder Do You Think of Me* and re-



corded lively new arrangements.

Fundis has given this collection a further sense of history and definition by including a couple of poignant excerpts from radio interviews that Whitley did during the last few years of his life. There is also a moving snippet of Whitley making his radio debut at age eight, singing Hank Williams' "You Win Again"; and another of him singing with his boyhood friend, Ricky Skaggs, in 1972, in a little bluegrass band they'd formed called The Lonesome Mountain Boys.

Above all, *Kentucky Bluebird* reminds us what a fine singer Whitley was. Lick for lick, it's hard to imagine anyone who could have outdone him on soulful country ballads like the classic Lefty Frizzell hit, "I Never Go Around Mirrors" (originally included on *Don't Close Your Eyes*), Hank Cochran's and Dean Dillon's "That's Where I Want to Take Our Love" or the lovely "Would These Arms Be in Your Way" (written by Hank Cochran, Red Lane and Vern Gosdin, and featuring harmonies by Emmylou Harris and Gosdin).

But Whitley was by no means all sad songs and soulfulness. There was always an upbeat, easygoing side to his personality, which is often overlooked in the wake of the tragic circumstances surrounding his death. Fundis highlights the singer's inherent playfulness by kicking off the album with "Going Home," a rollicking, good-timey number written by Troy Seals and John Schneider, which Whitley sometimes sang as the finale in

his live shows. The boisterous, irreverent "I Want My Rib Back" and the bluesy "Backbone Job" not only showcase Whitley's talents as a songwriter, but also remind us what a fun-loving character he so often was.

Perhaps the most moving of all the songs here is the title tune (written by Don Cook and Wally Wilson), which Whitley originally recorded as a demo quite a few years ago. Somehow, this earthy ballad, with its intimations of loneliness, yearning and dreams just beyond reach, epitomizes his all-too-brief life and the enduring memories he's left with his music. Somehow it makes it all that much sadder that *Kentucky Bluebird*, which might have been another milestone in Whitley's budding career, is instead his last hurrah.

—BOB ALLEN

## Doug Stone *I Thought It Was You* Epic 0801

**F**irst off, let me just say I don't begrudge Doug Stone all the success he's had thus far. He's a tireless worker, an energetic performer and—as his debut single, "I'd Be Better Off (In a Pine Box)," attested—a decent enough singer.

Yet despite all the hard work and good intentions that obviously went into it, *I Thought It Was You*, Stone's second and latest album, falls flat as an uncapped Pepsi that's been left out on the sink drain all night. The new album leaves the promise of greatness hinted at by "Pine Box" largely unfulfilled, and stands as a pallid follow-up to Stone's uneven, self-titled debut album of last year.

Emotionally speaking, there is almost nothing on *I Thought It Was You* that even approaches the intensity of "Pine Box." In fact, on selections like the title tune (co-written by Tim Mensy and G. Harrison), "The Feeling Never Goes



# Record Reviews

Away" (on which Stone himself is a co-writer) and "Come In Out of the Pain," Stone edges away from the honky tonk mode in which his debut single cast him. Instead, he appears this time around in the role of the suave, and at times almost smarmy, romantic crooner—a style that is perhaps better left to the Freddie Harts and Lee Greenwoods of the world.

Here and there, Stone does manage to rise above producer Doug Johnson's mundane arrangements and hit a few good, hard country licks. "The Right to Remain Silent" is a lively, free-wheeling song about an unfaithful man who gets his last romantic rites read to him by his spiteful lover. "Burning Down the Town" (co-written by Joe Diffie, W. Perry and L. Wilson) is yet another rowdy honky tonk complaint in which an old flame succumbs to metaphorical spontaneous combustion. "Remember the Ride" is a rather cute, if unremarkable ballad. "A Jukebox with a Country Song" is a fun little number that's worth a chuckle or two, except for the fact that Travis Tritt, with "Country Club," has already done a similar, more artful job of poking fun at the Yuppie-versus-good ol' boy clash of lifestyles.

Unfortunately, most of the rest of the material on *I Thought It Was You*, under

Stone's and Johnson's rendering, sounds like just so much candy-coated, whisper-in-my-ear fluff and dross, and it smacks a little bit too loudly of calculation for my tastes. Perhaps I'm a stick in the mud for expecting more of the sort of great, gut-wrenching singing that Stone showed us he could do on "Pine Box." But I sure don't hear it here.

—BOB ALLEN

## The Desert Rose Band

*True Love*  
MCA-10407

**Y**ou might recall my enthusiasm for The Desert Rose Band's previous album, which I lauded for its mature, sober approach. Now, after over a year between new albums (a greatest hits album with a couple of new songs was issued in the interim), they're back with their latest. The record company publicity sheets characterize it as "Beautifully crafted songs and pitch perfect harmonies." Catchy. The question is, is it as good as the last one?

Well, I don't think so. The above mentioned attributes are here in force, but unfortunately, it doesn't matter. The maturity that seemed so refreshing before is now cold and colorless, if not outright depressing. I realize that DRB

core members Chris Hillman, Herb Pedersen and John Jorgensen are all well beyond their wild youth. What with the way things are nowadays, plenty of people in their 40's feel lucky to have reached that point. Yet there's no joy, no feeling of renewal or revitalization here. Just doleful sobriety that might make for peace of mind, but doesn't necessarily produce good music. The entire record is smothered by a band taking itself way too seriously.

The themes are as they were before: lost love, reaffirmed love, going back to the old hometown, etc. And all of these subjects can be interesting—if there is enough joy, humor and wit to make them so. DRB delivers every single number in an almost funereal tone. Most of the songs, written or co-written by Hillman, make their statements in such a way that you can hardly wait for them to end.

Figure it from the titles: "It Takes a Believer," "Twilight Is Gone," "A Matter of Time," "Behind These Walls," "True Love." Frankly, some of these lyrics are so bad I'm not even sure that Hallmark would want them on their greeting cards. To wit, in the case of the latter song, "It's a true love/ Not a new love/ That makes my life/ So much better/ Tried and proven/ Down through the ages/ And it's guaranteed to keep us all together." Pro-

found. Peter Rowan's "Undying Love" is no better. "How many lovers in lifetimes have gone/ Like clothing that we wear..." You get the idea. Beautifully crafted songs ain't always good 'uns.

Sure, middle-aged men should act their age. But there's a place for wit and humor, too. Ask George Jones; ask Jerry Lee Lewis. Perhaps the DRB figure they'll get "Adult Contemporary" radio airplay (aimed at former hippies and hell-raisers who've settled down to become stock-brokers, insurance salesmen and all-around good citizens). Maybe they'll attract that audience. Then again, they run the risk of boring them to death.

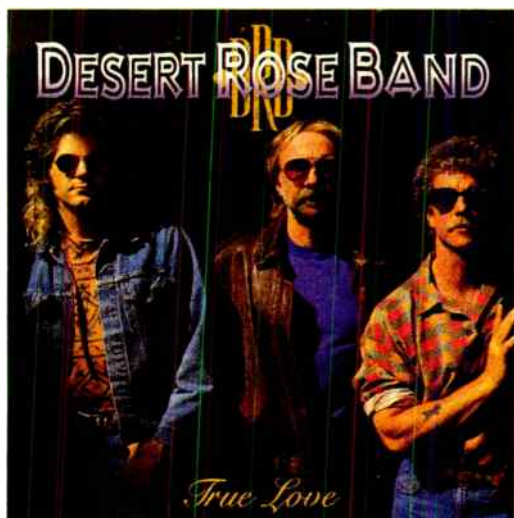
—RICH KIENZLE

## Shelby Lynne

*Soft Talk*  
Epic ET 47388

**S**helby Lynne is country music's Junior Miss Queen of Heartbreak. On her latest album, *Soft Talk*, the 23-year-old with the Reba-esque steamroller voice straps us into the back seat of her car for a tour of lonely avenue, a route she obviously knows by heart. Unlike her debut, *Sunrise*, and her second album, *Tough All Over*, *Soft Talk* is a polished offering tailor-made for radio. By customizing her pain, Lynne has lost some of her edge—the kind of bite making new-girls-on-the-block Trisha Yearwood and Kelly Willis hot these days—but she clings to the rage that has become her trademark.

On "Don't Cross Your Heart," the first cut, Lynne warns us before ever letting us in the car what we're in for. Tempo speeding, she belts: "You're going to learn when it comes to love/logic turns defenseless/and it'll turn on you." "I've Learned to Love" is a quiet, atmospheric song laced nicely with Brent Mason's and Chuck Jones' acoustic guitars. Keeping one eye on the road, Lynne tells how she ended up



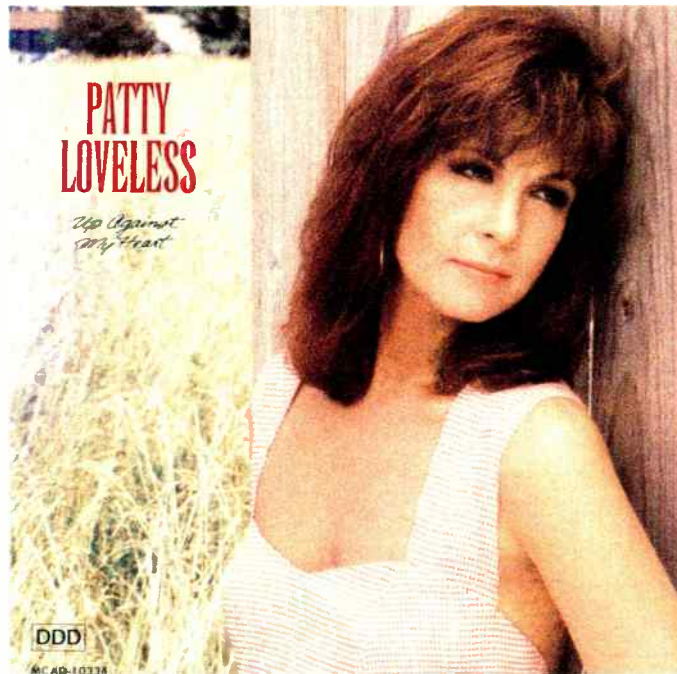
# Record Reviews

so forlorn, then skids into a cover of Tammy Wynette's 1986 hit, "Alive and Well," a haunting, almost sinister confessional in which she sings, "I wished that I could lay to rest the memory of how good it used to be/If I could I'd take a gun and aim it at the past and shoot to kill."

With the car warmed up, Lynne squeals her wheels into the sassy, almost rocking "You Can't Break a Broken Heart." Appropriately enough, the tune starts with a moan from Lynne who, with her foot on the gas, growls and fishtails over Steve Gibson's guitar and Mickey Raphael's barreling harmonica. It's a welcome deviation from previous 35 miles-per-hour songs, but before you know it, Lynne strays from course and picks up hitchhiker Les Taylor for a token duet on "The Very First Lasting Love." It's a pleasant song, but it seems stuck into the mix for the sake of a radio hit. It never has the chance to bother you, though, because Lynne dumps Taylor and gets back on the road with the soulful "Stop Me," where she begs us to keep her on course and stop her if she 1) talks too much, 2) laughs too loud, 3) tries to walk down his street, 4) sings too low, 5) loses control or 6) cries. Accentuated with finger snaps and musical accompaniment circa 1950, Lynne's fired-up voice is at its best thus far.

On "It Might Be Me," the final number, Lynne's voice is cranked even more intensely and rides a gospel groove that fits like a peg in Gary Smith's bluesy piano playing. The climactic song signals that the trip is almost over, and even tells us that along the way Lynne didn't obtain any new takes on love. But, when she sings, "All anybody in this whole world needs is just one good friend," we know that she did learn things about herself. With all this said and sung, Lynn pulls the car over, drops us off and drives away.

Even though Lynne and producer James Stroud play it safe on *Soft Talk*, they succeed



in creating an endearing, heartbreak tour that never runs out of gas. On the next drive out, though, Lynne should realize that she's old enough to break the law, to take some chances, to do what she wants. If Kathy Mattea can do it, why can't she?

—CHUCK DEAN

## Patty Loveless *Up Against My Heart* MCA Records MCAC 10336

**T**he Ernest Tubb Record Shop was our first stop on the MCA Records scavenger hunt, held in honor of Patty Loveless' latest release, *Up Against My Heart*. Half of our team went inside to look for Patty Loveless songs containing the word "blue" (they found five), while the rest of us stayed in the van carefully listening to Patty's cassette, trying to match selected lyrics with specific song titles, something we were told counted for big points. We matched lyrics correctly but really didn't pay much attention to album content or theme—we were in a race, after all, and our team was busy debating heavy moral questions like, "Is it

ethical, if given a chance, to steal all the teams' clues, especially if it guarantees our team's victory?" We decided it was, and did. Unfortunately, despite our deviousness, we didn't win. (It's possible, since we all read *Hitmen*, that we didn't cheat big enough.) We did, however, by evening's end, know the words and lyrics to almost every cut on the album. That must have been what MCA Records intended all along.

*Up Against My Heart*, Patty's fifth album, reunites the talents of Emory Gordy Jr. and Tony Brown, the original team who co-produced her first two albums. The disc takes a peek at an emotionally diverse, multi-dimensional Loveless. There's something for everybody, from two-steps to Cajun foot stompers, tear-stained ballads to black-humored love to Patsy Cline. As we quickly found out—and we are admittedly a hard house to play—this is not an album you'll easily tire of; instead, it keeps getting better each time you listen. You'll be singing along before you know it.

"Hurt Me Bad (In a Real Good Way)" is deeper than it sounds. My initial negative reaction to the title turned

around when I heard the line in context: "I would have never found you if he had wanted to stay/ He hurt me bad in a real good way." Written and harmonized by Deborah Allen, it's one you'll find yourself inwardly humming.

"If You Don't Want Me" is a painful story of a disintegrating relationship; ironically, it's co-written by Emory Gordy Jr., Loveless' happily married hubby. Patty admits she saw her "former self" in the song, which tells of a woman who "would rather be alone than just a 'prize on a shelf.'" Two other tear-jerkers, "The Last Thing I Do" and "I Already Miss You (Like You're Already Gone)," are good country ballads with the modal mountain harmonies Loveless really shines on.

She gets help with the harmonies from Mac McAnally and label-mate Vince Gill on two Cajun-kickers, "I Came Straight to You" and "Waitin' for the Phone to Ring," with Dolly Parton joining in on the latter, a song of restless frustration. Loveless often chooses songs that are faintly reminiscent of past hits, either in title or guitar licks. ("Timber, I'm Falling in Love," for example, echoed Buddy Holly's "Every Day.") This album is no exception. "Jealous Bone," a blues-rock with a definite attitude, is Creedence Clearwater Revival-like in arrangement, complete with "Green River" licks. "Nobody Loves You Like I Do" is not the Anne Murray/Dave Loggins hit from a few years back, but a traditional honky tonk two-step written by Kostas. "Can't Stop Myself From Loving You," another Kostas ballad, is similar in title only to an O'Kanes hit. Produced with a 60's feel, it's Patty does Patsy, right down to hitting the flat side of a low note, then sliding up. The only thing missing are real strings.

The surprise of the album is Lyle Lovett's sardonic signature song, "God Will," complete with Lyle on background vocals (as well as Vince Gill





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## Record Reviews

and Mac McAnally). Unlike Lovett, Patty sings it straight-ahead country, omitting the sarcastic twists; I missed Lyle's wicked gleam.

*Up Against My Heart*, like her previous releases, is what Loveless describes as "traditional country with an edge." She plays your heartstrings more than she plays victim, a refreshing change for women in country music, and she does it with diversity—you'll want to go back and listen again and again and again.

—MARJIE MCGRAW

### Highway 101 *Bing Bang Boom* Warner Bros. 926588-2

A waitress from the Nashville Palace? I was not impressed—even though Warner Brothers had also snagged Randy Travis there. I confess I was not even mildly interested in the new, improved Highway 101 until I was driving along a winding Nashville street and heard "Bing Bang Boom" on the radio. I turned it up; I leaned in closer, straining to hear the lyrics. With a catchy beat and well-crafted lines like "I walked in and my heartbeat jumped/my hair stood up and my skin goosebumped/my mind went blank and my IQ slumped/and my judgment hit the road," I was hooked. Highway 101 not only had a Number One single, they had a brand new fan.

If anyone feared the demise of the group when Paulette Carlson left, this disc should permanently put his or her fears to rest. It's not that Paulette's absence isn't noticeable—it is; her voice is just too distinctive not to be missed. But it is also perhaps too independent and highly stylized to be part of a group. Newcomer Nikki Nelson (who does have an extensive music background, despite being discovered as a waitress) also has a distinct style, but it blends better, giving Highway 101 a stronger group identity than



ever before, which is saying a lot for a band named Top Vocal Group of 1988 by both the Academy of Country Music and the Country Music Association.

As hard as I fell for their first single, though, I was apprehensive about the rest of the disc. The title cut is not an easy act to follow. Fortunately, someone else thought of that. Give producers Paul Worley and Ed Seay credit—the lineup of songs is strong. Lots of uptempo country with a blues edge. Two of the tunes, "Wherever You Are" and "Restless Kind," were written by Michael Henderson of The Snakes; both have a great groove, unusual chord progression and a haunting modal sound. And Highway 101 performs them with finesse—they play on the edge of blues/rock without overpowering the lyrics or darkening the music.

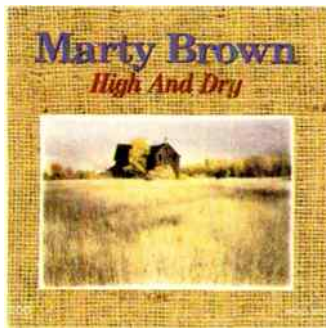
One of the disc's strongest songs is "Till I Get It Right," co-written by Red Lane and Larry Henley. The way Nelson torches this song is reminiscent of an early Reba McEntire without the gymnastics. It gave me chills. And even though it ran one second short of four minutes, it didn't seem long enough. Two other ballads, "The Blame" and "River of Tears," also serve as showcases for Ms. Nelson's throaty vocals.

The overall feel of the disc is upbeat and positive, one to grab when you feel like dancing. Play the title cut and sit still? Don't tap my toes to "Honky Tonk Baby" or "Restless Kind"? Get serious.

It must have been daunting for this group to not only add a



## Record Reviews



new female lead but also come up with an album strong enough to stand up to the legacy of previous hits, but Highway 101 has done it. And with the addition of Nikki Nelson, it was an easy transition. —MARIE MCGRAW

### Marty Brown *High and Dry* MCA 10330

**T**he March 13, 1991, edition of CBS-TV's *48 Hours* told the story of struggling, 25-year-old Kentucky singer-songwriter Marty Brown. On the verge of a major breakthrough in Nashville, Brown's raw hillbilly presence (as opposed to the affected presence of some hat acts whose names I won't mention) and vocal style promised great things. Brown's debut reveals his skill was the real thing.

For those who think Hank Williams Sr., Lefty Frizzell and Ernest Tubb set the standards, the news is not good—it's joyous. Producers Richard Bennett and Tony Brown have placed Brown in the perfect context with sparse but tasteful instrumentation that gives Brown plenty of room to yodel and twang. Aside from being a great guitarist, Bennett, a longtime record collector, understands the music of the 40's and 50's and the traditions that inspired Brown. And that shows here. However, that's only part of the battle. A great singer like Brown could easily be dragged down by rotten material. It happens to others. Find the hottest songsmiths on Music Row, grab whatever

you can and see what sticks to the barn. The thing is, Brown is no slouch as a writer. His material is delightfully free of obtuse imagery or pretense. The songs, like the voice, take the listener on a time-travel excursion back to 1949.

And though it might seem surprising, there's nary a cover of someone else's old hit to be found. Covers aren't necessarily a bad thing if the artist can add something new, but if he or she can't, the result winds up sounding like a Boxcar Willie album—great songs, sung by a great singer, but not necessarily better than the originals. It's a credit to Brown's songwriting skills that there's no need for covers.

"Don't Worry Baby" is country boogie in the tradition of The Delmore Brothers. The Hank presence on "Honky Tonk Special" is ghostly, but not imitative of other songs dealing with kids whose daddy can't tapdance away from the taproom. The delightful "Old King Kong," complete with Dixieland accompaniment, must be heard to be believed. Likewise, the pure anguish in "Nobody Knows" is chilling.

I have only one concern. The audience is there for Marty's music, but I fear certain country radio outlets might find him *too* country. Don't get me wrong, there are a lot of real country deejays out there who are gonna love this as much as I do. Trouble is, some country radio music directors these days are former hippies, folkies and heavy metalheads who don't like anything that doesn't bear some resemblance to some dumb rock song they remember from their youth. If you don't hear Marty on the radio, call the station and ask them to play him. If they don't know who he is, send them a copy of this review. If they say they know him and he's too country, ask them if they play Hank Jr. When they say yes, ask them if they ever heard his daddy. Don't be surprised if they say, "Oh, did he sing, too?"

—RICH KIENZLE



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# People

## IT'S A MIRACLE

Country's own Hollywood movie star, **Kris Kristofferson**, will star in a made-for-cable Christmas movie, *Miracle In the Wilderness*, due to air December 9th. The movie, based on the novella by **Paul Gallico**, also stars **Kim Cattrall** and is being produced by Turner Broadcasting System. It's set to air on Turner's movie channel, TNT, at the start of the holiday season. Kris plays a frontiersman with a wife and child who is building a home in the American Northwest. Not to tell too much of the plot, they witness a miracle as the story unfolds. The tale is perfect for Christmas and is sure to become a favorite. Tune in—I know I will.

## GARTH IN THE NEWS

The hottest singer ever to erupt out of Music City, Mr. **Garth Brooks**, has made a decision not to tour the first six months of 1992. Word I got was he turned down a quarter of a million to perform in Houston during this time period. Another Garth goodie: Tickets were sold in 30 minutes in Dallas for a Garth concert 18,000 strong, while another show booked for the night before sold out in 45 minutes.

What's more, Garth's new album, *Ropin' the Wind*, made history when it debuted on the *Billboard* charts at Number One—and I don't mean just the country charts. The boy took the Number One spot on the pop charts, too! This makes me sooo happy. Our stars are outselling pop stars. And his other two albums are also in the Top 50 of the pop charts. In fact, a recent issue of *Billboard* showed 35 country albums in the Top 200 album charts. We are cooking with gas down south.

Topping off this Garth-fest, were your eyes glued to the CMA Awards as mine were? Garth was nominated for five awards (only **Alan Jackson** and **Vince Gill** had more nominations—six each). And Brooks was the big winner, walking off with four trophies—Single of the Year, Album of the Year, Music Video of the Year and Entertainer of the Year. The boy is hot! Vince Gill was also a mul-



A new, made-for-cable Christmas movie stars our own Kris Kristofferson.

tiple-award winner—he nabbed three. See the box in this section for a complete list of CMA winners. A big honor for country music was the presence of **President and Mrs. George Bush**. First Lady Barbara looked lovely, and President George gave a beautiful closing statement.

## GOOD BYE, HONEY

When you tune in to *Hee Haw* this TV season, you'll see some major changes. Some familiar players will not be returning to the show, which has been on the air for many and many a year. **Cathy Baker**, **Marianne Rogers** (wife of **Kenny Rogers**), **Gunilla Hutton**, **Misty Row**, **Dub Taylor** and **Roni Stoneman** are among the eight cast members whose contracts will not be renewed next year. Baker told the *Tennessean*, "The whole show as you knew it and I knew it is gone. None of the same sets, none of the same material—all of that is gone." She added, "They're going to do more of a *Saturday Night Live* approach with country music. The cornfield is gone. They want to have a more uptown image and still provide that country music."

It will remain to be seen how successful this new version is. Sometimes change can be good, but sometimes it don't pay to fool with a proven success. You know the old saying—if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

## WAYLON SPOKESMAN

**Waylon Jennings** has been named spokesperson for the GED people. This is to encourage others like Waylon who did not complete high school to do so. The GED is the adult education equivalent of a high school diploma. A couple of years ago, Waylon got his GED and since that time has been actively encouraging others to do so too. The other spokesperson is **Bill Cosby**. Cosby has not done too badly in the entertainment biz either.

## THE BLUEBIRD

It's hard to explain how wonderful the Bluebird Cafe is. You can eat and drink there, but more than that you can hear most of the new songs written in this town while they are still in the pencil stage on a legal pad. Last night I took myself down to Hillsboro Village, home of the Bluebird, to see four of my faves, **Larry Cordle**, **Carl Jackson**, **Jim Rushing** and **Waylan Patton**. The listening room was jammed. Every chair was taken, and there was no more room to stand. Oohs and aahs followed each verse and chorus as the audience heard tomorrow's radio songs. Awesome, I'd say. These four songsmiths pull in many hungry songwriters with the "want to's." As an example, one young man said to me, "I feel like this is college. I come here to learn. And these guys, they are the best." I agreed and walked out of the smoke-filled air on the arm of the best-looking man in the place, **Brian Kennedy**. Others in attendance were TNN's **Brian O'Neal**, ASCAP's **Shelby Kennedy** and **Ted Walker**, originator of the world renowned "Full Moon Bluegrass Party." Ted is a bonafide lawyer who loves bluegrass so much he turns his farm into a bluegrass heaven every full moon. From the four corners of the globe and Nashville, too, lovers of bluegrass turn out.

But, back to the Bluebird. Out-of-

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

# People

## SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT



The foursome of Merle Haggard, J.P. Pennington, Willie Nelson and Ralph Emery harmonize with J.D. Sumner and The Stamps Quartet (partially shown left). I happened to catch this historical occasion. It is wonderful to see legends like Merle and Willie straighten themselves out and sing for the Almighty. It's also always good to hear them sing "Whiskey River" and "Mama Tried."

towners who love songs, when you come to town don't just show up at the Bluebird. You must make a reservation. Ask for directions. It's easy to find and well worth your time and money. After all, the greatest songs written and sung by the greatest songwriters in the world are performed in the round (ITR) at this location. You will never see nothing like this again.

## MILSAP DONATES

Good guy **Ronnie Milsap** donated a bunch of stuff to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Included was the tux Ronnie wore to the CMA awards in 1977 when he was named Male Vocalist of the Year and Entertainer of the Year and won Album of the Year. When I read this I laughed and thought, wonder if wife **Joyce** was just cleaning out closets and asked Ronnie to get it out of the house. So Ronnie just took the suit and all the other paraphernalia to the Hall of Fame. Wish I had a place where I could put all my old things.

## BIKERS REMEMBER KEITH

Sandy Hook, Kentucky's favorite son, the late **Keith Whitley**, was honored recently when bikers from motorcycle clubs in Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia made a memorial run to Music City. The group spent the night in Bowling Green and were joined there by TV

personality **Lorianne Crook**. The group proceeded to Keith's grave site at Spring Hill Cemetery on Gallatin Road in Nashville where they had a memorial service. The caravan proceeded to the Country Music Hall of Fame where Whitley's Harley Davidson is on display. Whitley rode this bike in the video for his Number One hit, "When You Say Nothing At All." Keith's widow, RCA songstress **Lorrie Morgan**, presented the bike to the Hall of Fame after her husband's death. **Faye Whitley**, Keith's mother, has a son and daughter. Her third son, Randy, was killed in a motorcycle crash.

## RICKY GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

Student programmers from The National Association of Campus Activities were invited by Sony Records to hear an intimate acoustic set by **Ricky Skaggs** and his band. They also got a sneak preview of material from his new album, *My Father's Son*. Boy, they didn't teach those courses when I went to school.

## EDDIE RABBITT PLAYS PAUL NEWMAN BENEFIT

Now girls, I do wish I could be of some benefit to **Paul Newman**. Don't you? I mean, after all, I can think of at least ten ways I could be of benefit to that hunk. Now, foolishness aside, **Eddie Rabbitt** was the token hillbilly who performed at the Hole in the Wall Gang camp benefit.

The camp plays host to children with blood-related diseases. Others in attendance were **Phylicia Rashad, Bobby Short, Judy Collins, Jason Robards, Julie Gold, Gene Shalit** and more. By the way, Rabbitt's bus got robbed here in town, at Hemphill Motors, where he parks the vehicle. Missing was Eddie's Ovation guitar, black leather custom-made jacket, VCR and his box of brand new self-sung cassettes titled *Ten Rounds*. Somewhere, some thief is hiding out listening to Eddie Rabbitt sing. At least he/she has good taste in music.

## MORRIS THE SINGER (NOT THE CAT)

Good guy **Gary Morris** is serving as spokesman for the Leukemia Society of America representing the country music community. Gary, who is also a member of the Society's Performing Arts Committee wrote to 50 fellow performers asking each of them to record a public service spot for country radio stations. The completed spots will then be forwarded to stations nationwide. I want to thank Gary for serving in this capacity. This disease is now in remission for some friends of mine. It hasn't been that long that leukemia killed it's every victim. Thanks to folks like Gary and others in the radio industry. Last year over \$2 million was raised from radio promotions. Research continues. Your help is needed and appreciated.

## INVINCIBLE VINCE

August must have been the most memorable month in the career of invincible **Vince Gill**. He appeared weeklong at Opryland's Geo Theater and he was made a member of the Grand Ole Opry. Now that was the week that was for Vince, I'd say. By the way girls, have you noticed all the hunks at the Opry these days? There's **Ricky Van Shelton, Clint Black, Randy Travis, Alan Jackson, Vince, Ricky Skaggs** and **Garth Brooks**. I go as often as they do.

## I WILL, SAID THE LITTLE RED HEN

Yes, it was I. You did see me at Ruth's Chris having dinner with producer **Kyle Lehnig**, Warner Brother's VP **Martha Sharpe**, her hot new group **Live 'n Kickin'** and my pal and partner **Bobby Heller**. Miss Martha said, "Let's go," and I said, "I will." Watch **Live 'n Kickin'** make smoke. And yes, I said, "I will," and I did go to dinner at Brother's with MCA's **Jim Kemp**. I always hang out with the handsome boys. Jim is one. Cer-



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# People

tainly I said, "I will," and did go to dinner with MCA's A&R person, **Renee Bell**, at Faison's. "I will," said I, to ASCAP's **Shelby Kennedy**, and we did dine at the Cooker.

## EYE SAW

Eye saw Nick Hunter, VP Warner Brothers Records, at Ichiban. Nick was having sushi. I was having tempura and fun.

Eye saw newcomer **Billy Dean** facing north, then south. Girls, I can tell you that the man fills out his jeans in all the right places.

Eye saw the great **George Jones** at the CMA building the day they announced the Hall of Fame nominees. Tried as I might to speak to him, words did not pass my lips. Choke, I thought I would, being that close to the greatest living vocalist on the planet. By the way, I hear that Jones' brand new MCA album, produced by **Kyle Lehning**, is vintage country at its best. Can't wait.

Our seven-year-old, **Adam Smith**, kept pulling at my sleeve at supper. A crowd of us were dining at Ole Country Buffet, where you pile your plates sky high, eat that one, then pile up a another. "What is it?" I asked the persistent youngster. "Is that somebody?" he asked and pointed his finger behind me. I turned and there was **Conway Twitty** with his plate piled as full as mine.

## POP GOES US

When **Bonnie Raitt's** brand new album, *Luck of the Draw*, hit the pop charts, that made three albums the Capitol label had in the Top 30. The other two were **Garth Brooks' No Fences** and *Garth Brooks*. In 1991 let it be known that Garth Brooks is outselling **Paul McCartney**. Don't you just love it? Pop goes us.

## BILL ANDERSON'S ANNIVERSARY

To commemorate **Bill Anderson's** 30 years on the Opry, Georgia Governor **Zell Miller** showed up at the Grand Ole Opry and presented him with a plaque from his home state proclaiming "Bill Anderson Day in the State of Georgia." Miller acknowledged Bill's songwriting, saying, "Thirty years from now and another 30 and another 30, people will still be singing the great songs written by Bill Anderson." Bill's fan club president presented Opry manager **Hal Durham** a check for \$1,600 for the Grand Ole Opry Trust Fund, which assists musicians who find themselves in dire financial straits during sickness or because of a death.



**Ray Benson of Asleep at the Wheel helps Dolly display her new gold.**

## PLAY BALL, GUYS

All you red-blooded he-men who dig these hillbilly gals, gather 'round and take heed. The pick of the litter, good looking **Lorrie Morgan**, held her annual soft ball show-off at Moss Wright Park in nearby Goodlettsville. There's no charge for the event; however, donations were accepted for the Keith Whitley Memorial Fund of the Vanderbilt Institute for the

treatment of addiction. Lorrie's band, The Water Moccasins, compete across the country with many radio stations in softball and, each time, request free-will offerings for the anti-drug and alcohol abuse center.

## ANOTHER GOLD FOR DOLLY

**Dolly Parton's** current album, *Eagle When She Flies*, was certified Gold recently. Word has it that the multi-talented Dolly had no idea that the album had gone Gold until the powers that be at Sony showed up with the Gold record in hand and presented it to her. The first single, "Rockin' Years," that wonderful duet with **Ricky Van Shelton**, chart-topped for the labelmates and chart-topped my heart, which is just as important in the Book of Hazel. Congrats, Dolly, on having a Gold hillbilly album. It sure makes me happy to know Miss Dolly is recording country music again. Plus, she and Ray Benson just completed a made-for-TV movie, *Wild Texas Wind*. Let's give her a hand, fans.

## CLASS ACT IS HAIRL HENSLEY

Longtime Grand Ole Opry staff announcer **Hairl Hensley** has always had a bluegrass heart. He's loved the music of **Bill Monroe**, **The Osborne Brothers**,

## TWO OF A KIND, WORKING ON A FULL HOUSE



**President George Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush attended the Country Music Association Awards this year. They got together backstage with another Barbara and George—Mandrell and Jones. Two pair, not a bad hand. 'Course, if George Strait were in the photo, it would have been a full house.**



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# People

**Jim and Jesse and Ralph Stanley** as much as he does country music. Besides his Opry announcing, Hairl hosts a WSM radio show, which he has extended to include bluegrass. On Tuesday nights, Hairl features an hour of bluegrass, and each morning at 4:45 CST, he hosts the 15-minute program, *Early Bird Gets the Bluegrass*. Hairl is including newcomers like **Tony Rice** and **Alison Krauss** as well as the old standbys. It was great seeing Alison on the Opry recently with her band. Still a youngster, the Grammy winner is the most unpretentious star I've ever seen. If she has an ego, it doesn't show. I hope she makes a mint with her bluegrass. And that class act, Hairl Hensley, well, he knows I think he's a class act.



The Opry welcomed Alison Krauss.

## INSTRUMENTALIST EDDIE

Multi-instrumentalist **Eddie Adcock**, leader of the Eddie Adcock Band, was named Instrumentalist of the Year by 2,600 radio stations. Eddie was honored at the Opryland Hotel by the Major Independent Labels. Adcock and company's new recording is titled *Divie Fried*. I've been a fan of Eddie's more years than he or I would like to admit. Tell you what, when I met Eddie, I was slim and he had hair. So there.

## HEADHUNTERS IN THE MOVIES?

Well, not really, but their voices are. If you listen closely to the soundtrack of the movie *Harley Davidson & The Marlboro Man*, you can hear them singing "Let's Work Together." The film stars **Mickey Rourke** and **Don Johnson**. You might remember seeing The **HeadHunters'** video version where some 300,000 bikers gathered for the filming of the event.



## 1991 CMA AWARD WINNERS

Entertainer of the Year .....	Garth Brooks
Single of the Year .....	"Friends in Low Places"
Artist and record company .....	Garth Brooks/Capitol
Album of the Year .....	<i>No Fences</i>
Artist and record company .....	Garth Brooks/Capitol
Song of the Year .....	"When I Call Your Name"
Songwriter .....	Vince Gill/Tim DuBois
Female Vocalist of the Year .....	Tanya Tucker
Male Vocalist of the Year .....	Vince Gill
Vocal Group of the Year .....	Kentucky HeadHunters
Vocal Duo of the Year .....	The Judds
Vocal Event of the Year .....	Mark O'Connor and The New Nashville Cats (Ricky Skaggs, Steve Wariner and Vince Gill)
Musician of the Year .....	Mark O'Connor
Horizon Award .....	Travis Tritt
Hall of Fame .....	Felice and Boudleaux Bryant
Music Video of the Year .....	"The Thunder Rolls"
Artist and Director .....	Garth Brooks/Bud Schaetzle

# People

## INTO RADIO?—COURSE YOU ARE

The 1992 Country Radio Seminar will commence March 4 and end March 7 at Music City's Opryland Hotel. The 23rd annual event promises to be bigger and better than ever, so says good guy **Frank Mull**, Executive Director. I'll see you there.

## INTO LICENSE TAGS?

If you're into license tags as I am, you will get a big kick out of this one. The Dean of Hillbilly Songwriters, Mr. **Harlan Howard**, has come up with a great hook for a license tag...Music Me. Do you dig it, country music fans? Out-of-this-world-rageous. Music Me.

## FRICKE MAKES MUSIC AGAIN

**Janie Fricke** is the first country artist signed by Intersound Entertainment. Formerly a classical/jazz/pop label, the company's taking a step into the field of country music. Janie's first single is titled "You Never Crossed My Mind" from the album *Janie Fricke*. Watch for Janie on **The Statler Brothers'** new TV show.

## GATLINS CHANGING LINEUP

**LaDonna Gatlin Johnson**, The Gatlin Brothers' sister (got that?), joined **Steve** and **Rudy Gatlin** during this past summer when **Larry** was recuperating from vocal cord surgery. She'll rejoin them when Larry returns to finish out the tour. Their Christmas concerts will include a performance at each show with a local choir. The foursome will team up with the choirs and some local symphonies for a collection of best loved Christmas carols. Hope you get to see them. The Gatlins plan to continue touring till about April of 1992, and then they'll call it quits. In the future, Larry looks to songwriting, Steve favors artist management, while Rudy is eyeing producing records.

Also on tour this Christmas season are **The Oak Ridge Boys** with **Marie Osmond**. They will have a show geared for the holidays, too.

## HOLLY DON'T

If you've been wondering why you haven't heard much of **Holly Dunn**'s latest single, "Maybe I Mean Yes," Dunn has requested that radio and television discontinue playing it. The decision was reached by Dunn and her co-writers and producers due to "the continued misun-

## MILSAP ON VIDEO AND TV



**Ronnie Milsap** recently shot a video for his current single, "Since I Don't Have You," from his album, *Back To the Grindstone*. The video was shot at the Martin Luther King Jr. magnet school in Nashville. By the way, did you see Ronnie's three guest appearances on the soap opera, *Another World*? He played himself entertaining at a Chicago club.

derstanding of the intent and the content of the lyrics and the controversy that has been built around it..." as she put it.

In an open letter to the media, Dunn stressed that she and her co-writers intended the song to be a lighthearted look at one couple's attempt at dating, handled in an innocent, nonsexual, flirtatious way. She says that she and her co-writers "stand by their original intent 100% and believe the misunderstanding may stem from the recent focus in the press on the



**The funnyman's at it again.**

subject of rape and date rape, and the raised awareness of the public to this issue."

It is up to individual radio stations to make their own decisions, but as of this writing, most were complying with her request.

## HELLO, THIS IS JERRY CLOWER

Look at the **Jerry Clower** photo and listen closely and you will hear exactly what Jerry is saying. First off, he says, "Friends, I've got a brand new record on MCA what's been my label for 21 years and 21 albums. This brand new product is called *Racoonteur*. As always, MCA is doing for me what they have done for two decades and better, selling my records. Me and my wife, **Homerline**, and our four younguns are looking to my manager, Mr. **Tandy Rice**, to find a place for the two rooms of memorabilia that's upstairs at our house. Homerline will be powerfully happy to get all the stuff out from up there and out of her way. By the way, **Marcel Ledbetter** got baptized last week at the Baptist Church baptismal down home in Liberty, Mississippi. From the back row, somebody yelled, as the preacher pulled Marcel out of the water, 'Put him under again preacher...Marcel got more sins than one dip can get rid of.'" Did you hear what Jerry said? Read again and you will hear him for sure.



*"He's my really specialest friend,  
and I take him everywhere..."*

# "Boo Bear and Me"

Wherever little Evie goes, one thing's certain: her beloved "Boo Bear" always tags along. He's such a timeworn fellow that it's hard to believe he was once a brand new gift from Grandma. Nowadays, his bow is long gone, and so is one eye... but Evie's love for "Boo" is as constant as ever.

"Boo Bear and Me" by Jan Goodyear is the first issue in a collection of porcelain dolls portraying children with their best-loved friends.

Evie's contented expression shows she feels secure with "Boo" at her side. Her head and limbs are fine bisque porcelain, carefully hand-painted. Her one-piece floral-print playsuit has a pale pink collar and sleeves, trimmed with matching pink eyelet. Each doll bears the signature of the artist, is hand-numbered, and comes with a Certificate of Authenticity.

Recommended by Ashton-Drake, "Boo Bear and Me" has been certified Premiere Grade—your assurance of superior artistry and craftsmanship. At \$78.00, she's an heirloom-quality doll of exceptional value today, and may be a wise investment for the future.

Welcome this darling little girl and her favorite bear into your home. But act promptly... "Boo Bear and Me" is issued in an edition ending forever in 1991, after which molds for this doll will be broken and no more porcelain for "Boo Bear and Me" will ever be cast. Order today.



Shown smaller than actual size of 13½ inches tall. Complete with bear and doll stand.

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# Dottie West

1932-1991

**T**he past year hadn't been a good one for Dorothy Marie Marsh West. She divorced her third husband, Alan Winters, whom she'd married in 1983. Financial woes forced foreclosure on her home outside Nashville, and, citing over a million dollars in debts, she declared bankruptcy. This past June much of her property was auctioned to help satisfy those debts. This past July she was injured slightly in an automobile accident while driving to the Opry.

Then on August 30th, again en route to the Opry, her car broke down. A stranger gave her a lift and drove too fast trying to get her there. The car flipped off the road near Opryland, critically injuring both driver and passenger. Despite three operations, she died September 4th at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and was buried next to her mother in her hometown of McMinnville, Tennessee. Dottie knew violent accidents all too well. Plane crashes claimed both her close friend, Patsy Cline, in 1963 and her duet partner, Jim Reeves, a year later.

Under the glitz and glamor was a woman of tenacity and substance: an aspiring performer who doggedly pursued stardom, a skilled songwriter who learned from the best, a benefactor to many up-and-coming singers and songwriters and the first female country singer to win a Grammy.

It all started on October 11, 1932, when Dorothy Marie Marsh was born outside McMinnville, Tennessee, in a village called Frog Pond. Though the family was poor, Dottie's mother bought her a guitar when she was seven, triggering her pursuit of a musical career. When she was in seventh grade during the country boogie craze in the late 1940's, she wrote her first song, "Frog Pond Boogie."

After high school she enrolled at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville where she met fellow student Bill West, a steel guitarist who majored in electronics. They led a country band at the school and married in 1952. Following graduation they moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where Bill worked in engineering. Shelly, one of their four children, was born there. As they had in school, Dottie and Bill played music and performed on a local country music TV show. One fan in nearby Western Pennsylvania was a teenaged Jeannie Seely.

In 1959 Dottie made her first, unsuccessful recordings for Starday. Two years later the Wests moved to Nashville. Dottie became fast friends with then-struggling



songwriters Roger Miller, Willie Nelson and Hank Cochran, who gave her invaluable advice about writing. For a short time, she recorded for Atlantic. One day in 1962, she picked up her home phone to find RCA's Chet Atkins on the other end. A contract followed. Her first RCA release, a cover of Willie Nelson's hit, "Touch Me," went nowhere. But Jim Reeves had a Number Three record in 1963 with her song, "Is This Me?"

While in Cleveland, Dottie had begun corresponding with Patsy Cline, whom she'd discovered when Patsy won first prize on Arthur Godfrey's *Talent Scouts* TV show. The two became confidants after the Wests moved to Nashville. Shortly before her death in 1963, Patsy gave her beloved scrapbook to Dottie.

1964 was Dottie's year. She had her first big hit: "Love Is No Excuse," a duet with Jim Reeves that was still on the charts when Reeves died. Later that year came her Grammy-winning solo hit, "Here Comes My Baby." She joined the Opry, and with Bill playing steel began working the road. Her mid-60's solo hits, such as "Would You Hold It Against Me" and "Paper Mansions," did well. Dottie and Bill divorced in 1969. That same year brought two hit duets with Don Gibson: "Rings of Gold" and "There's a Story Goin' Round."

There was a side to Dottie that her fans didn't see. As Patsy had helped her, she helped a new generation of artists. Struggling songwriters hung out at her house, trying out ideas and eating her home-cooked meals. Kris Kristofferson wrote "For the Good Times" and "Help Me Make

It Through the Night" there. Ironically, she wouldn't record the latter song because she felt it was too suggestive. She later laughed at her bad judgment.

More often, West was an astute judge of talent. The fact that West recorded one of her songs inspired Jeannie Seely, then an obscure songwriter, to come to Nashville. Dottie gave Eddie Rabbitt encouragement and gave Steve Wariner, her bass player in the 70's, invaluable lessons in performing. Her role in Larry Gatlin's success was pivotal. After Dottie's death, Gatlin told the Nashville *Tennessean*, "If it had not been for Dorothy Marie, Larry Wayne would probably have been a bad lawyer somewhere in Houston."

In 1973 she co-wrote and recorded "Country Sunshine," the acclaimed Coca-Cola jingle that brought her fame and appearances in Coke TV commercials. The song also became a hit single in its own right. She then married her drummer, Byron Metcalf. Her popularity on the road remained, but her hits fell off. In 1976, she left RCA for United Artists.

In 1977 producer Larry Butler teamed her with Kenny Rogers. They met at one of Dottie's overdub sessions, and, at Butler's behest, they recorded "Every Time Two Fools Collide" on the spot. The song remained at Number One for two weeks in 1978. More hit duets followed: "Anyone Who Isn't Me Tonight," "All I Ever Need Is You," "Til I Can Make It on My Own" and the crossover hit, "What Are We Doin' in Love," were all at or near the top. Their albums together were strong sellers, and the awards flowed in, including the CMA Best Vocal Duo award in both 1978 and 1979. Suddenly, in her late 40's (but looking years younger), Dottie West became one of the day's most dazzling female stars. Divorced from Metcalf in 1980, she had her own solo hits in the early 80's.

Things leveled off for Dottie in the mid-80's. Kenny Rogers, who remained a friend, went on with his own solo career. West recorded for the small Permian label with marginal results, but still toured extensively, then cut back to do more TV and work the Opry.

Dottie West's achievements in country music were very important. A master composer and vocalist, in the last three decades she helped many new artists who had a major impact on where the music was headed. And in a nation where much of the population is aging, she proved glamour and style didn't end with youth.

—RICH KIENZLE



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1991 CMA AWARD WINNER

# THE JUDDS

## *A Year of Long and Painful Goodbyes*

BY BOB ALLEN

I've been at this thing called country music journalism now for what seems like a significant chunk of my lifetime. Along the way, I've learned all about being the "detached, impartial observer." But this is one of those stories where all that stuff tends to go out the window. Mind you, I've never been best buddies with The Judds. Never hung out with them or went over to their house for hamburgers. But they'll always have a special place in my heart, if only because I was, so to speak, there at the creation.

I first met Wynonna and Naomi back in 1983, before they'd even released their first record, back when they were still just "the judds"—lower case. Naomi was still working as a registered nurse, and Wynonna was barely out of high school. A friend at RCA Records called me and raved about this wonderful new mother-daughter duet team they'd just signed. She asked me to come interview them and write a biographical press release to go out with their first single and album. One of the blurbs I wrote ended up on the back of their first album.

I remember the day I went with my record company friend over to Wynonna's and Naomi's manager's house, which is where I heard them sing for the very first time. Sitting on the living room sofa, with just their acoustic guitars, they did a couple of duets. They just mesmerized everybody in the room and instantly made a believer out of me. Afterwards, we all had lunch together. I knew from then on that their success was a foregone conclusion.

The next time I saw Naomi and Wynonna was months later, and they weren't just "the judds"—lower case—any more. They'd already become The Judds: glamorous stars of stage and records with CMA awards, platinum albums, Grammys, guest shots on the *Tonight Show* and the whole nine yards.

It's truly been a fairy tale eight years. "The happiest years of my life," says Wynonna. "It's still sometimes unreal to me," adds Naomi. "Every time at the awards shows when I see an usher coming down the aisle, I think, 'Uh-oh, this is it: They're going to oust us.'"

Sadly, it's an eight years that must now more or less come to a close. It all officially ends on December 4th, at the Middle Tennessee State University Coliseum in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. That's where The Judds will make the final stop on their current "Love Can Build a







Bridge" tour and perform what they now say will be their last concert—scheduled for live broadcast, in pay-per-view cable TV format. (Though with their typical show-biz savvy, even in their darkest hour, they did hold out—on a recent appearance on *Donahue*—the vague possibility of future shows and future records, if Naomi's health should somehow permit.)

"It's all pretty incredible," Naomi muses, her voice breaking a little. "I was thinking last night how 1984 was a year of firsts for us: our first time on stage, our first fan—who is now our fan club president—the first time we went to an awards show...."

"1991 is a year of *lasts*. Every city we go to, it will be the last time we appear there as The Judds, and at the awards shows I'll be saying my goodbyes." Her voice falters again, and she wipes her eyes. "So we've come full circle."

So, excuse me if I—like The Judds—tend to get a little maudlin and misty-eyed about all this. Because I suppose this is, in a manner of speaking, my own goodbye to The Judds. I'm still sorting out my own feelings—trying to balance the sensations of hope and despair, triumph and tragedy—that hang in the balance here.

Wynonna, 27 now, is still like the girl next door. Happily engaged to a handsome young musician named Tony King (who sometimes works the road with Vince Gill), at times she still comes across as a precocious teenager teetering between boisterous self-confidence and painful insecurity, caught off guard by the remarkable vocal talent she was born with. "A lot of times I feel like my whole life I've been sort of skating by," she admits. "Sure I have God-given talent, but I've never had to work that hard; I don't feel like I've done much to deserve all this. It's almost like I won the lottery, or I was handed the golden key to life, or something. Only now, with Mom retiring, I'm going to be out there, having to prove myself...."

Naomi, once you get past all the expensive, glittery stage get-up, the alluring public persona and the sometimes glib public pronouncements, is a true Earth Mother. ("The Queen of Everything," Wynonna calls her, only half in jest.) At age 45, she is soft-spoken, philosophical, compassionate, deeply spiritual and very much the healer, looking, even in her own time of illness, for ways to give hope and comfort to others. Of course, Mama Judd (who married her long-time sweetheart, Larry Strickland, a few years back) is also the pragmatic operator. She's the one who put together the original blueprint and made the first emotional down payments on what would eventually become The Judds' rags-to-riches Cinderella story, using only her daughter's still unproven talent and her own head full of outlandish dreams as collateral.

You can hear the quintessential Naomi Judd in "Love Can Build a Bridge," The Judds' anthem-like show—and as it turns out, career—closer. The song is about salvation through human healing, and understanding. When asked, Naomi recalls how she came up with the song.

"I wrote it way back before my illness, so it ended up becoming sort of a self-fulfilling prophesy," she recalls, a trace of wistfulness and chronic fatigue in her voice. "The origin of it was in Medford, Oregon, where we were playing a show. I took Banjo Judd out for his daily walk." Banjo is her part lhasa apso/part poodle dog who, like Loretta Lynn, Wynonna's rat terrier, accompanies her just about everywhere but on stage. "That's something I used to do every day," Naomi continues, "just to meet the local people and soak up the local color. It always kept me real grounded just to talk to the kids on their bicycles and the grandmas on their front porches.... But I was sitting on this park bench, and this homeless fella came and sat down next to me. My knee-jerk reaction was to take off my diamond ring and put it down in my sneaker. But then I actu-



“...1984 was a year of firsts for us: our first time on stage, our first fan—who is now our fan club president—the first time we went to an awards show...”



ally started looking at him, trying to see the person down beneath all the layers of grime and dirt, and it really occurred to me that maybe he had a mom somewhere, and I began to wonder about his past history.

“Then, later, I started thinking about world peace, and human understanding, and it occurred to me that there are a whole lot of big problems in the world that need a little answer, which all boiled down to the most important words in that song: ‘It all begins with you and me.’”

A few hours after Naomi tells me this, sitting in a hotel suite somewhere in the suburban sprawl of southwestern Delaware, I am watching The Judds perform “Love Can Build a Bridge” in front of an audience of 20,000 at the close of an all-day music festival in rural Cecil County, Maryland. It is the first, and most likely the last, time I’ll see them do the song, and the conditions are somewhat less than perfect. The Judds don’t have their usual elaborate stage set, and they are doing battle with a sound system that so badly exasperated Ricky Van Shelton earlier in the evening that, in a fit of pique, he smashed his expensive Gibson guitar to smithereens coming off stage.

Yet, despite the obstacles, The Judds’ show is a fine one. As they later explain, the stage is still the one place where all their fears and worries about the future fall aside and for a brief while the two of them become what Wynonna describes as “a third entity” whose strength is somehow greater than the human frailty of its two parts. “Up there on stage together, it’s a feeling that’s got to be as close as human beings can come to the sensation of flying,” says Naomi.

As always when in front of an audience, mother and daughter exude casual yet high-energy confidence and enthusiasm. For that matter, if it hadn’t already been all over *People* and *Donahue* and *Good Morning America* that Naomi was battling a potentially fatal liver ailment, it would be hard to tell that anything was amiss at all. She is cool, calm, graceful and—as always—lovely. She jokes, teases, pirouettes, prances and dances across the stage while laying down her sturdy, low-key harmonies. She cajoles the screaming girls in the front row by pointing at them and announcing, “Here’s the audience contingent with the hormone imbalance!”

Of course, both Judds are on stage, front and center, for the finale, “Love Can Build a Bridge.” And it’s a very emotional time, for musicians and audience alike. “It’s weird,” the younger Judd adds. “It’s like you know the time and

place you’re going to die, and how it’s going to happen, but you don’t know how you’re going to feel, or what you’re going to do. The only way I, honestly, am able to get through all this is knowing that it might give hope to someone else, because there are honestly days when I want to call up Ken Stilts, who’s been our manager since day one, and just tell him I can’t *do* this anymore. There are days on tour when I feel emotionally and physically like a child, and I’m terrified of going out there in front of all those people. And some nights out there I just *cannot* look at Mom....

“But then,” she shrugs, “I look out into the crowd and see all those smiling faces, and I realize it has come full circle: that they’re the ones giving *us* strength now.” “Every night I’ve developed a ritual that has become very cathartic for me,” Naomi later explains as she and Wynonna relax in their Silver Eagle tour bus as it idles in a field behind the makeshift stage, now somewhere in the boondocks of northern Maryland, waiting for the traffic to clear so they can head down the interstate to the next tour stop. “After the show, we go back to the hotel, shower, check out, then head on down the road on the bus. I sit up front in my jamies and eat microwave popcorn and go through all the wonderful cards and letters that people send us.

“Every night it makes me think of how full my life is right now.” She pauses, seeming to struggle to hold back tears. “I mean, I used to be alone: I had no friends, no support group, no money, no savings account, no medical insurance. Now I’ve just got so many friends.

“I really believe that our fans, our friends, do see themselves in us,” she adds, her voice again choking with emotion. “I hope they do, because they’ve really made us what we are. They’ve made me rich in every way, and I don’t just mean the farm where I live, or the car I drive. I’m talking about when I came to Nashville, I had *nothing*. I had no confidence, very little self-esteem. I was just another single mother with a couple of battered suitcases and a couple of hungry kids, and a head full of the wildest dreams that anyone could ever imagine.

It was much earlier that day when I had first linked up with The Judds. And, as I waited in their road manager’s hotel suite, I was, admittedly, a little apprehensive. It had been a long time—nearly five years—since I’d last



**Mother and daughter on stage where a “third entity” takes over and fears and worries are put aside. Naomi sees herself in both Ashley and Wynonna, who are as different as night and day.**





spoken with Naomi and Wynonna. And there were delicate matters to be discussed, like Naomi's chronic, acute hepatitis ("a big, bad, scary disease," is how she herself later describes it) and Wynonna's impending solo career, over which, she later explains, she is suffering high anxiety.

Yet I needn't have worried. The Judds prove to be as informal and hospitable as ever. Wynonna comes bounding into the room carrying Loretta Lynn, and dressed in a madras blouse, black leotards and a fancy, pink sequined cap. She sits down at a desk, takes out her official George Jones pocket knife and intently slices up a lemon for her mineral water. "This is lunch," she jokes. "I need to lose about 80 pounds before the photo shoot for my solo album."

A few minutes later, Naomi, who is just getting up and about, softly knocks on the door and enters. She's wearing elegant Oriental pajamas, flip-flops and shades. She's carrying a barely picked-over room-service tray containing a tuna fish salad sandwich and french fries. She looks ever so slightly under the weather as she curls up on the sofa with Banjo Judd, who soon falls fast asleep. Her disease, she explains, is in remission. (Her liver enzyme count was over 300—dangerously high—when she was first diagnosed; but when it was last checked, it was back down around 100, well out of the danger zone.) Yet it's clear that this tour is taking its toll.

The unsettling events of the past year or so and the whole air of finality surrounding their farewell tour seem to have put The Judds in a rather introspective and philosophical frame of mind. (They've also been involved in countless hours of interviews for their forthcoming official autobiography—a collaboration with writer Bud Schaeztle, to be published next year—for which they reportedly got a hefty sum of money. And that's left them in a talkative mood.)

**CMM:** This last couple of years has been a pretty difficult time for you.

**Naomi:** (*Laughs wistfully.*) 1990 was, hands down, the worst year of my life. And that's saying a lot, because I have not had the utopian life. I was so ill for much of the year that I couldn't even get out of bed. And before that, I was the kind of person who never even got a cold.

**Wynonna:** There were days on tour when I literally had to go down to her room and talk to her to get her out of bed for the show. I'd have to tell her, 'Hey, listen. If you get weak on stage, just sit on a stool.' It got to where she had to be taken from the stage to the bus in a golf cart.

**Naomi:** No, I'm talking about when I was in a fetal position in bed at home in a darkened room, and I couldn't even get up to go to the bathroom, and I thought I was going to die. I was that way for several months. I was hanging on by my fingernails, and I felt like there was a *real* possibility that I was not going to make it. When I first went to the Mayo Clinic, I was in a wheelchair. I was having panic attacks. At the same time all that was happening, people all around me were coming down with cancer. I had a lump in my own breast that I discovered around that time—thank the good Lord, it was benign. Our manager's mother died on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day we were all at the funeral home. That was what 1990 was for us. We were just in a state of grief and shock for most of the year.

On the other hand, 1991 has probably been the most important year of my life. I've come to realize that illnesses and problems of that sort are just conditions of the human experience, and it's how you face them and deal with them that counts.

**CMM:** You do seem to be doing much better now, though.

**Naomi:** (*Eyes widen in amazement.*) The last time I went up to see my doctor at the Mayo Clinic, he locked the door, shut off



**The Judds have come a long way in a short time. It seems like only yesterday they received their first Gold album for 1984's *Why Not Me*. They celebrated with producer Brent Maher and RCA's Joe Galante.**

his beeper, sat me down and asked, 'How are you doing it!?' The medical books I've read give you three years with something like this, and I've evidently had it for four years already. I'm supposed to be an invalid. Yet here I am, riding around the country, performing on stage, when I'm supposed to be six feet under!

**CMM:** I must say, Wynonna, you seem to have come a long way since I last spoke to you. You're not just the precocious little music business brat anymore.

**Wynonna:** Yeah! (*Laughs.*) I suppose these interviews are good for me, because they help me grasp this very scary, very interesting process I'm going through. I worry a lot about how I'm going to get by without Mom. I mean, for the last 26 years we've never been more than six feet apart from each other. I mean, you're talking about a bond between two people that's beyond description, beyond interpretation.

**Naomi:** (*Laughs fondly.*) Even when we have days off, she still calls me three or four times a day! I think the parent-child relationship is the greatest relationship we experience here on earth. A man and a woman are two people trying to become one; Wynonna and I are one person trying to become two. (*Wynonna giggles nervously and nods in agreement.*)

I've often been told by people that they've never seen a mother-daughter relationship that was so intense. I think the reason is, from the day I learned I was pregnant with Wynonna, I had to fight for her. It was the year 1964 and that was a disastrous year for me. My brother was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease (Brian Judd died of lymphatic cancer in 1965). My parents' marriage, their relationship, fell apart, our family was disintegrating. And that's how Wynonna came into the world. I've had to scrap and claw and fight off the world for Wynonna and



*“1991 is a year of lasts. Every city we go to, it will be the last time we appear there as The Judds, and at the awards shows I’ll be saying my goodbyes.”*



Ashley (her other daughter), and we have this psychological umbilical cord that’s never been broken. Wynonna and Ashley and I are like triplets: I’m constantly seeing myself in these two kids. They’re as different as Vanilla Ice and George Jones.

*Wynonna: (Blustery.)* Yah-hah! Good way to explain it, Mom! Let’s just say different as night and day. That’s simpler.

*Naomi:* Yeah, let’s just say night and day....A year ago this week Ashley Judd pulled out of my farm by herself with a U-Haul trailer with all her belongings in it, headed for Hollywood. She stopped at the Grand Canyon and sent me a postcard. (*Marvels.*) Well, when I first left Kentucky for the West Coast, I did the same exact thing! Wynonna and I often talk about what we call the U-Haul years (the times when Naomi, then a single parent, took her two daughters and lit out for the West Coast in search of a better life). Both the girls still have all these memories of living out of a U-Haul and waking me up and saying, ‘Mommy, where are we today?’

*Wynonna: (Chuckles.)* I still say that!

*Naomi: (Her voice falters again, as she sheds another tear.)* I still have a little bit of guilt about what I dragged my kids through, especially with the crime awareness that we have today. Here I was, with never more than 200 bucks in my purse, going across the country with these two kids, staying in fleabag hotels, eating in truckstops....”

*Wynonna: (Teases.)* Uhhmmm, I still like the truckstops!

*Naomi:* When I think of my two kids and what I put them through....(*She shakes her head.*) When Ashley enrolled in college, she’d gone to 13 schools. When I realized that, I just had to leave the table and go in the bathroom and have a good cry, because I felt so intensely guilty. Here I was, born and raised in the same house that my mother still lives in today, which my parents bought from my grandparents when I was four. I could go home tomorrow, and my birthday cards and things are still in the end tables, my toys are still in the attic.

*CMM:* Wynonna, tell us a little about your solo career. I understand you’ve already partially completed your first solo album with producer Tony Brown.

*Wynonna:* I tell you, that’s just one question I can’t deal with right now. I can’t let myself think about that, or I won’t be able to go on stage tomorrow night. At first I thought the music was the biggest challenge in my life, but now I realize it’s untangling these incredible layers of emotion that Mother and I share. I have a strange feeling of abandoning her, because for years, we’ve been two people side by side, not just in our music, but in everything.

Several times I’ve had this dream. (*Shudders.*) I’m on stage somewhere, without Mom, and I’m trying to sing, and I look around and none of the bandmembers are paying any attention to me, and the drummer gets up and walks off stage. There’s just this incredible fear that I have, of, will I be able to survive on my own? Because I’ve always had her. I have this terrible worry that a time will come when I’ll be on the road by myself, and she’ll be off on her book promotion tour or someplace and I won’t be able to reach her. I really wish I could imagine going on by myself. I wish I could, but I just can’t. (*She glances at her mom.*) There are days when I think, what do you do when you’ve already had the best?

*Naomi: (Murmurs.)* I have learned to become secure with insecurity.

*Wynonna:* Yeah. And never put your tongue on a glacier.

*Naomi: (Frowns.)* I used to want awards. Now I just want a cure for this stinkin’ disease!

*Wynonna:* I think it’s a great time to look back over all this time and know that Mom and I had the best intentions, the purest intentions, in getting into this business. You know, we’re sort of proof that good girls *can* finish first: that you don’t have to go through all the political b.s. and sleep with everybody to get to the top. Through it all, I think we had high morals and high values, and Mom was always careful that we did what was right and that we worked with good, decent people, and that we didn’t run around like a bunch of idiots. She always made sure that there was a certain family tone to everything we did, and that there was never anything false about it.

*Naomi:* To me, the greatest three words in the English language are love, faith and hope. That’s really all we need. (*Laughs.*) I’ve got love, faith and hope, and Wynonna’s got her George Jones pocket knife! We can do anything!

It’s late that night, an hour or more after the show, by the time the last segment of our interview is over. Naomi, Wynonna, a couple of members of their tour team and I are sitting around the tour bus, waiting for the traffic to clear, re-hashing the show and the long day’s events. Wynonna is itching to get on down the road, and Naomi is fading fast.

But before Naomi says good night, she gives me a brief tour of their surprisingly spacious living quarters on the bus. She shows me some toys she keeps on hand, and her little silver crown and scepter as the Queen of Everything. “Sometimes I invite kids who have dread diseases and things on the bus, and I put on my crown and scepter, and I sit them down and tell them that I can grant them one wish, and I let them secretly decide what it will be. Faith and hope, after all, have tremendous healing powers. You see, I’m a great believer in psycho-neuro immunology: in other words, a positive attitude.”

Then, as I say goodbye, Naomi surprises me with a gift. Earlier in the day, I’d made passing reference to a dear friend of mine whose life has been devastated by a chronic, disabling illness that has thus far eluded diagnosis. Naomi had remembered our conversation, and she gives me a care package for my friend: several tapes and books on healing, including one that’s given her particular strength: *Quantum Healing*, by Dr. Deepak Chopra. In each book she has added her own careful hand-written notes and instructions. (“Sleep a lot! Exercise as tolerated, and pray for healing.”) I’m deeply moved, and somehow reminded of the true powers of human kindness and compassion—the healing effect that they can have on both giver and recipient. I have a feeling it’s one of those special moments that I won’t forget, even if I live to 104.

Naomi explains how, back home, she keeps two full-time assistants busy, helping her answer the 30 or so letters a day that she gets. “Many of these letters are from other people with serious, life-threatening diseases, and I try to do whatever I can to give them encouragement,” she tells me as I, at last, say good night.

“I really believe that the Lord gave us a great gift, put Wynonna and me out there in front of the public for a reason,” she adds quietly. “And now I know He wants me to somehow continue to be an inspiration for people....He has a plan for me. I know He does.

“Like I’ve said before: This isn’t the end. It’s just another chapter in the continuing Judds saga.” ■



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# CMSA NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1991

# Newsletter

## REVIEWS & FEATURES

### Country Music in the 1990's

As 1991 draws to a close, it seems a good time to reflect on what the new decade has meant to country music so far. Basically, country is booming! Country radio is enjoying its highest ratings in recent memory—"our" radio stations are tied neck and neck with Top 40 stations as the most popular format in the country. The emergence of new, diverse talent has brought many new fans into the fold, and country records are selling at "record" rates—in 1990, the number of Gold and platinum certifications for country albums nearly doubled versus the previous year, and in 1991, the trend is even stronger. Even our veteran, legendary performers are coming on strong—Johnny Cash released his *Mystery of Life* album to much critical praise, George Jones has

teamed up with hot Nashville producer Kyle Lehning for what is being hailed as Jones' best album in years, and this year's TNN/Music City News Living Legend award recipient, Tammy Wynette, is racing up the charts with her new duet single with Randy Travis. Meanwhile, here at *Country Music Magazine*, circulation is growing by leaps and bounds—we've hit 551,000 (that includes some 200,000 of you who are CMSA members).

These are exciting times for country music—and the growth is due to you, the fans who read this magazine, buy country records and attend country concerts. Isn't it great that the rest of the world is finding out what we've known all along? Happy Holidays to All!

### Concert Comments

*Members have answered the call for concert reviews. Roxanne Johnston, of Hibbing, Minnesota, sends her thoughts on Marty Stuart, while sisters Darcy Angle and Debby Parmentier fill us in on Reba McEntire. Keep 'em coming!*

#### MARTY IN MINNESOTA

Almost a year has passed since I last saw Marty Stuart on this same stage in Hinckley, Minnesota. He has a new guitar player, Brad Davis, and a new drummer, John Sturdivant Jr. He sounds even better and puts even more heart into his music than ever! Personally, though, his hit songs and videos haven't changed him in the least—he's still the same humble Marty he was before people realized what talent was walking in their midst.

It's infectious, watching him enjoy himself so much. You can't help but tap your toe and clap your hands. From his own "Tempted," to John R. Cash's "Blue Train," to the classic fiddle tune, "Soldier's Joy," there isn't another artist that can mix the old with the new as impressively and make it sound so fresh. And, as always, a request for an autograph and a picture is always met with a smile. I do hope his "Crusade for Hillbilly Music" brings him and the boys back to my neck of the woods again next year. Listen up, folks, country music doesn't get much more exciting than this!

**Roxanne Johnston**  
Hibbing, Minnesota



Roxanne Johnston was pleased to meet one of her favorites, Marty Stuart.

#### REBA OVERCOMES TRAGEDY

I recently had the privilege of viewing the most courageous performance by a country star in this decade. After the tragedy that Reba McEntire, her family and her friends suffered, it would have been the

easiest thing to cancel her remaining concert appearances. But she had the courage to take center stage on the night of April 4, 1991, at the Richfield Coliseum in Ohio. My sister, Debby Parmentier, drove over four hours from Gregory, Michigan, for the show, which also included Vince Gill and Clint Black, and I have to admit, most of our initial excitement was for our hero, Clint.

But as the spotlight pinpointed the little lady—Reba—on stage, you could tell she was summoning every ounce of backbone that she possessed as she launched into a gutsy rendition of "Love Will Find Its Way to You." The crowd was on its feet with thunderous applause, approval and love, letting her know that if she wanted to stand on the stage for an hour and just cry, we would have let her. But, superstar that Reba is, she went on with the show, each song putting her into a smoother groove with her band.

The highlight of our evening was when she took center stage to sing an a capella version of "Sweet Dreams." It was the most heartrending version my ears have ever had the joy to experience, and there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

I would like to thank two of country music's gentlemen, who took the backseat for one evening so the audience could witness the miracle of Reba. Thanks, Vince Gill and Clint Black. Not only are you guys good-looking, but your hearts are in the right place.

**Darcy Angle**  
Akron, Ohio

#### In This Issue

- Concert Reviews
- The Legendary Minnie Pearl
- The Last Old Time Medicine Show
- Readers Create

**Editor:** George Fletcher  
**Executive Editor:** Helen Barnard  
**Art Director:** Kathryn Gray

### Aspiring Artist Jeff Kimball

Rosalie Cates, a member in Jacksonville, Florida, fills us in on a local artist in her area, Jeff Kimball. Jeff hasn't let physical disability slow him down.

Jeff Kimball is 43 years old. He was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, and was stricken with polio when he was just four months old. With extensive and grueling therapy and the help of braces and crutches, Jeff regained the use of his legs. From the time he was a child, Jeff was determined to become a country music singer. Among his favorite performers are Merle Haggard, Slim Whitman, Kenny Rogers and Randy Travis.

He performs twice a week at the Bargain House of Fleas on Blanding Boulevard in Jacksonville, playing for tips and enjoying the contact with people. Whether rain or shine, hot or cold weather, you'll find this versatile performer singing his heart out. In addition to his work at the flea market, Jeff performs three nights a week at Jacksonville's Hyde Park Lounge, and has made a tape of his singing. And though he realizes that time is passing, his hopes and dreams remain bright and positive, fueled by determination.

**Rosalie Cates**  
Jacksonville, Florida



Jeff Kimball performs at the House of Fleas in Jacksonville, Florida

### Notes From the Mailbag

Comments and information from members around the country.

#### SHE WANTS HER CMT

I really enjoy *Country Music Magazine* and The Nashville Network. But when I was visiting in Illinois, I saw a cable channel devoted only to music videos called CMT. I would really like to have that channel here in California. Why is it not available?

**Irene Trosper**  
Santa Ana, California

The channel you refer to is Country Music Television (CMT). Let your local cable company know that you want it added to your cable—if they receive enough letters from country fans who are also their customers, perhaps they'll include it.—Ed.

#### MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE

I'm writing to comment on the issue you discussed in the July/August *Newsletter*—the volume of Information, Please letters you receive versus the volume of Pen Pals. I'm a member, and I believe that non-members should be allowed to place ads. I'd prefer a 1,000 to one ratio in favor of more Information, Please letters, and I'm all for expanding the section in any way possible.

**Mark Chisenhall**  
Charlotte, North Carolina

The Collections page is for members only, and Pen Pals is still receiving at least a third more mail than Information, Please. See below for more on Pen Pals!—Ed.



CMSA members Rob Lowe and Delica Meyer met through Pen Pals

#### PEN PALS GOOD NEWS

I'm writing to you because, after all, your magazine is responsible. I'm a devoted country music fan, and I don't know too many others in New York. So, I turned to *Country Music Magazine*, and in the Pen Pals section I came across an intriguing ad. I wrote, and to my surprise, the lady answered back. Soon we graduated to phone calls and discovered we had a lot in common. We decided to meet in person when I took a vacation that brought me to her area. We hit it off in true country fashion—we danced and laughed, and want to thank you for bringing us together. Though we don't know where our friendship will lead us, we owe a beautiful beginning to *Country Music Magazine*.

**Rob Lowe**  
Horseheads, New York  
and  
**Delica Meyer**  
Mt. Vernon, Illinois



#### Lee Moore Checks In

Lee Moore, performer and former WWVA disc jockey (known on the air as "The Coffee Drinking Nite Hawk"), who now resides in Wynantville, New York, sent us these photographs made on a recent trip to Nashville. Lee writes, "I hope you can find a place for a photo or two of me and friends I've known for years. I've been in the business now for 59 years, and at age 76, I'm still active." Lee was covered in the *Newsletter* back in the July/August 1987 issue.



Backstage at the Grand Ole Opry, Lee meets up with Jack Greene and Little Jimmy Dickens. Lee and Bobby Bare got together at Bare's souvenir shop in Hendersonville.





Bonnie Kay Stepp and Adam W. Wenclewicz hear wedding bells ring ng

### MORE PEN PALS GOOD NEWS

Our names are Adam W. Wenclewicz and Bonnie Kay Stepp. We are avid readers of your fine magazine. I, Bonnie, put an ad in the Pen Pal section in search of finding someone interesting to write to, to talk about country music and things like that. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that anything like what happened would indeed happen.

Adam and I started writing in June, and he soon visited me in my hometown. Something magical happened, and we knew right then and there that we had something in common. Adam then moved here from Delaware, and now, thanks to your publication, we've decided to "tie the knot."

Thank you, *Country Music Magazine*, for introducing me to Adam—we have so much in common, even down to liking the same breed of dog.

**Bonnie Kay Stepp  
Vinton, Ohio**

### SEPTEMBER 1991 POLL

#### Album and Single of the Month

Alan Jackson *Don't Rock the Jukebox*  
Alan Jackson "Don't Rock the Jukebox"  
It's Alan Jackson month again! He's got the top album and single. The Number Two album belongs to George Strait with *Chill of an Early Fall*. Ricky Van Shelton is third with *Backroads*. Fourth is Alan's debut, *Here in the Real World*, and in fifth is Clint Black's *Killin' Time*. On the singles side, Travis Tritt is second with "Here's a Quarter," George Strait follows with "You Know Me Better Than That," RVS' "Simple Man" is fourth, and Dolly Parton is fifth with "Silver and Gold." Sharp-eyed readers may have noticed our error in the poll last issue—it was the July 1991 poll, of course, and not July 1990....

### Bill Britton's Benches

You may remember our coverage of Bill Britton's bench-making handiwork—he made a bench for us in 1989, and it enjoys a prominent place in our Westport office. Recently he made this one for long-time Hank Williams fan, Larry Swedenhjelm. Larry, a CMSA member in Kane, Pennsylvania, is hoping that someone will make an accurate movie on the life of Hank Williams soon. "Now that the part about his daughter, Jett Williams, is known, it seems that all the pieces of the puzzle are there," he says. Larry thanks Bill Britton and poses here with the bench and a favorite Hank Williams painting.



### The Last Medicine Show

Back in the early days of country music, medicine shows provided lots of opportunity for singers and fiddlers. Performers would be hired to draw a crowd as the show travelled from town to town, selling patent medicines and other "cure-alls"—some legitimate, some of dubious quality. By the end of the 1940's, the glory days of patent medicines and the travelling medicine show were over, but "Doc" Tommy Scott's Old Time Medicine Show is still alive and kicking. "Doc" wrote us about his show. Operating continuously since 1890, Tommy Scott's Old Time Medicine Show has logged nearly 20,000 performances. Originally called the Herb-O-Lac Medicine Show, after the laxative invented by founder M.F. Chamberlin, the show was taken over by Scott in the late 1930's. He resides in Toccoa, Georgia, but you'll rarely find him there, as the show is on



"Doc" Tommy Scott is the last of a breed—he's the proprietor of "The Last Real Medicine Show."

the road for more than 300 days a year, performing all over the United States and Canada. Scott's show includes country and bluegrass entertainment, comedy, magic acts, ventriloquists, jugglers, vaudeville acts, sharp shooting displays and, of course, the "pitch" for Herb-O-Lac and "Doc" Scott's Snake Oil Liniment. Herb-O-Lac is actually a trademarked, herb-based laxative, that, according to Scott, is made from genuine Indian formulas and really works.

Scott and his show have been profiled on numerous television programs, including *Entertainment Tonight*, *Late Night with David Letterman*, *Nashville Now*, *Today*, *Oprah*, *The Tonight Show* and many more. Scott is a member of the Atlanta Country Music Hall of Fame, is included in the Walkway of Stars in Nashville and has some of his memorabilia on display at the Smithsonian Institute. He says that his show has "appeared in person in more different towns than any show on earth," and he doesn't plan on slowing down any time soon.



## Collecting the Magazine

Help other members find the issues they need. Write each other directly.

●Wanted: One copy of March/April issue of *Country Music Magazine*, plus the November 26, 1999, issue of *People Weekly*. Deborah Stahl, Rt. 1, Box 290, Hudson, IN 46747.

## Information, Please

Write to these members directly if you have the information or items they need. Enclose SASE if you must correspond.

●Wanted: photographs of Tammy Wynette and Tanya Tucker from 1980-1991 and articles from the early 1980's. Also interested in the award shows from 1967-1988 and any VHS shows with Tammy Wynette and Tanya Tucker such as *Nashville Now*, *Celebrities Offstage*, *Crook & Chase*, and any other shows they've been on. Will pay for copies of photos and will send tapes for all VHS shows. Jenni Buchanan, 6219 Old Greenwood Rd., Ft. Smith, AR 72903.

●I'm trying to locate photos, negatives, articles, TV appearances, CD's, tapes, records, concert and album reviews, all memorabilia, etc. on Sylvia, Lorrie Morgan, Charly McClain, Ricky Skaggs, Louise Mandrell, Restless Heart and Steve Wariner. Also looking for VCR recordings of ACM, CMA, *Music City News Awards* shows from 1980-present. I would also like to purchase *Country Music*, *Music City News*, *Country Song Roundup* and *Country Music U.S.A.* magazines from 1980-present. Will pay reasonable prices or trade for items I have. List items and prices or trade. Please include phone number. Todd Fussy, Route 2, Box 153, Royalton, MN 56373.

●I am trying to locate a cassette tape of Merle Haggard's *Some Train, A Different Time*. Merle sings the songs of Jimmie Rodgers on it. I prefer to purchase cassette, but if not available, I will reimburse anyone willing to tape it. Eleanor Reed, 9 Cherry Pl., Maplewood, NJ 07040.

●I am looking for the Dolly Parton album that has the song "Down From Dover" on it. Anyone willing to tape it for cassette and postage? Denise Romano, 1502 Carmel Dr., San Jose, CA 95125.

●Can anyone help me locate VHS tapes of Conway Twitty's movies, *Platinum High School* (later titled *Trouble at Seventeen*), *College Confidential* and *Sex Kittens Go to College* (later titled *Beauty and the Robot*), all released in 1960. Also looking for movie posters on these. Will gladly pay good price and send VHS tape. Send information to T.L. Boyce, Rt. 1, Box 78, Big Cabin, OK 74332.

●I'm looking for the book *The Outlaws: Revolution in Country Music* by Michael Bane (Doubleday/Dolphin, 1978). Also, Emmylou's first album, *Gliding Bird* (Jubilee, 1970). Will pay. Mike Merandino, 94 Boston St., Salem, MA 01970-1421.

●Did anyone tape the Grand Ole Opry show that was on TNN on Saturday, July 6, 1991? Little Jimmy Dickens and Eddie Raven were on. Karen Stoffel, P.O. Box 1932, Rogers, TX 76569.

●I am a fan of Crystal Gayle and would be interested in obtaining any items such

as articles, pictures, VHS videos, etc. I would especially like to obtain videos of her TV specials, appearances on award shows and *Another World*. Would also like to hear from other fans of Crystal. Paul Wolff, P.O. Box 980, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

●Wanted: Any recordings of Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius. Singles or LP's. Send information to Charles Higgins, 423 Greenough St., Sunbury, PA 17801.

●Wanted: Anything pertaining to The Judds. I'm looking for video coverage of break-up announcement on *Video P.M., Crook & Chase*, etc. Also looking for videos of the duo on Alabama special, hosting circus, on country segment of VH-1 or any other TV appearances. List items and prices. Tammy Nichols, 34707 E. Benson Rd., Lone Jack, MO 64070.

●For Sale: country, pop and Christmas LP's, 45's and cassettes. For free list, send SASE to R.E. Pitts, 4600 Jackson Blvd., #175, Columbia, SC 29209.

●Wanted: older George Jones recordings. I need the album *Blue and Lonesome*. Kay Ruport, 2616 East 4th St., Superior, WI 54880.

●For Sale: Country records, books, magazines, articles and on stage/off stage/Fan Fair photos of all your favorite country artists. I am also looking for Louise Mandrell photos and anything and everything on Crystal Gayle—photos, articles, records, Crystal on *Sesame Street Country*, cassette or LP, etc. All Crystal fans write and send SASE to: Galen Duncan, 3517 Grier Nursery Rd., Street, MD 21154.

●Wanted: LP's, cassettes or anything on New Coon Creek Girls. Also, Wild Rose, Amy Grant and The Judds. Looking for VHS video clips of them on shows, photos, memorabilia, etc. Gladly pay anything. Pat Lehmann, 909 Shelbyview Dr., Shelbyville, TN 37160.

●Wanted: Anything having to do with George Jones. Records, photos, etc. Absolutely anything. Write: Mike Wakeman, Route 3, Box 273A, Edinburg, VA 22824.

●Help! My cassette tape let me down. I'm looking for someone to copy the radio show *Country Line USA* from July 15, 1991, featuring Randy Owen. I will supply tape and postage. Susy Vance, 7 Bel Aire Rd., Delmont, PA 15626.

●Wanted: VCR tapes of the following: Loretta Lynn co-hosting *Nashville Now* and Reba McEntire guest hosting *Nashville Now* (aired last year). Will send VHS tapes if needed. Thank you. Lance Yaeger, 43 Mapes Ave., Springfield, NJ 07081-3217.

●Wanted: Anything on Reba McEntire. Records, posters, VHS tapes, newspaper articles, magazines, photos, old newsletters, memorabilia, etc. Please send list with prices and condition of each item. Torry Hansen, P.O. Box 594, Hayfork, CA 96041.

●Wanted: Jennifer McCarter and The McCarter Sisters' items—photos, posters, buttons, magazine articles and concert items. Also the album or cassette of *Better Be Home Soon* in very good to mint condition. Also looking for photos of The Judds, Patty Loveless, Trisha Yearwood. Plus *Billboard* magazine. Thanks for your help. Michael Clem-

ent, P.O. Box 67, 2555 Highway 308, Labadieville, LA 70372.

●For Sale: LP's, 45's and 78 records of various artists such as Bob Wills, Roy Acuff, Merle Haggard, Cowboy Copas, Dolly Parton, George Jones and too many others to mention. Send SASE for list. Mrs. Mary Barker, 306 Young, Nocona, TX 76255.

●Looking for everything and anything on The Judds such as concert photos, Fan Fair photos, posters, articles and stories. Jamie Wigley, 50 Cashtown Loop, Aragon, GA 30104.

●A devoted Loretta Lynn fan would like to hear from anyone who has Loretta albums from 1960 thru the 70's. Send list of what you have, price and condition. Also looking for any of her singles on the Zero label, like "I'm a Honky Tonk Girl," "Heartache Meet Mr. Blues" or any others. Enclose a SASE please. Mrs. Laurie Ann Smith, 718-1/2 South Main St., Three Rivers, MI 49093.

## Address Change

Millie Aumiller, whose pen pal letter appeared in the July/August issue, has a change of address. Her new address is 2400 Andrew Avenue, Apt. 806, La Porte, IN 46350.

●Looking for an album or tape by Ronnie Dove entitled *Right or Wrong*. Will pay a reasonable price for a copy. Write: Mary Wohlsein, P.O. Box 344, Washougal, WA 98671-0344.

●Wanted: Anything and everything on The Judds to add to my collection. I am also looking for VHS copies of all award shows from 1984 to present (ACM, CMA, Grammys, etc.). Please send price list. Cheryl Wilson, 976 White Ash Ct., Loveland, CO 80538.

●Searching intensely for a good copy of Deborah Allen's 1987 album, *Telepathy*. Will pay for mint copies. Want more than one copy, so write me now. Aaron Wheelis, 2134 E. Michelle Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85022.

●Trying to locate photographs taken in 1955 or 1956 of Elvis Presley and Anita Carter pressing records at RCA in Indianapolis. Would like to obtain photos or publication in which they appeared. Vicki Langdon, P.O. Box 1712, Denison, TX 75021-1712.

●Wanted: Any VHS shows of the *Grand Ole Opry*, *Nashville Now*, *Nashville Music*, *Crook & Chase*, etc. with Jean Shepard, Jan Howard or Jeanne C. Riley. Especially want Grand Ole Opry show of 8/3/91. Also any photographs and magazine articles, etc. I will send tapes for shows to be copied and pay for cost of copies of pictures. Please help! Thanks! Jenni Buchanan, 6219 Old Greenwood Rd., Ft. Smith, AR 72903.

●Wanted: Albums or 45's by Con Hunley. Must be in good condition. Will pay fair price. State names of albums, price and condition. E. Faye Smith, Rt. 5, Box 180-A, Fort Payne, AL 35967.

●Looking for a cassette tape of two Dick Curless albums: HAT 3139 *It's Just a Matter of Time* and BD 313 *CB Special* with Curtis McPeake. Sylvia Matson, N. Front St., Weightsville, PA 17368.

●Wanted: VHS video of Hank Williams Jr. and Hank Williams Sr. titled "Tear in my Beer." Would appreciate having a

copy made. Thanks. Bernadette Loe, Gen-Dei, Fort Liard N.W.T., Canada X06 OAO.

●Looking for the following 45's: Barbara Mandrell's "Let Me Live"/"Just a Closer Walk With Thee"; Louise Mandrell's "Everlasting Love"/"Band of Gold" and "Wake Me Up"/"Yes I Do"; The Mandrells' "Don't Hold Your Breath"/"Panhandle Rag." If singles are not for sale, I'd be interested in taped copies of the two songs by The Mandrells and Louise's "Band of Gold." Also need two episodes of *Barbara Mandrell and The Mandrell Sisters*: (1) guests Conway Twitty and Fran Tarkenton (2) guest Loretta Lynn (these episodes did not air on TNN), and Mandrell videos from 70's and early 80's. J.R. Moore, 9-531 RD.B, Rt. 3, Leipsic, OH 45856.

## Pen Pals

Make new friends by mail.

●Howdy, darlin'! I've been into country music for years (even when it wasn't cool). My favorites are The Good Ol' (Southern) Boys. I'm temporarily incarcerated and want to meet new friends. Will answer all. Robert Dickey, P.O. Box 3145, Dayton, OH 45401.

●Hi, my name is Jamie Wigley. I'm 15 years old, and I love country music. My favorites are Patsy Cline, George Strait, Reba McEntire, The Forester Sisters, Clint Black and many more! But my absolute favorite is The Judds. Interests are clogging, writing to pen pals, watching TNN and singing country music. Please write, and I'll answer all letters. Thanks. Jamie Wigley, 50 Cashtown Loop, Aragon, GA 30104.

●Howdy, country fans! This misplaced cowboy is looking for a "few good Pen Pals." I am 39 years young and enjoy Clint Black, Randy Travis, Eddie Rabbitt and many more. Looking for anyone (M-F), ages 21-40, to write. I'll write back. I collect radio station T-shirts and hope to be a DJ at a country radio station soon. Please, no inmates or jokers. Only good country music people need write. Paul W. Moberg, P.O. Box 19418, Johnston, RI 02919.

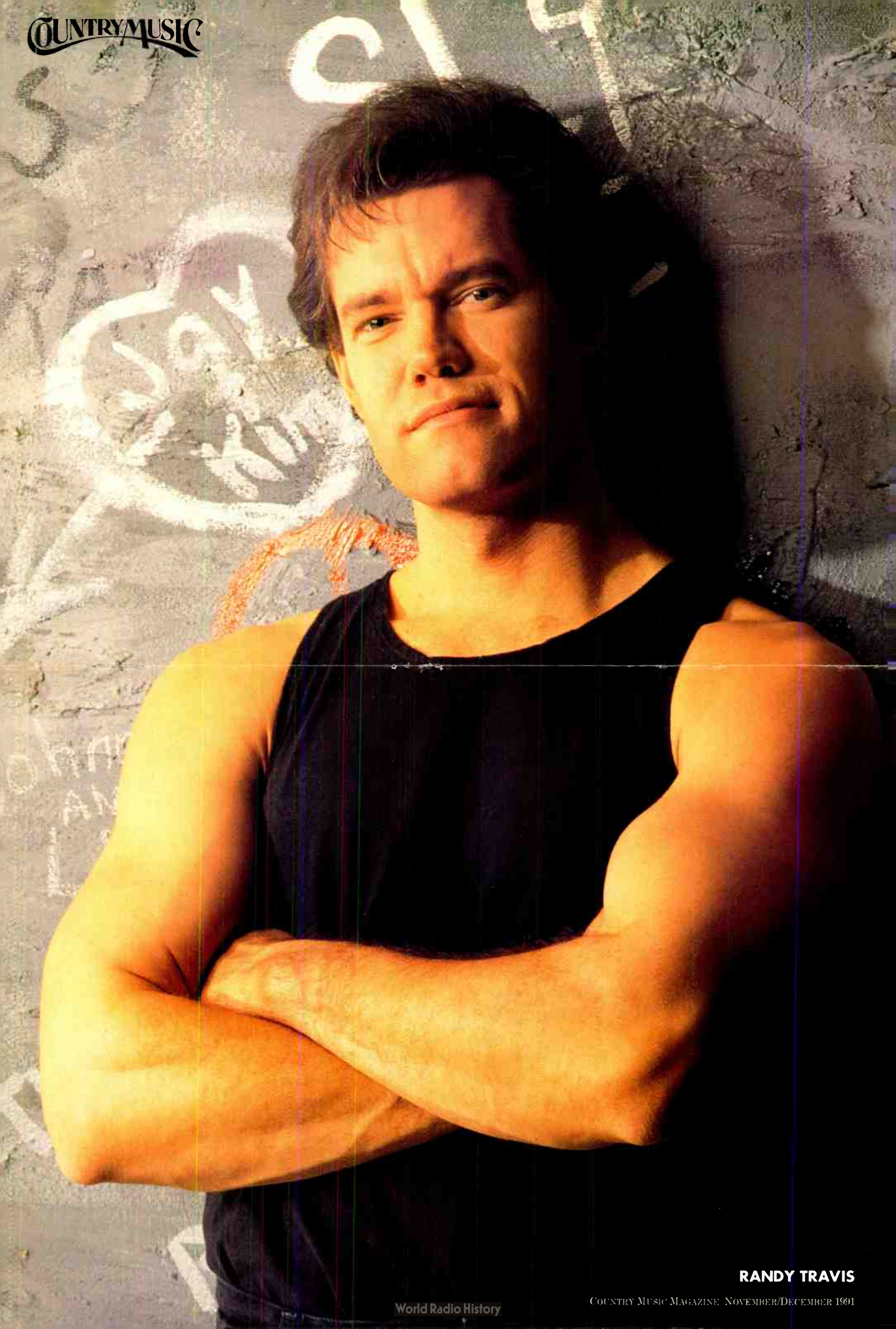
●Hi, my name is Margina. I'm 35 years old and was raised on country music. I like to dance, travel and attend concerts and rodeos. I would enjoy hearing from you. Margina Hoffman, Chinook, P.O. Box 30081, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2H 2V8.

●Hi! I am a 17-year-old country girl who loves country music very much. Some of my favorites are Loretta Lynn, George Jones and Clint Black. Some of my interests are playing guitar, horseback riding and country concerts. I would like to hear from you country boys out there, or any one. Will answer to all. Tammy Alexander, Rt. 1, Box 828, Lobelville, TN 37097.

●Hello! I'm 43, single, work as a receptionist. Socially handicapped. Love country music and TNN. Seek correspondence with anyone who has a good sense of humor and enjoys discussing religion, law, psychology, etc. Eva MacDonald, 6224A Lawrence St., Halifax NS B3L 1J9 Canada.

●I am from Baldwinville, New York. I am 57 years old and love country and western music. I would like to hear from





**RANDY TRAVIS**



PULL-OUT  
CENTERFOLD  
OF THE MONTH

# RANDY TRAVIS

## Facts of Life

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### Personal Data

**Given Name:** Randy Traywick  
**Birthdate:** May 4, 1959  
**Birthplace:** Marshville, North Carolina  
**Family:** Wife, Lib Hatcher; mother, Bobbie; father, Harold; brothers: Dennis, Ricky, David; sisters, Rose and Sue  
**Hobbies:** Horseback riding, target shooting, weight lifting  
**Favorite film:** *Silverado*  
**Famous for:** Randy's debut album, *Storms of Life*, went platinum faster than any other debut album by a country artist. It stayed at Number One for 12 weeks. His second album, *Always & Forever*, stayed at Number One for 43 weeks.

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### Vital Statistics

**Height:** 5'9"  
**Weight:** 185 lbs.  
**Color eyes:** Blue  
**Color hair:** Brown

.....

### Awards Highlights

1985: ACM Top New Male Vocalist.  
1986: CMA Horizon Award/ACM Top Male Vocalist, Album of the Year (*Storms of Life*), Single and Song of the Year ("On the Other Hand").  
1987: CMA Male Vocalist, Album (*Always & Forever*) and Single of the Year ("Forever & Ever, Amen")/ACM Male Vocalist, Single and Song ("Forever & Ever, Amen").  
1988: Grammy Best Country Vocal Performance-Male/American Music Award Male Vocalist-Country, Album-Country (*Always & Forever*), Single and Video-Country ("Forever & Ever, Amen")/TNN Viewers Choice Favorite Male Vocalist, Entertainer, Album (*Always & Forever*), Video and Song ("Forever & Ever, Amen")/World Music Award Favorite Country LP (*Always & Forever*).  
1989: *Rolling Stone* Annual Readers Poll Best Country Artist/*Country Music Round Up* International Country Music Award/People's Choice Best Male Musical Performer/TNN Viewers Choice Fa-



vorite Album (*Old 8 x 10*), Favorite Entertainer/*Music City News* Entertainer of the Year/American Music Award Favorite Album-Country (*Old 8 x 10*), Favorite Single-Country ("I Told You So"), Favorite Male Vocalist-Country.  
1990: American Music Award Favorite Male Vocalist-Country, Favorite Single-Country ("Deeper Than the Holler"), Favorite Album-Country (*Old 8 x 10*)/*Billboard* Number One Country Album Artist, Number One Country Artist/Amusement Business Top Grossing Country Tour/World Music Award Favorite Country Artist/*Playboy* Music Poll Male Vocalist-Country.  
1991: *Rolling Stone* Annual Readers Poll Best Country Artist/*Playboy* Music Poll Male Vocalist-Country.

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### Recording Career

Record Label: Warner Bros. Records, 1815 Division Street, P.O. Box 120897, Nashville, Tennessee 37212.

Albums	Release Date
<i>Storms of Life</i>	1986**
<i>Always &amp; Forever</i>	1987**
<i>Old 8x10</i>	1988**
<i>No Holdin' Back</i>	1989**

*An Old Time Christmas Album* 1989\*  
*Heroes and Friends* 1990\*\*  
*High Lonesome* 1991

\*Gold Album, over 500,000 sold.  
\*\*Platinum Album, over 1,000,000 sold.

**Number One Singles**  
"On the Other Hand"  
"Diggin' Up Bones"  
"Forever & Ever, Amen"  
"I Won't Need You Anymore"  
"Too Gone, Too Long"  
"I Told You So"  
"Honky Tonk Moon"  
"Deeper Than the Holler"  
"Is It Still Over"  
"Just a Matter of Time"  
"Heroes & Friends"

.....

### Videos

"Forever & Ever, Amen"  
"Promises"  
"It's Just a Matter of Time"  
"He Walked on Water"  
"I Told You So"  
"Heroes & Friends"  
Randy's first home video, *Forever & Ever*, features his greatest hits, interviews and never-before-seen footage. Also a behind-the-scenes look at home and on the road.

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### TV Highlights

*Saturday Night Live*  
*John Lennon Tribute*  
*Ray Charles Special*  
*HBO Special with George Jones*

.....

### Fan Club

Membership in the Randy Travis Fan Club includes four newsletters, a bio sheet, Randy's itinerary and other items of interest. To join, send \$10 (Canada/foreign must send dues by U.S. money order only) plus \$1.95 postage and handling to *Country Music Magazine*, Reader Service Department 111291, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880.

Something special  
from Someone special

LORRIE MORGAN

Something in  
Red



Contains the hit singles  
"WE BOTH WALK" and  
"A PICTURE OF ME  
(WITHOUT YOU)"



pen pals. I like Patsy Cline and Hank Williams. I also love the banjo, camping and picnics. Please write. **Maryann Calkins, 404 Landrush Way, Baldwinsville, NY 13027.**

●Hi! My name is Angie. I'm 20, soon to be 21. I would like to hear from men between the ages of 20 and 25 or anyone who would like to write. I love country music. Also love to sing and dance and love going to concerts/fairs. A couple of my favorites include Travis Tritt and Shenandoah. Other people I like listening to are Paul Overstreet, Ricky Skaggs, Billy Dean, Patty Loveless, Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, Vince Gill and many others. Sorry, no inmates, please. **Angie Seward, 1711 Debbie Ln., Orange Park, FL 32073.**

●Wanted: Elvis pen pals. I love Elvis and would like to hear from females only. I also collect on Elvis! I am 38 years old. **Rita Page, 625 Breckenridge St., Owensboro, KY 42303.**

●I'm a 24-year-old, single male looking for a female about 18 to 23 years old to write to. I'm a country music fan whose favorites are Loretta Lynn, Garth Brooks, The Kentucky HeadHunters, Marty Stuart, Hank Jr. and Sr. and Patsy Cline. Hobbies are going to the movies, singing, parties, going to concerts, watching TNN, etc. So, please write. I'll answer all letters and send photo with first letter. **Greg Bouchard, 1-K Racquette Acres, Potsdam, NY 13676-7201.**

●Hi! I am a single country girl who'd love to hear from anybody! I'm 17 years old. Some of my favorites include Tom Wopat, Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, George Strait and Keith Whitley. I love to dance and enjoy almost any outdoor activity. Will write to all. Send photo and I'll do the same, okay. Please write! **Sandra Esensee, 803 N. Edison St., Fredericksburg, TX 78624.**

●Hi! I'm a 25-year-old, single female. I love country music. My favorites include Clint Black, George Strait, Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Shelby Lynne and Reba McEntire. Will answer all letters. **Joanne Boatwright, Route 3, Box 461, Gadsden, AL 35901.**

●Hi! I'm 35-years-old/young and enjoy country music. Can't say for sure who my favorite is 'cause I have so many. I enjoy everything; being in the Army I have to. Looking for female pen pals mostly, but males welcome. Will answer all inmates. Sometimes, I know how you must feel. **SSG Terry D. Hall, HHC 2/68 Armor, APO New York, NY 09034.**

●Hi, my name is Jamie. I'm 17 years old. I love country music and everything about country living. I would love to hear from others who feel the same way I do. My favorites include The Judds, Keith Whitley, Garth Brooks and many others new and old. I enjoy writing, traveling and meeting people. I would like to hear from anyone, any age, and from anywhere. I'll answer all letters. **Jamie Le Croix, Rt. 1, Box 684F, Merryville, LA 70553.**

●Hi, my name is Mrs. Alvin Kahle, and I am 56 years old. I love country and gospel music. Would love to hear from ladies only (ages 50 to 70 or so) from these states: Oklahoma, Missouri, Colorado, Wyoming and Arkansas. Have lots of

favorite singers and lots of country music tapes. Please write me; I'll be looking for your letters. **Mrs. Alvin Kahle, P.O. Box 42, Alma, Kansas 66401.**

●Howdy! Good-looking, 36-year-old man looking for a woman to write to. My favorites are George Jones, Merle Haggard and others. My interests are playing tennis, collecting country music, photographing and writing letters. Send photo; I'll send one. **Bertil Gustafsson, Hokhult, S-590 42 Horn, Sweden.**

●Hey, ya! I am a 17-year-old student who would like to hear from guys that are kind, open-minded, educated, funny, and single, age 18 to 25. I like to write, draw, dance, and listen to music. Some of my favorites are Reba, Kentucky HeadHunters, Dwight Yoakam, Madonna and Adam Ant. Send photo if possible and write soon. **Sherri Bond, Rt. 2, Box 2, Kingman, IN 47952.**

●Hi! My name is Susy. I'm 31, married and looking for new friends! I'm a die-hard Alabama fan, also enjoy Charlie Daniels, The Judds, Restless Heart, Travis Tritt and Clint Black. I enjoy NASCAR racing, hockey and love animals. Hope to hear from you soon! **Susy Vance, 7 Bel Aire Rd., Delmont, PA 15626.**

●I'm a 57-year-old hillbilly picker and singer, and I would like to correspond with fans of the Golden Age of hillbilly music (1940-1955), with the purpose of exchanging tapes, stories, etc. I promise to answer! I would also like to buy a Gibson or Martin guitar from the 1930's or 1940's to strum while I sing those songs of that era. **James Ausburn, 3037 Park Ave., St. Charles, MO 63301.**

●Hi! My name is Pat. I'm a 36-year-old single female and would love to hear from country music fans. My favorite is Alabama. I also like Clint Black, Ricky Van Shelton and many others. I love animals and the country and mountains. Would love to hear from any single guys my age and will answer all who write. **Patricia Lorey, P.O. Box 245, Celina, TX 75009.**

●My name is Charlie. I'm a single male, 24 years old. I love country music, playing the drums, writing poetry and music, dancing, boating, horseback riding, camping, traveling, sharing quiet talks, long walks, sunsets and bodies of water. I like to hear from anyone who is honest, lonely and in need of a friend or looking for a possible relationship. I'm open, honest and caring and will answer all who take the time to write! **Charles Street, P.O. Box 601, Pendleton, IN 46064.**

●Lived my life like Johnny Paycheck's song, "The Only Hell My Mama Ever Raised," and am now paying for it in a state facility. Looking for girls 20-35 to help bring some light to this 29-year-old iron horse cowboy's dreary days. Like old and new country with Dwight Yoakam, Merle Haggard, Patty Loveless, Lorrie Morgan and Desert Rose Band as some of my favorites. Like stock car racing, Harley-Davidsons and more. Photo for photo. **Andrew Ashton, P.O. Box 19033, Green Bay, WI 54307.**

●Howdy! I'm a 21-year-old, single female. Would like to correspond with anyone between the ages of 19-30. Some of my favorite artists are Alabama, Garth

Brooks, George Strait, Travis Tritt and Dolly Parton. Just to name a few. Y'all write. **Amanda J. Cromwell, P.O. Box 1188, Porter, TX 77365.**

●Hi! This transplanted "good ol' Texas gal" wishes to hear from "good ol' gals and guys." Enjoy country music, Haggard, Nelson and others. Love car racing, beach and the great outdoors. Retired now and enjoying the good life. Let's exchange photos and enjoy each other's letters. Looking forward to hearing from many pen pals. **Elsie Reynolds, 2750 Wheatstone St., #83, San Diego, CA 92111.**

●Hi, my name is Leslie Lynn Thetford. I'm a 23-year-old, single cowgirl looking to correspond with a real cowboy, not wanna-be's, ages 26-36. I'm involved in rodeos, and I show breeding ewes and am very independent. Love anything country. Some favorite singers are Reba McEntire, Tanya Tucker, Johnny Cash, The Judds, Merle Haggard and Johnny Horton. Send photo, I will, too! No inmates. **Leslie Lynn Thetford, P.O. Box 4605, Bryan, TX 77805.**

●Hi! I'm a 23-year-old newcomer to country music. I enjoy many artists including George Strait, Ricky Van Shelton, Lorrie Morgan, Garth Brooks and The Kentucky HeadHunters. I'm also a fan of many other types of music. I'm looking for pen pals, guys or gals between the ages of 23-33. No prisoners, please. **Vonnie Sisson, 6302 93rd Pl., Seabrook, MD 20706.**

●"non, I know you're out there! I'd like for all T. Graham Brown fans to write! I also love Alabama, Vince Gill, Garth Brooks, Ricky Van Shelton and many more. Write soon, Ladies only, please! **Sheila Detty, 736 Francis Ln., Chillicothe, OH 45601-9764.**

●Hi! My name is Karen. I am 38 years old and divorced. I enjoy most all country music. I have lots of favorites—Clint Black, Patsy Cline, Alabama, Ricky Van Shelton, Lorrie Morgan, Vince Gill and The Kentucky HeadHunters, to name a few. I would like to hear from other country music fans. **Karen Colyer, 2823 Dunmore Dr., Nashville, TN 37214.**

●Hi! My name is Karen Eble. I'm 26 years old, and I'm a big fan of country music. My favorites are Clint Black, Travis Tritt, Alabama and Gary Morris but my favorite group is The Golden and their dad, William Lee Golden. I've been over 5,000 miles to see them this year and still can't get enough of them. I'm looking for pen pals, but especially write if you love The Golden. I would love to swap stories about them. No inmates, please. **Karen Eble, 10000 Olmstead, Evansville, IN 47711.**

●Howdy! I'm a 16-year-old country girl. I love everything that has to do with country music. Some of my favorites are Clint Black, Travis Tritt, Restless Heart, Dan Seals, Garth Brooks and many more. Would love to hear from all you country folks, any age. Send photo, and I'll do the same. **Heidi Humphrey, P.O. Box 103, Redway, CA 95560.**

●I am a 40-year-old, single, female country music lover. My Number One favorite is Ricky Van Shelton, and I would like to hear from any of his loyal fans, age 30-45. I also like George Strait, Clint Black, Randy Travis, Alan Jackson and

many more. My other interests include animals, cross stitching and bike riding. **Dolores Shalek, 466 South Fulton Ave., Bradley, IL 60915.**

●Howdy! My name is Michelle, and I am 19 years old. I love country music and the beautiful outdoors. Some of my hobbies include camping, fishing, water sports, exercising, horseback riding and athletics. My favorite country music stars are Garth Brooks, Clint Black, George Strait, Reba McEntire, The Judds, Tanya Tucker, Restless Heart, Alan Jackson and many more. I would love to hear from any guys or gals with the same interests between the ages of 19-25. Pictures would be nice. Will write back to ya'll. **Michelle Peachey, 110 North Monmouth Ave. #205, Monmouth, OR 97361.**

●Tall, urban guy seeks female pen pals, 18-25. Favorite country singers are Alan Jackson, Marty Stuart and Patty Loveless. Like camping and have country band. Write: **Jerry Minnick, P.O. Box 1946, Hiram, OH 44234.**

●Hello, my name is Steve. I am 45 years old and have been told I'm young looking. I enjoy listening to all country music and also like car racing, outdoors, dancing, baseball and football. Would like to correspond with women from ages 20-48. Send photo, and I will send same. **Steve W. Berbes Jr., 971 Woodlyn Rd., Baltimore, MD 21221.**

●24-year-old female in south-central Pennsylvania looking for people who are interested in seeing concerts in the area and within short driving distance (New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland). My favorites are Mary Chapin Carpenter, Kathy Mattea, The Judds and the Forester Sisters. Would also like to see Reba, Garth, Tanya, Lorrie and other new artists. Pen pals welcome from all over! I'm tired of enjoying concerts by myself. My friends won't go. Join me! **Leslie B. Green, 170 Clubhouse Rd., Apartment 314, King of Prussia, PA 19406.**

●Hi! My name is Laurie Ann Smith. I am 27 years old and love country music. My all-time favorite country singer/songwriter is Loretta Lynn. I love meeting new people, writing to pen pals and going to concerts. Please write and tell me all about yourself. Come on—fill up my mailbox. I want to be your friend. No prisoners, please! **Mrs. Laurie Ann Smith, 718-1/2 South Main St., Three Rivers, MI 49093.**

●Hi! I'm 26 years old and single. Some of my favorites are Randy Travis, Alan Jackson, The Judds, Mark Chesnut, Lionel Cartwright, Holly Dunn, Shenandoah and The Oak Ridge Boys. Will answer all letters. **Mary Rode, 258 Twilight Ter., Circle Pines, MN 55014.**

●Looking for Southern belle (20-40) who's willing to relocate and settle down with this very romantic 52-year-old (but looks younger). I'm a former singer who enjoys a variety of music (especially country) movies and moonlight walks. Let's correspond. **John E. Carter, 1560 30th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53144.**

*Send requests to Country Music Magazine, 329 Riverside Ave., Westport, CT 06880. Mark envelope Attention: Collections. Entries sent without membership number will be discarded.*

# Minnie Pearl

*Sarah Ophelia Colley created a character that eventually became as much an institution as the Grand Ole Opry itself.*

.....  
*by Rich Kienzle*

*November 1940:* The Grand Ole Opry's powers-that-be weren't sure that the 28-year-old female comic they were auditioning would fit in. She lacked the raw, rural background of most Opry acts. College-educated, she was well-versed in drama, classical literature and classical music. She wasn't that familiar with the show, yet here she was, trying to take a made-up stage character and make it work.

The Opry, then broadcast from the War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville, slotted her as a guest performer. Sarah Colley walked on the Opry stage, nervous. After her spot, she asked her mother, who was in the audience, how she did. Her mother replied that "several people woke up." It was a tentative beginning for Minnie Pearl, but within two years she was a Nashville institution.

For the next 51 years, Minnie's simple, innocent (and authentic) country humor created an unforgettable character who performed in a variety of settings. Her career began on improvised stages in the Depression-era rural South. With the Opry, she graduated to radio. Eventually her images and words wound up bouncing off satellites.

Her roots were far removed from that. Born in 1912 in Centerville, Tennessee, southwest of Nashville, Sarah Ophelia Colley was the fifth daughter of Tom Colley, a well-to-do owner of a lumber business. It was an urbane, educated household. Her mother, Fannie Colley, was well-educated and steeped in the virtues of propriety. But like her father, Sarah had a feeling for earthy humor. She enjoyed vaudeville shows and attended local tent shows.

Sarah's dramatic aspirations continued through her teens. In 1930, after she graduated from high school, she enrolled



in Ward-Belmont College in Nashville. Bear in mind, the Nashville of the 1920's was not Music City U.S.A. but the "Athens of the South"—a center of high culture, education and breeding and a far cry from the blue-collar, rural roots of much of Tennessee and the South. Ward-Belmont, an exclusive women's school, produced polished, proper Southern women able to teach or perform other tasks in times when women's options were far fewer than today.

After graduation, she taught dramatics, dance and piano in Centerville. Then in 1934 she joined the Wayne P. Sewell Production company as a show director. This Atlanta firm produced amateur theater, mostly musical comedies, in the South. Sewell directors went into towns and supervised productions which featured local citizens playing the roles and raised funds

for local organizations such as Lions Clubs. The job put Sarah Colley in touch with the other side of the South. As she directed these shows, she was able to observe rural Southerners closely and, with her dramatic training, capture their essence.

During one trip in 1936 she spent time with an Alabama family. An elderly woman in the home told her stories, local folk tales, and had a colorful way of explaining things in rural dialect. Sarah drank it in. She saw a potential character she could portray, and as time went on, she added ideas to the concept, including childhood memories of a railroad switching station near Centerville known as Grinder's Switch. That colorful locale would provide the name for her fictitious hometown. She named her character Minnie Pearl.

In 1937 when Tom Colley died at age 80, Sarah went home to be with her mother. She ran a government-funded recreation center in Centerville and in 1940 produced a show for a local banker's convention. When a speaker was late, Minnie filled in the time, and went over well enough that a Nashville banker suggested WSM recruit her for the Opry.

Her first audition at WSM's offices didn't go well, and she made only \$10 that first time onstage at the Opry. But George Hay called her the following Wednesday and asked her to come back the next Saturday. When she arrived, she found 300 pieces of fan mail waiting for her, and was offered a permanent slot on the Opry. Minnie had touched on something that the show needed.

Her pure country humor, in the form of the innocent country spinster who is not quite sure about anything but so proud to be there, struck a chord in people. There was something lovable, common and universal in the character of Minnie Pearl



## LEGENDS OF COUNTRY MUSIC

that transcended everything. Roy Acuff was one of Minnie's first supporters. He added her to his touring show, which often performed in tents. She was able to polish and refine the character even further there, and by 1943 she was on the road with other Opry stars, entertaining the troops at U.S. military bases as part of the Camel Caravan.

Shortly after the war ended, Rod Brasfield—also from Centerville—joined the Opry as a comedian. Soon Brasfield and Minnie, though they each did separate routines, also began to perform together. Brasfield, a forgotten figure in Opry history, took on a naive, hillbilly personality and could get away with racy (for that time), double-entendre humor that anyone else couldn't have gotten on the air. Minnie, who played the straight man to Brasfield, was in awe of him. She would work with Brasfield until he became ill and died in 1958.

In 1947, the same year she appeared at Carnegie Hall with an Opry troupe, Sarah Colley married Henry Cannon, a former Army Air Corps captain and pilot who

became her right hand, chauffeuring Minnie and other Opry stars on their tours. Minnie's career continued through the 1950's. She even appeared on *This Is Your Life* in 1957. And though Minnie wasn't really a recording artist, she made some records for King, RCA and Starday, among others.

In 1967 she lent her name to a chicken franchise that lasted a few years before going under, one of her few failures. On the other hand, she had success with a straight dramatic role as an evangelist in the otherwise horrible 1967 B-movie, *That Tennessee Beat*, which featured Merle Travis and other Nashville singers making hilarious attempts at "acting," hobbled by an awful script.

Offstage, Sarah Cannon was an urbane, well-educated Southern lady, as she'd been raised to be. Intelligent and well-read, she had no trouble deciding where Minnie left off and Sarah began. In 1968 she was nominated for membership in the Country Music Hall of Fame, but because so many singers and pioneers were still being inducted into the then-new Hall, it

took seven years—until 1975—for her to finally win the award.

As Nashville grew as a music and entertainment capital, Minnie continued to work. Though she didn't tour as often, she found herself doing more network TV and occasional shows in Las Vegas. A regular on *Hee Haw* almost from the show's beginning, and still an Opry regular (often trading quips with old friend Roy Acuff, who helped her polish her act years before), she became an inspiration to women when she successfully won a battle with breast cancer.

The success of The Nashville Network also kept her busy until earlier this year when, at age 78, she suffered a serious stroke that has, for the time being, curtailed her performing activities completely. As she undergoes therapy and recovers slowly, her future as a performer is not clear. Given Minnie's—and Sarah's—spunk, however, it would be unwise to assume she won't be back. In any case, Minnie Pearl's contributions to country comedy over the past half-century long ago made her a legend.



# Readers Create

## Tribute to a Father

*Raul Juarez Jr., a member in Watsonville, California, who goes by the C.B. handle, "The California Dreamer," says, "My father is a forklift operator in a warehouse, loading trucks to go all over the U.S. and Canada. All of my life, I have idolized my father and truck drivers."*

## Everything Was Easier Back Then

I'm finding out how hard life can be  
Nothin' good comes easy.  
You gotta work from 8 to 5  
Puttin' in your share of overtime.  
Trying to raise a family  
On a low budget ain't easy.  
Lucky for me I've got a good wife  
Who helps me get by.

But I still wish I could live my life  
Like when I was a kid.  
I didn't have to do much work  
And my daddy kept me fed.  
Everything was easier back then.  
I wish I could live my life  
Like when I was a kid.

House payment gets here faster all the time  
Doesn't let me save a dime.  
Paying too many bills every month  
Doesn't leave me any money to have some fun.  
The man in the White House doesn't see  
That his taxes are hurting me.  
I wonder if he cares  
I don't know, life ain't fair. —Raul Juarez Jr.



**Ralph Emery Fan Heard From**  
Marte Noll sends in this sketch of Nashville Now host, Ralph Emery. Marte hails from Utica, New York.

## Goodbye Is Never Easy

*Rena Walden, a CMSA member from Ten Mile, Tennessee, put pen to paper and came up with this look at the end of a relationship.*

## How Can I Say Goodbye to You

The happiest days of my life we spent together.  
Loving you was easy to do.  
I always thought you felt the same way.  
How can I say goodbye to you?

I wanted you from the moment I first saw you.  
And I've loved you my whole life through.  
Now you're telling me it's over.  
How can I say goodbye to you?

I don't think I can live without you.  
I guess our love was too good to be true.  
As I watch you drive away I wonder.  
How can I say goodbye to you?

How can I say goodbye to you?  
It would help if I just had a clue.  
Is it too late for us to make up?  
How can I say goodbye to you?

—Rena Walden

## The Price of War

*Mac McCoy writes in from Ripley, Mississippi, "I love Country Music Magazine and can hardly wait between issues. I have written lyrics for years, but have never sent them anywhere. I wrote this in 1989, from a story a black man told me about his brother, who was killed in Vietnam. He said his mother just lost her will to live and died six months later from grief. After the Gulf War started, I couldn't help but wonder how many mothers would end up like this." Here's Mac's story.*

## My Son, A Soldier

My son was sent away to war,  
In a far and distant land.  
I never had the chance to see  
Him grow into a man.

He stood upon foreign soil,  
And waved Old Glory high.  
He watched his buddies fall.  
One by one, by his side.

His letters found their way home,  
Very few and very brief.  
"We're always pushed for time," he'd say,  
"And I sure could use more sleep."

"But, please try not to worry, Mom,  
I'll be home soon, I know.  
Just keep those prayers flowing,  
And remember, I love you so."

—Mac McCoy



## New Faces

Member Karen Wheland of Palmyra, Pennsylvania, sent this sketch of Alan Jackson—A.J.'s first Readers Create appearance. Karen presents her original sketches to the stars. Says Karen, "The very first picture I ever drew was of Travis Tritt. I presented the original to him at a concert, and he was very gracious and flattered. I am so thankful to Travis for inspiring the 'artist' in me. Thanks for a great Newsletter."

The fatal bullet came one morn,  
To a fox hole cold and gray.  
And there upon the foreign soil,  
My darling son would lay.

There was no discrimination,  
Of the color black or white.  
Side by side the soldiers fought,  
Side by side the soldiers died.

Freedom rings out loud and clear,  
For us all to be the same.  
Mother's love is mother's love,  
And there's no color-code in pain.

They handed me a Medal of Honor  
To say how gallantly and brave  
He had given the gift of life,  
As they fired above his grave.

It didn't take the sound of guns,  
On that cold December day  
To tell me how my son had died,  
In a land so far away.

My only hope, be not in vain,  
For mankind alike to see  
Brotherly love is the only love,  
In the land of the brave and free.



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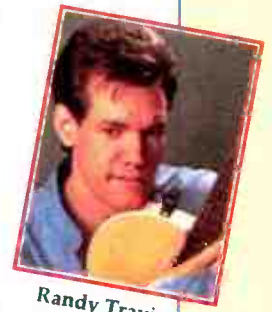
Clint Black

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- Nobody Loves Me Like You Do / Anne Murray with Dave Loggins
- I Can Tell By The Way You Dance / Vern Gosdin
- Morning Desire / Kenny Rogers
- Too Much on My Heart / The Statler Brothers
- That's the Way Love Goes / Merle Haggard
- Lost in the Fifties Tonight / Ronnie Milsap
- Mind Your Own Business / Hank Williams, Jr.
- Never Be You / Rosanne Cash
- Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On / Mel McDaniel
- Bop / Dan Seals
- Real Love / Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers
- Roll On (Eighteen Wheeler) / Alabama
- Modern Day Romance / The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
- On the Other Hand / Randy Travis
- Mama's Never Seen Those Eyes / The Forester Sisters
- Dixie Road / Lee Greenwood
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# *Doug Stone:* **BUILDING DREAMS**

— by Bob Allen —

**D**oug Stone's father is an inventor and evidently something of a dreamer. The elder Stone spent long hours tinkering in his workshop, trying to perfect a fail-safe braking system for large trucks and working on other brainstorms, some of which came to fruition, some of which didn't. The dad's habits evidently made a big impression on his son, who made his dramatic debut in the country charts with a melancholy tearjerker called "I'd Be Better Off (In a Pine Box)" and followed up with several Top Five hits, "I See You In a Different Light," "These Lips Don't Know How to Say Goodbye" and "Fourteen Minutes Old." By his mid-teens, Doug himself was a confirmed inventor and tinkerer. Only *his* workshop was the small home recording studio he built for himself, and his inventions were his original songs.

"I built my first studio when I was 16, around the time I had my first band," Stone recalls. "I bought my first mobile home and took out the front bedroom and built it there. I built about five studios altogether. I kept building them in other people's houses, and they'd either sell their house or their daddies would run us off for bein' too noisy! I finally got smart the last time and built one in a house I owned.

"Most of my life I've worked as a diesel mechanic," he adds. "There ain't much you can throw at me that I can't do—fix my own washing machine, my own lawn mower, the whole bit....But I've always had this drive to write and record.

*As an inventor and tinkerer,  
Doug Stone could fix anything.  
Now this Mr. Fix-It is fixing to  
make it big in the music business.*

For years, I'd work my job for eight hours, then come home and work another eight hours in my little studio, writing songs, doing demos of them.

"A lot of times, I'd fall asleep on the board, wake up and go to work and do it all again," recalls the singer. "My first wife said she felt like a studio widow, because I practically *lived* in there! You know: just bring me a cup of coffee and a cigarette, and I was ready."

When he had a few days off from touring and working on his second Epic album, *I Thought It Was You*, recently, he was back at it in his current basement studio. Not long ago, he upgraded it from eight tracks to 16 and invested in a new sound board. "I get home and visit with my wife, Kerry, and my little boy for a

released. He and his state-of-the-art, six-piece backup band have been touring almost nonstop, opening across the country for superstars like Alabama, Reba McEntire, K.T. Oslin and Ricky Van Shelton.

"I was thinking about taking a vacation," says the energetic singer. "But then some more show dates came in, in front of good audiences, so I canceled the vacation. This is a critical time for me, and the way I look at it, I've only got one shot at it."

Stone has been delighting audiences with his dependably tough yet pliable baritone and animated stage presence. He sings, he dances, he shimmies and even does a sort of countrified "moon walk." "I had this woman come up to me

superstardom remains to be seen. Nevertheless, he's being hailed as one of the best of the *new* new traditionalists, along with Alan Jackson, Travis Tritt, Mark Collie, Joe Diffie, Aaron Tippin and a host of other country Johnny-come-latelys jockeying for position at the top of the charts. (Tritt, Jackson and Stone, coincidentally, all hail from the greater Atlanta area.)

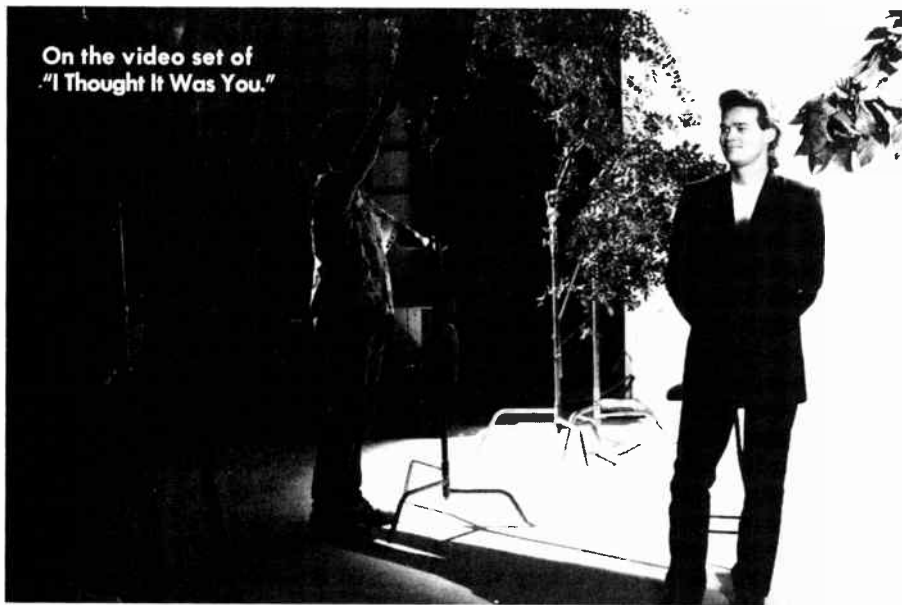
The Philadelphia *Inquirer* did remark on Stone's live show: "A beefy guy with a beefy voice...a great future ahead of him." "A magnificent vocal," gushed Robert K. Oermann in a review of the single, "Pine Box," in *Music Row*, a Nashville trade publication influential with country radio, and "the best weeper I've heard so far this year." Eventually, "Pine Box" garnered a Grammy nomination; in 1991, Stone himself was nominated for the Academy of Country Music's Top New Male Vocalist award (Alan Jackson won) and the Country Music Association's Horizon Award for most promising new artist.

When Stone shows up for a mid-afternoon interview at his publicist's Music Row office, he is in high gear, as usual. Later that same evening, he'll open another show for Reba McEntire at Nashville's Starwood Amphitheater. And from there, he will rush directly over to the Grand Ole Opry to make his second guest appearance on that venerable stage. Between then and now, he has scheduled several TV and print interviews.

Dressed in black Levi's, a matching black shirt and dark shades, Stone seems slightly out of breath, maybe even a trifle at loose ends, as it dawns on him that despite his hectic schedule, he will have a few hours off before the 7:30 show. He seems uncertain just what to do with himself.

"I get so busy that I almost forget to eat, forget to get hungry," he laughs sheepishly as—always the inveterate tinkerer and technician—he helps this writer get a stubborn cassette recorder working. "I've lost 20 pounds since we started touring. I'm down from 175 to 155. Of course, I needed to, because I was getting pretty chunky: Back before all this started, I took a year off and stayed at home with my little boy, and we didn't do anything but play, eat and have fun.

"But I wasn't really trying to lose," insists Stone, who talks at a rapid-fire pace and seems to run on pure adrenalin. "A couple of times I just forgot to eat until I almost passed out from lack of nutrition. The funny thing is, whenever I get up on stage the button always seems to push *itself*," he continues, amazed. "Not too long ago, I was playing this club in Houston, and I had a virus of some kind. I just wanted to go some place and lie down.



*"I didn't really pick this occupation. It picked me. And I've followed it all my life."*

couple of hours, and then I'm right back down there," Stone grins sheepishly. "Kerry recently told me she's starting to feel like a 'studio widow' too."

Admittedly, though, Stone has had little time for his musical tinkering here lately; he's hardly been home. Since "Pine Box" (written by veteran Nashville writers Johnny MacRae and Steve Clark—and no doubt the most forlorn and fatalistic honky tonk love lament since George Jones' "He Stopped Loving Her Today") went storming into the country Top Five, life has been delightfully hectic. Stone has been lucky to get back home to Newnan, Georgia, where he now resides with his second wife and young son, more than a couple of days a month. The pace of his career has, in fact, been almost dizzying since March of 1990 when his debut album, *Don Pepe*, was

after a show and tell me, 'You sure don't dance country!'" laughs the Georgia-born singer. Despite his sullen publicity photos (in which he looks like a beat-up, young Lefty Frizzell) and his mournful debut single, he's affable and delightfully humorous in person. "Heck, I didn't know what to say to her. I just get up there and do what I feel like doing. I used to play guitar a lot, and I couldn't move around. Before that, I was a drummer, and I was *really* stuck in one place. But now, I like having the freedom to walk around or dance off whatever it is I'm feeling."

The critics' reception of Stone was not as resounding as the welcome they accorded, say, Clint Black, or Randy Travis, back when they were each starting out, and whether Stone will ultimately rise to their sustained level of neo-



The guys in the band made me drink some orange juice with sugar in it for energy, but gettin' up on that stage was still the hardest thing I've ever done. Then halfway through the first song, something just kicked in. And pretty soon, I was in gear and gaining speed. They clapped after every song, and they didn't throw rotten tomatoes or anything, so I guess I must have done pretty good!"

Stone may still be a little giddy over how fast things have happened for him. Yet he claims he's not the least bit surprised to find himself where he is today. He insists that he's more or less known all along—ever since, as a seven-year-old, his mother (a singer and guitarist in her own right who always harbored fierce ambitions for her talented son) shoved him out on stage at a concert to sing a duet with Loretta Lynn. "I didn't really pick this occupation. It picked me," he insists. "And I've followed it all my life."

By the time Stone was 15, he'd begun to write songs and taught himself to play a half-dozen or so different instruments. He and a friend formed their own band and began playing local skating rinks for five dollars a night. His mom, always his key supporter, and evidently something of a stage mother, would book the band and often advise them *in concert* by heckling them from the audience as they performed.

But up until a couple of years ago, when the "Cinderella story" that landed him where he is today began to unfold, Stone was still laboring as a diesel mechanic by day and dividing his nights between playing local dance halls and working in his little studio. Nashville's country music industry was a universe into which he'd never ventured. "I wrote all these songs and made all these tapes, but they just piled up on the shelf, because I really didn't know anybody in the business to send them to. I'd never been to Nashville, because, quite frankly, I figured it would have been a waste of my time. I didn't know anybody, and they didn't know me. And if they don't know you, it's like you don't exist."

Stone was "discovered" the old-fashioned way, in 1987, when a Nashville manager took the advice of a friend who lived in the Newnan area and came down to catch one of Stone's Saturday night shows at the local V.F.W. hall. Another year passed before the woman got around to sending him a management contract. But once signed, she quickly put him together with Doug Johnson, a fledgling Nashville engineer and producer who took Stone in the studio in 1988 and recorded three songs to shop to the major labels.

"I remember when Doug and I first went in the studio, the whole time he



**In the short time he's been in the business, Stone has gained media attention. Above, on Video P.M. with hosts Cathy Martindale and Gary Beatty and below, with Faith Ford (of *Murphy Brown*) and Tammy Wynette. He and Wynette performed at The Roxy in Los Angeles.**



kept telling me not to get my hopes up high, that getting a record deal was a hard thing to do," Stone recalls. "I remember asking him, 'Have you ever just felt like it was your turn at bat?' He said, 'No, not really.' I said, 'Well, I do.' I just had this gut feeling that the time was right."

Stone's intuition and optimism proved correct. A few months later, Johnson took the tracks they'd made to veteran Columbia/Epic producer Bob Montgomery, who, over the years, has worked with everyone from Vern Gosdin and Waylon Jennings to Janie Fricke and the late Marty Robbins. Montgomery was impressed enough to eventually sign Stone as an artist and Johnson as his producer.

Now, with his career in full swing, Stone is looking forward to another solid week off the road so he can spend more time in his home studio. "I have some song ideas I want to work on some more. I've been writing songs since 1976, and I feel like only now am I really beginning to learn how. That

gives you an idea of how long it takes to learn. I also made my own demos of all the songs on the new album, so that when I got in the studio in Nashville, I already had a clearer idea of how I wanted to sing them.

"The problem now is finding the time for all that," he adds with a harried look as he glances at his watch to see if he's running ahead of or behind his treadmill-like schedule. "When I'm in Nashville, they keep me so busy doing interviews and stuff that I hardly have time to sit down. Since I've been touring, I've only written one song on the road. See, I've got 11 guys in my band and road crew on the bus, and it's hard to get off anywhere where you're by yourself, unless you're in the bunk. And I can't fit my guitar in there!"

"But I do want to keep learning and putting as much time into it as I can," he emphasizes, "because it's still a long, hard climb to where I want to go. That's why I've been working wide open, continuously, hitting it real hard. You've just got to get out there and keep convincing people that—hey, I *love* what I'm doing, so let me keep doing it!"



**A** lot of people in the country music business are glad that Carlene Carter came back; that these days she's making country records, having country hits and being a country personality.

That's just a fact with some very good reasons behind it. Carlene's a pretty wonderful singer and songwriter, for a start, and also she's the daughter of two pretty well-esteemed country legends and the granddaughter of another who was pretty much the music's founding mother: and then, too, hers has been a comeback of significant distances; the places from which she's returned are pretty far away. So really, Carlene's isn't the usual mildly pleasant showbiz-success-after-setbacks story, and the reaction of those who care isn't the usual modestly tickled gee-that's-nice. The pleasure of seeing this particular 'new face' again feels special and runs deep: It's the joy of welcoming a favorite daughter, long prodigal, back into the fold.

The basic outline of Carlene's life so far is, then, a circle beginning and ending in Nashville. She was born there as the offspring of a short-lived union between two popular Grand Ole Opry performers of the day, June Carter and Carl Smith; she grew up there and on the country tour circuit of which the city was and is the center, under the care of her mother, her stepfather Johnny Cash, and the storied ladies of The Carter Family, including her legendary grandmother Maybelle; she stayed

there until the end of her teens, by which time she had borne two children in two failed marriages and acquired a thorough education in the basics of her trade (creative writing at Vanderbilt, honky tonk technique and etiquette at the Exit-In); and now, in her mid-30's, she's back in town, living in Mother Maybelle's old house, the home of her early childhood. She is close to both her parents both geographically (her father, happily retired from show business, has a ranch outside Nashville) and emotionally.

Her years away were as active as her years in town. There was almost a decade based in London with her third husband, the great English pop-rockster Nick Lowe, until she and he separated a couple of years ago; and there was a long and increasingly debilitating drug and alcohol addiction which climaxed in her choice of sobriety, also a couple of years ago; and



there has been fully six albums worth of music which, while occasionally brilliant and always interesting, didn't begin to achieve its creative or commercial potential with any consistency until 1990, when *I Fell in Love* came out sounding just plain old, wise, wild and wonderful. That album launched Carlene's 'new' country career very effectively, and moreover it was such a lovely piece of work that you could easily find yourself agreeing with many of its reviewers: Even after all those years, all the false starts and wrong directions—all the turmoil, turbulence and flat-out trouble in Carlene's life and career—this music was worth the wait.

Carlene comes walking jauntily into the joint, very casual and easy in blue jeans and a denim shirt, with her hair in a natural, no-nonsense ponytail—a working rig, not her trash-chic, retro-bimbo-cowgirl state look—and we sit down for an early dinner and interview.

The joint is the Hamburger Hamlet on Sunset Boulevard in the lushly monied

for being different, I never compromised myself musically, and I was always myself.' That really hit home with me, because I spent years thinking I was doing the right thing by trying to fit in to this or that. I always got real influenced by where I was at, and the kind of music going on around me, and who I was working with, the musicians on my records—whatever *they* thought was hip, slick and cool, I'd try to do it because then I'd be hip, slick and cool. But then, as soon as I kind of grew up enough to know that I couldn't be anything except what I am, that's when I started making real good music. And funnily enough, people started liking it a whole lot better."

She pauses. "Sometimes it's scary, though. I find myself listening to a playback and thinking, 'Can I do this? *Nobody* does this! Maybe this is wrong!' You know, second guessing myself. But I'm trying to learn to quit that."

She doesn't disown any of her previous work, even albums as far from her present reality as the fast, brassy (and

much more anxious to shed the family heritage than embrace it). She found herself feeling more comfortable as a Carter Sister than she'd ever felt on stage, and also she really appreciated country audiences. "They're so *nice* to you," she says with a touch of wonder still in her voice, echoing the amazement of many a performer accustomed to the raunch and rudeness of rock.

The final piece fell into place when she came to a basic realization about herself as an artist. She'd already proved that she could write whatever good, commercial songs the market demanded (acts as different as The Doobie Brothers and The Go Go's have had hits with her material), but "I wanted to write about what I knew about, which was all this, the whole country world I was raised in. And really, you can't write a song about riding in a hill-billy Cadillac with your grandmother, and have them play it on rock radio. Nobody gives a damn."

The song "Me and the Wildwood Rose" is the one she's talking about, an achingly

# CARLENE CARTER'S Back In Town

*And it's a very welcome homecoming for a talented woman with one of country music's most legendary lineages. ♡ By Patrick Carr*

region between West Hollywood and Beverly Hills (chosen because it's right down the hill from the home recording studio where she and her producer, Howie Epstein of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers, are working on the follow-up to *I Fell in Love*, and it's okay: a gussied-up New York diner transposed to the City of Dreams. Carlene's thoroughly at home, of course, as she is in most cosmopolitan environments. Her distinctly down-home accent and her dimwit video hostess character notwithstanding, this ain't (and never was) no hick chick from the sticks.

I congratulate her on *I Fell in Love*, noting, among other things, how very clearly it stood out from the pack in both country and rock—no 1990 record sounded at all like it either lyrically or musically—and she seems pleased.

"Well, that's good, I guess. You know, I was listening to John (Cash) accepting an award the other night, and he said, 'Even though people were always criticizing me

pretty good) Euro-dance disc, *C'est Si Bon*, or the ragged *Blue Nun* (named after the brand of wine she and Nick Lowe and their friends were swilling at the time), and she is in fact justifiably proud of the country-rock ground she broke with *Musical Shapes* in 1979. Still, though, she agrees with the critics that the style of *I Fell in Love* is where she belongs.

The process of finding that style began with her mother and her aunts, Helen and Anita, altogether The Carter Sisters. After she returned from London to Tennessee, Carlene worked the road with them for almost two years, and, singing those sweet harmonies on those lovely old songs—the same deeply rooted, enormously influential music those same women were making around her when she was just a tot—she began to get the idea that country wasn't as uncool as she'd been thinking it was (and she *had* been thinking that; in her 20's she'd been

moving memoir of Maybelle seen in the eyes of a child and held in the heart of a mourner. It's a clear, wonderfully evocative song which tells you just what it was like for a little girl snuggled down on quilts on the floor of that touring Cadillac with her family all around her (Maybelle driving), and you feel just the sense of love and loss the grown woman means to communicate: the warmth of childhood happiness remembered always, the chill of childhood security gone long ago. And of course this gem of a song both reflects the theme of The Carter Family classic it echoes and gives us the answer to the question that classic poses. Yes, with Carlene back home in every important way, the circle *will* be unbroken.

Carlene's work with The Carter Sisters coincided with the beginnings of her recovery from drug and alcohol addiction, and for her that was both very fortunate—you'd be hard pressed to find a

*“As soon as I kind of grew up enough to know that I couldn’t be anything except what I am, that’s when I started making real good music. And funnily enough, people started liking it a whole lot better.”*



more sobriety-encouraging environment than a cocoon of Carter women—and very nice.

“I got to go back and be a kid again, you see,” she says. “I left home so young that I never quite got my kid stuff out. I mean, in those two years I got to be with Helen and Anita. I used to *cry* to stay with my Aunt Helen when I was a little kid! And they taught me so much in those two years, just with the grace with which they do things, and their humor; they laugh at *everything*. It was wonderful to be with them as a grownup, and not be dulled to it by not being sober.”

That jogs my memory, and I recall a day at the Cash/Carter house when June Carter told me, with great joy, about her daughter’s then-new sobriety. “That makes a full set, Patrick!” She laughed. “All my babies are sober now!” (June’s ‘babies’ including, in this context, her husband as well as her daughters and stepdaughters.)

Carlene grins when she hears that. “You know,” she says, “I remember my mom around then saying to me, ‘Honey, you’re doing all the things I always knew you could do.’”

She looks down at the table, and her

grin becomes a long, reflective smile of pleasure. It’s a good moment, the kind that happens from time to time as a person emerges from the darkness of addiction and alcoholism.

We talk for a long time about recovery, but the subject isn’t something either of us wants to overemphasize. The differences in Carlene stoned and sober are obvious enough—she made *I Fell in Love* sober, and Warner Brothers trusted her to do so, and now she’s taking exceptionally good care of business as opposed to “hiding out in my house, peeping out the window” (or pushing up Tennessee daisies)—and so we’ll confine ourselves to concluding remarks: what Carlene sees as the biggest change in herself since she quit drinking and drugging.

“I guess I’m not scared that I’m doing the wrong things anymore. I’m not all filled with guilt, because I’m really trying my best to be a good person. I took an awful lot for granted before, and I lost an awful lot—I think God wanted to teach me a lesson about that—but now it’s all coming around again. I think everything comes back the way it should be if you try real hard to be real upright. Don’t you?”

One of Carlene’s great fears was that she wouldn’t be able to write sober. That fear was groundless, though. The first song she wrote in recovery was “Easy From Now On,” and if you’ve heard that tune, you know exactly how it stacks up against her previous work; it’s one of the best two or three songs she’s ever written, and its spirit is second to none. And maybe its title is prophetic, too.

Career-wise, things have certainly been falling into place rather easily. Her alliance with Howie Epstein has turned out to be just the right move, both professionally and personally—she and he work very well indeed together, their union amounting to more than the sum of its parts—and her other main professional relationships, with manager Bill Carter (who also manages Reba McEntire and Rodney Crowell, among others) and with Warner Brothers Records, have also thrived. By getting these people into her camp she’s achieved a combination of business savvy and muscle, and creative support and freedom, which any recording artist would envy.

Things are going well, then, and looking better all the time. Her job as the host of the VH1 country video show, *Carlene*

**Above, with daughter Tiffany, Carlene shares the legacy of a close-knit country family. As a child, she found special comfort in grand-mother Maybelle and mother June. She now lives in Maybelle’s old house, where she’d lived years before.**





*Carter's Nashville*, is in its early days, but that should turn out okay, too; a few tens of millions of affluent, relatively sophisticated new viewer/listeners might be quite healthy for the progress of a country artist with Carlene's winning combination of great looks, unique image and killer music. Overall, then, she's in the same kind of perfectly aligned market position as her buddy Marty Stuart: way cool enough for the cool, way country enough for the country, and just flat-out loaded with talent. Whether she'll go the distance remains to be seen, but you have to admit that the odds aren't half bad.

In the country market, of course, radio airplay will be the deciding factor in Carlene's career, and she's a little nervous about that. "I think I'm gonna have to keep proving myself over and over," she says. "I think the programmers are afraid I'll turn around suddenly and do some rap record, you know? Like, 'Isn't she married to some limey or somethin'? Isn't she one of them punk rockers?' I understand that, and I really can't blame them, but I'll just keep doing what I'm doing and hope for the best."

The album she's working on now, she says, is very like *I Fell in Love* in most ways, the most significant difference being "a little more melancholy to it. I think this is a bit more of a grownup record. There was a certain high-spirited kind of frenzy to *I Fell in Love*, but now I'm more interested in opening up the direct channel from my heart to the tape recorder."

Which might mean, I hope, more songs like "Me and the Wildwood Rose" and "Easy From Now On," the latter a complex, spellbinding little trip about survival, self-preservation and freedom: one of those songs which never really tells you what the story is—what's happening to the singer, or what just happened to make her sing—but which communicates its feelings just beautifully, and suggests far more than it says. It was written to do just that, Carlene says. Allusive writing is her natural style.

We get into the subject of writing now, and again we talk a lot, so again I'll cut to the chase. Carlene admits quite freely that although she enjoys performing her music and gets a kick out of hamming for the video camera (the latter a family trait; her mother is also a comedienne), she's really a writer at heart.

"The best feeling I ever get is when I've written a song that I know is good," she says. "Even if it's not something commercial or something we can put on an album, just something I need to do for myself, it's like the best sex in the world. It's like the best drug you could ever take. It is the all for me. It would break my heart if someone told me I couldn't write songs anymore. If they passed a law that you couldn't do it, I'd make 'em up in my head and keep 'em in my hair. It's the thing



Call it pure country or country cool, Carlene fits in with Kevin Welch and Marty Stuart as well as Roy Acuff. Early appearances with The Carter Family were invaluable.



that I love, above all, above everything."

Carlene speaks with such force that I find myself going for lightness—there's a movie concept here, I say; cadres of heavily armed songwriters eluding brain police in sewers, abandoned fallout shelters, Ozark caverns—and Carlene laughs and goes along with the gag. Still, though, one must honor her passion and recognize its result: She is one of our time's most effective and powerful songwriters.

More supportive evidence for that claim, as if you needed it, is contained in the song "Guardian Angel," another of the quieter gems on *I Fell in Love*. It was written, Carlene says, two times: first in London in 1984, when she was drunk and

crying over the suicide of a person very dear to her, and then as she worked on *I Fell in Love*, "to make the song more real to me now. There were things about myself I wasn't willing to admit then, and now I am."

The essential message of the song remains the same, though: Through all her trials and troubles, and the wreckage she has wrought on herself and others, Carlene has had protection.

"It's true," she says. "Even in my times when I was really lost, I always felt like there was something watching over me that was going to get me through, to get me to the place that was safe and good for me." And it did. ■

# Letters

## Awed by Beautiful Emmylou

Thank you, thank you, for the very beautiful cover photo of Emmylou Harris on the September/October issue! And it's about time. Aside from her gorgeous voice and songs, she is truly one of the most beautiful women on the planet! I find myself staring so much at her cover photo, I can barely get inside the magazine to read it.

I've been a rock 'n' roll fan for 25 years, and I recently started loving country music because of the women singers, not the men (you can have all them Hat-Acts).

Don Lechner  
Cincinnati, Ohio

## Talented Emmylou

I would like to commend you for the lovely article on Emmylou Harris in the September/October issue. It's been a long time since that beautiful and talented lady has graced the cover of *Country Music Magazine*. I met Emmylou during her brief but glorious period with Gram Parsons in 1972-1973. I have followed her career closely for almost 20 years. However, your article mixed up the names of her two daughters. Hallie is the older of the two. It was she, not Meghann, who came to live with Emmy when she was 16. Meghann was born in mid-September 1979. They say to err is human, but to forgive divine. Well, knowing Emmylou as I do, rest assured, you're forgiven.

Terry Alexander  
Lexington, Kentucky

*Bob Allen joins us in apologizing to Emmylou, Hallie and Meghann for the inadvertant mix-up.—Ed.*

## Unique Emmylou

Thank you for the beautiful cover photo and article on the one-and-only Emmylou, in the September/October issue. This woman has country music's most unique voice and style. If I hadn't heard Emmylou on Gram's *Grievous Angel* album years ago, I would never have discovered country music. Any readers who haven't checked out Emmylou are missing the essence of what country music is all about.

Philip Gardner  
West Hartford, Connecticut

## Yoakam Feature Fine

July/August 1991—another fantastic issue because of the great articles on Michael Martin Murphey, Alan Jackson,



Hank Thompson and my favorite, Dwight Yoakam. The feature article on Dwight clearly shows that Patrick Carr is perceptive, obviously plans his focus and is able to develop an analytic and evaluative piece for the reader. This issue of *Country Music Magazine* was overwhelmingly rich in quality material.

David Arneson  
Glen Head, New York

## Hooray for Patrick Carr

Yesterday was a red letter day for me. I picked up my first issue of *Country Music* specifically for its cover story on Dwight Yoakam. After wading through the dreck of Hazel Smith (a person? a committee? a disaster!) and some semi-informed music reviews, the interview with Yoakam made the July/August issue worth its price and more. For the thoughtful fan of country music, Patrick Carr's kind of writing is a rare—oh, how rare—treat! I sent in my subscription specifically to read more of his work.

I am now officially on the lookout for any and all of Patrick Carr's work, and want him to know how very greatly I appreciate his insights, style and perspective on my favorite music.

Sue Dodea  
St. Clair Shores, Michigan

## Yoakam—Make My Day!

Make my day! That is just what you did when I received my July/August issue. Thank you so much for the cover photo and story on Dwight, who, in my opinion,

is the best of the new country singers. And taking some time off has only made him better. He seems to be one singer who knows what he's doing, and is doing it well. Now, how about another pull-out poster?

Connie Edelen  
Salt Lake City, Utah

*For our first Dwight centerfold, see January/February 1990.—Ed.*

## All-Time Favorite, Yoakam

Thank you, *Country Music Magazine* and Patrick Carr, for the interesting article, "Tune in to Dwight Yoakam," in the July/August issue. Dwight is my favorite person and singer of all time. I feel if he had only 10% of the support that all the other singers in Nashville receive, he would be the Number One singer of all time. Dwight's voice is the best. And that—not what he thinks—should be the criteria for his music.

Winnie Connelly  
Canby, Oregon

## Garth's Birthday

I received the September/October issue of *Country Music Magazine* yesterday, and, like always, I had to sit right down and read it from cover to cover. On the Facts of Life page on the Garth Brooks centerfold, you have his birthday listed as February 2, 1962, but I thought his birthday was February 7, 1962.

Paul Thompson  
Statesville, North Carolina  
*February 7th is correct.—Ed.*

## Garth's Centerfold Best

Awesome! Thank you very, very much for the centerfold picture of Garth Brooks in the September/October issue. It has got to be the best! He's my absolute favorite, and he puts on the best concert I've ever been to. He's so down-to-earth, and I can tell he's a super-neat person, too. The feeling I get after attending one of his concerts is a natural high. Keep it up, Garth!

Gina Heersink  
Alamosa, Colorado

## Garth—What a Man

Thank you for the Garth Brooks pull-out poster. My husband and I had the pleasure of seeing Garth in August. What a performance! What a man! I loved the honesty of "The Thunder Rolls" video. I hope someone has the sense and maturity to un-ban it.

Gaye Hubbard  
Mitchell, South Dakota



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### Will the Real Randy Travis Please Stand Up?

Thanks again for a great magazine, but there's only one problem with it—it's bi-monthly. I have to wait too long in between issues. The reason I'm writing is because I wanted to give you a picture of Randy Travis and myself. I'm now in a show called Living Legends of Country Music. There's myself, and a Ricky Van Shelton, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers.

Michael Patrick  
Albany, Oregon



Randy Travis and Michael Patrick of the Living Legends show.

### Shelton Centerfold on File

This Kentucky gal loves Ricky Van Shelton! After seeing him perform at the Scioto County Fair in Ohio, in August, I've become an RVS fan. Thanks, *Country Music Magazine*, for the great pull-out poster of Ricky Van Shelton in your July/August issue. Having this poster on my filing cabinet at work never lets me forget the terrific time I had at his concert.

Dawn Ramey  
Garpon, Kentucky

### Send Shelton C.O.D.

Yes! Ricky Van Shelton! Receiving your magazine in the mail is always nice. But with the pull-out poster in the July/August issue—even better. Now, could you mail the real man—C.O.D.? Okay, how about some facts? I really enjoy his music. I was fortunate to win tickets to see him in Wilmington, North Carolina, last December. What a great show. I'd love to meet him. He's got to be as great as his music.

Patti Ward  
Conway, South Carolina

### Michael Martin Murphey Inspires

I met Michael Martin Murphey at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, in February. He is just like he sounded in the July/August issue. He's honest, sincere and very dedicated to real cowboy music.

My cousin, Cindy, and I sat behind Michael one evening. We felt awed to be so close to him. He would greet people who approached him with openness, kindness and politeness. I found Michael to be an inspiration.

Ann Lauha  
Paradise, California

### Murphey on John Cash

Thank you very much for the 20 Questions with Michael Martin Murphey in the July/August issue. I agree 100% with Michael when he talks about the negative way Johnny Cash has been treated by radio and the whole industry in recent years. It is a total disgrace! Johnny Cash is still a very active recording artist, and should be treated as such—his recent efforts have been excellent. Johnny's releases go virtually unnoticed because the radio stations do not air them.

Ron Grimm  
Astoria, Oregon

### Voice and Body to Boot!

Thanks so much for that wonderful article on Aaron Tippin in the September/October issue. I recently purchased Aaron's album, *You've Got to Stand for Something*, and I can honestly say I love every song. This man is so talented. What a great voice, and what a great body! What more could you ask for? Needless to say, I'm looking forward to any future articles and pictures of Aaron.

J. Hall  
Great Mills, Maryland

### Tippin Is Tops

As a huge Aaron Tippin fan, you could not imagine how ecstatic I was to find your excellent, in-depth article on Aaron in your September/October issue. Not only is Aaron an exceptional singer, he is also a wonderful songwriter. His songs are filled with honesty and emotion.

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to meet Aaron this year at Fan Fair. He is a very warm person with a great sense of humor and a true appreciation of his fans. I also met his wonderful mother, Mary, and lovely daughter, Charla.

Dawn M. Borysewicz  
Schenectady, New York

### From Tippin to Yearwood

Thanks for the article in the September/October issue on Aaron Tippin. I really enjoyed reading about him. Maybe we could see a cover story or centerfold on him soon!

Also, my daughter and I are big Trisha Yearwood fans. The article on her in Record Reviews in the September/October issue was right on target. *Trisha Yearwood* is a great album. Emily, my four-year-old, knows the words to "She's in Love With the Boy" and sings it all the time! Keep up the good work, Trisha!

Michelle Moore  
Petal, Mississippi

### Jackson—Good Ole Country Boy

I had the pleasure of getting to see Alan Jackson perform at Tombstone Junction, Kentucky. I just wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoyed Bob Allen's article on him in the July/August issue. I personally think Alan will become one of

the all-time favorites (next to George Jones) in years to come. I just hope he continues to sing the good ole country songs with the same fervor he has currently. He definitely is from "The Real World." Best of luck to Alan, and I'll be waiting to enjoy his new songs as well as the old ones. Keep up the good work, *Country Music Magazine*.

Anita Beal  
Liberty, Kentucky

### Jackson Worth 100 Reads

I want to thank Bob Allen for doing such a great job on the story about Alan Jackson in the July/August issue. He is my absolute favorite performer. I've read the story at least 100 times! The pictures are wonderful, especially the one of Alan with Randy Travis. Now, how about seeing that handsome, blue-eyed blonde in a centerfold? Also, is there an Alan Jackson fan club?

Kristi Jenkins  
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

*We've already run a centerfold—see the September/October 1990 issue. To reach the fan club, write P.O. Box 121945, Nashville, Tennessee 37212 or use address on the centerfold.—Ed.*

### In Michigan with Jett Williams

Recently, we attended the Bay-O-Rama in New Baltimore, Michigan. Jett Williams and The Drifting Cowboys were appearing. This was a free concert. They were excellent. Enclosed is a picture of Jett Williams signing autographs.

Barb Walker  
Mt. Clemens, Michigan



Jett Williams at the Bay-O-Rama.

### Get the Buds Straight

I enjoy your magazine very much. It's nice to see these pioneers still talked about. In your mention of Shot Jackson's passing in the July/August issue, you said Sho-Bud was founded by Shot and Buddy Emmons. I think you will find it was Shot and Bud Isaac. Mr. Emmons came later, and a third Bud was Buddy Charleston (Ernest Tubb's steel player).



Guess who's been in

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**MARTY ROBBINS**  
Super Legend—120 mins.

This memorable video features 18 performances: *El Paso/White Sport Coat/Devil Woman/Ribbon Of Darkness/Singing The Blues/I Couldn't Keep From Cryin'/Don't Worry 'Bout Me/This Time You Gave Me A Mountain*, and many more, including Marty's Grammy winning song, *My Woman, My Woman, My Wife*. It also includes rare appearances from early television shows and the big screen, as well as exciting clips from his racing career. You'll also hear fitting remembrances from fellow stars like Roy Acuff, Faron Young and Barbara Mandrell.

**MARTY ROBBINS**  
A Man And His Music—55 mins.

This additional Marty Robbins video was recorded live at the Opry in 1980. "Funnin' around" was what he called it. And that's precisely what this video is all about. It includes his version of Elvis' *That's All Right (Mama)*, plus these other great selections: *Ribbon Of Darkness/A White Sport Coat/Devil Woman/Big Iron/My Woman, My Woman, My Wife/Among My Souvenirs/Don't Worry/El Paso*.

**HANK WILLIAMS JR.**  
Full Access—80 mins.

In Montana, you'll get an insider's view of Hank's private refuge and see the side that only a privileged few have seen before. In Tennessee, join Hank as he relaxes with friends at his home, and meet some of the people closest to him. In concert, see, hear and feel Hank's hits as only he can perform them: *Born To Boogie/If The South Woulda Won/Family Tradition/A Country Boy Can Survive/Young Country/My Name Is Bocaphus* • MORE!

**ALAN JACKSON**  
Here In The Real World

Here are Alan's three #1 smash hits, *Here In The Real World* and *Wanted* and *Chasin' The Neon Rainbow*. Plus, a pair of captivating live performances: *Dog River Blues* and *Home*. There's also his first big song *Blue Blooded Woman*. *Here In The Real World* clearly reveals Alan's humble, unpretentious manner combined with genuine talent and striking good looks—all the elements that have made him country's hottest new star. 25 minutes.

**KEITH WHITLEY**  
I Wonder Do You Think Of Me

On May 9, 1989, near the completion of the *I Wonder Do You Think Of Me* album, Keith Whitley passed away. One of his last conversations was of how much this record meant to him. He lives on in our hearts with this wonderful tribute featuring: *Don't Close Your Eyes? I'm No Stranger To The Rain/Ain't Nothin'/Homecoming/Hard Livin'/When You Say Nothing At All*... plus a tribute by Country Music Television's Stan Hitchcock. 30 mins.

**THE JUDDS**  
Love Can Build A Bridge—60 mins.

Follow the Judds as they pack up cameras, crew and loved ones and set off to Sedona, Arizona to shoot the world's first video performance in 3D. You'll also be treated to interviews and scenes from their last tour together as The Judds. Songs featured include: *This Country's Rockin'/Born To Be Blue/Rompin' Stompin' Blues/Love Can Build A Bridge*. There's even a special added bonus... a visit to Naomi's recent wedding.

**ERNEST TUBB**  
Thanks Troubadour Thanks—62 mins.

Here is the complete, true story of America's Troubadour. From his birth in depression-era Texas, the early influence of Jimmie Rodgers, the first recording sessions, early radio shows and Hollywood movies to the Grand Ole Opry, over 40 years on the road and sales of over 20 million records. This unique video biography features classic performances and Ernest's top hits. Listen to some of the biggest names in country music tell you the Ernest Tubb story.

Country Music  
**VIDEOS**

**GEORGE JONES**  
Same Ole Me—60 Mins.

They call him "Possum." They also call him "Country Music's Living Legend." Unquestionably, he is the greatest vocal interpreter that the world of country music has ever known. *Same Ole Me* is the story of George Jones, finally told his way with the help of such great stars as Roy Acuff, Loretta Lynn and Johnny Cash. It includes hits like: *He Stopped Loving Her Today/Barienders Blues/The Race Is On/She Thinks I Still Care/White Lightning/Why Baby Why/Some Day My Day Will Come/Always Get Lucky With You*.

**ANNE MURRAY**  
Doing Some Of Her Best—29 Mins.

She has been a country music stalwart of sorts for years. Few can match her distinctive voice and stage presence. Now you can meet this special lady through rare interview footage and hear her perform these great hits: *Time Don't Run Out On Me/Who's Leaving Who/Are You Still In Love With Me?/Now and Forever (You And Me)/Flying On Your Own/If I Ever Fall In Love Again (A Duet With Kenny Rogers)*.

**GEORGE STRAIT LIVE!**  
The Dallas Reunion Arena—52 mins.

Now, this platinum-selling country superstar is captured for the first time on video cassette. Backed by his famed *Ace In The Hole Band*, he whips up the audience performing all of his greatest hits, including: *The Fireman/The Cowboy Rides Away/Amarillo By Morning/All My Ex's Live In Texas/Any Old Time/Hot Burning Flames/Dance Time In Texas/A Six Pack To Go/Marina Del Rey/You Look So Good In Love* • AND MORE!

**CLINT BLACK**  
Put Yourself In My Shoes—19 mins.

He's the hottest new star to hit the country music stage... winner of the 1989 Horizon Award and 1990 CMA Male Vocalist of the Year. Meet this newest country music phenomenon up close. Hear Clint's frank interview with Country Music Video Magazine. Listen to all his great hits, including: *Killin' Time/A Better Man/Walkin' Away/Put Yourself In My Shoes*. If you are one of Clint's million plus fans, you won't want to miss this new video.

**REBA**  
A Special Celebration—30 mins.

Entertainer of the Year in 1986...an unprecedented four Female Vocalist of the Year awards by the Country Music Association...five consecutive gold albums. There is only one Reba and here is her best on one video: *Whoever's In New England/What Am I Gonna Do About You?/The Last One To Know/Sunday Kind Of Love/I Know How He Feels/Cathy's Clown*. It's more than a collection of video clips, it's an opportunity to know a great star.

**PATSY CLINE**  
The Real Patsy Cline—48 mins.

She had the voice of an angel, a career fraught with triumph and disaster and a private life that exceeds any scriptwriter's imagination. This is her complete story, from her brilliant rise to stardom to her tragic death at the pinnacle of her career. This unique video biography features rare, classic performances of such hit songs as *Crazy* and *I Fall To Pieces*. Plus, there's heartfelt commentary by the people who were closest to Patsy and saw it all, including: Dottie West, Mel Tillis, Carl Perkins, Loretta Lynn, Charlie Dick (Patsy's husband), Patsy's two children and more!

**TRAVIS TRITT**  
It's All About To Change—55 mins.

Here is one of country music's hottest young stars on one of today's hottest new videos. Now you can watch Travis perform all his hit videos. Included are: *Country Club/Help Me Hold On/Put Some Drive In Your Country/Drift Off To Dream/Here's A Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)*. There's also exclusive interview footage and musical excerpts from: *I'm Gonna Be Someone/All I'll Ever Be/Bible Belt*.

**MERLE HAGGARD**  
The Best Of Merle Haggard—60 mins.

"I have selected some of my favorite songs for this video...and I hope they will be your favorites too!"—Merle Haggard. You be the judge: *My Favorite Memory/Stay Here And Drink/Mama's Hungry Eyes/Today I Started Loving You Again/Old Man From The Mountains/Kern River/If I Could Only Fly/When Times Were Good/Honky-Tonk Night Time Man/Ida Red/Big City/Okie From Muskogee/Foolights* • 6 MORE!

**HIGHWAYMEN LIVE**  
Willie, Waylon, Cash, Kris—98 mins.

Here, captured on this memorable 98 minute video, is perhaps the most historic country music tour to ever take to the road. Four of the greatest talents of our time performing 26 great hits, including: *Highwayman/Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys/Trouble Man/Ring Of Fire/Folsom Prison Blues/Always On My Mind/Silver Station/Last Cowboy Song/Desperados Waiting For A Train/Luckenbach, Texas* • AND MORE!

**RICKY VAN SHELTON**  
To Be Continued...

Ricky has topped the album chart in three out of three tries, and he's scored seven #1 singles—so far. *To Be Continued*...features every one of his videos plus two live performances and a fascinating interview. Included are: *Crime Of Passion/Someone Lied/Life Turned Her That Way/I'll Leave This World Loving You/Hole In My Pocket (Live)/Living Proof (Live)/Statue Of A Fool/I Meant Every Word He Said*. 35 mins. • REVIEW BELOW!

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I also enjoyed your Update on Johnny Gimble in the May/June issue. Is there any way your magazine could feature the musicians more? They are artists in their own right, and you would be surprised at their following.

Gary Buffalo  
Una, South Carolina

*Bud Isaacs was the first Nashville musician to play a pedal steel, but Emmons and others say Shot and Emmons founded Sho-Bud. Buddy Charleston played a Sho-Bud with The Troubadours.—Ed.*

### Little Jimmy Dickens Dines

On the subject of Little Jimmy Dickens as covered in Legends of Country Music in the September/October issue of the *CMSA Newsletter*, I can remember the summer of 1941 when Jimmy would play at the Paramount Theater on Friday and Saturday afternoon and evening on State Street here in Bristol. The manager of the theater had a restaurant on Cumberland Street, and they would eat there after the shows.

Scott Lowell Jr.  
Bristol, Virginia

### Legendary Hank Thompson

I have to write and thank you for the nice article on Hank Thompson in the Legends of Country Music section of the July/August *CMSA Newsletter*. He truly is a legend. He had the smoothest, sincerest delivery of a song I have ever heard. He also had the best Western swing band to come out of that era. In addition, he was a talented songwriter. The stations just don't play enough of his music anymore. We have some nice young talent, but it remains to be seen whether any of them will endure as Hank has. I hope he hangs in there forever.

Verda Rasmussen  
Worland, Wyoming

### Big Thanks From Hank

I want to thank you for printing the very informative and complimentary article on me in your July/August edition of *Country Music*. Rich Kienzle did a superb job of presenting this story. It is also refreshing to read an accurate account. Unfortunately, not all writers are as meticulous in getting the facts down correctly as Rich did.

Those of us who helped pioneer this industry have a large legion of fans, and I know they appreciate your publication.

Sincerely,  
Hank Thompson  
Roanoke, Texas

### Claude Gray and Ann Jones?

Back in the early 1960's, I used to enjoy the singing of a Texas singer, Claude Gray. He had several big hits, including "Family Bible" and "I'll Just Have a Cup of Coffee and I'll Go." I wonder if any of the readers know what happened to Claude? Also wonder about a girl singer

by the name of Ann Jones on Capitol back in the late 40's and early 50's. I miss these great stars of the past.

John Bell  
Zeeland, Michigan

*Who knows about Gray and Jones?—Ed.*

### Info on Roy Shaffer

Many years ago (in the early 1940's), I used to hear my mother speak of a country singer named Roy Shaffer. Every time he was on the air, my mom would turn on our old battery-operated radio, and us children would have to sit down and be quiet. She would not let us make a sound while he was singing for fear she would miss a note or two. Mama used to sing "Down Among the Budding Roses" all the time, and that could have been one of his songs. If you have any information on Roy Shaffer, I would appreciate knowing more.

Naumie Cox  
Jonesville, Louisiana

*Roy Shaffer fans, come in, please.—Ed.*

### A Note on WestFest

In the People section in the July/August issue, Hazel mistakenly stated that the original WestFest started out West around Memorial Day. In actuality, it was Labor Day weekend, and this year was the 5th Anniversary (as Michael Martin Murphey said in 20 Questions, which was a pleasure to read). I think it's great that Michael has taken the cowboy/Indian show on the road for other people to enjoy. It's all that Michael talks about and much, much more.

Terry Mathes  
Littleton, Colorado

*Labor Day is correct.—Ed.*

### Goodbye, Dottie West

We're gonna miss you, Dottie West, in our eyes you were the best!

You brought rays of sunshine  
this old world could use,  
Now our hearts are aching  
as we listen to the news.

So lovely to look at,  
even better to hear,

We admired from a distance,  
never dared to get near.

I guess we're too late now,  
we won't get the chance,  
But as Garth Brooks sang,  
"We wouldn't miss The Dance."

This past year must have been  
a terrible blow,

But you kept on going up until  
that last show.

If the joy that you gave us could be  
measured and weighed,

Then all of these debts would  
surely be paid.

We love you, we miss you,  
but we'll always know.

On the big stage in Heaven  
you're the star of the show.

David Kinsey  
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

*See also People in this issue.—Ed.*

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QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the January/February 1992 issue.

1. Carlene Carter's stepfather is often referred to as "The Man in Black." Who is he?
2. Which veteran recently celebrated his 30th anniversary as a Grand Ole Opry member?
3. Name the artist who holds the Number One spot on the *Country Music Magazine* Top 25 album chart in this issue.
4. Doug Stone and Alan Jackson both hail from the same town in Georgia. Name the town.
5. Where will The Judds hold their final concert appearance?
6. What is the name of the new album by Patty Loveless?
7. Ricky Skaggs is married to a woman who is a member of the family singing group, The Whites. Who is she?
8. What full-size pickup truck retains more of its original value than any other?



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**Rockin' With Parton/Shelton**

In the People section in the July/August issue, there is a paragraph about the "Rockin' Years," the Parton/Shelton duet, in which Hazel states, "I've never heard Dolly sound better. Ricky Van wasn't singing as strong as I'd like him to sing." Since this is Dolly's song, I'm sure Ricky's voice was toned down and Dolly's intensified, but it's a wonderful collaboration and may well be the Vocal Event of the Year.

Ellen Morgan

Jackson, Mississippi

See People for CMA winners.—Ed.

**K.T. Born in Arkansas**

K.T. Oslin put on two shows here in Santa Rosa in September. Our country radio station, KRPO, had a contest for two front-row tickets. On one particular day, the qualifying question was "Where was K.T. born?" I remember reading an article about K.T. in the May/June 1990 issue stating she was born and raised in Texas. However, the DJ said "Sorry, wrong answer," and went on to another caller. I called the station manager the following morning, and according to them, she was born in Arkansas. Will you please research this question for me for my sanity?

Debe Limacher

Santa Rosa, California

Born in Arkansas, raised in Texas.—Ed.

**Dairy Farmers Say Help!**

To the Editor of *Country Music Magazine* and the Country Music Stars It Represents:

The year 1991 has been a financially devastating year for dairy farmers across the United States. We are getting paid as much now for our milk as we were in the 1970's. If nothing happens to change the course of events, 75% of all dairy farmers in this country will be out of business by this time in 1992.

I have seen a handful of wonderful, caring performers change the course of history with things like FarmAid. The dairy farmers need your help and support now.

Cheryl Goodrich

Harpersville, New York

**Ray Whitley Guitar**

Ray Whitley once played in a band in the old days for either Gene Autry or Roy Rogers, or both. Ray was an old cowboy movie star. My father, Leo Hill, owns a Recording King guitar and has owned it since 1939. The guitar has "Ray Whitley" written in cursive lettering on the head stock. I am inquiring if Ray once owned it, and if he didn't, who did. There is only one number on the guitar, EW-1904, on the top back of the head stock. Perhaps Ray will read this letter and will write.

Dixie Hultenschmidt

Gabbs, Nevada

Ray died in 1979. The guitar may have been from a "Ray Whitley" line produced

by Recording King. Whitley was the first to play the big Gibson J-200, the same model now used by Emmylou Harris. Whitley's is in the Country Music Hall of Fame Museum.—Ed.

**Lowdown on the Opry**

Could you please publish a list of the members of the Grand Ole Opry?

Raymond Butler

Hoover, Alabama

The Grand Ole Opry Fan Club publishes a list of members in its quarterly newsletter. To join, write 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214.—Ed.

**Misreading Holly Dunn**

I am outraged by the pulling of Holly Dunn's newest release, "Maybe I Mean Yes." I enjoyed this innocent, flirtatious song each time I heard it, and I looked forward to hearing it more and more as it climbed the music charts. I can't comprehend how this song could be misinterpreted as to encourage date rape. These people are obviously not accustomed to the fun, lighthearted songs that have made Holly Dunn one of my favorite female artists.

Brenda Kring

Axtell, Nebraska

For more, see People in this issue.—Ed.

**Show-Stopping Sawyer Brown**

I had the chance to see Sawyer Brown in concert this summer in Branson, Missouri. The boys put on the best show I have ever seen. Duncan is a great addition to the group, but Mark is still my favorite. I love country music and your magazine. The only thing it needs is a Sawyer Brown centerfold.

Angela Lippe

Blue Eye, Missouri

Another centerfold!—Ed.

**Loved Yodeling Slim**

There was a letter in the May/June issue about Yodeling Slim Clark. I have to tell you, my heart stopped when I saw that name. My mother and I knew him when I was three or four years old, and I am now in my 40's. Slim held a very special place in our memories, and we often wondered where and how he was. It would mean so much to be able to write to him.

Pat Smith

Mission Hills, California

For Yodeling Slim Clark's address, write the New England Country Music Historical Society, P.O. Box 575, Watertown, Massachusetts 02272-0575.—Ed.

**Stoned at Fan Fair**

That is, I met Doug Stone, who certainly made an impact on me! His emotion-filled singing really tugs at your heartstrings, and his down-home country charm totally captures your heart! It is easy to see why this talented young artist is creating such a stir on the country music scene! His



looks are pretty special, too, and he would make a gorgeous pull-out poster in *Country Music Magazine*! Which, by the way, is one of my favorite parts of the magazine!

Thank you, *Country Music Magazine*, for giving me many hours of reading pleasure, even if it is only every other month. I enjoy it so much, I wish it were every week!

Joni Emmel  
Defiance, Ohio

See feature on Stone in this issue.—Ed.



Elmer Angenendt with Travis Tritt. That's Travis' dog, Otis, on the bus.

### That Polite Travis Tritt

I just wanted to write and thank you for the great review of Travis Tritt's album, *It's All About to Change*, in the September/October issue. Travis is the best. I've been a fan of his since he first released "Country Club." My husband and I had the pleasure of meeting Travis before his concert at the Missouri State Fair in August. He was so nice and polite to talk to. How about a cover story, 20 Questions or centerfold of Travis in the near future? Or better yet, how about all three?

Shirley Dean Angenendt  
Slater, Missouri

Never satisfied.—Ed.

### Gill or Arnold?

My husband insists that the song, "When I Call Your Name," by Vince Gill, was not written by him but is an old song written and performed by Eddy Arnold in the 1940's or 1950's. He insists even the music is the same. We have had many discussions about this, but I cannot convince him. Can you help put this matter to rest?

Betty Wall  
Porterville, California

Vince Gill and Tim DuBois wrote "When I Call Your Name."—Ed.

### Grateful to Kevin Welch

My husband and I would like to publicly thank Kevin Welch and his band for a song well done! "Till I See You Again"

keeps us going since our son, Donald, died in 1989. Kevin answered a note I sent to him and sent us an 8x10 photo of himself which we always keep on our end table.

That's what country music is all about: caring performers like Kevin singing songs you can identify with in many ways. Good luck and God bless you, Kevin!

Linda and Jack Trimmer  
York, Pennsylvania

### Louise Mandrell and Letters

My sister and I race to be the first one to get and read *Country Music*. What a great magazine—all the articles are interesting, but I like Letters the best. It's the only place country fans can be heard. The other magazines give so little space to reader response, it doesn't give many of us a chance.

We saw Louise Mandrell at the Acuff Theatre in Nashville in May, and that was the best show I have ever seen. Let me tell you and everyone else, Louise has it all.

Star Cardwell  
Carmichael, California

### Shelton Review Not Fun

This one isn't gonna be fun either, folks! After reading Rich Kienzle's review of Ricky Van Shelton's album, *Backroads*, in the September/October issue, I was steaming. I finally cooled off when I told myself that this review is only one man's opinion, a man who obviously needs a hearing aid. If "I Am a Simple Man" is so weak, as Rich states, why did it become another Number One for RVS?

Thank you for the great centerfold of Ricky Van Shelton in the July/August issue. I love *Country Music Magazine* and only wish it was published monthly.

Gloria Ambrosino  
Gloversville, New York

### No Fluff on Shelton

I am so mad after reading Rich Kienzle's review of Ricky Van Shelton's album, *Backroads*, in the September/October issue. The man doesn't know what he is talking about. I agree that the *Loving Proof* album is a masterpiece, but there is certainly not anything missing from *RVS III*, and *Backroads* is even better. So maybe Ricky and Steve Buckingham do have a formula—a formula for putting out the hits and the kind of songs that they know Ricky's fans love and want from him.

Joanne Thompson  
Albertville, Alabama

### Agrees with Rich on Shelton

I have to agree with Rich Kienzle about Ricky Van's new album, *Backroads*, in the September/October issue.

Now, Ricky is my very favorite of the hatted acts—and if I were 20 years younger, I would show him how much I like him. Ricky sounds his best when he sings a ballad. What I'd like to hear Ricky

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sing is a whole album of the late, great Marty Robbins' love songs. If there ever is a *Ricky Van Shelton Sings a Tribute to Marty Robbins* album, I'll be in front of the line with my sweaty palm to purchase it!

Berta Joy  
Arvada, Colorado

## Jackson Review Brings in Bucks

Applause, applause to *Country Music Magazine* and Rich Kienzle for the outstanding review on Alan Jackson's album, *Don't Rock the Jukebox*, in the September/October issue. There have been some great things said about him and his music, but Rich was able to put into words what I was only feeling. I went ahead today and renewed my *Country Music* subscription for two more years! Anyone with that good taste has my loyalty and business.

Rita Mitchell  
Harlingen, Texas

## Willie's Great Stuff

Willie Nelson's IRS Tapes release, *Who'll Buy My Memories*—great stuff. I agree 100% with Bob Allen's review in the September/October issue. This is good material—an added bonus—just Willie's voice, his guitar and nothing else!

On a different note, your reviews are usually pretty tongue-in-cheek. I'm surprised you didn't mention what Willie's reaction might be to the question of how he got in "this IRS mess." He'd probably point to his shirt, smile and shrug his shoulders!

Terry Kline  
Bowling Green, Ohio

For Willie's shirt, see cover of the IRS CD.—Ed.

## Right On With Cash Review

I am writing to tell Bob Allen he hit the mark with the Johnny Cash review in the July/August issue. *The Mystery of Life* is a great album, and as always, Johnny never disappoints his fans. But he almost talks about Johnny in the past tense. There I disagree! Maybe Johnny doesn't have a Number One song every other year, but he is still the best country artist ever. He sticks to the songs and style he believes in, and he's been doing it for over 35 years. As long as he keeps making albums like this—from the heart—he'll always be Number One with me!

Jeri Beth Garner  
Meeker, Oklahoma

## Johnny Cash Going Strong

I disagree with Bob Allen's statement in Record Reviews in the July/August issue that Johnny Cash is "now in his twilight years as a recording artist." His latest two albums, *Boom Chicka Boom* and *The Mystery of Life*, show that he can continue to put out new material with his identifying sound and superb results.

On June 22nd, John appeared as a Celebrity Grand Marshal in the Milwaukee





**Country Music Magazine gets around. Here's Iron Eyes Cody, the Indian who starred in the Keep America Beautiful campaign in the 70's, with CMM's September/October issue, and Gene Bear, country music archivist on the West Coast, getting ready to tape a segment of Gene's cable TV talk show.**

City of Festivals Parade. That evening, he performed a "Salute to America" concert to a capacity crowd. He received three standing ovations. The Carter Family sang for a portion of the show, and nobody has heard a finer voice until they hear Anita Carter sing the Marty Robbins classic, "Don't Worry About Me."

Steven Rogstad  
Racine, Wisconsin

#### Down with Dillon Review

I read the review in the July/August issue on Dean Dillon's album, *Out of Your Ever Lovin' Mind*. I'm very disappointed about what John Morthland had to say about the song, "Friday Night's Woman." He stated that it had personality, but doesn't have a performance. I say bull-ony! I do agree with the comment, though, on the song "Holed Up in Some Honky Tonk." It is commanding. The video is great, too. If you don't like "Friday Night's Woman," then you'll just wind up with the "Everyday Blues."

Bobby Dean Sanchez  
Magdalena, New Mexico

#### Songwriter Says Howdy

Rich Kienzle, thanks for the great mention of my song, "Standing by the River," in your review of Kelly Willis' new record, *Bang Bang*, in the May/June issue. I'm still broke, but my ego is rating well! It is my first major cut, so here's hoping you'll have more to mention in the future. Thanks again!

Tom Clifford  
Austin, Texas

#### How About Rex Allen Jr.?

What happened to Rex Allen Jr.? He had a great voice and was known for songs such as "Goodbye," "I Can See Clearly Now," "Lying in My Arms" and others from his two Warner Brothers albums, recorded in Nashville in 1974 and 1979. He had a nice, deep, mellow voice like his father, the famous Rex Allen of Western movies.

B. Adams  
Milledgeville, Georgia  
*Catch Rex Allen Jr. on The Statler Brothers' new variety show on TNN.—Ed.*

#### Reader-Friendly CMM

I have just received my first issue of *Country Music Magazine* (September/October 1991) and I must say I am very pleased. Being a production manager for a local magazine, I know the hard work that goes into producing a reader-friendly product. The staff at *Country Music* is doing a wonderful job.

Julie Bernard  
Marrero, Louisiana

#### Sweeps Delivers Again

Thank you so much for the \$1,000. Winning the April/May 1991 Renewal Sweepstakes was something I never thought would happen. Since I'm about to celebrate my 27th birthday, it couldn't have come at a more perfect time. My friend and I went to see George Strait and Lorrie Morgan in concert at the Kentucky State Fair—it was great.

I feel country music is the heart of America. It is here to stay. I'm so proud to be a part of it.

Rusty Cooper  
New Albany, Indiana

#### Another Sweeps Winner

The winner of the June/July 1991 \$1000 Renewal Sweepstakes is Helen L. Monday of Granite, Oklahoma. Helen is also an Academy member.

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RECORDING ARTIST AND AWARD WINNING songwriter doing 50-50 co-writing on accepted materials. Best lyrics to: Ramsey Kearney, 602 Inverness Ave., Nashville, TN 37204.

PRODUCER ACCEPTING SONGS, poems, lyrics. IP, 2201 Murfreesboro Road, Suite D-202, Nashville, TN 37217.

COMPOSERS CONTEST. \$1,000 1st prize. Your music our lyrics. Send \$20 total entry fee. Check or money order to: Chuck Romer, 17700 S. Avalon, Suite 350, Carson, CA 90746. Enclose SASE with check and we'll send contest lyrics and details.

## SONGWRITERS

AWARD WINNING RECORD COMPANY screening country singers to record. (615) 883-5349.

SINGERS, SONGWRITERS needed. Free! Applications: United Agency, Box 862-D, New York, NY 10009.

PROFESSIONAL DEMO \$75. Free information. Sample \$1.00. Hollywood Recorders, 603 First, #138-CM, Oceanside, CA 92054. (619) 757-7446.

## VIDEOS

CABLE TV DESCRABLERS. All major brands. We specialize in dealer pricing. Toll free: 1-(800) 327-3407. K.D. Video, P.O. Box 29538, Mioneapolis, MN 55429.

FREE SAMPLE VIDEO! Custom videos/photos and 100's of stock videos/photos. \$10 P/H for video or \$1.00 for girls' filled catalog. Customized Productions, P.O. Box 2761, Dept. CM, Dunedin, FL 34697.

LEARN TO DANCE COUNTRY WESTERN STYLE two-step, waltz, swing, polka. Instruction by America's leading country western teachers. Write for free catalogue. SASE: Image Makers Video Service, P.O. Box 442, Rockland, MA 02370. (617) 871-0400.

LEARN TO PLAY THE COUNTRY PIANO by ear! This instructive video teaches you how to play the chords and rhythm parts that you always hear in country, blues and gospel. Learn to play by ear, even if you have never tried to play any instrument before. 60 minutes. Send \$29.95 plus \$3.00 P/H to: Nashville Warehouse, P.O. Box 1226, Hendersonville, TN 37077-9990.

LEARN TO PLAY BASIC BLUE-GRASS BANJO! 60-minute video starts with easy chord forms for song accompaniment and progresses to a variety of five-string techniques. Even an absolute beginner will soon be playing their favorite blue-grass hits. Send \$29.95 plus \$3.00 P/H to: Nashville Warehouse, P.O. Box 1226, Hendersonville, TN 37077-9990.

## CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

The classified ad rates are: \$4.75 per word for one issue - for three prepaid issues, the rate is \$4.45 per word, per issue. Minimum ad ten words. All classified advertising must be prepaid by either business check or money order. Sorry, no credit cards are accepted. The next available issue is January/February, which closes Wednesday, November 20th. To place your ad in this issue, just complete the information below and mail this coupon with your payment today.

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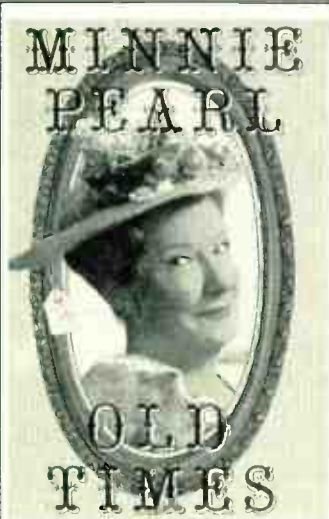
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Mail your copy and payment to: *Country Music*, P.O. Box 570, Clearwater, Florida 34617. Telephones: National (800) 762-3555, Florida (813) 449-1775.



### Minnie Pearl Special

As Rich Kienzle mentions in his Legends of Country Music feature, Minnie Pearl hasn't made that many recordings. The only one available is her version of "On Top of Old Smoky," which can be found on the King Records compilation, *Country & Western Hits: All-Star Artists* (King 710), reviewed in this issue's Essential Collector. However, another item that is available is Minnie's video biography, *Old Times*. This 50-minute tape provides an overview of Minnie's long and distinguished career. It includes early performance footage of Minnie on the Opry with Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Hank Thompson, George D. Hay and Rod Brasfield. Minnie supplies anecdotes on her life, the creation of her character and the people she's worked with over the years. The tape costs \$39.95. When ordering *Old Times*, use product code V1F. CMSA members, as always, deduct \$2.00 off prices listed. Include membership number with your order. See instructions below for ordering.

### Buried Treasures Special

Another batch of Bear Family boxed sets lead off this issue's Buried Treasures. This time around are two on Johnny Horton (together, they cover everything he ever recorded) and one on Johnny Cash. CMSA members deduct \$10.00 off of the regular price listed in the How to Get These Treasures box on the Buried Treasures page.

Other treasures dug up by Rich are several Marty Robbins CD's, a compilation of vintage George Jones material covering the first part of his lengthy career, a Brenda Lee anthology and an album of Willie Nelson rarities. Members may deduct \$2.00 off the list price for each of these items.

### Essential Collector Special

CMSA members are also entitled to a discount on items listed in Essential Collector. You may deduct \$2.00 off the price of each item covered in this section. This time, Rich has practically raided the vaults of the historic independent record label, King Records. Some of the "essentials" he turns up are classics from Moon Mullican, The Brown's Ferry Four, T. Texas Tyler, The Wilburn Brothers, The Maddox Brothers and Rose, and more. Be sure to include your membership number, and follow ordering instructions in the box on the Essential Collector page.

### Marty Stuart and The Journal

Marty Stuart paid a visit to the *Country Music Magazine* offices in Westport, Connecticut, where publisher Russell Barnard talked him into playing for the staff (see photo below). He also talked Marty into writing the cover story for the December issue of *The Journal*. It's on Flatt & Scruggs, and who better to write about them? Marty, after all, began his career playing in Lester Flatt's band at the age of 13. Members of the Academy are going to love this one—to illustrate the story, Marty sent along some rare memorabilia from his personal collection. If you haven't yet signed up for *The Journal*, do it now! To join the Acad-



emy and get a year's subscription to *The Journal*, send check or money order for \$10 to: American Academy for the Preservation of Old-Time Country Music, P.O. Box 2000, Marion, Ohio 43306. In addition to your subscription, you'll get *The Journal's* special Premier Collector's Edition and the 1992 Legends calendar.

### How to Order

To order any of the items listed on this page, send your check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 111291N, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include \$1.95 postage and handling for first item ordered, \$.95 for each additional item. Include membership number if taking discount.

## MEMBERS POLL/NOVEMBER 1991

# VOTE

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

### Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records, cassettes or compact discs) in the last month?  Yes  No  
How many records? \_\_\_\_\_ cassettes? \_\_\_\_\_ CD's? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which ones did you like best? List performers and album titles.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

3. List the numbers of your top five favorites from the Top 25 in this issue.

Singles (list 5 numbers)

Albums (list 5 numbers)

### Tell Us About Your Vehicles

4. How many vehicles does your household own? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Of those listed above, how many are passenger cars? \_\_\_\_\_  
Please list age, make and model for each:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Of those listed above, how many are pickup trucks, vans or other sport/utility vehicles? \_\_\_\_\_  
Please list age, make and model for each:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Of those listed above, how many are recreational vehicles (campers, trailers, snowmobiles, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Please list age, make and model for each:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Who Can Vote

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

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

**Fill out poll and mail to:** November Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 14th Floor, 380 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017.



# EDITOR'S CHOICE

## LORETTA LYNN: HONKY TONK GIRL

This authorized video biography, *Honky Tonk Girl*, is a lively and personal portrait of Loretta Lynn, touching on everything from her early life of poverty in Butcher Holler to the peak of her career. You'll follow Loretta from rural Kentucky—where you see old photos and live scenes of her homeplace—to the clubs of the Northwest, from her first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry to her acceptance speech as the 1972 Entertainer of the Year at the CMA Awards Show. Loretta helped change attitudes in our society by singing and writing about women like her who married too young, got pregnant too often and never had enough money to make ends meet. Through hit after hit and superstardom,



Loretta never changed much from the sweet but spunky honky tonk girl heard on her first record. She remains one of the most respected and loved entertainers in the world. *Honky Tonk Girl* features her singing "I'm a Honky Tonk Girl," "Coal Miner's Daughter," "Don't Come Home a-Drinkin' (With Lovin' on Your Mind)," "Wings Upon Your Horns," "You Ain't Woman Enough," "Fist City," "One's on the Way," "I Lie," "You're Lookin' at Country" and lots more. Besides Loretta, you'll see Patsy Cline singing "Walking after Midnight" and a duet by Loretta and Conway Twitty. Special guests include: Mooney (Loretta's husband), Charlie Dick (Patsy Cline's husband), Waylon Jennings, Ernest Tubb, Minnie Pearl, The Wilburn Brothers, Patty Loveless, Justin Tubb, Duane Allen (of The Oak Ridge Boys), Grant Turner (of WSM radio) and Owen Bradley (Loretta's record producer). See Rich Kienzle's review (July/August 1991 issue, *Country Music*). *Honky Tonk Girl* costs only \$29.98, #V8A, and is 60 minutes long. This is an outstanding video.

## EXPRESS TRAX SING-A-LONG TAPES

Now you can step into the country spotlight with the *Express Trax Sing-a-Long* tapes. These high quality, chrome tapes are recorded by top studio musicians in the songs' original keys. The backup band plays real instruments, such as the fiddle and steel guitar—no synthesizers! One side of the tape is all instrumental so that you can be the lead singer; the other side includes both instruments and vocals. These tapes are great for parties, talent competitions, night club performances or just having fun. Both amateurs and professionals will enjoy singing with the background tracks—each song is a big hit in country music. Package #16 includes: "Thunder Rolls"/Garth Brooks, "Better Man"/Clint Black, "Point of Light"/Randy Travis, "Down Home"/Alabama, "When I Call Your Name"/Vince Gill, "Friends in Low Places"/Garth Brooks, "Forever and Ever, Amen"/Randy Travis, "Put Yourself in My Shoes"/Clint Black, "I Am a Simple Man"/Ricky Van Shelton, "Don't Rock the Jukebox"/Alan Jackson, "If I Know Me"/George Strait, "If the Devil Danced in Empty Pockets"/Joe Diffie, "Blame It on Texas"/Mark Chesnutt, "If Tomorrow Never Comes"/



Garth Brooks and "Here in the Real World"/Alan Jackson. Package #28 includes: "Bing, Bang, Boom"/Highway 101, "Silver and Gold"/Dolly Parton, "Men"/Forester Sisters, "Fancy"/Reba McEntire, "Daddy's Hands"/Holly Dunn, "You Lie"/Reba McEntire, "Dear Me"/Lorrie Morgan, "We Both Walk"/Lorrie Morgan, "Fallin' Out of Love"/Reba McEntire, "One of Those Things"/Pam Tillis, "Love Can Build a Bridge"/The Judds, "Where've You Been"/Kathy Mattea, "I'm That Kind of Girl"/Patty Loveless, "One Hundred and Two"/The Judds and "Down to My Last Teardrop"/Tanya Tucker. Each package gives you 15 country songs on two cassettes. Only \$19.95 for each package, #PKG28 or #PKG16—please specify which when ordering.

## NEW COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE LOGO T-SHIRTS

We've finally got them! Just look at our new *Country Music Magazine* logo T-shirts. These stylish shirts are available in a designer color, iced heather, with our *Country Music* logo nicely displayed in turquoise with purple highlights—the look is great!



What's more, the shirts have those sporty roll-up sleeves which are so popular now, in your choice of color: turquoise or purple—they handsomely accent the logo. That's me, Robin, in the turquoise sleeve T-shirt, and my brother, Michael, in the purple—isn't he a cutie? Don't worry, these T-shirts are made over-sized, so you don't have to worry about them shrinking out of shape. To top it all off, the new *Country Music* logo T-shirt is 100% combed cotton—the softness is so incredible, I sleep in mine! The bottom of the shirt has slits so you can follow the fashion and wear yours outside your jeans or tucked in. Gear for Sports makes these A-1 quality T-shirts for us, as they do for many professional sports teams. The turquoise roll-up sleeve T-shirt is #G7C, and the purple sleeve is #G7A. Each T-shirt costs only \$21.95. Offered in medium, large and x-large sizes, please indicate which when ordering—don't forget, these T-shirts are over-sized!





## I LOVE COUNTRY MUSIC BASEBALL CAP

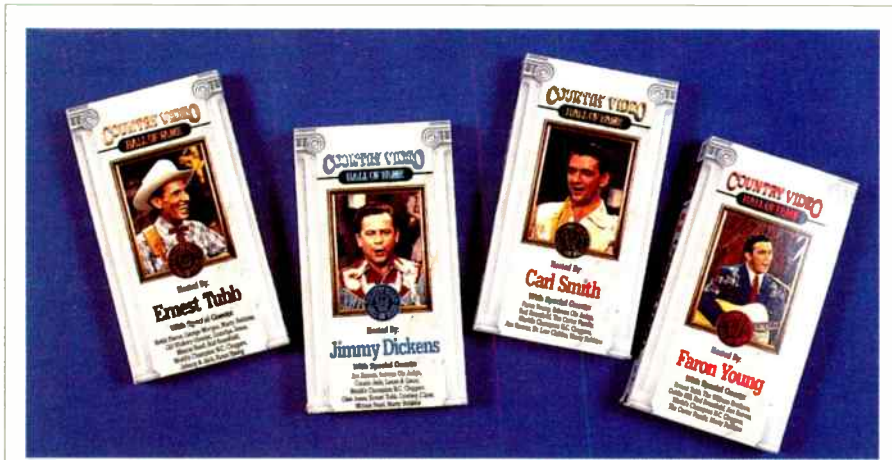
You are familiar with our ever-so-popular "I Love Country Music" T-shirt. Now you can get the same design on a baseball cap. The "I Love Country Music" baseball cap comes in navy blue with the words, "I Love Country Music," the guitar and the banjo in puffed white. To add a nice touch, the words "Country Music" and "love" are highlighted in a subtle red. The baseball cap is 100% polyester, with a foam lining inside the top-front and mesh in the back for ventilation—it is extremely comfortable. The "I Love Country Music" baseball cap costs only \$5.00, #G2N.

## CHRISTMAS WITH SHELTON, PARTON AND DANIELS

It's Christmas time—Santa, snow, crackling fires and sleigh rides—ooh, that sounds nice! And what better way to spend your holidays than with three country friends: Ricky Van Shelton, Dolly Parton and Charlie Daniels. *Ricky Van Shelton Sings Christmas* is as awesome as Ricky is. That man can take any style of song and make it sound great! *Ricky Van Shelton Sings Christmas* (CBS 45269) includes: "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "White Christmas," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "Silver Bells," "Silent Night," "Christmas," "Please Come Home for Christmas," "Pretty Paper," "Country Christmas," "Christmas Long Ago" and "What Child is This." *Dolly Parton: Home for Christmas* (Columbia 46796) includes: "First Noel," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "Go Tell It on the Mountain," "The Little Drummer Boy," "We Three Kings," "Jingle Bells," "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Joy to the World." *Charlie Daniels: Christmas Time Down South* (EPIC 46103) includes: "Hallelujah," "Little Folks," "Christmas



Time Down South," "Carolina I Hear You Calling," "My Christmas Love Song to You," "Mississippi Christmas Eve," "Jesus is the Light of the World," "Cowboy's Christmas Gift," "Carolina (I Remember You)" and "The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)." Each record is available on cassette and CD—no LP. Cassette cost is only \$7.98 and CD cost is \$15.98. Save money when you order two (any format), and take \$1.00 off; order all three and take \$2.00 off. What a deal!



## COUNTRY VIDEO HALL OF FAME

Imagine, four legendary stars host four different Hall of Fame videos. Ernest Tubb sings "Two Glasses, Joe" and "Letters Have No Arms" (#V3B) and hosts performances by Webb Pierce, George Morgan, Marty Robbins, Old Hickory Quartet, Grandpa Jones, Minnie Pearl, Rod Brasfield, North Carolina Cloggers, Johnny & Jack and Faron Young. Next, Little Jimmy Dickens (#V4C) hosts Jim Reeves, Ernest Tubb, Cowboy Copas, Minnie Pearl, Marty Robbins, the Solemn Ole Judge, Cousin Jody, Lonzo & Oscar, North Carolina Cloggers and Okie Jones, plus performs "Hillbilly Fever." On the third video, Faron Young (#V5F) is host; his guests include: Ernest Tubb, The Wilburn Brothers, Goldie Hill, Rod Brasfield, Jim Reeves, Marty Robbins, The Carter Family and the World's Champion North Carolina Cloggers. You'll also see Faron doing "If You Ain't Lovin'." The fourth video, hosted by Carl Smith (#V6G), includes performances by Faron Young, Marty Robbins, Jim Reeves, The Carter Family, the Solemn Ole Judge, Rod Brasfield, World's Champion North Carolina Cloggers and Dr. Lew Childre, plus Smith on "Satisfaction Guaranteed" and "Darling, Am I the One." All these legends are in their prime. You can order each video separately for just \$9.99, or you can save \$4.00 and buy all four at only \$35.99. Now that's a deal! Please don't forget the product codes.

## COUNTRY MUSIC BELT BUCKLES

Look at these gorgeous belt buckles made out of genuine pewter with vibrant enamel colors highlighting the words "Country Music." These buckles will wear handsomely on your belt—the publisher of *Country Music Magazine* loves his! The "I Love Country Music" buckle is nicely accented with a bronze fiddle and guitar; the "Country Music" buckle shows off a banjo and fiddle. Each belt buckle only costs \$9.95, or save money and buy two for \$17.90. "I Love Country Music" belt buckle, #G6J; "Country Music" belt buckle, #G7L; both belt buckles, #G6J/G7L.





## GARTH BROOKS VIDEO

It's new! It's hot! It's Garth! Someone finally came out with a fantastic compilation of Garth's most popular videos. Included in the set, titled *Garth Brooks*, are "If Tomorrow Never Comes," "The Dance" and "The Thunder Rolls." In "If Tomorrow Never Comes," Garth's real wife, Sandy, plays his "video" wife—a special touch. "The Dance," already well-known, will definitely go down in history. Garth has said many times that if

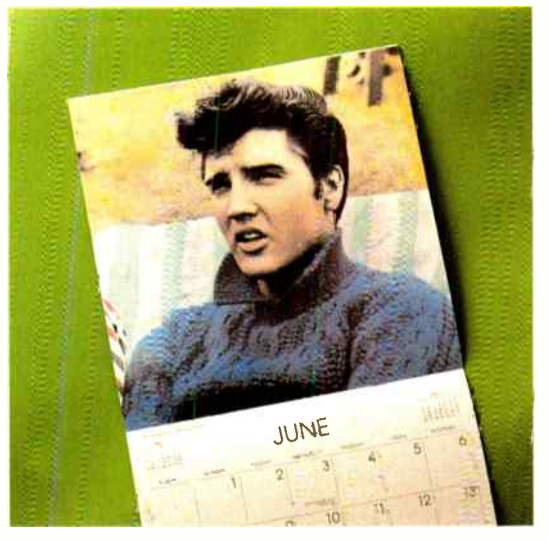


something ever happens to him, "please play 'The Dance' video." And then there's "The Thunder Rolls," which has stirred up so much controversy. Interestingly, Garth explains the creation of this video and his purpose in making it. He even goes into detail about his performance as the "bad mar." An additional surprise—the original last line to the song was cut from the recording. It is portrayed in the video!

In addition to the videos, you get live clips of Garth performing "Friends in Low Places," "Much Too Young (To Feel This Damn Old)" and "Not Counting You." Garth's video runs 30 minutes and costs \$19.98, #V2D—definitely worth every minute!

## ELVIS 1992 WALL CALENDAR

Wow! Look at dreamy-eyed Elvis Presley captured on 12 months of the 1992 Elvis Wall Calendar. All 12 glossy, close-up pictures of Elvis are 12" x 12", and the entire calendar opens up to 12" x 24". Scattered throughout the calendar are facts about Elvis' life and career. For example, do you know when Elvis performed four sold-out concerts at Madison Square Garden or when he graduated from high school? Find out the answers to these questions on your Elvis 1992 Calendar. It sells for only \$9.95, #G6X. Don't miss out on all the great collector's photos!

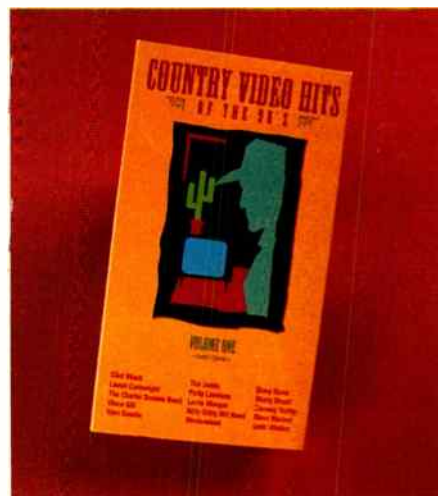


## COUNTRY FASHION JEWELRY

Can't you just see yourself or your friends in these beautiful earrings and brooches! When I was in Nashville in June, I bought myself a pair of the guitar earrings and the cowboy hat pin—they look great with my new boots! The violin brooch (#J1X) is gold with rhinestone clusters—it's a class act. The guitar-shaped earrings (#J2A) are also gold with rhinestones, and with emeralds, too—they look great with the brooch. And how about those adorable gold cowboy-hat-shaped earrings (#J3M) with diamond color posts? To "boot," you don't want to be without a gold mesh cowboy hat pin to match (#J4D). Each item of jewelry sells for only \$7.98, or save money, make a set and buy two pieces for only \$13.98—\$2.00 off! These are fantastic stocking stuffers! Please note these earrings are for pierced ears only.

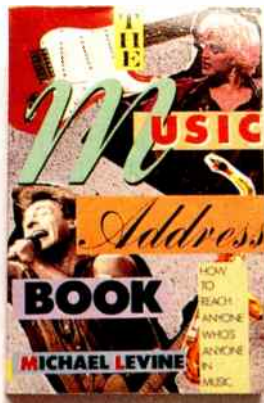
## COUNTRY VIDEO HITS OF THE 90'S

What a treat! Fifteen of your favorite country videos brought together in one place. Now you don't have to wait for CMT to play what you like. Just pop *Country Video Hits of the 90's* into your VCR, and there you have it. If you are like me, and can't get CMT at all, this certainly is a great compilation of songs—now I don't feel I've missed anything! *Country Video Hits of the 90's* includes: "A Better Man" by Clint Black, "I Watched It All" by Lionel Cartwright,



"Simple Man" by The Charlie Daniels Band, "When I Call Your Name" by Vince Gill, "That Just About Does It" by Vern Gosdin, "Give a Little Love" by The Judds, "Don't Toss Us Away" by Patty Loveless, "Out of Your Shoes" by Lorrie Morgan, "When It's Gone" by The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, "Sunday in the South" by Shenandoah, "I'd Be Better Off (In a Pine Box)" by Doug Stone, "Cry Cry Cry" by Marty Stuart, "Crazy in Love" by Conway Twitty, "The Weekend" by Steve Wariner and "It Ain't Nothin'" by Keith Whitley. What a line-up! *Country Video Hits of the 90's* costs only \$19.95, #V6E, and runs 56 minutes. A great buy!



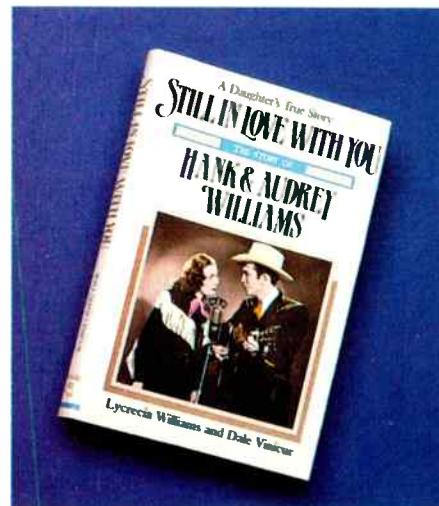


### THE MUSIC ADDRESS BOOK

At age 35, Michael Levine is regarded as the world's foremost address expert. He wrote *The Address Book* and *The New Address Book*, the latter receiving overwhelming praise. Joan Lunden of *Good Morning America* said, "I love the book...and plan to use it!" *USA Today* remarked, "A gem...remarkable, thorough and accurate." Mr. Levine has gone one step further with his new creation, *The Music Address Book*. This book contains complete and up-to-date addresses for more than 3,000 singers, performers, managers, record companies and fan clubs. For all you Randy Travis fans, *The Music Address Book* will show you how to contact him. I'm a Clint Black fan, and now I know where to send Clint a letter. For any songwriters trying to break into the music industry, this book is a great resource for contacting record labels and/or singers. *The Music Address Book* is alphabetized by name and organized into three sections: The Addresses, Record Labels and Music Business Glossary. *The Music Address Book* also contains sections on "Getting Your Music Heard" and "Avoiding Ripoffs." This 228-page book sells for \$8.95, #B1C.

### DOLLY PARTON DOLL

Look what's new! What a great Christmas gift! This gorgeous replica of Dolly Parton stands one-and-one-half feet high and displays Dolly's beautiful figure and elegant costume. Dolly's wearing a red-leatherette dress adorned with gold and white lace, and her gold belt is accented with a red ruby—she even has on a gold necklace! In addition, her fabulous blonde hair is decorated with a red lace bow. The Dolly Parton doll is a great gift for both young and old—plus an invaluable collector's item! The Dolly Parton Doll costs only \$49.95, #D1A, and includes a stand.



### STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU: THE STORY OF HANK AND AUDREY WILLIAMS

Lycrecia Williams tells the true story of her parents, Hank and Audrey, in this touching biography, *Still in Love With You*. For the first time, someone who knew both of them intimately has opened up a window on their lives, so that the real Hank and Audrey can be seen. Lycrecia recounts the previously untold truth of their lives, interprets it in light of what is known today about alcoholism and co-dependency and—with tenderness and humor—shares the love that Hank and Audrey had for each other. Presenting stories that have never before appeared in print, the book re-introduces Hank and Audrey as they were, with all their flaws and beauty. Rich Kienzie reviewed *Still in Love With You* in *Essential Collector* (May/June 1990 issue, *Country Music*), where he described it as a "well-done narrative." You've read other stories on Hank and Audrey. Now get the whole truth in this 199-page, hardcover book for \$16.95, #B4F. Plus, you don't want to miss out on the 69 classic photos of the Williams family.

## NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE

Mail to: Nashville Warehouse, P.O.Box 292553, Nashville, TN 37229

(Please Print Clearly)						
ITEM NO.	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION/COLOR/SIZE	ITEM PRICE	SHPG./HNDLG.	TOTAL	
NAME						
ADDRESS						
CITY	STATE	ZIP				
ENCLOSED IS A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR \$ PAYABLE TO NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE						
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ACCOUNT #						
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# Essential Collector

by Rich Kienzle

King Records was founded in Cincinnati in 1943 by Syd Nathan, a local furniture and used record dealer. His first recording artists were Grandpa Jones and Merle Travis, who were then performing on WLW's *Boone County Jamboree*. Since WLW discouraged their artists from recording, Merle and Grandpa used the name The Sheppard Brothers for their records. Over the next 20 years King became one of America's major independent labels, first for country, then for rhythm and blues.

King's country artists ran the gamut of styles from full-blown honky tonk (Cowboy Copas, The York Brothers, Hawkshaw Hawkins) and sentimental ballads (Clyde Moody) to Western swing (Hank Penny, Luke Wills), bluegrass (The Stanley Brothers, Reno and Smiley), traditional country (Grandpa Jones) and country boogie (The Delmore Brothers and Wayne Raney). Years before Elvis began recording black music, the foul-tempered, cigar-chewing Nathan had his black artists recording country songs and vice versa.

Some of King's classic albums are available again on cassette or CD and include the original versions of certain hits that haven't been available for years. Don't trust the historical information on the back of the jackets—the only liner notes included. They state that Starday Records (which later merged with King) was founded in 1952 by Don Pierce. Starday was actually founded in 1952 by Texans Jack Starnes and Pappy Daily. Former Four Star Records executive Pierce became a partner in the business in 1953 and in the late 50's took over the company.

**Various Artists:** King was big on packaging its hits on LP's during the 50's. These samplers typically included a fair percentage of the label's big



hits plus other numbers. While not every song on *All Time Country & Western Hits* (King 537) was a blockbuster, there are some classics: Moon Mullican's 1950 Number One record, "I'll Sail My Ship Alone"; Cowboy Copas' 1949 hit version of "Tennessee Waltz," his 1948 "Signed, Sealed and Delivered" and his original 1946 rendition of "Filipino Baby"; *Midwestern Hayride* star Bonnie Lou's odd sounding 1953 "Tennessee Wig Walk"; Grandpa Jones' 1947 classic, "Old Rattler"; The Delmore Brothers' 1949 masterpiece, "Blues Stay Away From Me" (with Wayne Raney on harmonica); and Raney's own 1949 hit, "Why Don't You Haul Off and Love Me."

King wasn't particularly clever in naming these collections. *Country & Western Hits: All-Star Artists* (King 710) is a bit more oriented toward bluegrass and rural music than the compilation discussed above, and mixes material from both King Records and Four Star (King released Four Star material on LP's). From Four Star comes Jimmy Dean's 1953 hit, "Bummin' Around" (his first), Ferlin Husky's "Wise Guys" and Webb Pierce's 1949 number, "High Geared Daddy." Among the big hits from King are Clyde Moody's classic, "Shenandoah Waltz"; Moon Mullican's sentimental 1948 hit, "Sweeter Than the Flowers"; Hawkshaw Hawkins' 1951 "Slow Poke"; and Jimmie Osborne's sober 1949 rendering of "The Death of Little

Kathy Fiscus," based on a true event. Though they weren't hits, Wayne Raney's awesome 1947 "Lonesome Wind Blues" with The Delmores and "Money, Marbles and Chalk" by Reno & Smiley, included here, are outstanding. Minnie Pearl's 1946 "On Top of Old Smokey" features backing by Pee Wee King's Golden West Cowboys and is one of her few recordings still in print.

**Moon Mullican:** Moon Mullican, the "King of the Hillbilly Piano Players," did his finest work for King after World War II. Legend has it that he and fellow Opry member Hank Williams co-wrote "Jambalaya" while they were heading to a show in a plane piloted by Minnie Pearl's husband, Henry Cannon. *Moon Mullican Sings and Plays 16 of his Favorite Tunes* (King 628), released in 1959, has none of his hits, but does feature some terrific material recorded from 1950 through 1956. There's his own version of "Jambalaya" (with slightly different lyrics), plus two driving 1950's rockers, "Seven Nights to Rock" and "I'm Mad With You," both featuring (uncredited) backup from Boyd Bennett and his Rockets. Several sentimental songs, "A Mighty Pretty Waltz," "Keep a Light in the Window for Me" and "A Crushed Red Rose and a Faded Blue Ribbon" are here as well. Moon was also a master of novelties ("Southern Hospitality" and "Short But Sweet") and stomping rhythm and blues (such as "A Thousand and One Sleepless

Nights" and King's black rhythm and blues artist, Tiny Bradshaw's, 1950 hit, "Well, Oh, Well"); his versions of these songs are all included.

**The Stanley Brothers:** The Stanley Brothers and The Clinch Mountain Boys made their first King recordings in Cincinnati on September 30 and October 1, 1958. Those two sessions were released in their entirety on the 1960 LP, *The Stanley Brothers and The Clinch Mountain Boys* (King LP 615). (The Stanleys had previously recorded for Rich-R-Tone, Columbia and Mer-



cury.) The dozen numbers here include "Train 45," "Heaven Seemed So Near," "How Mountain Girls Can Love," "She's More to Be Pitied," "Your Selfish Heart," "Keep a Memory" and four more with vocals, plus instrumentals like "Mastertone March" (named for the Gibson banjo played by Ralph) and "Clinch Mountain Backstep."

**The Wilburn Brothers:** Since Doyle and Teddy Wilburn were hitmakers for Decca Records for so many years, it's easy to forget that they didn't begin their careers as a Nashville act, but as The Wilburn Family. As a quartet featuring Doyle, Teddy, Lester and Leslie Wilburn, they worked over KWKH in Shreveport and were *Louisiana Hayride* regulars. The Wilburns recorded both for Webb Pierce's Pacemaker label in the early 50's and also for Four Star.

The Four Star material wound up on *The Wonderful*





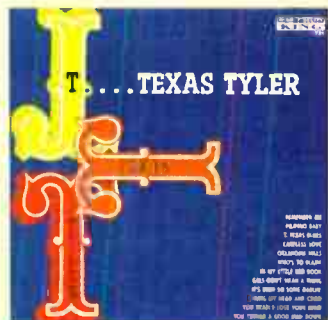


**Wilburn Brothers** (King 746). It features the four brothers on a mixture of gospel and country songs, most of them recorded in the 50's. If you're used to Owen Bradley's Nashville Sound production on Doyle and Teddy, this is going to be a bit of a shock. The music is rawer and heavy on mandolin, the harmonies a bit ragged. There's the excellent "Bugle Call from Heaven," a respectable version of Hank Williams' "Long Gone Lonesome Blues" and an awful version of Tennessee Ernie's "Anticipation Blues."

**Railroad Special: All Aboard!** For the *Railroad Special* (Starday SLP 170) is a 16-song anthology of various railroad songs recorded for Starday by different artists in the 50's and early 60's, much of it with a bluegrass and old-timey flavor. Starday did many theme albums in the same vein, most notably their classic 1960's truck driver albums. A very young Jim Glaser (seen in a photo on the back cover) is featured on "Midnight Special," "The Dying Hobo" and "Casey Jones." Bill Clifton & His Dixie Mountain Boys perform "Railroadin' on the Great Divide" and "Cannonball Blues." "Orange Blossom Fiddle" by Hank Snow's Rainbow Ranch Boys features fiddler Chubby Wise. Wayne Raney's "Country Express" spotlights his harmonica. The Stanley Brothers are here with "Ridin' That Midnite Train" and "Choo Choo Comin'," while an early incarnation of The Country Gentlemen is featured on "Train in the Hollow."

**The Brown's Ferry Four:** The Brown's Ferry Four was yet another product of WLW radio; they later inspired *Hee Haw's* Gospel Quartet. Little wonder

that Syd Nathan recorded them as well. Their charter members were Grandpa Jones, Merle Travis and Alton and Rabon Delmore. However, on many of their King recordings, the lineup varied; at one point Red Foley was an anonymous group member. (None were ever credited on the records.) *16 Sacred Songs, Volume 2* (King LP 590) brings together gospel classics recorded between 1945 and 1951. Most of these songs probably feature the original group since King held Delmore Brothers and Grandpa Jones sessions at the same time as those for the early Brown's Ferry Four. The numbers are mostly standards: "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," "Just a Little Talk With Jesus," "Over in the Glory Land," "Jesus Hold My Hand" and "Hallelujah Morning." Of the later songs, two at least, "We Should Walk Together" and "There's a Page in the Bible," include Grandpa, who recorded at the same time these songs were laid down.



**T. Texas Tyler:** In this column back in the July/August 1991 issue, we reviewed a King Records Webb Pierce LP that was spoiled by some over-

dubbed voices and drums added to the original recordings. I'm glad to report that *T. Texas Tyler* (King 721), originally released in 1961, features material every bit as good, but without any stupid overdubs. These songs were recorded for Four Star from 1945 through the late 40's in Los Angeles. Tyler's classic "Remember Me" and "Filipino Baby" are both performed in bare-bones, simple country arrangements. The rest were recorded with an incredible group of L.A. Western swing musicians, among them steel guitar genius Noel Boggs, pianist Vic Davis, guitarist Jimmy Wyble, ex-Bob Wills trumpeter Danny Alguire and fiddler Don Decker. They rip the stuffing out of "In My Little Red Book," "Careless Love," "Oklahoma Hills," "T. Texas Blues," "You Nearly Lose Your Mind" and "Gals Don't Mean a Thing."

Anyone who only remembers Tyler for his recitation of "Deck of Cards" will be surprised by this one. Any Western swing fan who loves hot instrumental work needs it.

**The Maddox Brothers and Rose:** Though they were born in Alabama, The Maddox Brothers (Cal, Fred, Don and Henry) and Rose moved to California during the Depression, and made their greatest recordings after World War II. Rose's jagged, unpolished voice and terrific phrasing worked well on both ballads and wild, uninhibited blues and boogie tunes that antici-

pated the frantic sounds of rockabilly.

*The Maddox Brothers and Rose* (King 677) comes from the group's late 40's recordings for Four Star. It includes Rose's now-classic performance of Woody Guthrie's ballad, "Philadelphia Lawyer," as well as more restrained ballads, "Gosh I Miss You All the Time" and "No One Is Sweeter Than You." These last contrast with their crazed



versions of Hank Thompson's hit, "Whoa, Sailor"; Wayne Raney's "Why Don't You Haul Off and Love Me"; the old blues number, "Step It Up and Go"; and even the traditional song, "Sally Let Your Bangs Hang Down." Some of the wilder lead guitar playing is almost certainly that of Roy Nichols, who later worked with Merle Haggard.

**Reno and Smiley:** *Good Old Country Ballads* (King 621), released in 1959 but recorded at various sessions ranging from 1952 to 1956, chronicles one of the finest of all bluegrass duos to follow in the wake of The Stanley Brothers and Flatt and Scruggs. Banjoist Don Reno, who replaced Earl Scruggs in Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys, and guitarist Red Smiley, were an outstanding, hardcore bluegrass group, and one that had an independent streak. You'll find hard-edged tunes like "Let's Live for Tonight" and "Cruel Love" along with "Barefoot Nellie" and "Drifting with the Tide." Don and Red also did novelties like "I'm the Biggest Liar in Town" and, on their 1956 session (probably at Syd Nathan's suggestion), "Country Boy Rock 'n' Roll," which is less rock 'n' roll than it is garden variety bluegrass with a blues flavor.

### How to Get These Collectibles

Available in formats shown at prices shown: *All-Time Country and Western Hits* (K 537), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/*All-Time Country & Western Hits: All Star Artists* (K 710), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/Moon Mullican, *Sings and Plays 16 of His Favorite Tunes* (K 628), cassette only \$9.98/Brown's Ferry Four, *16 Sacred Songs, Volume 2* (K 590), cassette only \$9.98/*T. Texas Tyler* (K 721), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/Reno and Smiley, *Good Old Country Ballads* (K 621), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/The Wilburn Brothers, *The Wonderful Wilburn Brothers* (K 746), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/*Maddox Brothers and Rose* (K 677), CD \$10.98, cassette \$9.98/*The Stanley Brothers and The Clinch Mountain Boys* (K 615), cassette \$9.98/*All Aboard the Railroad Special* (SLP 710), cassette only \$9.98. Send check or money order payable to Nashville Warehouse to Dept. 111291EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, TN 37229. Add \$1.95 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional.



# Buried Treasures

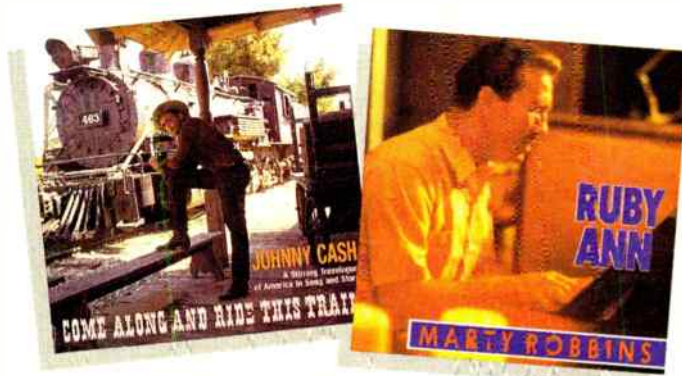
by Rich Kienzle

**Johnny Horton:** Johnny Horton's career was just beginning when he died in a violent car crash near Tyler, Texas, in 1960. Thanks to Dwight Yoakam, Horton's contributions have resurfaced recently, through Yoakam's revival of "Honky Tonk Man." Now, on two major packages, every known Horton recording is available.

*The Early Years* (Bear Family BFX 15289) consists of seven albums—105 songs, covering Horton's first recordings from his early days in Los Angeles and Shreveport. The set begins with his first records for the tiny Cormac label in 1951, then those made for Abbott in 1951-52 and his Mercury sides from 1952-54. Also available for the first time ever are 31 demo recordings made in the early 1950's. It wouldn't be fair or honest to say that everything here is fantastic, particularly the early stuff. Horton was still obscure, and, like many new artists, was feeling his way by doing derivative material like "Go and Wash Your Dirty Feet," an imitation of Little Jimmy Dickens' early songs.

Other numbers are far better, among them "Words," "Coal Smoke, Valve Oil and Steam" and "Rhythm in My Baby's Walk," which features an explosive steel guitar solo from Speedy West. Except for one missing number, "Take My Word," all of the Mercury recordings are here including unissued sides. Again, everything isn't a gem. Imagine what the lyrics of a song titled "Ha-Ha and Moonface" sound like. However, "Tennessee Jive" is respectable country boogie, and Horton's acid-tongued "The Devil Made a Masterpiece" is excellent. So are "The Mansion You Stole" and "All for the Love of a Girl." (He later re-recorded both for Columbia.)

Remember when Willie Nelson hit big and everyone was repackaging his old re-



cordings? Well, the same thing happened with Horton in the late 50's. Dot and Briar Records each repackaged his early Abbott singles on albums and overdubbed added instruments. This compilation reissues both of those LP's, which may be excessive. How many people will care that much about mere overdubs?

However, the superb oversized book included with the set more than redeems it. Containing detailed notes, a complete discography and amazing photographs, it could stand alone without the records. It's laden with Horton memorabilia including old record advertisements, fan club material and more. Several revealing photos even show Horton minus his toupee. The same booklet is also included in the boxed set discussed below.

*The Columbia Years* (BCD 15470) continues the Horton saga on four CD's containing 127 recordings, 35 of them demo recordings made during the mid-to-late 50's (including Horton singing "Shake, Rattle and Roll"). All the early masterpieces, including "Honky Tonk Man," "The Wild One" and "Ole Slew-Foot," are here, with Grady Martin's astounding twanging guitar holding it together. The saga song hits, "North to Alaska," "Battle of New Orleans," "Sink The Bismarck," "Johnny Reb" and the rest are here as well. So is the strange group of pop songs he recorded in 1958 in Shreveport for the SESAC song licensing organization.

By now, you'd assume that everything in the Columbia vaults would have been released, but there's more, including "Over-Loving You" and alternate takes of songs like "North to Alaska" (originally called "Go North!") and "Sink the Bismarck." Twelve of the demo recordings are included twice, the originals and the versions that were overdubbed and released in 1969 as the LP *Johnny Horton on the Road*. Again, not everything here is a gem, but the high standards on most of the Columbia sides mean they still hold up. As noted above, the booklet in these two sets is the same.

**Johnny Cash:** *Come Along and Ride This Train* (BCD 15563) consists of 87 songs on four CD's, and covers Cash's saga songs and Americana numbers from 1960 to 1977. It begins with the material from his *Ride This Train* album and continues on through *Blood, Sweat and Tears*, the western album *Mean As Hell*, *Ballads of the True West*, the controversial *Bitter Tears, America*, *From Sea to Shining Sea* and *The Rambler*. Cash ran the gamut on these, from the wild West to dramatic incidents in American history, to life in rural America, to vignettes from his own Arkansas boyhood. He based the song "Cisco Clifton's Fillin' Station" on a gas station located near his hometown of Dyess.

Among the other Cash standards that debuted on these albums were "Busted," "Mr.

Garfield," "The Ballad of Ira Hayes" and "25 Minutes to Go." And, as our own Bob Allen states in his excellent liner notes, "Much of this music is a testament to Cash's most vital, creatively focused, and thematically ambitious period as a writer, singer and interpreter..." The booklet also includes original comments about *Ride This Train* from Merle Travis and Tex Ritter. Illustrating the booklet are various color publicity shots of Cash in cowboy duds, many of them never published, but obviously taken for album covers. My only gripe: why no discographical data?

**Marty Robbins:** In 1956 Columbia Records released Marty Robbins' first LP, *Rockin' Rollin' Robbins*, a collection of his mid-50's rock 'n' roll tracks. Now a CD with the same title, *Rockin' Rollin' Robbins* (BCD 15566), is available with some added tracks. Recorded from 1953 to 1958, these 19 tracks are mostly hard rockers. The best known numbers are Marty's 1954 hit cover of Elvis' "That's All Right (Mama)" and his covers of "Maybelline," "Long Tall Sally," Bill Monroe's "Footprints in the Snow" (from 1958) and "Pain and Misery." His 1954 duet with Nashville session guitarist Ray Edenton is here along with other Marty originals like "Mean Mama Blues" and "Tennessee Toddy." Balancing it out are "Singing the Blues" and "Knee Deep in the Blues." Complete discographical data and notes are included.

When Columbia's New York producer, Mitch Miller had pop singer Guy Mitchell, cover "Singing the Blues" and "Knee Deep in the Blues," Mitchell enjoyed the pop chart success that Marty could have had. When Marty got upset, Columbia brought him to New York in early 1957 to record with Miller and Guy Mitchell's arranger, Ray Conniff. The first session pro-



duced a crossover smash: "A White Sport Coat (And a Pink Carnation)." For two years following that session, between tours and sessions in Nashville, Robbins continued to record with Miller and Conniff. *The Story of My Life: The Ray Conniff Recordings* (BCD 15567) reissues all but one session Marty did with Miller and Conniff. Several were soft teen-pop hits, among them "The Story of My Life," "Just Married," "Stairway of Love," "She Was Only Seventeen" and "Ain't I the Lucky One." "The Hanging Tree" came from the movie of the same name. The detailed notes include new interviews with Conniff and with Miller.

*Ruby Ann* (BCD 15569) explores Marty's 1959-1966 pop efforts, including his final session with Miller and Conniff. These songs weren't quite on the level of the earlier sides. Two versions of his 1962 hit "Ruby Ann"—the hit version, and an alternate slower take with horns—are included here, as is "Teenager's Dad," which also appeared on a previous Bear reissue. Robbins continued cutting teen material like "Cap and Gown" even after musical trends changed in the mid-60's. During that period he recorded "A Whole Lot Easier" and "Hello Baby (Goodbye Baby)" in 1964, "Baby's Gone" in 1965 and "You've Been So Busy Baby" in 1966. This volume isn't as strong as the first two, but ties up the loose ends.

Marty loved Hawaiian ballads. In 1953 he recorded his first Hawaiian number; in 1957 he recorded an entire LP, *Song of the Islands*, and in 1963 a follow-up album titled *Hawaii's Calling Me*. This collection, *Hawaii's Calling Me* (BCD 15568), brings together both albums and related material for a total of 28 songs.

Robbins, of course, was a peerless Hawaiian-style vocalist, able to handle even falsetto singing. *Song of the Islands* included songs like "Beyond the Reef" and "Sweet Leilani" while *Hawaii's Calling Me* teamed him with Jerry Byrd. Byrd, Nashville's top non-pedal country steel guitarist in

the early 50's, refused to switch to pedal guitars when they came into vogue. On this album, Byrd and Robbins created magic, including a new version of "Beyond the Reef" that's arguably superior to the original. Byrd's sweet-buttery steel playing fit hand-in-glove with Marty's vocals.

Another new Bear Family Robbins compilation, *Island Woman* (BCD 15571), mixes 25 Jamaican and Tex-Mex songs recorded from 1963 to 1968. They aren't on the level of the other material Marty was cutting at the time. The CD includes everything from "Bahama Mama" and "Kingston Girl" to traditional Mexican fare like "La Paloma" and "Maria Elena." This musical tack was primarily a footnote to the other things he was doing.

**George Jones:** I compiled and annotated this one, so facts only. *The Best of George Jones: 1955-1967* (Rhino 70531) covers the years when George established himself, starting with his 1955 hit recording of "Why Baby Why" on Starday Records. It also runs through such early Starday hits as "What Am I Worth" and the honky-tonk ballad, "Just One More." The Mercury sides here include "Don't Stop the Music," "Color of the Blues," "White Lightning," "The Window Up Above," "Tender Years" and "Aching, Breaking Heart."

From his early 60's United Artists period comes "She Thinks I Still Care"; the Jack Clement composition, "A Girl I Used to Know"; his hit duet

with Melba Montgomery, "We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds"; "You Comb Her Hair" and "The Race Is On." From the final period covered, when Jones was with Musicor Records, comes his 1965 revival of the Faron Young hit, "I've Got Five Dollars and It's Saturday Night" (a duet with pop singer Gene Pitney), "Love Bug," "I'm a People" and "Walk Through This World With Me."

**Willie Nelson:** If you call the toll-free number to order Willie Nelson's *The IRS Tapes* CD or cassette, you get the chance to order another Willie collection of even more interest to collectors and fans. *The Hungry Years* is a never-before-issued 1976 recording (15 songs in all) done with Willie's band at a Louisiana recording studio. It concentrates mostly on country songs from the 40's and 50's. Don't confuse this collection with an LP of the same name. The LP featured selections from a 1960 Nashville demo session of Willie's that have been re-issued dozens of times in recent years.

Here, you get his version of the Wesley Tuttle hit, "Detour" (recorded before he cut it with Leon Russell); "Ragged But Right," the George Jones favorite; The Louvin Brothers' "When I Stop Dreaming" (with an overdubbed vocal by Emmylou Harris); Tommy Collins' "If That's the Fashion"; Bob Wills' "Time Changes Everything"; Johnnie Lee Wills' "Milk Cow Blues" and The Wilburn Brothers' "Carefree Moments." His version of Rodney Crowell's "Til I

Gain Control Again" features overdubbed harmonies from Rodney himself. The music is excellent, though God knows why anyone added a Fairlight synthesizer, a newfangled computerized keyboard that didn't exist in 1976. The music here was fine as is. In fact, this is so good I honestly wonder why Willie didn't give it to Columbia to release back then. I also wonder what else he has lying in his tape vaults. **Brenda Lee:** For years, MCA Records didn't do right by Brenda Lee's varied and rich career. They've redeemed themselves now with a collection that puts her music into some perspective: *The Brenda Lee Anthology* (MCA 2-10384). Available on two CD's or cassettes, these 40 songs cover the years 1956-1980, from her earliest days as 12-year-old "Little Brenda Lee" through her early pop-rock sides to her early 60's pop ballads and her 1970's and 1980's country hits.

To some, Brenda might not seem worth a serious anthology. I would disagree. When music was changing drastically in the mid-50's, her early sides had enough country flavor to keep country fans happy (even though most only made the pop charts) and enough of a sassy rock 'n' roll edge to grab the kids. Recorded with some of Nashville's greatest pickers, "Jambalaya," "Bigelow 6-2000," "Dynamite," "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" and "Sweet Nothin's" wear well over three decades later.

Early 60's material like "All Alone Am I," "As Usual" and later, more country material like "Nobody Wins" and "Big Four Poster Bed" (all country hits), testify to the durability of her music. The packaging is superb, far better than even MCA's *Country Hall of Fame* series, with a fine booklet containing near-complete recording information. With help from Brenda, MCA was able to get hold of some excellent photos and memorabilia. The well-researched liner notes by Diana Haig place Brenda's career in the right context and are truly enjoyable to read.

#### How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: Johnny Horton, *The Early Years* (BFX 15289) 7-album boxed set, \$129.95/Horton, *The Columbia Years* (BCD 15470) 4-CD boxed set \$118.00/Johnny Cash, *Come Along and Ride This Train* (BCD 15563) 4-CD boxed set \$118.00/Marty Robbins, *Rockin' Rollin' Robbins* (BCD 15566) CD only \$28.95/Robbins, *The Story of My Life: The Ray Conniff Recordings* (BCD 15567) CD only \$28.95/Robbins, *Ruby Ann* (BCD 15569) CD only \$28.95/Robbins, *Hawaii's Calling Me* (BCD 15568) CD only \$28.95/Robbins, *Island Woman* (BCD 15571) CD only \$28.95/*The Best of George Jones: 1955-1967* (R 70531) cassette \$11.98, CD \$15.98/*The Brenda Lee Anthology* (MCA 2-10384) 2 CD's \$40.95, 2 cassettes (MCAC 10405/6) \$28.95. Willie Nelson's *Hungry Years* is available by calling 1-800-652-3400.

Send check or money order payable to *Country Music Magazine* to Department 111291, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Add \$1.95 postage and handling for first item ordered, \$.95 each additional. **CMSA Members, for discounts see the For CMSA Members Only page elsewhere in this issue.**

**1** *In the June 1981 issue of Country Music, we ran our first Ricky Skaggs article, "A Superpicker Takes a Shot at Superstardom." That was about the time you came to Nashville. Remember that? Doesn't seem like ten years to me.*

Well, it sure does to me. (Laughs.) Yeah, I remember that. It does seem like ten years. But it has gone by real quick.

**2** *Do you know what Marty Stuart says about you?*

I don't know what all he was saying.

*He says that Ricky Skaggs saved country music in the 80's...single-handed.*

Wow!

**3** *What is the biggest difference in Ricky Skaggs ten years later?*

My biggest difference? I really don't think I've changed my opinion of traditional music and the traditional values of life. I think the recording techniques and qualities have gotten better. But my heart, to put out good messages and songs—family values and Christian values of marriage and love and hope for the future of families and children—I think those things are still there. Musically I'm just as proud to be a country boy, just as happy to be singing country music and playing country music as I was then. Ten years ago—when I came out—I just didn't have all this stuff in front of me. What I had was stuff behind me.

**4** *You were focused more on your musical background than on your future?*

Yes, I had a dictionary in my head full of Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, J.D. Crowe and Tony Rice and people that I worked with, you know, Emmylou and The Country Gentlemen, different ones. I knew those people's music, and I knew that it existed. But I knew there was something out there for me, too.

**5** *So, you weren't consciously trying to "save country music"?*



## 20 Questions with **RICKY SKAGGS**

—by Russ Barnard—

I think if I had thought that I was doing something to save country music, and if I had known the impact I was to have on country music, it would have probably scared me to death. I probably wouldn't have had the courage to push on through and do the things that I did. I did it because I love country music and because I love bluegrass. I wasn't doing it for any other reason. Like I said, I had no idea I was going to make the impact in the world that I did. It's a pretty humbling thing when you look back and think about it.

**6** *Would you say that you know a lot more now about the process of producing records?*

Well, I wanted to produce my own records when I came to Nashville. And that was one of the things that was important to me. But, you know, technology has really come a long way, especially with digital recording—there were times when I went all digital and didn't like the sound as well as what's on this new album. What we did on this new album, we recorded the tracks on digital and recorded drums and stuff like that on analog

tape. 'Cause I found out, after working ten years in the studio, what sounds better on analog and what sounds best on digital. So we combine those two now. We lock the two machines together, and in the final mix, we listened to what we like best—we ended up recording it digital and mixing it analog, because the analog mixes just sounded better. They had more life, more excitement, more punch. And you could hear the reverb better with analog. We had to master it digital, 'cause all stuff has to be mastered that way nowadays.

**7** *What are the main things you learned on the business side?*

Well, if I had some advice to give any young and upcoming artists, I think they really oughta be involved as much as they can be in their business affairs...involved in finances, business meetings, financial meetings, accounting meetings, those kind of things.

**8** *What's the advantage?*

When everybody can be involved, it's just a plus. It keeps everybody honest, it keeps everything up front. It allows the artist to really know that money doesn't grow on trees, that there is a price to be paid for everything out there and there's always a payday—there's always the bills that someone has to pay. And ultimately, that person is always the artist, whether it's an advance from the record label, or an advance at the bank. You're ultimately responsible for that. So, I would encourage people to get a good accountant, a good lawyer, get your business affairs really set up. They need to get people they really trust who are really capable, that come highly recommended.

**9** *You handle your own personal management. Are you recommending that?*

No, not necessarily. Chip Peay was my manager for the first five years—he and I got along real well, we had a lot of really good things in common, and I really liked Chip a lot. Then



there just came a time when we felt like we needed to part ways. And I started managing my own career. But it's really hard. I would not recommend anyone managing their own career, even though I gotta say that I feel we've been successful at it. But it's hard to go to the record label and be your own spokesman. There's times when a manager needs to be there and be the spokesman and the intercessor.

**10** *Doesn't that go both ways?*

Yes. There's times that the record label needs to come down *deluxe* on the artist and say, "Wait a minute. This is what he's doing. This is what happened at the radio stations. He didn't sign this, and he made somebody mad. Or, he played too long here, or he didn't play long enough there, and we're catching the heat from it—and that's what's causing this record to have a hard time in Chicago." Those are things that the record label needs to be able to say to the manager, because it's hard to say that to the artist.

**11** *Because the artist and the record company need a friendly atmosphere?*

Right. Roy Wunsch and I have a wonderful relationship. I love him, he's kind of my hero. He's done a great job at CBS, and I'm a big fan of his. But there's times when he's had to hold his tongue, and I've had to hold mine. There's times that I can't tell him all that I feel and all that I see out there on the road—it may sound like I'm bragging.

**12** *So a manager would be helpful at those times?*

Yes. If a manager was going on in there and tellin' him these kind of things, he would say, "Well, fine. Sounds good. Just don't let Ricky ever start talking about that, 'cause he'll get a big head."

It's good to have someone to play that role. I just don't believe that you have to give away ten percent of your life, or 15 percent of your life, to a manager. I think that the

managers nowadays have changed to be good marketing consultants, and their role has changed somewhat in the ten years that I've been in this business.

**13** *If the manager's role has changed, should his compensation be changed?*

I think that there's a retainer or certain percentage if need be, but when you tithe 15 percent to a manager, another ten percent to a booking agent, or 15 percent to a booking agent, you're 30 percent right there, off the top. And then \$2,500 a month or something like that to publicity—man, it just goes!



**14** *Do you think fans are aware of where all that money goes?*

They just don't have any idea where it goes.

**15** *What's another example?*

Well, we have 12 cuts on this album instead of the usual ten. I take a loss on that when I do that—I lose money.

**16** *How do you lose money on that?*

In the publishing end of it. CBS has a composition control clause where they only pay 3/4 rate instead of full statutory rate for songwriters' royalties—you know, the record

company will pay up to ten, but if you have anything over ten, they start taking that away from the artist and his publishing. So, with me owning the publishing on three songs on the album, my writers won't make as much on that as if I had ten pieces—or if Garth Brooks or someone else had cut 'em.

**17** *On your new album you play an Earthwood bass on the title cut, "My Father's Son." What's that?*

It's an instrument Ernie Ball made. It's almost like those Mexican guitars with four strings that the mariachis

play. Emmylou and Brian used to use it a lot—they used it on *Roses in the Snow*. It's real soft sounding bass, a beautiful sound.

**18** *Speaking of Brian Ahern, did he produce something for you?*

He came in and helped us produce one song—mine and Sharon's duet. We really wanted Brian's influence on this particular song, and we really wanted to give him a good plug and a good recommendation. Almost like a stamp of approval, 'cause I just think Brian is one of the most brilliant producers that ever produced country music.

**19** *We recently published a photo of your daughter, Molly Kate, singing on stage with you. Was that just for fun or can she really sing?*

Molly Kate sings harmony to every record we listen to, riding around in my truck. And she's singing good—she really hears the parts, and she has a natural ability to pick up music and recreate what she hears. Mandy and Andrew are both musical, but they don't live with us all the time. They come down a lot in the summer and spend time with us. But if they were with me all the time, I'd probably be encouraging them a lot more to play. Lucas is our two-year-old, and he plays the drums—he loves the drums—and he's in the new video, playing away. Mac MacAnally's little girl gives him a kiss, and that kind of stopped him for a second, but then he gets right back into it. (Laughs.) It's neat. They all really have a gift for it.

**20** *Do you want them to go into music careers?*

I'd love to see it get back to where families got more involved in the music business. So, if that could happen, it would just be wonderful...so we could travel and do more things together as a family. I just want what's best for them. We're trying to teach them, really, to pray, and try to stay in touch with God, and not take advice from every wind of doctrine that comes down the pike, but really have a relationship—not religion, but relationship—with the Lord, and through that, as they grow up, they will really be able to know in their heart what God is calling them to do. We're not trying to encourage music, but we're not discouraging it either. If the gifting is there, it's a parent's responsibility to pick up on that and try to encourage them. But not discourage them because "Oh, no, you don't want to go on the road. I won't have you go on the road and be like I am." I would never discourage something that God has birthed in them naturally. ■

# TOP 25

## Singles

1. Clint Black ..... *Where Are You Now*
2. Lionel Cartwright ..... *Leap of Faith*
3. Garth Brooks ..... *Rodeo*
4. Doug Stone ..... *I Thought It Was You*
5. Sawyer Brown ..... *The Walk*
6. Diamond Rio ..... *Mirror Mirror*
7. Joe Diffie ..... *New Way (To Light Up an Old Flame)*
8. Paul Overstreet ..... *Ball and Chain*
9. Ricky Van Shelton ..... *Keep It Between the Lines*
10. Mark Chesnutt ..... *Your Love Is a Miracle*
11. Brooks & Dunn ..... *Brand New Man*
12. Keith Whitley and Earl Thomas Conley ... *Brotherly Love*
13. Alan Jackson ..... *Someday*
14. Travis Tritt ..... *Anymore*
15. Mary Chapin Carpenter ..... *Down at the Twist and Shout*
16. Mike Reid ..... *As Simple as That*
17. Lorrie Morgan ..... *A Picture of Me (Without You)*
18. Ronnie Milsap ..... *Since I Don't Have You*
19. Dwight Yoakam ..... *Nothing's Changed Here*
20. Pam Tillis ..... *Put Yourself in My Place*
21. Marty Stuart ..... *Tempted*
22. Tanya Tucker ..... *Down to My Last Teardrop*
23. George Strait ..... *You Know Me Better Than That*
24. B.B. Watson ..... *Light at the End of the Tunnel*
25. Trisha Yearwood ..... *Like We Never Had a Broken Heart*

## Albums

1. Garth Brooks ..... *Ropin' the Wind*
2. Garth Brooks ..... *No Fences*
3. Travis Tritt ..... *It's All About to Change*
4. Garth Brooks ..... *Garth Brooks*
5. Alan Jackson ..... *Don't Rock the Jukebox*
6. Ricky Van Shelton ..... *Backroads*
7. Randy Travis ..... *High Lonesome*
8. Trisha Yearwood ..... *Trisha Yearwood*
9. Clint Black ..... *Put Yourself in My Shoes*
10. Tanya Tucker ..... *What Do I Do With Me*
11. Reba McEntire ..... *Rumor Has It*
12. Lorrie Morgan ..... *Something in Red*
13. Diamond Rio ..... *Diamond Rio*
14. Doug Stone ..... *I Thought It Was You*
15. The Judds ..... *Greatest Hits, Volume 2*
16. Dolly Parton ..... *Eagle When She Flies*
17. Brooks & Dunn ..... *Brand New Man*
18. Alan Jackson ..... *Here in the Real World*
19. Clint Black ..... *Killin' Time*
20. Travis Tritt ..... *Country Club*
21. The Judds ..... *Greatest Hits*
22. George Strait ..... *Chill of an Early Fall*
23. Sawyer Brown ..... *Buick*
24. Mary Chapin Carpenter ..... *Shooting Straight in the Dark*
25. Vince Gill ..... *Pocket Full of Gold*

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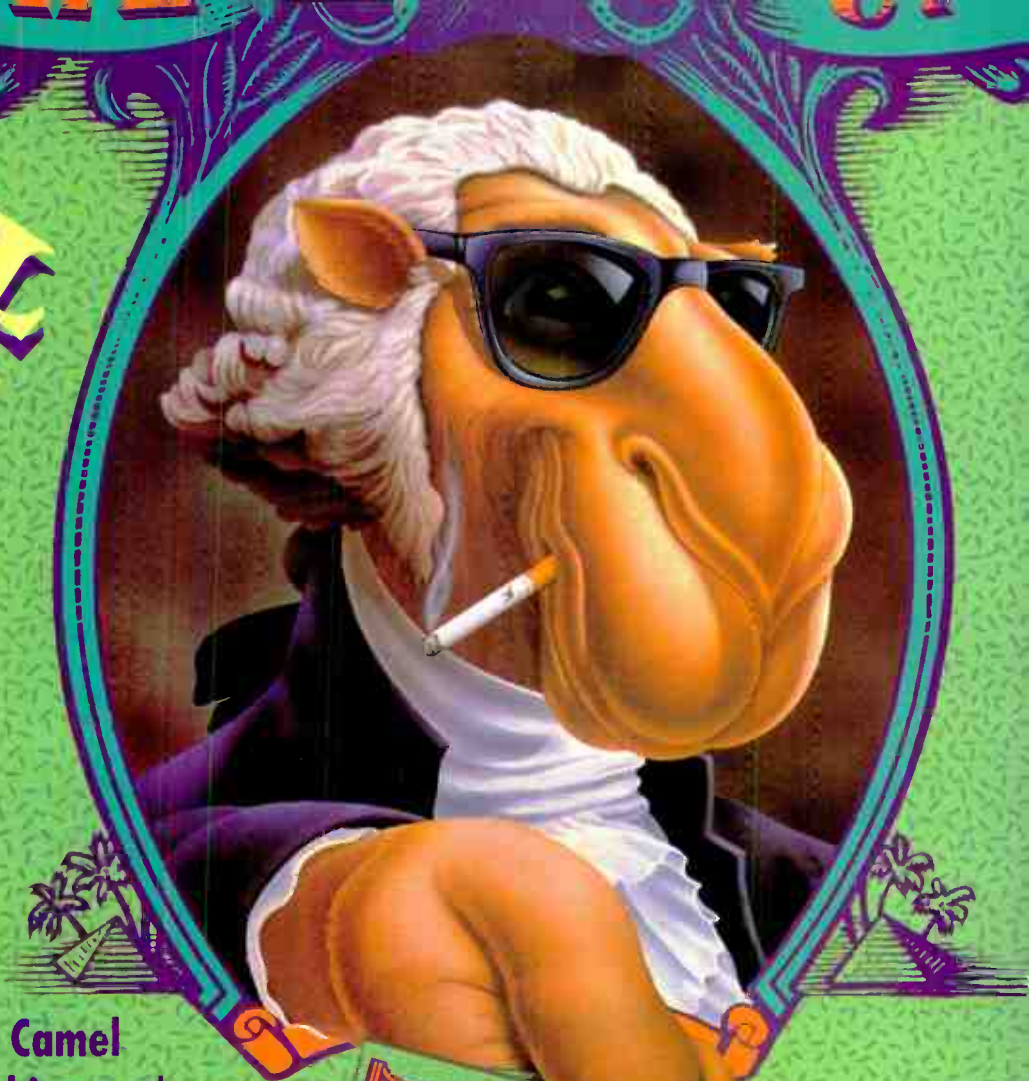
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