

CMA

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FEBRUARY/
MARCH 2006

The Year in
Country Music

Who New to
Watch in 2006

BIG & RICH
Living Dangerously

MARTINA MCBRIDE
Records 'Timeless' Classics

CHRIS CAGLE
Regroups After a
Difficult Year

Country Music Hall
of Fame Member **DOLLY PARTON**

MARTY STUART
Country Renaissance Man

OAK RIDGE BOYS
Renew Interest in
National Anthem

photo: Andrew Eccles



15



16



19

cover photo: Kristin Barlowe

- 4** The Year in Country Music
- 12** Country Artists, Corporate Endorsements
- 13** Soundtracks Feature Country Music
- 14** Who New to Watch in 2006
- 15** Martina McBride Records an Album of 'Timeless' Classics
- 16** Big & Rich: The Year of Living Dangerously
- 18** The Changing Face of Nashville Record Labels:
Universal Music Group
- 19** Chris Cagle Regroups After a Difficult Year
- 20** CRS-37 PREVIEW
CMA Proud Sponsor of CRS-37
Q&A with Radio Leaders
- 22** HD Radio to the Rescue
- 23** Marty Stuart: Country Renaissance Man
- 24** SONGWRITER SPOTLIGHT: Rivers Rutherford
- 25** LEGEND: The Oak Ridge Boys
- 26** CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL
Get Involved in CMA Music Festival
CMAfest.com Launches
Tickets on Sale Now
Advertise in the Program Book
- 28** DEBUT ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: Bo Bice, Cherryholmes, Jamey Johnson
and Luke Stricklin
- 30** INTERNATIONAL
Q&A with Rob Potts, Australian Advisory Group
International Events Calendar
- 31** NEW CD RELEASES
IN MEMORIAM: Daniel D. Hoffman, Eric Edwards and Hank Mills
- 32** CMA Directory Coming Soon
CMA Sponsors Leadership Music Digital Summit
Nashville's Music Industry Worth \$6.38 Billion
- 33** Karian Studios Offers Discount to CMA Members
CMA STAFF CHANGES
- 39** CMA PRESENTS COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME MEMBER
Dolly Parton
- 40** CMA EVENTS CALENDAR

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It's February and a good time to talk about the heart of CMA — our artists.

The artist community is the epicenter of everything we do at CMA to advance Country Music around the globe. So, it is no surprise that building stronger relationships with the artists is one of CMA's three strategic initiatives.

I feel very passionate about this issue and proud of the progress we have made reaching out to our artist community. I've made it a personal responsibility to get to know our artists, answer tough questions they may have about the Association and identifying ways we can work more closely to help achieve greater success for everyone in the industry.

I want artists to feel at home at CMA and confident in the knowledge that we devote the bulk of our resources and time to thinking about the needs of the artists and ways that we can better serve this important segment of our membership.

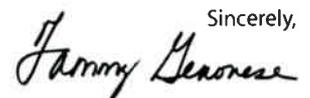
Spearheading this important drive has been the former President/Chairman of the CMA Board of Directors, Kix Brooks. And I can honestly say the tremendous progress we have made in reaching out to the artists is a direct result of his tireless service on their behalf. He paved the way for increased artist representation and service on the CMA Board and I'm delighted that we have so many great artists now serving as volunteer leaders including Trace Adkins, Sara Evans, Troy Gentry and Brad Paisley. Representatives throughout our artistic community serve with them on the CMA Artists Relations Committee, which is chaired in 2006 by Kix.

Since it was formed in 2003, the Committee has racked up numerous accomplishments including launching an annual artists relations luncheon during CRS; producing an artist tutorial series featuring industry leaders offering practical advice for newly signed acts; new artist orientation visits at CMA, where we provide an overview of CMA Music Festival, the CMA Awards and our other activities domestically and abroad; free lifetime membership to all final CMA Awards nominees in artist categories as well as members of the Grand Ole Opry; making complimentary seats for the CMA Awards available to members of the Country Music Hall of Fame; working with stakeholders and engineers to improve sound quality for the CMA Awards broadcast; producing an historical narrative about the Country Music industry on CD; donating \$800,000 to date to charities selected by artists who participate in CMA Music Festival; and much more.

And while we sometimes turn to the superstars of the format for support, CMA is an Association for artists at every level and stage of their careers. We have created programs and events to help our developing and burgeoning acts including performances overseas with "New From Nashville;" CMA supported media appearances on network TV; and performances for corporate brand managers and marketers at national conferences.

As much as we have accomplished, we all want to do more and set the bar even higher in 2006. I welcome your input and ideas. I want CMA to be an organization that embraces artists with open arms and a sincere desire to help them accomplish their dreams. Because, when our artists are successful, we all sleep a little better.

Sincerely,



Tammy Genovese
CMA Chief Operating Officer



CMA Close Up welcomes your letters and feedback.
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or e-mail at closeup@CMAworld.com

Country Music WRAPS 2005 ON STRONG NOTE

While the bulk of the music industry slumped with an across-the-board decline of 7.2 percent for music sales in 2005, Country Music finished stronger than every format except Latin, with a more modest 3.3 percent drop, according to figures released by Nielsen SoundScan.

"As an industry we face the same challenges as all musical formats, but in 2005, we had some advantages, too," said Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer. "Country Music received a lot of national attention with Carrie Underwood winning 'American Idol,' the Johnny Cash biopic 'Walk the Line' hitting movie theaters, network television specials for Kenny Chesney and Faith Hill, and of course the CMA Awards' one-time visit to New York City. With all of these important factors impacting the marketplace right before our fourth quarter sales season, we were able to carry that momentum through the end of the year."

In fact, sales of Top Current Country Albums were strong in the holiday sales period (the last six weeks of 2005), finishing ahead of the same period in 2004 by 8 percent, while sales of the Top 200 Current Albums fell 16 percent, according to Nielsen SoundScan's annual tally.

During the busiest retail week of the year (Dec. 19-25), 11 Country albums scanned more than 100,000 units each including Carrie Underwood (400,625); Kenny Chesney (268,898); *The Legend of Johnny Cash* (177,548); Rascal Flatts (172,369); Faith Hill (145,498); Trace Adkins (134,157); Reba McEntire (124,086); Keith Urban (122,780); Martina McBride (121,099); Big & Rich (119,323); and Sugarland (117,476). Gretchen Wilson was close behind with 98,366.

Overall, the number of albums sold in 2005 was 75.3 million down from 77.9 million in 2004, but Country's marketshare increased in 2005 from 11.69 to 12.7 percent. Frustrating the number watchers is the fact that Garth Brooks' box set, which was sold exclusively at Wal-Mart, was not included in the Nielsen SoundScan count. The retail giant has said that more than a million copies have been sold, but estimates place that figure as high as 2.5 million.

"If those numbers had been included in the final SoundScan figures, we would have ended the year on the positive side of the equation," Genovese said. "Still, Country Music held its own during a very tumultuous period for the music industry. The creative depth of our artistic community, loyalty of our fan base and the breakthrough success of some of our bright new talent all contributed to this achievement."

Contributing to those gains in 2005 was a diverse slate of performers representing the broad terrain of the format, from newcomers Underwood and Sugarland to legacy artist Cash; cross-over superstar Hill to one of the premiere entertainers in the industry Chesney; Toby Keith, who continued to sell strong in 2005, to trio Rascal Flatts, who broke into the upper sales ranks across all formats for the first time. The trio's album *Feels Like Today* sold 2,511,209 units in 2005, claiming the No. 7 best selling album of the year spot among all genres.

"The diversity of these performers illustrates the strength and future potential of the genre," Genovese said. "Country Music is strong as a format, when you have artists at virtually every phase of their careers selling albums at this pace."

album sales

THE TOP 10 COUNTRY ALBUMS OF 2005

	artist	album	sales
1	RASCAL FLATTS	FEELS LIKE TODAY	2,511,209
2	KENNY CHESNEY	THE ROAD and THE RADIO	1,817,196
3	KEITH URBAN	BE HERE	1,713,571
4	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	SOME HEARTS	1,636,889
5	FAITH HILL	FIREFLIES	1,531,656
6	SUGARLAND	TWICE THE SPEED OF LIFE	1,510,879
7	TOBY KEITH	HONKYTONK UNIVERSITY	1,446,621
8	GRETCHEN WILSON	HERE FOR THE PARTY	1,214,383
9	KENNY CHESNEY	BE AS YOU ARE	1,078,559
10	TOBY KEITH	GREATEST HITS 2	1,023,188

Source: Nielsen SoundScan (Dec. 28, 2005 YTD)

Albums making simultaneous No. 1 debuts on the *Billboard* 200 and Country Albums Charts in 2005 included Kenny Chesney's *Be As You Are* and *The Road And The Radio*; Faith Hill's *Fireflies*; George Strait's *Somewhere Down in Texas*; and Gretchen Wilson's *All Jacked Up*.

Garth Brooks released *Garth Brooks: The Limited Series* box set exclusively at Wal-Mart and Sam's Club locations on Nov. 25. Wal-Mart announced the box set sold more than 500,000 copies on its first day of release, making it the top-selling musical component in Wal-Mart history. In the second week after its release, Wal-Mart announced the box set had sold more than 1 million copies. RIAA has not yet announced a certification of these sales. These sales are also not reflected in the Nielsen SoundScan figures.

Country female newcomers Miranda Lambert and Carrie Underwood made their marks in 2005. Lambert's debut album *Kerosene* and Underwood's *Some Hearts* both entered the *Billboard* Country Albums Chart at No. 1. At the end of 2005, Lambert got her Christmas wish when her album went Gold. Underwood's album sold 314,000 units in its first week, making it the biggest first week sales of a debut album by a new Country artist in Nielsen SoundScan history. The album was certified Gold after only two weeks in stores, and was certified Platinum soon after. Underwood's album continued to be a strong seller throughout the holiday sales period, achieving Double Platinum in January 2006.



touring EVENTS

Listed below are the Top 10 all-genre tours and the Top 10 Country tours based on attendance and gross sales, according to *Pollstar* magazine for shows played between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2005.

ALL GENRE TOP 10 (attendance)

1	U2	1,432,890
2	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND	1,211,430
3	THE ROLLING STONES	1,209,479
4	KENNY CHESNEY	1,131,326
5	GREEN DAY	912,843
6	RASCAL FLATTS	807,899
7	MOTLEY CRUE	791,591
8	NEIL DIAMOND	750,210
9	EAGLES	725,598
10	"VANSWARPED TOUR"	717,736

COUNTRY TOP 10 (attendance)

1	KENNY CHESNEY	1,131,326
2	RASCAL FLATTS	807,899
3	TOBY KEITH	684,968
4	JIMMY BUFFETT	536,391
5	KEITH URBAN	515,596
6	BROOKS & DUNN	489,239
7	BRAD PAISLEY	362,341
8	ALISON KRAUSS AND UNION STATION featuring Jerry Douglas	292,217
9	GEORGE STRAIT	261,322
10	ALAN JACKSON	247,202

ALL GENRE TOP 10 (gross sales in million)

1	ROLLING STONES	\$162
2	U2	\$138
3	CELINE DION	\$81
4	EAGLES	\$78
5	PAUL McCARTNEY	\$77
6	ELTON JOHN	\$66
7	KENNY CHESNEY	\$62
8	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND	\$57
9	NEIL DIAMOND	\$47
10	JIMMY BUFFETT	\$41

COUNTRY TOP 10 (gross sales in million)

1	KENNY CHESNEY	\$62
2	JIMMY BUFFETT	\$41
3	TOBY KEITH	\$32
4	RASCAL FLATTS	\$28
5	KEITH URBAN	\$19
6	BROOKS & DUNN	\$17
7	GEORGE STRAIT	\$14
8	BRAD PAISLEY	\$14
9	ALISON KRAUSS AND UNION STATION featuring Jerry Douglas	\$12
10	ALAN JACKSON	\$12



Rascal Flatts



Kenny Chesney



Toby Keith

THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

Some of Country's hottest stars teamed up on the road in 2005. Reba McEntire, Terri Clark and Brad Paisley had the "Two Hats and a Redhead Tour;" Paisley also headlined "CMT on Tour: Brad Paisley Time Well Wasted 2005" featuring Sara Evans and special guest Sugarland; Brooks & Dunn hooked up with other high-energy duos Big & Rich and the Warren Brothers for the "Deuces Wild Tour;" Kenny Chesney invited Gretchen Wilson, Keith Urban, Uncle Kracker and Pat Green on his "Somewhere in the Sun Tour;" and Alan Jackson and Sara Evans collaborated on the "What I Do Tour." Urban headlined his own tour, "Livin' Right Now," with Little Big Town and Miranda Lambert. Toby Keith invited Lee Ann Womack and Shooter Jennings on his "Big Throwdown II Tour." Rascal Flatts, Blake Shelton and Shelly Fairchild performed on the "Here's To You Tour." Dierks Bentley and George Strait toured together.

RIAA ALBUM SALES CERTIFICATIONS

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certified 35 Gold, 22 Platinum and 15 multi-Platinum (including 1 Diamond) Country albums in 2005. Gold indicates sales of 500,000 units; Platinum indicates sales of 1 million units; multi-Platinum is for each successive million units sold; and Diamond indicates sales of 10 million albums. The RIAA continues to award these rankings throughout the life of the album; An album does not have to be released in the same year it achieves one or more of these rankings.

The legendary Patsy Cline's *Greatest Hits* album received the Diamond award for reaching 10 million units sold in 2005. After more than 40 years, the Country Music Hall of Fame member's music continues to inspire and entertain new generations of fans.

Big & Rich (*Horse Of A Different Color*) received their first multi-Platinum album certification in 2005, selling more than 2 million albums. Dierks Bentley (*Dierks Bentley*); Chris LeDoux (*20 Greatest Hits*); Sugarland (*Twice The Speed Of Life*); and Carrie Underwood (*Some Hearts*) received their first Platinum album certifications in 2005. Jason Aldean (*Jason Aldean*); Rodney Carrington (*Greatest Hits*); Josh Gracin (*Josh Gracin*); Miranda Lambert (*Kerosene*); Sugarland (*Twice The Speed Of Life*); and Carrie Underwood (*Some Hearts*) received their first Gold album certifications in 2005.

In 2004, RIAA launched the Digital Sales Awards, reflecting sales of singles downloaded from legal online music sites. RIAA Digital Gold Sales Awards were given to 34 Country singles and a Platinum Sales Award went to six singles in 2005. Single tracks are awarded Gold (100,000 downloads), Platinum (200,000) and multi-Platinum (400,000+) certifications. Platinum Digital Sales certifications went to Big & Rich's "Save A Horse, Ride A Cowboy;" Tim McGraw's "Live Like You Were Dying;" Rascal Flatt's "Bless The Broken Road;" Keith Urban's "You'll Think Of Me;" Gretchen Wilson's "Redneck Woman;" and Lee Ann Womack's "I Hope You Dance."

In addition, the RIAA certified five Gold (50,000 units sold) and four Platinum (100,000 units sold) Country longform videos. Platinum Country longform videos included Trace Adkins (*Video Hits*); Big & Rich (*Super Galactic Fan Pack*); and Keith Urban (*Video Hits and Livin' Right Now*).

For more information on album, single and video certifications, visit the searchable database on RIAA.com.



"Today" host Katie Couric presents a Platinum plaque to Dierks Bentley.



Sugarland celebrates Platinum success. (l-r) Universal Music Group Nashville Co-Chairman Lube Lewis; Kristen Hall, Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush of Sugarland; and Manager Gail Gellman.



Alan Jackson



Andy Griggs



Big & Rich



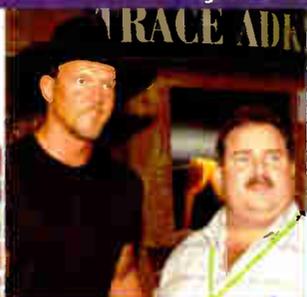
Rascal Flatts



Carrie Underwood



Montgomery Gentry



Trace Adkins



Blue County



Bush's Baked Beans Family Zone

COUNTRY MUSIC'S **BIGGEST PARTY** Music Festival

In 2005, CMA Music Festival broke attendance records with 145,355 people attending "Country Music's Biggest Party™," June 9-12 in Downtown Nashville. Though persistent showers from a tropical storm drenched many of the venues, the fans still came out in force, dancing, singing and clapping along to more than 50 hours of music. Thirty-five acts appeared in the Nightly Concerts at The Coliseum including Trace Adkins, Dierks Bentley, Big & Rich, Sara Evans, Alan Jackson, Miranda Lambert, Jo Dee Messina, Dolly Parton and The Grascals, Rascal Flatts, Kenny Rogers, Blake Shelton, Sugarland, Travis Tritt, Carrie Underwood, Keith Urban, Gretchen Wilson, Lee Ann Womack, Wynonna, Trisha Yearwood and more. Montgomery Gentry kicked off the Festival at the Greased Lightning® Daytime Stages with a rousing performance before thousands of fans. The riverfront dual stages bustled with a rich array of more than 100 acts from major and independent labels. The Wrangler® Fan Fair (Exhibit Hall) was once again a hit with fans seeking that much-coveted autograph. The Bush's® Baked Beans Family Zone featured activities for the whole family including the Crisco® Country Favorites Corner and the popular free cookout hosted by Bush's® Baked Beans spokesduo Jay Bush and his dog Duke. The Sports Zone featured the fourth year of the Andy Griggs Celebrity Archery Tournament as well as the second annual B.A.S.S. Anglers and Artists Tournament and the debut of The Tracy Byrd Golf Challenge. CMA Celebrity Close Up, hosted by Lorianne Crook, treated more than 2,000 fans to question and answer sessions with Kix Brooks of Brooks & Dunn, Eddie Montgomery of Montgomery Gentry, Trisha Yearwood, Sugarland and Travis Tritt. The sessions aired in two special episodes on GAC. The Stars of NBC Daytime made their fifth appearance at the Festival, signing autographs and hosting the NBC Daytime After Hours™ Party at the Wildhorse Saloon.

For the second year, the CMA Music Festival was filmed for a two-hour, primetime television special. In 2005, the special aired on Aug. 2 on the ABC Television Network and was produced by Robert Deaton and directed by Gary Halvorson. CMA Music Festival is organized and produced by the CMA. CMA Board Member Tony Conway is the Executive Producer of the CMA Music Festival. Premiere Radio Networks is the official radio packager of the CMA Music Festival.

photos: Amanda Eckard, Jim Higgins, Theresa Montgomery and John Russell

THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

Country radio

Country radio is still on top as the most dominant radio genre in 2005 with 2,043 stations across the U.S., according to *Inside Radio/M Street*.

For the spring and summer ratings period, Country stations had the largest share of national listeners 12 and older since fall 1999, according to Arbitron's American Radio Listening Trends Format Report.

BILLBOARD'S TOP FIVE HOT COUNTRY SONGS

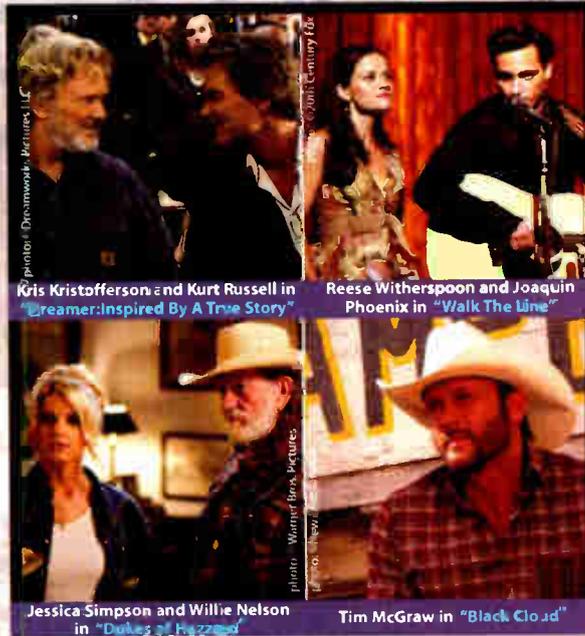
- Craig Morgan, "That's What I Love About Sunday"
- Toby Keith, "As Good As I Once Was"
- Rascal Flatts, "Bless The Broken Road"
- Sugarland, "Something More"
- Rascal Flatts, "Fast Cars And Freedom"

RADIO & RECORDS' MOST HEARD OF 2005

- Craig Morgan, "That's What I Love About Sunday"
- Rascal Flatts, "Bless The Broken Road"
- Josh Gracin, "Nothin' To Lose"
- Sugarland, "Baby Girl"
- Rascal Flatts, "Fast Cars And Freedom"

motion pictures

The silver screen saw the return of a redheaded stranger when Willie Nelson played Uncle Jesse in the big screen version of "Dukes of Hazzard," also starring Jessica Simpson, Burt Reynolds and Johnny Knoxville. Junior Brown narrated the movie. Reba McEntire's signature voice will be heard from the mouth of a cow as part of an animated remake of "Charlotte's Web." Tim McGraw signed on to star in a remake of "My Friend Flicka" while his acting debut in the Rick Schroder film "Black Cloud" was released nationally in 2005. Dolly Parton made a cameo playing herself in "Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous" with Sandra Bullock. "Walk the Line," a biopic about the early years of Johnny Cash and June Carter starred Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon and co-starred Country artists Shelby Lynne as Cash's mother, Shooter Jennings as his young father Waylon Jennings, and Waylon Payne as Jerry Lee Lewis. Kris Kristofferson starred in "Dreamer: Inspired By A True Story," also starring Dakota Fanning and Kurt Russell and "The Jacket," starring Adrian Brody and Keira Knightly. Dwight Yoakam starred in the Tommy Lee Jones-directed "The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada," had a short cameo in "The Wedding Crashers" and will appear in "Banditas." Mark Collie continued to add to his acting credits, appearing in "Lost Lake." Dean Sams of Lonestar appeared in his first independent film, "Drone Virus." Blake Shelton will appear in the upcoming movie "The Red Knot." Randy Travis appeared in "It's The Visitation."



THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

CMA Awards COUNTRY MUSIC'S BIGGEST NIGHT™

"Country Music's Biggest Night™" took a trip outside of Nashville for the first time in history. The gala event, hosted by duo Brooks & Dunn, was broadcast live from Madison Square Garden in New York City. A week of events, dubbed "Country Takes NYC," lead up to the Nov. 15 broadcast with special theme days that featured concerts, fashion shows, art gallery openings, sports events and more. "The 39th Annual CMA Awards" took a bite out of the Big Apple and the competition, giving CBS Television network a nightly win in viewers and key demographics. The CMA Awards was first in households (11.1/17), viewers (17.73m), adults 18-49 (5.4/13) and adults 25-54 (6.7/15). "The 39th Annual CMA Awards" was Tuesday's No. 1 program in households, viewers and adults 25-54. CBS Research estimates more than 36 million viewers watched all or part of the ceremony. CBS posted season high Tuesday deliveries in viewers and key demographics with the Network's best Tuesday ratings in adults 18-49 since May 10, 2005 and its best Tuesday performance in viewers and adults 25-54 since Nov. 9, 2004 (also the CMA Awards).

Lee Ann Womack and Keith Urban were the big winners at the 2005 CMA Awards. Womack won Single, Album and Musical Event of the Year honors and Urban received his first Entertainer of the Year trophy and his second consecutive Male Vocalist of the Year Award. Gretchen Wilson won her first Female Vocalist of the Year Award and Dierks Bentley took home the Horizon Award. During the broadcast, Alabama, the late DeFord Bailey and Glen Campbell were formally inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. With 23 performances, the 2005 CMA Awards certainly lived up to its reputation as "Country Music's Biggest Night™." Performance highlights included duets by Elton John and Dolly Parton; Paul Simon and Willie Nelson (accompanied by Norah Jones); and Bon Jovi with Jennifer Nettles of Sugarland. Country superstar Garth Brooks came out of retirement to perform "Good Ride Cowboy," his tribute to the late Chris LeDoux, live in Times Square. LeDoux received the CMA Chairman's Award of Merit. CMA Board Chairman Kix Brooks presented the Award to LeDoux's sons backstage following the show.

For the first time, Joan and Melissa Rivers covered arrivals on the "CMA Awards Red Carpet" live on the TV Guide Channel. The 2005 CMA Awards were directed by Paul Miller and scripted by David Wild. Walter C. Miller, Executive Producer, celebrated his 35th anniversary with the CMA Awards. Premiere Radio Networks is the official radio packager of the CMA Awards.

CMA and the ABC Television Network announced in 2005 that the CMA Awards will move to ABC beginning in November 2006, as the CMA Awards celebrates its 40th Anniversary. "The 40th Annual CMA Awards" will be broadcast live from the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville, Tenn. The deal will keep the CMA Awards on ABC through 2012.

photos: John Russell and Jason Kempin/FilmMagic.com



Alabama Garth Brooks Dierks Bentley Glen Campbell Keith Urban
Elton John, Dolly Parton Gretchen Wilson Jennifer Nettles, Jon Bon Jovi Paul Simon, Willie Nelson, Norah Jones Lee Ann Womack

television

Kenny Chesney and Faith Hill had concert specials on the day before Thanksgiving, though on different networks and different time slots. "Kenny Chesney: Somewhere in the Sun" aired on ABC and helped the network to a second place finish for the night with a 5.2/9 rating/share. "Faith Hill: Fireflies" pulled 4.4/7 rating/share for NBC. Willie Nelson and Big & Rich performed for American troops overseas on the ABC special "Nick & Jessica's Tour of Duty" with Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson. Gretchen Wilson, Big & Rich and Cowboy Troy celebrated Independence Day on the "Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular" on CBS. Trace Adkins saluted America's veterans on PBS's "National Memorial Day Concert." Carrie Underwood performed on NBC's "Christmas at Rockefeller Center." CBS aired a special dedicated to the late Johnny Cash, "I Walk the Line: A Night For Johnny Cash," which included performances by Sheryl Crow, Foo Fighters, Shooter Jennings and Jessi Colter, Norah Jones, Kid Rock, Alison Krauss, Kris Kristofferson, Jerry Lee Lewis, Martina McBride, Brad Paisley, U2 and Dwight Yoakam. Gretchen Wilson performed with her hero Charlie Daniels on the Super Bowl pre-show, "Bridging the Generations." Blake Shelton played himself and performed his hit single "Nobody But Me" on the CBS movie special, "The Christmas Blessing." Sugarland rang in the New Year on ABC's "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve." Billy Ray Cyrus starred alongside his daughter in the Disney Channel movie "Hannah Montana." Josh Gracin, SHEDAISSY and Rhonda Vincent performed on the Christmas-themed "Capital One Holiday Celebration on Ice" on NBC. Lonestar performed on "The 22nd Annual Christmas Day Parade" on ABC.

Country Music was represented in a big way on the two top-rated morning shows in the nation. Julie Roberts recorded the theme song "Good To Go" and appeared in the promos for ABC's "Good Morning America." Phil Vassar's song "Live For Today" was used on NBC's "Today" for its special series "Live For Today" that aired in May.

Hank Williams Jr. celebrated his 16th and final year singing the theme song for ABC's "Monday Night Football." Tim McGraw inked another season-long deal with the football program to use McGraw's popular song "I Like It, I Love It."

Reality shows dominated the airwaves in 2005 and Country artists had their fair share of appearances. Rascal Flatts appeared on "American Idol" on FOX to sing "Bless The Broken Road" with eventual winner Carrie Underwood, making them the first Country act to appear on the popular series. LeAnn Rimes took over hosting duties for USA Network's third season of "Nashville Star" with Phil Vassar, Bret Michaels and Anastasia Brown as judges. Winner Erika Jo released her debut album on Universal South Records. Fans got to see behind-the-scenes of two of Country's hottest acts, Gretchen Wilson and Big & Rich, in CMT's "MuzikMafia TV." Amy Grant hosted "Three Wishes," a new show on NBC that grants wishes to a deserving town. New group Ryan Shupe & the RubberBand's song "Dream Big" was featured in promos for "Three Wishes" and Craig Morgan performed on an episode. Tanya Tucker starred in her own reality show "Tuckerville" on TLC. Aaron Tippin appeared on TLC's "Trading Spaces." Martina McBride, Brad Paisley, Mark Wills and Trisha Yearwood each taped episodes on ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." LeAnn Rimes performed the theme song and appeared on an episode of GSN's equestrian challenge "American Dream Derby." Naomi Judd signed on as host of "Naomi's New Morning," a weekly variety series on the Hallmark Channel. Shania Twain appeared on NBC's "The Apprentice."

Some Country stars showed off their humorous sides in sitcoms in 2005. Wynonna played a New York socialite in ABC's "Hope & Faith" and Dolly Parton appeared as a real estate agent in "Reba" on The WB. Montgomery Gentry, Trace Adkins and Van Zant made cameos on The WB's "Blue Collar TV." Adkins also appeared as himself on NBC's "My Name Is Earl." Clint Black guest starred on an episode of ABC's "Hot Properties."

Kids shows had a Country sound with Alison Krauss and Union Station visiting "Sesame Street" and Trace Adkins guest starring on The Disney Channel's "Higglytown Heroes."

Charity always brings out Country's biggest hearts. Faith Hill, Tim McGraw, Keith Urban and Toby Keith were part of Bob Geldoff's multi-city, multi-network "Live 8" benefit concerts to raise awareness about global poverty.

Big & Rich appeared on the NBC drama "Las Vegas." In the soap opera department, Blue County appeared on "As the World Turns" and Trick Pony took a turn on "Days of our Lives."

Heard and not seen on television was Martina McBride's "This One's For the Girls," which was featured on promos for the NCAA Women's Basketball Championship and Craig Morgan's "That's What I Love About Sunday" on the USA Network's "PGA Tour Sunday" highlights show. Big & Rich's "Comin' To Your City" was used as the theme song for ESPN's "College Game Day."

"CMT Crossroads" had another very successful year of Country/pop combinations in 2005, pairing Keith Urban with John Fogerty; Ronnie Milsap with Los Lonely Boys; Brad Paisley with John Mayer; Sugarland with Bon Jovi; and Kenny Rogers with Lionel Richie.



books, MAGAZINES and GAMES

THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

Many Country artists turned authors in 2005. Tanya Tucker consulted some of her closest friends in the music business for *100 Ways to Beat the Blues*. Billy Joe Shaver wrote *Honky Tonk Hero*. *Coming Home to Myself*, Wynonna's autobiography, followed her critically acclaimed tour "Her Story: Scenes from a Lifetime." In *Looking Back to See: A Country Music Memoir*, Maxine Brown remembers what it was like in the music business for her and siblings Bonnie and Jim Ed Brown. *Tragedy's Gift*, written by Kevin Sharp with Jeanne Gere, describes Sharp's struggles with bone cancer and his Country career. Jeff Foxworthy released *Jeff Foxworthy's Redneck Dictionary: Words You Thought You Knew the Meaning Of* and *Redneck Extreme Mobile Home Makeover: Or A Redneck Look at Fixing Up and Decorating Your House Without Loss of Limbs*. Foxworthy's "Blue Collar TV" partner Bill Engvall released *Here's Your Sign*.

Cookbooks were popular in 2005. Loretta Lynn and Jeff Foxworthy released cookbooks with *You're Cookin' It Country* and *Redneck Grill*, respectively; *Southern Country Cooking from the Loveless Cafe: Fried Chicken, Hams, and Jams from Nashville's Favorite Café* by Jan and Michael Stern, featured recipes from George Jones, Patty Loveless, LeAnn Rimes, Marty Stuart and more; and *The All-American Cowboy Grill*, written by Cheryl Rogers-Barnett, Ken Beck and Jim Clark, featured Clint Black, Tracy Byrd, George Strait, Randy Travis and others.

Books written about Country subjects included *Dear Mama Williams: Sympathy Cards & Letters to the Hank Williams Family*, edited by Williams' stepdaughter Lycrecia Williams Hoover and Dale Vinicur, featured some of the letters the Williams family received after the Country Music Hall of Fame member's death; *In Other Words: Artists Talk About Life and Work*, by Anthony DeCurtis, reveals the author's behind-the-scenes memories of his most famous interviewees, including Johnny Cash, June Carter Cash, Lucinda Williams and more; *Grievous Angel: The Authorized Biography of Gram Parsons* was written by Jessica Hundley and Parsons' daughter Polly Parsons; *I Still Miss Someone: Friends and Family Remember Johnny Cash*, by Hugh Waddell, tells the story of the life of Cash through the words of his family and friends; *Country Music Goes To War*, by Charles K. Wolfe and James E. Akenson, examines Country Music's role in times of war; *Lovesick Blues: The Life of Hank Williams*, written by Paul Hemphill, showed the parallels between the Country star's and the author's lives. *Entertainment Weekly* writer Chris Willman released *Rednecks and Bluenecks: The Politics of Country Music*, a look at the differing political leanings of Country Music artists. *Steve Earle: Fearless Heart, Outlaw Poet*, by David McGee, takes an intensive album-by-album look at the influential artist. *Music City Reader 2005*, edited by Randy Rudder, is a compilation of stories from Nashville-area writers. British journalist Robin Eggar released *Shania Twain: The Biography* through CMT Books. Founding member of The Four Guys, Sam Wellington, offers his showbiz advice in his new book, *Who Wants To Be A Country Music Star? The Right Way And The Nashville Way To Launch And Maintain A Country Music Career*. *Immoral*, the new thriller from Brian Freeman, features a hero who incorporates Country Music in his crime fighting with Vince Gill, Sara Evans, Alan Jackson and Patty Loveless.

Sara Evans was featured as the only Country artist on *People's* 50 Most Beautiful list, Keith Anderson made it in the magazine's Most Eligible Men issue, and Tim McGraw and Keith Urban were featured in the Sexiest Men Alive issue. Shania Twain ranked at No. 30 on *Forbes* magazine's Celebrity 100 list.

Country Music trivia was a hot topic in board games in 2005. "Music Scene It?" featured Tim McGraw on the box cover. "Shout About Music," a DVD game, featured a Country edition. "Country Music Triviologies" featured brain-bending trivia questions in different categories.



tsunami and HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORTS

On Dec. 26, 2004, one of the biggest tsunamis in history killed more than 160,000 people in South Asia. People all around the world chipped in to help, including many in the Country Music community.

Kenny Chesney performed on the NBC special "Tsunami Aid: A Concert of Hope," with music downloads available of the performances with all proceeds going to the Red Cross. In Nashville, Kathy Mattea and Michael W. Smith hosted a benefit, "An Evening for Restoration: Music City Comes Together For Tsunami Relief," which raised more than \$50,000 for World Vision. Diamond Rio, Crystal Gayle, Vince Gill, Lee Greenwood, the Oak Ridge Boys and Ricky Skaggs were among the performers. In Texas, Pat Green, Jack Ingram and Jerry Jeff Walker hosted a benefit. Willie Nelson's benefit concert, which featured Joe Ely, Patty Griffin, Natalie Maines of the Dixie Chicks, Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis, was released as a CD and DVD with proceeds going to C.A.R.E. and UNICEF.

Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast of the United States in late August 2005, killing thousands of people and displacing more than a million others from their homes in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. Less than a month later, Hurricane Rita hit the Gulf again, effecting people in Texas and parts of Louisiana. Country artists and organizations sprung into action, donating money, supplies and comfort to those people whose lives were turned upside down by the disaster.

The terrible suffering and loss left in the wake of Hurricane Katrina compelled CMA's Board of Directors to double the amount of funds donated as part of CMA's "Cause for Celebration!" charitable benefit program with half of the money going to The Salvation Army to aid in the relief effort. CMA donated \$200,000 to The Salvation Army on behalf of the artists who participated in 2005 CMA Music Festival in addition to the \$200,000 earmarked to give to charities designated by the artists.

Garth Brooks, the Dixie Chicks and Trisha Yearwood performed while Reba McEntire helped answer phones on the cross-network fundraiser "Shelter From the Storm: A Concert for the Gulf Coast" to benefit victims of hurricanes that ravaged the Gulf Coast. Faith Hill, Tim McGraw and Willie Nelson appeared on NBC's "A Concert for Hurricane Relief." Another hurricane relief concert, "ReAct Now: Music and Relief," which aired on CMT, MTV and VH1, featured performances by Big & Rich, Emmylou Harris, Alan Jackson and Sugarland.

Faith Hill visited Gulfport, Miss., one of the hardest hit areas from Hurricane Katrina, to help distribute supplies that she bought for victims. Jo Dee Messina and her band loaded supplies in their tour trucks and drove down to Louisiana to unload relief supplies and food. Brooks & Dunn sent two of their semi trucks down to Jackson, Miss., loaded with relief supplies. Charley Pride directly helped 40 families displaced by Hurricane Katrina by buying them everyday necessities.

Darryl Worley contributed \$50,000 from the proceeds of his annual "Tennessee River Run" to the American Red Cross. Lane Brody included animal victims of the hurricanes as beneficiaries from her annual benefit for Walden's Puddle. Montgomery Gentry urged their fans to contribute all they could to help hurricane victims and donated all of the proceeds from fan club memberships to the Red Cross. Keith Urban donated proceeds from the theater events at 85 screens nationwide of his "Livin' Right Now" concert DVD to the Red Cross. Travis Tritt donated \$10,000 from his performance at the Silver Star Casino to hurricane victims. The Recording Academy's MusiCares Foundation pledged an initial donation of \$1 million to help musicians whose lives were uprooted by Hurricane Katrina. Cupit Records set up a Web site for people to contribute funds to specific families in need. Hank Williams, Jr. donated \$125,000 from a concert at Pearl River Resort to hurricane relief efforts in Biloxi, Miss. Aaron Tippin urged his fans to give generously to hurricane victims at his concerts and gave all donated monies to the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Alan Jackson donated proceeds from several of his concerts to Katrina relief organizations. Jeff Bates donated \$25,000 from a benefit concert in Mississippi to the Salvation Army. Broken Bow Records donated \$1 from each CD sold on their imprint through the end of 2005 to the Red Cross. Farm Aid, headed by Willie Nelson, raised money for the Family Farm Disaster Fund to aid farmers in the hardest hit areas get their lives back together.

The Grand Ole Opry hosted "Country Reaches Out: An Opry Benefit for the American Red Cross" live on GAC with performers including Terri Clark, Billy Currington, Little Jimmy Dickens, Alan Jackson, Alison Krauss, Craig Morgan, LeAnn Rimes, Julie Roberts, Marty Stuart, Keith Urban and more. Phil Vassar and Shelly Fairchild performed at "One Country, One Night" for the Red Cross in Kansas City. Buddy Jewell performed a benefit concert at Sam's Town Casino in Tunica, Miss. with proceeds going to the Central Mississippi chapter of the Red Cross. Carrie Underwood headlined a benefit concert with her "American Idol" castmates with proceeds from ticket sales and merchandise going to the Red Cross and the Humane Society of the United States to help pets stranded in the disaster. The Music City Jam, held at the Expo Center at Music Valley Drive in Nashville, raised nearly \$5,000 for the Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief Center with performers including Cowboy Crush, Todd Fritsch, Hilljack, Daniel Lee Martin, Lila McCann, Kevin Sharp and more. Alabama performed a free concert in their native state for all evacuees from the storm. Gretchen Wilson and Big & Rich added a date to their tour with all proceeds going to victims.



Billy Currington performs at "Country Reaches Out: An Opry Benefit for the American Red Cross."

Dixie Chicks perform on "Shelter From the Storm: A Concert for the Gulf Coast."

Neil Young and Emmylou Harris on "ReAct Now: Music and Relief."



CMA donates to the Salvation Army as part of CMA's "Cause for Celebration!" (l-r) J. William Denny, Lifetime CMA Board member, member of The Salvation Army Nashville Chapter Board of Directors and Vice President/Treasurer, National Tape & Disc, Inc.; Tony Conway, CMA Music Festival Executive Producer and President/Co-owner, Buddy Lee Attractions; recording artist Jimmy Wayne; Major Ron Raymer, Area Commander, The Salvation Army Nashville Chapter; Walker Matthews, Chair of The Salvation Army Advisory Board; and Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer.



Tim McGraw and "Today" host Matt Lauer on "A Concert for Hurricane Relief."



Ben Jones and Cowboy Crush at the Music City Jam.

THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

musicals and PLAYS

The League of American Theatres and Producers, Inc. and CMA brought Broadway's elite together with some of Country Music's biggest stars for "Broadway Meets Country" at the Frederick P. Rose Hall, Home of Jazz at Lincoln Center during "Country Takes NYC" week leading up to the 2005 CMA Awards. Performers included Broadway's Jason Danieley, Renée Elise Goldsberry, Adriane Lenox, Marin Mazzie, Andrea McArdle, Brian Stokes Mitchell, James Naughton, Marian Seldes, Ben Vereen and Patrick Wilson. Country stars included Trace Adkins, Glen Campbell, Billy Currington, Raul Malo, Neal McCoy, Richie McDonald of Lonestar, Jamie O'Neal, Julie Roberts, Carrie Underwood, Lee Ann Womack and Trisha Yearwood.

Dolly Parton is planning her first musical on Broadway, an adaptation of the hit workplace satire "9 to 5." Parton is writing 10 new songs for the musical, but will not appear onstage. "Ring of Fire," a musical about the life of Johnny Cash, is set to begin on Broadway in 2006 and stars Lari White. Carlene Carter starred in the Nashville and New York productions of "Wildwood Flowers," a musical about the original Carter Family. Billy Ray Cyrus played Frank Butler in a Toronto production of "Annie Get Your Gun." Billy Currington joined a star-studded collection of performers taking part in the fourth annual "Broadway Under The Stars" event, which marked the start of New York City's summer outdoor cultural season. Sherrié Austin starred in Broadway's "The Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde." Mandy Barnett, Kathy Mattea, Jeannie Seely and Pam Tillis appeared in a Nashville production of the off-Broadway play "The Vagina Monologues."



Brian Stokes Mitchell and Lee Ann Womack at "Broadway Meets Country."



Sherrié Austin and Deven May in "The Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde."

armed forces SHOWS

The Grand Ole Opry partnered with the U.S. Department of Defense's "America Supports You," a nationwide program to showcase and communicate America's support to the men and women in the armed forces. Through the partnership, "Grand Ole Opry Live" was made available to troops around the world through the Armed Services Network.

"The Spirit of America Tour" featured more than 20 shows with artists including the Oak Ridge Boys, Miranda Lambert, the Charlie Daniels Band, Pam Tillis, Buddy Jewell, Cowboy Crush, The Bellamy Brothers, Little Texas, Dierks Bentley, Cross Canadian Ragweed, Joe Diffie and more performing for U.S. troops stations overseas.

Stars for Stripes events took celebrity entertainment into the remote areas to perform for the troops. Participants this year included Bellamy Brothers, Charlie Daniels, Jolie Edwards, Aaron Tippin, Trick Pony, Mark Wills and Chely Wright and more.

Ty England, Toby Keith, Neal McCoy and Rascal Flatts participated in USO Tours in 2005.

Clint Black performed a special concert for the troops stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky. and was made an Honorary Member Of The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and Fort Campbell Screaming Eagles. Craig Morgan and Keni Thomas performed at the first annual "America Supports You" concert in Washington, D.C. Former U.S. soldier Bobby Pinson performed at military bases in Texas and North Carolina. Josh Gracin performed at Washington, D.C.'s Ford Theater in a special that honored American troops. Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran Luke Stricklin performed at various military bases throughout the country.

The American Freedom Festival, organized by the American Freedom Foundation Inc. in New York on Veterans Day as part of CMA's "Country Takes NYC" activities, featured performances by Charlie Daniels, Keni Thomas, Mark Wills, Darryl Worley and more, raising money and awareness for the veterans of America's armed forces and their families, whose lives have been affected by Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Charlie Daniels with U.S. troops in Iraq.



Mark Wills, John Bradshaw Layfield, Al Franken and Darryl Worley at the American Freedom Festival.



Pam Tillis performs at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico.



Toby Keith signs autographs for troops in Iraq.

tributes and ACCOLADES

Salute! The World War Tribute Album featured popular songs from the World War II era performed by LeAnn Rimes, Crystal Gayle, Kenny Rogers, The Judds, Lee Greenwood, Marie Osmond and more. *A Tribute To Brother Duets*, released on Pinecastle Records, featured 12 tracks by the most popular brother duos in Country Music including the Louvin Brothers, Delmore Brothers, Blue Sky Boys, Jim & Jesse, Wilburn Brothers, Whitstein Brothers and more. Crystal Gayle and Ricky Skaggs contributed to *Songs From The Neighborhood — The Music Of Mr. Rogers*. Fellow songwriters showered love on Billy Joe Shaver, including Guy Clark, Jimmy Dale Gilmore, Robert Earl Keen, Bruce Robison and more on *A Tribute To Billy Joe Shaver: Live. Happy Land: Musical Tributes To Laura Ingles Wilder* featured songs by Pat Enright, Riders in the Sky and others that tell the story of the *Little House* author.

Dierks Bentley was surprised at a show in California by Marty Stuart who told Bentley that he was being inducted as the newest, and youngest, member of the Grand Ole Opry. Country Music Hall of Fame member Dolly Parton received the National Medal of Arts from President George W. Bush. Shania Twain received Canada's highest civilian honor, the Order of Canada, which was established to recognize the lifetime contributions made by Canadians who made a major difference to Canada.



Marty Stuart watches as Dierks Bentley and his dog Jake celebrate his induction into the Grand Ole Opry.

THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

commercials

ADVERTISEMENTS and BUSINESS VENTURES

Country artists are throwing their hats into the clothing arena. Reba McEntire teamed up with Dillard's to launch her own clothing line aptly called Reba. George Strait lent his name to Wrangler for a line of jeans and shirts called The George Strait Collection. Keith Urban joined pop stars Joss Stone and Liz Phair for a GAP jeans ad campaign, "Favorites." Urban also recorded his song "Most People I Know Think I'm Crazy" for television ads and an exclusive CD only available in GAP stores. Carrie Underwood appeared in print ads for Skechers shoes. Janie Fricke creates handmade pillows and throws for her Janie Fricke Collection.

Martina McBride and LeAnn Rimes were immortalized in plastic when Mattel introduced a line of Barbie dolls sculpted in the Country ladies' images.

Phil Vassar appeared in commercials for Prilosec OTC. Carrie Underwood appeared in a series of commercials for Hershey's, singing classic jingles. Gretchen Wilson signed a huge endorsement deal with Chevy to appear in commercials nationwide. Garth Brooks and Martina McBride appeared in holiday-themed commercials for Wal-Mart. Brooks inked a deal to distribute his music exclusively through Wal-Mart, which included a limited edition box set. Target featured commercials for holiday wake-up calls from Brad Paisley and other celebrities. Charlie Daniels, Sara Evans and Alison Krauss and Union Station teamed up with Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores to distribute exclusive CDs only available in Cracker Barrel stores. Martina McBride partnered with Hallmark Gold Crown Stores to distribute the exclusive CD *My Heart*. Toby Keith continued to appear in Ford trucks commercials. Tim McGraw and Nelly appeared in a Budweiser commercial.

Country was the music of choice for companies connecting to their audiences. Terri Clark recorded a new song, "Better In A Dodge," for Dodge truck commercials. Trent Willmon's "Home Sweet Holiday Inn" was used by the hotel chain for its television ads. Joe Diffie rerecorded his hit "Pickup Man" for Applebee's Carside-To-Go advertising campaign. Darryl Worley recorded a new song, "I Found Love In A K-Mart Store" for the retailer's television ads. Collin Raye was the singing voice for one of the Fruit of the Loom characters in the garment maker's commercials.

Investment opportunities for Country artists continued to grow in 2005. Toby Keith opened I Love This Bar & Grill restaurants in Las Vegas and Oklahoma City and introduced his own line of marinades and spices. Keith started his own record label Show Dog Records, which will distribute Keith's music as well as other Country acts. John Michael Montgomery opened a restaurant, John Michael's Hometown Bar & Grill in Nicholasville, Ky. Willie Nelson started a company called Willie Nelson's Biodiesel that will market a new environmentally friendly truck and bus fuel made from vegetable oils. Tim McGraw became part owner of Arena Football League team the Nashville Kats and appeared in local commercials for the team. Darryl Worley opened Darryl Worley Home Furnishings in Enterprise, Ala., selling flooring, furniture, appliances and more. Shania Twain released a new fragrance, Shania by Stetson. Neal McCoy started his own record label, 903 Music. Marty Stuart delved into the record label business, opening Superlatone Records.

Corporate sponsors lined up to sign Country stars to endorsement deals in 2005. Trace Adkins teamed up with Waffle House restaurants for a multi-city contest where fans got to meet Adkins at a local Waffle House where he shared his favorite meal and even flipped an egg or two. Steve Azar signed a deal with ExxonMobil to sponsor his tour through 2006. Sonny Burgess signed endorsement deals with Bailey Hats and Wrangler. Swiss watch company Tissot signed Brad Paisley to expand awareness of its line of sports watches in the U.S. Dorfman Pacific and the Milano Hat Company signed Toby Keith to a three-year deal for a signature line of headwear.

Country Music

THE LONG ARM OF

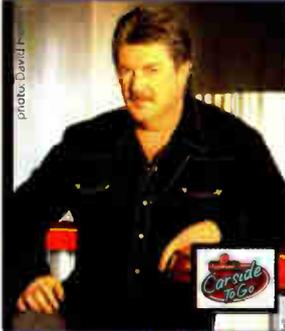
Country Music has come a long way since Grand Ole Opry advertisers were nearly the only sponsorships to be had. Today, companies with products far beyond traditional notions of the music's appeal are investing in Nashville's most famous export.

Phil Vassar sings the praises of Prilosec OTC, a product he uses to combat heartburn, which in turn helps his singing. You can find the new CD from Heather Lynn Williams in Saks Fifth Avenue, Carrie Underwood promotes trendy Skechers footwear, and ExxonMobil helps keep Steve Azar on the road. Martina McBride has her own Mattel doll and Sprint cell phone customers were the first to be able download the ring tone for her recent single "Rose Garden."

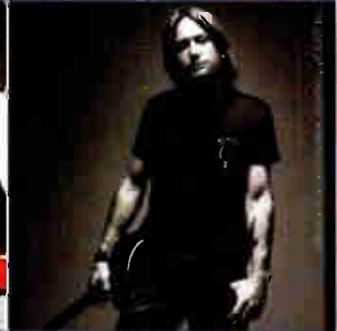
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Charlie Daniels, Sara Evans and Alison Krauss and Union Station *Cracker Barrel*



Joe Diffie *Applebee's*



Keith Urban *GAP*



LeAnn Rimes and Martina McBride *Barbie dolls* *Mattel*



Montgomery Gentry *Jay's Back*



Shania Twain *Stetson*



Phil Vassar *Prilosec*



Carrie Underwood *Skechers*



Brad Paisley *Tissot*



Trace Adkins *Waffle House*

soundtracks

The Charlie Daniels Band, Montgomery Gentry and Willie Nelson were featured on the soundtrack for the "Dukes of Hazzard." The soundtrack for "Must Love Dogs" featured Ryan Adams, Stephanie Bentley, Rodney Crowell, Susan Haynes and Linda Ronstadt. Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon provided the singing voices for Johnny Cash and June Carter on the soundtrack for "Walk the Line." Lila McCann recorded "I'm Amazed" for a CD accompanying the DVD release of Disney's "Cinderella." Patty Griffin and Adams contributed songs to the " Elizabethtown " soundtrack. The soundtrack for "Brokeback Mountain" featured songs from Steve Earle, Emmylou Harris, Nelson and Ronstadt. Harris also contributed to the "Because of Winn-Dixie" soundtrack. The "North Country" soundtrack featured a song by The Bellamy Brothers. Dolly Parton contributed a song that ran over the closing credits of "Transamerica." "The Muppet Christmas Carol Soundtrack Special 50th Anniversary Edition" featured a song by Martina McBride. The "Grand Champion" soundtrack featured Asleep at the Wheel, Robert Earl Keen, Nelson, Charlie Robison and George Strait. Shania Twain, Sara Evans, McBride, LeAnn Rimes and SheDAISY recorded classic songs for the all-women soundtrack to the hit ABC show "Desperate Housewives." Rascal Flatts' "Feels Like Today" was included in the soundtrack for the TV series "Smallville." Lyle Lovett and June Carter Cash had songs on the soundtrack to the HBO series "Deadwood."

Country Music in film

THE BUSINESS OF PLACING

Hollywood hasn't gone enough Country — yet. But 2005 experienced a rise in Country Music on movie soundtracks plus hot artists such as CMA Entertainer of the Year Keith Urban and CMA Vocalist of the Year Gretchen Wilson are making music supervisors in the film industry take a more serious look at Nashville.

Even though the popularity of Country Music is high, it's still behind rock, pop and jazz when it comes to soundtrack cuts. Less than five percent of soundtrack music in movies is Country however recent years show promise.

In 2004, Johnny Cash songs were featured in "Starksy & Hutch" and "Kill Bill Vol. 2." Kristyn Osborn of SheDAISY had a cut on "Raising Helen" and Tim McGraw sang "Wherever the Trail May Lead" in "Home on the Range." Asleep at the Wheel, the Dixie Chicks, Willie Nelson and George Strait contributed songs to "Grand Champion."

Mary Chapin Carpenter, Cash, Tammy Cochran, Carolyn Dawn Johnson, Montgomery Gentry and Rascal Flatts contributed songs for the Mel Gibson movie "We Were Soldiers." "The Rookie" included recordings by Ryan Adams, Guy Clark, Steve Earle, Duane Jarvis, Nelson and Allison Moorer. A Billy Gilman tune was in "Stuart Little 2" and "Lilo and Stitch" spotlighted Wynonna's cover of "Burning Love." "Sweet Home Alabama" included a song by SheDAISY and a cut by Steve Holy was in "Angel Eyes."

"O Brother, Where Art Thou?," "Cold Mountain" and "Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood" were perfect outlets for Alison Krauss. Faith Hill's songs were featured in "If I'm Not in Love," "Chasing Liberty," "Pearl Harbor" and "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas." Marty Stuart composed much of the soundtrack for the 2000 movie "All the Pretty Horses."

"Sure, there have been some good placements of Country Music," says Alan Brewer, an independent producer and President of Brewman Music & Entertainment (BME) in Nashville and Los Angeles.

Nearly every decision about what music goes into films is made by music supervisors in Los Angeles and New York. "Their personal listening tastes greatly affect the choices they make," Brewer said. "It's natural for people to lean toward what they are familiar with, what they enjoy. Many of these music supervisors know very little about Country Music."

But that's getting better, largely because of new Country stars like Big & Rich, who have a renegade reputation of being on the edge of Country with a sound that's a blend of Country, rock and hip-hop that appeals to a younger audience. Also artists with crossover success, including Hill and Shania Twain, have more Hollywood appeal.

"Whenever there's a lot of media focus on Country Music, music supervisors start looking for Country material," Brewer said. "Increased media attention creates a greater awareness of Country Music as a genre in Hollywood."

Country artists rarely get directly involved with their soundtrack contributions. Occasionally they might sing an original song that was created for the film, or possibly a different version of one of their hits.

Maureen Crowe is an independent music supervisor in Los Angeles who has worked on several films and soundtracks, including "Chicago" and "Fame." She landed Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You" for "The Bodyguard," which became a huge hit for Whitney Houston.

For the movie "Con Air," producer Jerry Bruckheimer wanted a song by a female rock artist. Because there were none available that seemed to fit the mood of the scene, Crowe suggested Nashville. "At the time LeAnn Rimes was really hot with the beautiful song 'How Do I Live?,' Crowe said. "Jerry really wanted the song but felt that LeAnn was too young. So instead he got Trisha Yearwood to cut it and both versions were out at the same time — LeAnn on radio and Trisha in the movie."

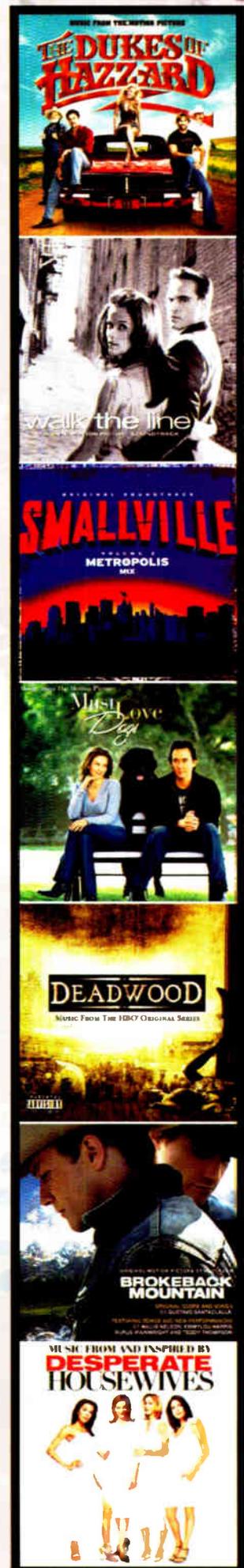
Rimes has since been featured on the "A View from the Top" soundtrack and provided the theme song to "Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde."

Crowe says most supervisors recognize that some of the best songwriting talent is in Nashville. "If supervisors need something specially written for a film, they'll usually tap into Nashville writers to get it done," she said.

Brewer stresses that pitching songs to Hollywood is different than pitching songs in Nashville. "In Hollywood, the story line of the song isn't that important. It's the mood that counts. It's all about vibe and mood," he said.

Jewel Coburn, Co-owner of Ten Ten Music, is one of the music publishers in Nashville who has mastered the Hollywood pitch. "My husband Barry and I go to L.A. to meet with music supervisors and directors," Coburn said. "We

continued on page 34...



THE YEAR IN COUNTRY MUSIC 2005

who new to watch in 2006



Bomshel *Dark Records*



Jace Everett *Epic Records*



Luke Bryar *Capitol Records Nashville*



Eric Church *Capitol Records Nashville*



John Corbett *Fan Bone Records*



Matt Jenkins *Universal South Records*



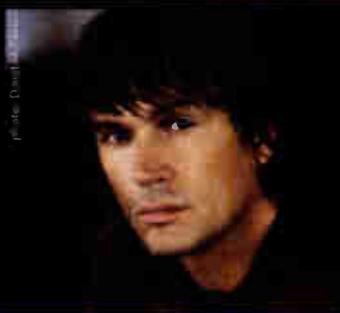
Jamey Johnson *RNA Records*



Brice Long *Columbia Records*



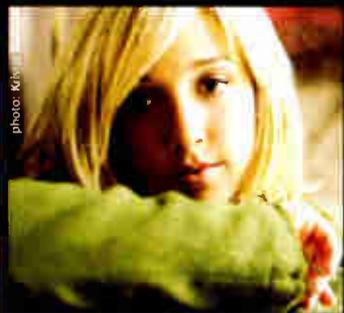
The Lost Trailers *RNA Records*



Rockie Lynne *Universal South Records*



Joey Martin *Gladys Knight Records*



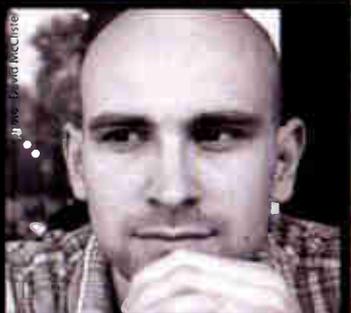
Ashley Monroe *Columbia Records*



Megan Mullins *Broken Bow Records*



Gary Nichols *Merrory Nashville*



Carey Ott *Dualtone Records*



Danielle Peck *Big Machine Records*



John Pierce *RCA Records*



Trent Tomlinson *Lyrical Street Records*

Who New to Watch in 2006 is a partial list of artists with debut singles or debut albums set for release in 2006.

NOT PICTURED:

- Brandi - Alive Records
- Carolina Rain - Equity Music Group
- Amber Dotson - Capitol Records Nashville
- Craig Hand - Category 5 Records
- Susan Haynes - Epic Records
- Jake Owen - RCA Records
- Taylor Swift - Big Machine Records
- Holli White - Active Entertainment

WHO NEW TO WATCH IN 2006

MARTINA McBRIDE

records an
album of
'Timeless'
classics

"THOSE
WOMEN
MADE IT
POSSIBLE
FOR ME TO
DO WHAT
I DO."

—Martina McBride



Martina McBride has been surrounded by traditional Country Music her entire life.

At age 7, the Kansas native joined her father's band, which played cover versions of chestnuts including "Heartaches By The Number," "Satin Sheets" and "I'll Be There."

Then she grew up to become a Country Music superstar.

In 1995, McBride joined the cast of the Grand Ole Opry, where she has frequently shared the stage with trailblazing artists such as Country Music Hall of Fame member Loretta Lynn, Jeanne Pruett and Connie Smith.

With the October 2005 release of her album *Timeless*, which debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top Country Albums chart and has since gone Platinum, McBride has come full circle, returning to the classic Country songs that were such an important part of her formative years. The singer's eighth studio album is comprised of 18 new recordings of songs from the 1950s, '60s and '70s, including tunes that were hits for Lynn, Pruett and Smith.

The album's lead single is "(I Never Promised You A) Rose Garden," a song written by Joe South that became a No. 1 Country hit for Lynn Anderson and helped her earn the honor of CMA Female Vocalist of the Year in 1971.

The key inspiration for *Timeless* was a new version of Buck Owens' "Together Again," which McBride recorded for *My Heart*, a compilation of her music that was sold exclusively at Hallmark Gold Crown® stores in 2005.

"That was the spark that started this whole thing," McBride said. "I had such a great time recording 'Together Again,' and it reminded me how much I loved this music and loved singing it. I thought, 'Someday, I'm going to do a whole album of this music.' And then I thought, 'Why wait until someday? Why don't I just do it now?'"

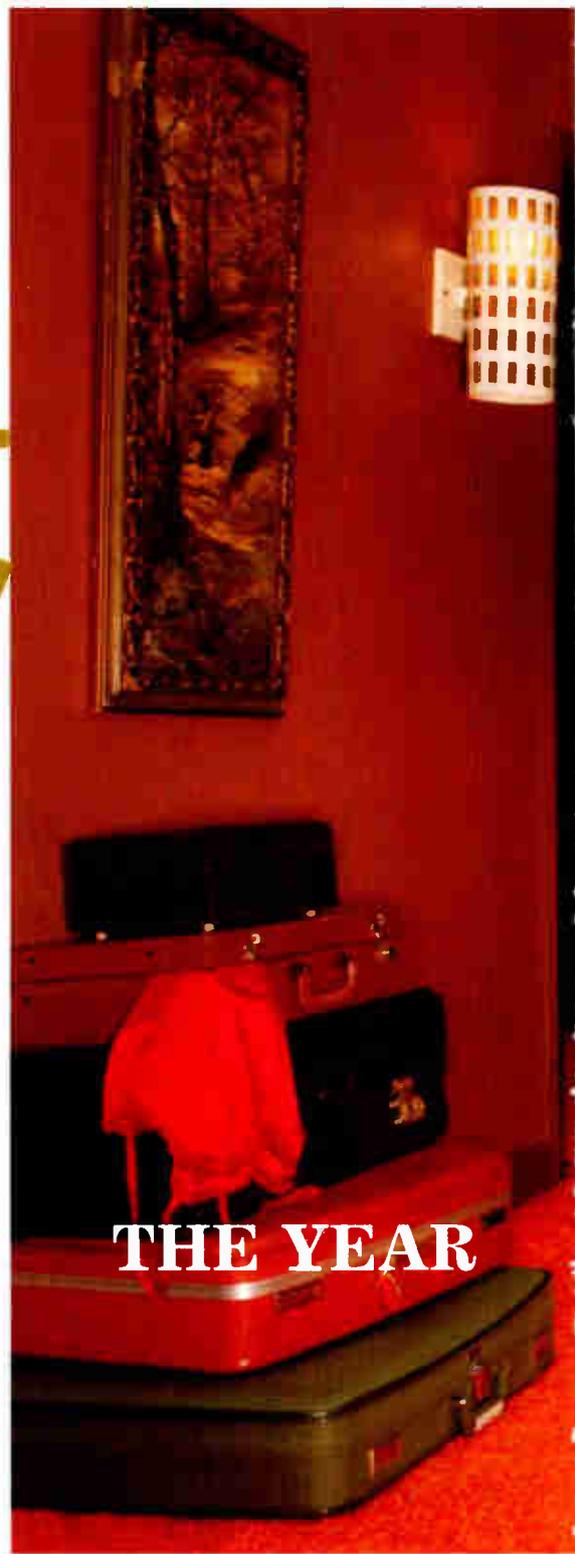
In addition to paying tribute to legendary stylists, the album also salutes the craftsmanship of some of the genre's most revered tunesmiths. McBride delivers dazzling renditions of Bill Anderson's "Once A Day," Johnny Cash's "I Still Miss Someone" (with guest vocalist Dolly Parton), Harlan Howard's "Heartaches By The Number" (with guest vocalist Dwight Yoakam) and Hank Williams' "You Win Again."

"Martina's love and understanding of Country Music is part of every word she sings on this album," said Joe Galante, Chairman, RCA Label Group. "There is no doubt in my mind that the writers of these timeless songs would agree that they have been given an equally timeless voice."

McBride has a deep respect for all the artists whose songs she interprets on *Timeless*, but she feels

continued on page 35...

BIG & RICH



THE YEAR

Being Big & Rich can be dangerous.

"I sliced my finger open on a disco ball one time," observed John Rich, seated next to partner Big Kenny (Alphin) in the conference room at the Warner Bros. Nashville office. "You've gotta be really careful."

"I slit my hand picking up a piece of guitar you'd smashed on the stage," Alphin said to his partner, pointing out the still-visible scar. "I went to grab it and pick it up to hand it to someone in the audience, and the edge just slit three fingers. Razor sharp!"

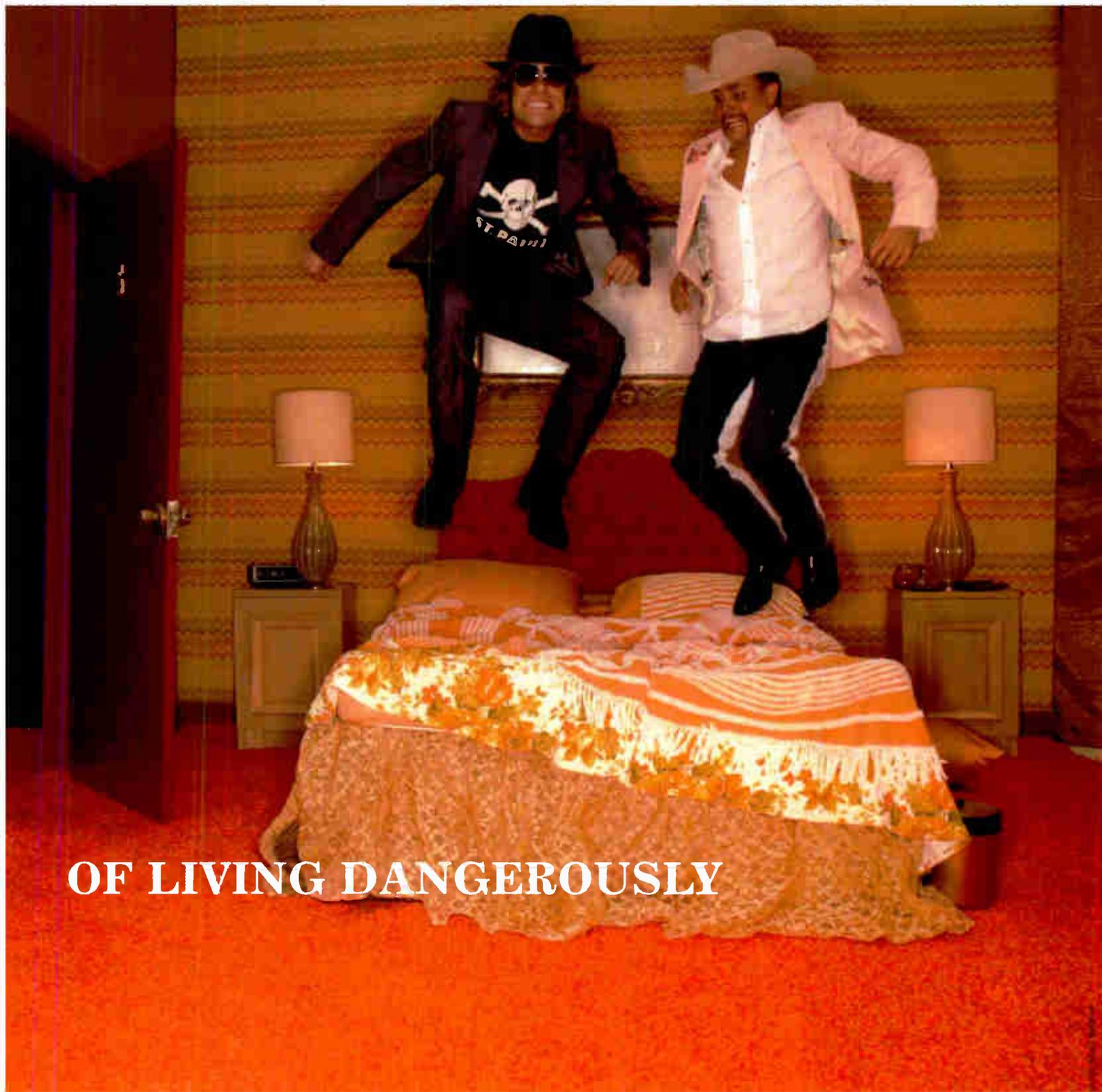
"I did that a couple times myself," replied Rich, nodding his head.

Very few Country acts would have occasion to incur these kinds of onstage injuries. But then, few have ever offered a stage show that includes disco balls, guitar smashings and the other outrageous antics that mark a Big & Rich show.

Since the release of their 2004 debut, *Horse Of A Different Color*, nearing triple-Platinum, these two Music City veterans have helped to change preconceptions about Country Music, what it is, who makes it and who will enjoy it. Their wildly diverse sound helps them appeal to audiences outside the traditional Country listenership, even as their Music Row-trained sense of songcraft ropes in hardcore Country fans. That audience has grown with the November 2005 release of their sophomore album, *Comin' To Your City*, and the flowering of MuzikMafia, the groundbreaking Nashville musical movement that included them, rapper Cowboy Troy, Gretchen Wilson and a roster of other promising talent.

At the core of Big & Rich's success is the combustible chemistry between Big Kenny and Rich. "They're total opposites, philosophically and emotionally," said Warner Bros. Nashville Chief Creative Officer Paul Worley, who signed them to the label and co-produced both albums along with the duo. "Each one of them has an opposite view of how the world works. And yet they both have this sort of genius mentality about them, and somehow they found a lot of common ground in their beliefs, and the value of an eclectic approach to music.

"You've really got yin and yang joined together in Big Kenny and John Rich. When that happens, there's always something powerful that comes out of that situation."



OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

Worley was first captured by Big & Rich's distinctive songwriting and interlacing harmonies during a meeting in his office. They had written a song ("She's A Butterfly") for Martina McBride's Worley-produced *Martina* album, and he summoned them to hear what else they had to offer. There was quite a bit, as it turned out. "When the two of them walked in and sat down with their acoustic guitars and sang me 'Wild West Show,' 'Holy Water,' 'Love Train' and four or five more songs, and I heard those two voices, and they started telling me about MuzikMafia. I just went, 'Holy God, I have got to be a part of this, whatever it is,'" Worley said.

What it turned out to be was a freewheeling mix of Country, rock, rap and even club dance music. Interesting, but not a surefire recipe for a mainstream hit. "My hope was that it was so far outside that it would be inside," Worley chuckled, "and that's what happened."

Big & Rich have yet to enjoy a Top 10 entry on *Billboard's* Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. But they have nonetheless found their audience, selling more than 2.6 million copies of *Horse Of A*

continued on page 35...

"You've really got yin and yang joined together in Big Kenny and John Rich. When that happens, there's always something powerful that comes out of that situation."

- Paul Worley



Yesterday and Today with Universal Music Group

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Through its primary subsidiaries — MCA Nashville, Mercury Nashville and the former DreamWorks Records Nashville — the Universal Music Group has a huge presence in the current makeup of Country Music. In a recent issue of *Billboard*, the company owned three of the top five titles on both the Country Singles and Country Albums charts.

Though the name Universal has existed in the music and movie industries for years, its presence as a distribution umbrella remains relatively new. Universal was established in 1998 when the Seagram Company merged with PolyGram.

That single move represented the consolidation of a huge mass of Country Music history. Decca Records, a once-significant imprint that accounts for a large chunk of Universal's back catalog, was the first major label to record Country artists in Nashville, holding Music City sessions for Red Foley and Ernest Tubb in August 1947.

Labels such as Decca, MCA, Mercury and MGM have boasted such Country Music Hall of Famers as Patsy Cline, Conway Twitty, Flatt & Scruggs and Hank Williams. And some of the most prominent executives in the Hall of Fame passed through the company's ranks.

Following is an introductory peek at the various entities that eventually melded into the Universal Music Group:



MCA/DECCA

English stockbroker Edward Lewis established the Decca label in 1929 and brought it to the U.S. five years later by luring Brunswick executive Jack Kapp. Country-gospel artist Stuart Hamblen recorded the first sides for the label, which blossomed to include acts Foley, Tubb, The Sons Of The Pioneers, Milton Brown and others.

Future Hall of Famer Paul Cohen took over the label's Country reins in the late-'40s, signing Bill Monroe, Webb Pierce, Kitty Wells and more. Around the same time, Decca gained control of Universal Pictures.

Cohen would move to a sister label, Coral, leaving Owen Bradley to head Decca's Country wing for nearly two decades. Bradley worked with legends including Cline and Loretta Lynn. The label remained active even after MCA bought it in 1962. The Decca name was put to rest in 1973 (though briefly revived in the '90s), in favor of MCA.

Today, MCA's roster includes Gary Allan, Vince Gill, Hot Apple Pie, Reba McEntire, George Strait, Josh Turner, Lee Ann Womack and Trisha Yearwood, though it also brought more once-booming labels into its fold.

Among the once-independent companies that contributed to MCA's catalog are:

- Dot Records, founded in Gallatin, a Nashville suburb, by Randy Wood in 1950. Initially a pop label, the company shifted its operations to Los Angeles, where it was sold to Paramount Pictures. By the 1970s, it was run by Jim Foglesong, inducted in 2004 to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Among its successes were Roy Clark and Donna Fargo.
- ABC Records was established as ABC-Paramount in 1955, and has the distinction of being the label that launched the *Ray Charles Modern Sounds In Country & Western Music* albums. In 1974, Paramount merged it with Dot to become ABC/Dot, with continued successes by The Oak Ridge Boys, Barbara Mandrell and Don Williams. ABC/Dot folded into MCA in 1979.
- Kapp Records, founded in 1954 by Jack Kapp's brother, Dave. The label developed Carl Smith, Mel Tillis and Bob Wills sides before it was sold to MCA in 1967.



MERCURY/POLYGRAM

Mercury got a foothold in Chicago in 1945, established by Irving Green, who owned a record pressing plant, and Berle Adams, the manager of R&B act Louis Jordan. The name gleaned from an advertisement for the Mercury automobile, the label established a Nashville presence in 1947.

The following year, Murray Nash became the head of the Country division, attracting Bill Carlisle, Flatt & Scruggs and others. But the label never quite picked up enough steam and merged briefly with a Texas label to become Mercury/Starday. That deal lasted less than two years, but it gave Mercury's catalog the early recordings of George Jones.

In 1961, Shelby Singleton began running Mercury just as the label expanded. Philips Electronics purchased it and added a sister imprint, Smash. Mercury picked up Roy Drusky, Faron Young and others, while Smash built Country hits with Jerry Lee Lewis and Roger Miller.

Jerry Kennedy would later take over the operations, which grew to include the music of Dave Dudley, Tom T. Hall, Johnny Rodriguez and The Statler Brothers. During Kennedy's time at the helm, Germany's PolyGram bought Mercury in 1971.

continued on page 36 ...



PATSY CLINE

FLATT & SCRUGGS



RED FOLEY

GEORGE JONES



LORETTA LYNN

ROGER MILLER



BILL MONROE

WILLIE NELSON



WEBB PIERCE

CARL SMITH



SONS OF THE PIONEERS

CONWAY TWITTY

photos: courtesy of the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum. Logos used by permission.



CHRIS Cagle

Regroups After A Difficult Year

Not too long ago, Chris Cagle seemingly had it all. His music career was gaining momentum with two Gold albums. His home life was happy.

Then it all came tumbling down.

Things began to unravel. He started having trouble with his voice. There was a change in his management. His relationship with his girlfriend got rocky. He was drinking and smoking, making the vocal problems worse.

Shaken, Cagle consulted renowned voice specialist Dr. Robert Ossoff, Chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville.

Ossoff immediately placed him on vocal rest and gave him an ultimatum — change his habits or lose the ability to sing. The words weren't particularly surprising to the hard-driving Texan.

"The doctor gave me a choice — you can drink and smoke or you can sing," Cagle said. "And I stopped both. You can go back and listen to the first two records and listen to this new one and tell that I quit smoking."

Many artists experience vocal problems, usually due to pushing beyond the limits or straining the vocal chords through overuse or improper singing techniques. Ossoff says many of these problems can be diminished and even eliminated with some common sense practices and lifestyle alterations.

"Generally our suggestions include smoking cessation, alcohol reduction and cessation, control of respiratory and food allergies and proper dietary and eating habits," Ossoff said. "The latter include not eating within two hours of sleep to reduce the risk of reflux and the laryngeal irritation that it causes."

"We often use resting the voice 24/7 as a non-invasive, non-medical treatment for benign vocal fold lesions. The goal of the treatment is to promote the healing of the larynx by stopping the abusive insults

the folds receive as a result of labored voice use. Often voice rest, coupled with steroids to help reduce the inflammation of the folds, increases the success of voice rest. Lesions that survive the treatment can then be addressed with therapeutic interventions such as speech and singing instruction. That type of treatment gives voice use guidelines such as staying out of noisy places, drinking plenty of water and proper use of the voice with appropriate voice inflection and airflow. In most cases, we do not recommend that voice rest exceed two weeks."

At one low point, Cagle considered completely throwing in the towel on his career.

"The last year was just really a year to get through, that's all I can say about it," Cagle said. "You dream of something for so long and then all of a sudden you're faced with the possibility that you won't be able to continue. It's not even having to stop. It's just not being able to see what you could have done with it all, you know?"

Even coming off of a successful album with hit singles "Beautiful Day" and "Chicks Dig It," Cagle wondered if fans would wait while he took the time to regroup.

"I remember when I was a fan, listening to the radio and noticing somebody was gone and wondering what happened to them," he said. "The thing that scared me most is there were some folks I knew that went through the same situation, dear friends of mine, who really haven't made it back."

Forced to walk away for a few months, Cagle passed time working on a horse farm in Kingston Springs, Tenn. The physical labor proved therapeutic. "I just had to go occupy my time and do something and it helped immensely," he said.

Time spent in therapy in Arizona helped Cagle deal with depression and demons that plagued him from childhood. "I'm the last person I would have thought in life would do that. I'm a blue-collar man and

continued on page 36...

"You can drink and smoke or you can sing ... I stopped both." — Chris Cagle



CRS-37 FEATURES NEW RADIO SALES DAY AND CAREER FAIR

CMA is a proud sponsor of the 37th annual Country Radio Seminar, taking place Wednesday, Feb. 15, through Friday, Feb. 17, and hosted by the Country Radio Broadcasters, Inc.

New this year is Radio Sales Day on Friday and a career fair.

"CMA is very excited that CRS has added a sales day to their program, targeting corporate marketers and advertising agencies while providing radio sales execs with networking, training and ideation opportunities for them to increase their own sales numbers," said Rick Murray, CMA Vice President of Strategic Marketing. "We believe that the CRS infrastructure is a perfect place for marketers to familiarize themselves with today's Country Music artists given all of the showcases built into and around the event. We plan to bring some of our partners to Nashville and use the time to work with them on our events, let them see the many performances at CRS and network with radio and other industry execs."

For the first time, CRB is offering a separate Friday registration, a one-day event ideal for radio sales staff and clients. Registrants will be able to attend the full day of CRS activities plus Friday night's annual New Faces of Country Music Show.

FRIDAY SALES PANELS INCLUDE:

"Gettin' R Done with Country Artists" - top agencies explain why Country radio works for them

"Main Street to Madison Avenue" - America's advertisers tell how and why they use Country artists to endorse their products

"We Don't All Live in Trailers" - addresses challenges that Country radio faces

"Arbitron: How to Make it Pay off for You" - explains how to use Arbitron ratings

CRS-37 features informative panels, artist showcases and networking opportunities. Remember to participate in the artist radio taping sessions, check out booths in the exhibit hall, stop by the CRS-37 Networking lounge on the second level and visit friends at the Bridge Bar, open daily from 11 AM until 2 AM.

Friday also includes the first Career Fair: It's Not Just a Job, It's a Lifestyle from 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM, featuring two workshops "I Want to Work at a Country Music Radio Station!" and "How to Attract, Hire and Keep a Great Staff." There is no charge to attend the Career Fair and it is open to the public.

CMA Entertainer of the Year Keith Urban hosts and headlines Music City Jam on Wednesday night following the welcome reception. CRB will present the Career Achievement award to Ronnie Milsap. John Hines, K102-Minneapolis morning DJ, will receive the Tom Rivers Humanitarian Award.

To register for CRS, contact the CRB at (615) 327-4487. On the Web: crb.org

RADIO LEGENDS TO BE HONORED AT ANNUAL DINNER

CMA is a proud sponsor of the Country Music DJ and Radio Hall of Fame dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 14. Terry Dorsey, Lon Helton and Arch Yancey will be inducted into the DJ Hall of Fame plus Jonathan Fricke and Ed Salamon will join the Country Music Radio Hall of Fame. For tickets call the CRB at (615) 327-4487 or register online at crb.org.



ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR TURN IN THE SPOTLIGHT?

The CMA BROADCAST AWARDS recognize the outstanding contributions of Country radio stations and personalities. DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A CMA AWARD!

Categories include National Broadcast Personality plus Broadcast Personality and Radio Station of the Year in Major, Large, Medium and Small markets.

SAVE THESE DATES IN 2006! APRIL 3 AND JUNE 29

Submissions begin: Monday, April 3 on Broadcast.CMAawards.com.

Deadline: Thursday, June 29. Visit CMAawards.com for CMA Broadcast Awards criteria and to view past winning entries. Completed membership applications must be received by CMA prior to deadline.

ONLY CMA MEMBERS CAN ENTER THE BROADCAST AWARDS.

Not a CMA member? You are missing out on this CMA Award-winning opportunity and these great membership benefits:

INDIVIDUAL STERLING CMA MEMBERSHIP (\$100 ANNUAL DUES)

- Opportunity to purchase CMA AWARDS TICKETS.*
- CMA Directory
- CMA CLOSE UP magazine
- ACCESS to My.CMAworld.com
- CMA Awards VOTING RIGHTS
- DISCOUNTS on various Billboard publications and directories; Loews Hotels; M-Street radio and television data; and more!

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- Opportunity to purchase CMA AWARDS TICKETS.*
- EXCLUSIVE TRIP PACKAGES to CMA Music Festival and the CMA Awards.
- Two CMA Music Festival four-day TICKETS.**
- MRI RESEARCH, which provides purchasing trend data on consumers, including Country listeners.
- CMA Directory
- DISCOUNTS on various Billboard publications and directories; Loews Hotels; M-Street radio and television data; and more!
- CMA CLOSE UP magazine
- ACCESS to My.CMAworld.com
- Listing in the CMA Awards Program Book and more!

*Opportunity to purchase CMA Awards tickets based on availability of tickets.

**Radio members for on-air promotional use only.

For more information on how to become a CMA member, call 1-800-788-3045 or visit CMAworld.com/membership.



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VICTOR SANSONE AND JULIE TALBOTT OFFER THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT CMA MEMBERSHIP AND THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN COUNTRY RADIO AND CMA

Victor Sansone, President and General Manager of ABC Radio Group in Atlanta (WKHX-FM, WYAY-FM), is a 30-year radio industry veteran who serves as Chairman of the CMA Board of Directors and CMA Radio Committee member.

Julie Talbott is the Executive Vice President of Premiere Radio Networks, the No. 1 radio network in the United States. A subsidiary of Clear Channel Communications, Premiere syndicates 70 radio programs and services to more than 5,000 radio affiliates, reaching more than 190 million listeners weekly. Premiere Radio celebrates its 15th year as the official radio packager of the CMA Music Festival and the CMA Awards.

CMA Close Up: Why did you become a CMA member?

Victor Sansone: "Because I wanted to have a voice in an association that represented issues I had a stake in."

Julie Talbott: "When I moved to New York from Kentucky after college, I was surprised at the ambivalence towards Country Music in the city. The stereotypes and impressions were not in line with what I knew the music to be. So it was only natural to turn to the CMA, the organization that spends their time and energies educating advertisers and helping to facilitate music sales."

CU: Does a partnership exist between CMA and Country radio?

VS: "Absolutely, and in my leadership roles over the past few years I have witnessed it flourish. Being from radio, I have worked to insure that there is a partnership. That said, it is also in radio's best interest to be very proactive with the CMA on bringing forward issues of importance."

CU: Discuss the primary mandate of the CMA Radio Committee.

VS: "To find ways to contribute in how to grow our business, and maximize the efforts of the organization on our behalf."



VICTOR SANSONE



JULIE TALBOTT

CU: Does the CMA Board place an emphasis on providing benefits for radio members?

VS: "There is a never ending search for any extended benefit to the membership and what is relevant to the majority."

CU: Does radio have a voice with the CMA Board?

VS: "I have had many conversations with radio members on what has been important to them. We have a system of open communication."

CU: Does the research that CMA provides give stations an edge in their local marketplace?

VS: "Absolutely. There are many research pieces that we wouldn't ordinarily be thinking of that are made available which spur our creativity locally."

CU: Does winning a CMA Broadcast Award advance careers and stations?

VS: "Your local community recognizes you differently when you have won. In a business where we try and differentiate ourselves and our stations from the next, what better way is out there than this?"

CU: How has being a CMA member helped your career?

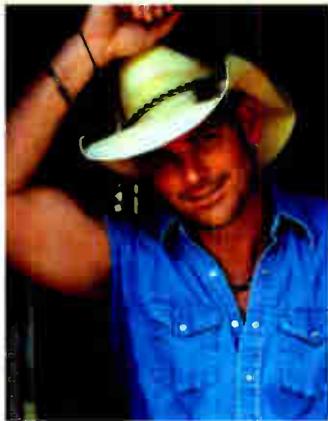
JT: "The most important part of being a CMA member is the pleasure of knowing the wonderful friends and business associates that have developed over the years. When MJI (bought by Premiere) first took over the radio rights of the

CMA Awards 15 years ago, there was very little activity with radio. Throughout the years, we have been able to grow that to extraordinary levels. It's been hard work, but it has brought me great joy. And for me, enjoying what I do on a daily basis is critical to my life."

CU: Is there a synergy between CMA, Country radio and Premiere that benefits the industry?

JT: "Premiere Radio Networks works with more than 2,000 Country radio

continued on page 36 ...



KEITH ANDERSON



JASON ALDEAN



VAN ZANT



JEFF BATES

LITTLE BIG TOWN



CHECK OUT THE NEW FACES OF COUNTRY MUSIC SHOW ON FRIDAY, FEB. 17

HD radio to the rescue



HD Digital Radio is discussed at the CMA Board of Directors meetings. (l-r) Ed Benson, CMA Chief Strategic Officer; Victor Sansone, President / General Manager of ABC Radio Group Atlanta (WKHX-FM, WYAY-FM); Tim Bealor, Vice President, RF Systems for Broadcast Electronics; and Mick Anselmo, Regional Vice President, Clear Channel Communications. photo: Amanda Eckard

Traditional radio is facing competition with the emergence of satellite radio newcomers XM and SIRIUS. But conventional radio has new digital technology of its own to help level the playing field. Digital radio, also known as HD Radio, provides a better, higher-fidelity sound quality, especially on the AM band; allows for data display on new receivers and will give stations the ability to multicast their signal. Broadcasters see the new technology as a game-changer while they face competition from satellite radio and other new media.

Current CMA Board Chairman Victor Sansone, who is also President/General Manager of ABC Radio Group Atlanta (WKHX-FM, WYAY-FM), believes HD Radio will be a boost, both to the radio industry and to consumers.

"I think we have to do this period," Sansone said. "Even without satellite radio, if we can enhance our technical delivery we should be thinking forward."

HD Radio works the same as traditional analog radio transmission, except that the audio is digitally formatted and transmitted as a continuous digital data stream together with the analog waveform signal. Radio stations send out both the analog and digital on the same broadcast frequency, along with signals for text data. New HD Radio tuners receive and decode the digital signal. Older analog receivers will continue to pick up the analog signal.

Tim Bealor, Vice President, RF Systems for Broadcast Electronics, which manufactures the equipment that allows stations to broadcast HD Radio, said that FM stations will be able to broadcast multiple channels on their existing bandwidth.

"There's a certain amount of bandwidth assigned to a station," Bealor explained. "For example at 98.1 on the FM dial there is one hundred kilohertz on either side of that that assigned to that station. In that hundred kilohertz range they can put in their analog signal and two digital carriers that ride just outside their analog signal but still within their allotted spectrum."

In addition to multicasting, he said better sound quality is another draw for the new technology.

"On the AM side, it's a huge performance difference. It allows the broadcast of stereo music. It allows a much broader signal. The frequency on AM receivers right now is barely above what a voice will do. Digital technology allows it to go up quite a bit in volume. For AM it's a huge, huge performance boost."

HD Radio began back in the early 1990s when three major U.S. broadcasting companies joined forces to develop a digital radio standard. The HD initiative really began to take off in 2000 when broadcasters and technology development companies consolidated their efforts and formed iBiquity Digital Corporation. In 2002, the FCC adopted HD technology from iBiquity as the sole digital standard for radio in the U.S. and about 585 radio stations in the U.S. have made the transition to HD Radio.

Because there is no new spectrum being made available for HD radio, there is no government mandate, nor is any expected, for stations to begin broadcasting a digital signal. Stations making the switch, however, are required to simulcast their current analog signal on their main digital channel. Even with the simulcast, FM stations have enough room to add two additional channels. HD also gives stations the ability to broadcast

text, such as song and artist info, on the HD receiver's display. This text data is known as Program Associated Data or PAD.

"We think a lot of stations will use these extra channels to broadcast things like deep album cuts, new artists, live concerts, and talk shows related to the format they're broadcasting," Bealor said. "They try to augment what's on their main channel. They also have the ability to transmit what is called near-PAD data that's not just limited to title and artist. If a station is sponsoring a concert by the artist that's currently on the air they can stream that across the receiver face."

"We are currently keeping it simple by simulcasting with the analog channel," Sansone said about ABC Radio's HD Radio programming in Atlanta. Without being able to comment specifically on his station's plans, he noted, "much more is planned for the future."

Because of the increased audio boost on the AM side, Bealor predicted that some AM stations that switched to the talk format will transition back to music programming. He also said that HD Radio is coming sooner rather than later.

"We anticipate that by the end of 2007 about 1,500 stations will be broadcasting in HD," he said. "Twenty-five of the major radio groups have signed an agreement to put the majority of their top 10 market stations on the air over the next three years."

When that happens listeners will be able to hear for themselves the advantages of HD Radio. Sansone believes the new technology will help terrestrial radio stay competitive with the many entertainment options consumers now enjoy. "The clarity that comes with digital is much more like the other technologies people enjoy," Sansone said. "Radio will be at par with iPod/CDs/satellite radio and TV music delivery."

In September, WKIS/Miami Country radio station added the HD channel, "Gretchen 99.9," to feature music of the CMA Female Vocalist of the Year, Gretchen Wilson. HD Radio will allow broadcasters to broaden their Country programming to include everything from alt-Country to bluegrass to classic. These multicast sidechannels will be advantageous to these companies adding formats in markets where they operate, especially major radio markets such as New York and San Francisco that currently do not have a Country radio station.

On Dec. 6, 2005, a coalition of eight of the nation's leading radio groups announced the formation of the HD Digital Radio Alliance to accelerate the acceptance of HD digital radio. Media companies including Bonneville International, Clear Channel, Cumulus Media, Emmis Communication, Entercom Communications, Greater Media and Infinity Broadcasting have pledged to collectively spend at least \$200 million in 2006 to market and promote the new format. They will work with digital receiver manufacturers to get more HD Radios installed in cars and help market the technology and secure affordable equipment for consumers to purchase.

The alliance plans a unified direction to launch HD2 commercial-free channels of new programming in the top 25 markets in January. The channels will be programmed locally and free to anyone who purchases one of the six available HD Radio models. There are no subscription fees and listeners can continue listening to local AM/FM stations on their existing analog radios as well as on their new HD Radio receivers.

John Hood

On the Web: bdcast.com; ibiquity.com

COUNTRY RENAISSANCE MAN

If you could project Marty Stuart's mind onto a screen, it would probably look like a night shot of Las Vegas during a power surge. The man never stops thinking. Lately, the 47-year-old former *wunderkind* has been riding a volcanic burst of creativity. Besides his usual performances, Stuart, who owns a private collection of more than 20,000 Country Music artifacts, is also working on four albums and six books.

Early in 2005, Stuart established Superlatone Records with the backing of Universal South Records. The first product of that alliance was released in August, *Souls' Chapel*, a collection of gospel tunes, six of which he wrote or co-wrote. The album, produced by Stuart, features his backing band the Fabulous Superlatives consisting of bassist Brian Glenn, drummer Harry Stinson and guitarist Kenny Vaughan.

Then in October came *Badlands*, a heartfelt cry on behalf of the American Indian, a project for which Stuart supplied all the songs but one and co-produced with John Carter Cash. On Feb. 7, 2006, Superlatone will release *Live At The Ryman*, a bluegrass album featuring two of Stuart's compositions, "The Whiskey Ain't Workin' Anymore" and "Hillbilly Rock" plus a mixture of bluegrass chestnuts including "Orange Blossom Special."

The Mississippi native plans to release four more CDs in 2006. These include another gospel record, a compilation of duets he's recorded throughout 20 years, titled *Compadres (An Anthology Of Duets)*, a studio album titled *Rhinestone Blues* and an instrumental score called *No Words Allowed*.

"When creativity comes, you must bottle it and go with it," Stuart said. "I've gone seasons where it's totally dry, and God didn't have a word to say. But it seems like He's talking a lot with me right now, and I'm happy to be the recipient of it."

Tony Brown, who jointly heads Universal South with Tim DuBois, said he believes that Stuart's artistry will pay off. "I think people forget that when Marty and I were doing records together at MCA, we sold close to 4 million records with him," Brown said. "Marty, now that Cash has passed on, carries on that same kind of artistic integrity. ... He's a treasure and a musicologist. He knows more about the Grand Ole Opry and about musicians and about instruments than probably anybody else that's ever been in the Country Music industry."

Brown believes Stuart has the same clear artistic vision that enabled producer T Bone Burnett to create the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack, a work that reminded Country Music of its roots while selling 7 million copies.

Books in the pipeline include *Long Journey Home*, a photo documentary by Bill Thorup, who's been shadowing Stuart since the early 1980s, and for which Stuart will write the text; *Blue Line Hot Shots*, Stuart's pictures of "eccentric characters on the backroads;" *Country Music: The Masters*, which covers the "golden era" of Country Music that Stuart began photographing when he was 13; *Signs Of Our Times*, pictures of church signs across America with "snappy sayings on them;" *The Marty Stuart*

continued on page 37...

"My whole thing about it is that when creativity comes, you must bottle it and go with it. I've gone seasons where it's totally dry, and God didn't have a word to say. But it seems like He's talking a lot with me right now, and I'm happy to be the recipient of it."

— Marty Stuart



(l-r) Harry Stinson, Brian Glenn, Marty Stuart and Kenny Vaughan.

All the Way from Memphis

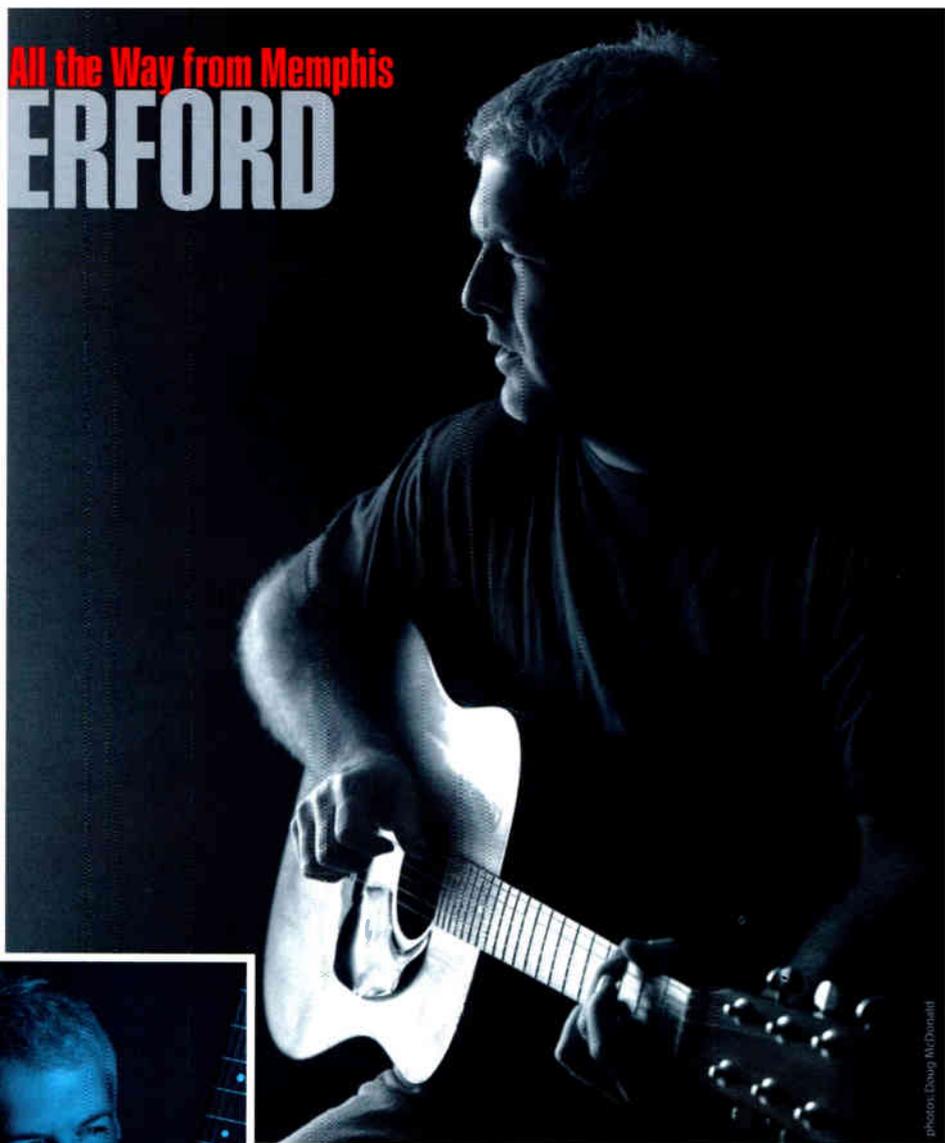
RIVERS RUTHERFORD

The childhood home of Rivers Rutherford was four blocks from Graceland, Elvis Presley's estate. Naturally, "The King" became one of his strongest childhood influences, as did Memphis' renowned Beale Street musicians.

But Rutherford's greatest influence is his own father, who encouraged him from a young age.

"One night when I was 9, my dad and I were singing and playing guitar in the kitchen while my mother was cooking and after a while my dad asked her what she wanted to hear," Rutherford recalled. "We didn't know it, but she was going deaf and loud noises hurt her ears, so she answered with an emphatic 'Nothing!' Being the smart aleck that I was, I went back to my room and wrote my first song and called it 'Nothing.' My dad thought it was pretty good and encouraged me to write another. So I've been writing ever since."

By the time he was 15, Rutherford was performing on the Memphis Queen Riverboat and learning R&B classics from Otis Redding, Sam and Dave and Booker T. Before long, he graduated



photos: Doug McDermott

"I hope my songs connect with people and affirm what they feel but don't or can't necessarily articulate."

— Rivers Rutherford



to the clubs on Beale Street. He attended the University of Mississippi on a music scholarship and studied piano and English.

Rutherford's next move was a big jump — over the fence surrounding the Memphis home of producer Chips Moman, who was working with The Highwaymen on their second album.

"Chips was not too happy about waking up to barking guard dogs and squad cars," Rutherford laughed, "but he listened ... and when I had finished playing, he just sat there silently smoking a cigarette. I thought he didn't like the song, so I started packing up my guitar."

But Moman did like it and eventually signed Rutherford to a writing deal, which led to his first cut.

"He told me he was working on a project in Nashville and wanted me to come up and play a song I had just written for 'the guys.' I walked into

the control room and it was Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson and Willie Nelson. ... The Highwaymen," Rutherford remembered. "Chips asked me to play my song 'American Remains' and 30 minutes later I was singing the scratch vocal while the band recorded it. Later that day I stood in a 3 feet by 3 feet vocal booth with Johnny Cash, teaching him the melody to my song. I got to play a little guitar and sing some backups too. I'm pretty sure that was my favorite day ever in a studio."

After a brief stint in law school in 1991 and moving to Nashville in 1993, Rutherford began to make a name for himself as an entertainer, studio guitar player and songwriter.

When he and his wife began a family, Rutherford took on more and more studio work. He played guitar on albums by Gary Allan, Tracy Byrd, Mark Chesnutt, Amy Grant, Point of Grace and Ringo Starr among others. But when a producer called to book him just one day before a session, Rutherford reached a turning point.

"It hit me that I must have been his last call at such a late date and I realized that I was never going to be the best guitar player in Nashville, so I called him back and told him 'I don't do sessions anymore,'" Rutherford said.

He signed a publishing deal with Universal Music Publishing Group in 1996 and remains with the company today. In 2002, he earned honors for the ASCAP Song of the Year, Brooks & Dunn's six weeks at No. 1 hit, "Ain't Nothing 'Bout You."

Rutherford has racked up cuts by acts including Gary Allan ("Smoke Rings In The Dark"); Josh Gracin ("I Want To Live"); Andy Griggs ("Tonight I Wanna Be Your Man"); Faith Hill ("When The Lights Go Down"); Tim McGraw ("Real Good Man"); Montgomery Gentry ("If You Ever Stop Loving Me"); Randy Travis ("Raise Him Up"); and Chely Wright ("Shut Up And Drive").

continued on page 37...

THE OAK RIDGE BOYS

Oh say, can you sing **our nation's anthem?**

Most Americans can't. In fact, two out of three don't know the words, a 2004 Harris poll found, and many more don't even recognize "The Star-Spangled Banner" as the national anthem. Fewer still can name the anthem's composer (Francis Scott Key) or the arduous battle that inspired it (at Fort McHenry during the War of 1812).

To remedy this, The National Association for Music Education (MENC) is staging the National Anthem Project, a multi-year campaign to renew interest in the anthem and build support for the school music programs where most Americans learn the song.

Four-time CMA Awards winner The Oak Ridge Boys have signed on as the official musical ambassadors for the effort, teaching the anthem to anyone willing to listen — at sports games, schools, concerts — almost anywhere.

"You see people who are more worried about hanging on to their drinks than taking their caps off (during the national anthem)," said Richard Sterban, bass singer for The Oak Ridge Boys which originated in 1943.

MENC organized the project with partners that include the Smithsonian Institution, the American Legion, the International Music Products Association, Gibson Musical Instruments, the History Channel, The Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and school districts nationwide, along with honorary spokesperson first lady Laura Bush and National Presenting Sponsor, Jeep®.

The automaker used an Aug. 11 gathering of Jeep owners in the Pocono Mountains to draw attention to the campaign by recreating the American flag using 140 red, blue, white and silver Jeep vehicles.

MENC, the world's largest arts education organization, may align with corporate sponsors for some activities and work alone other times, but the goal is always the same — to establish the importance of music education. For nearly 100 years, MENC has pushed the agenda, in spite of the fact that during budget crunches, music programs often get cut first.

"When you look at a ball game and the camera pans around, it looks like one of those movies where the words don't match the mouths moving," said John Mahlmann, MENC Executive Director, based in Reston, Va. "We saw that as a consequence of young people not having access to music programs in schools."

The project, launched in 2004, targets children and adults and will culminate in 2007 with several events in Washington celebrating the anthem, Mahlmann said. In January 2006, organizers began touring the country to raise awareness for the initiative by holding competitions in various towns for singers who perform the anthem. Selected winners will receive scholarships for their local school music programs and a chance to participate in one of the finale events in Washington.

The Oak Ridge Boys, who are currently on tour and singing the anthem at professional football and baseball games and other events, use each opportunity to promote the project and encourage audiences to sing along. They got involved out of a personal sense of patriotism, Sterban said. MENC approached The Oak Ridge Boys to join the project and learned the group had been singing the anthem at concerts since the 2001 September 11th terrorist attacks. They have recorded the anthem a few times, including it on their album of patriotic songs called *Colors*, released in 2003. Many ballparks play The Oak Ridge Boys' rendition when a singer isn't available.

"We teach our kids a lot of things, but to teach them our national anthem song and what it means to our country, I think is amazing," said William Lee Golden, baritone singer for the group.

The Oak Ridge Boys sang the anthem at schools including Branson High School in Branson, Mo. There they led a celebration on Sept. 14, joined by schools nationwide, commemorating the day the anthem was written. Nearly all the school's 1,150 students attended, as did the mayor, school board members, parents and others. The band and choir performed, and students delivered patriotic readings. The Oak Ridge Boys talked about why the anthem is important — and finished with the crowd pleaser, "Elvira."

"We try to encourage people to sing the national anthem along with us," Sterban said. "Not to sit and listen, but to sing along with it."

Key, a Washington attorney, penned the anthem in 1814 after watching the British attack Fort Henry during the War of 1812. By dawn, Key expected to find Baltimore firmly in the British grip, but he was stunned to see a battered American flag flapping in the wind.

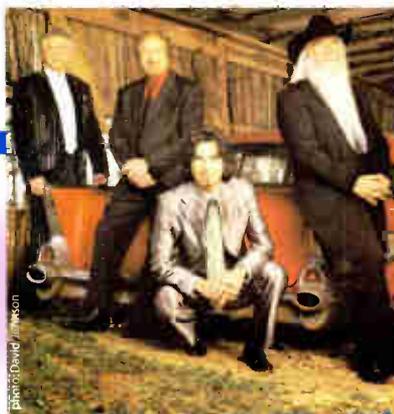
Inspired, Key wrote the poem "The Star-Spangled Banner." Set to a tune by John Stafford Smith, it became the nation's anthem in 1913.

The scene the anthem describes reminds 17-year-old Nicole McCall, a Branson High School senior, of the famous photograph of the tattered American flag hoisted above the rubble of the World Trade Center after the 2001 attacks. The school event in September reaffirmed for her the anthem's relevance today in a country still coping with terrorism and, more recently, Hurricane Katrina, said McCall, who introduced The Oak Ridge Boys.

"You think about it when you're at sports games and athletic events, but you don't really think about what it means and what our country's been through," said McCall, who learned the words in choir. "We've been through so much, and this song just really expresses that."

Amy Green

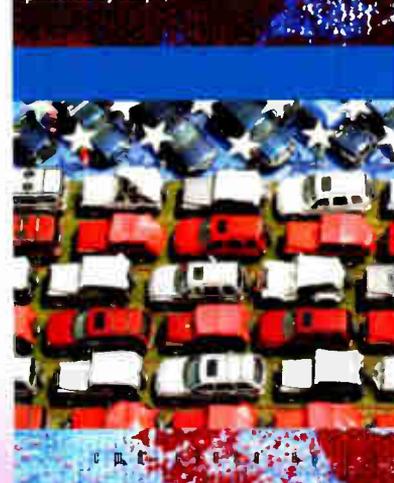
On the Web: oakridgeboys.com; thenationalanthemproject.org



The Oak Ridge Boys sing the national anthem before a Kansas City Royals baseball game at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo. (l-r) Joe Bonsall, Duane Allen, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban. photo: Kathy Gangswich

MENC musical ambassadors The Oak Ridge Boys lead Jeep vehicles owners in the singing of the national anthem on Aug. 11 in Mount Pocono, Pa. photo: Diane Bondareff

below: At the national anthem project event, Jeep owners position 140 vehicles in the form of the American flag to celebrate the first year of a multi-year national education initiative, sponsored by Jeep. photo: Stuart Ramson





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2006 CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL

WRANGLER® AND CMA CELEBRATE FIVE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

Wrangler® returns as the title sponsor of the CMA Music Festival Fan Fair® (Exhibit Hall), marking the fifth year the clothing icon has partnered with CMA.

"We are thrilled to work with Wrangler again," said Rick Murray, CMA Vice President of Strategic Marketing. "CMA works hard to develop long-term relationships with our partners. The key to our success in this area is for both to have a good understanding of each other's needs, coupled with open and honest communications. We have enjoyed this with Wrangler® and their team of marketing professionals."

The huge Wrangler® booth has become a landmark in the Fan Fair (Exhibit Hall) at the Nashville Convention Center, where fans shop, get autographs and pose for photos with their favorite stars.

"Like no other event in the Country Music industry, the CMA Music Festival brings together the sights and sounds of Country Music with the soul of Country Music — the fans," said Edyie Brooks-Bryant, Wrangler® Western Wear Marketing Manager. "For five years now, Wrangler's sponsorship of the Fan Fair (Exhibit Hall) has allowed us to welcome consumers who are loyal to both the patch and Country Music to Nashville and celebrate our shared love of Country Music. For us, that's priceless."

Murray said that Wrangler® customers and Country Music fans have much in common and run the gamut from traditionalists to edgy trendsetters.

"Both brands are dynamic and speak to a wide, diverse consumer audience which is why we have been able to grow and develop this relationship effectively over the years," Murray said.

In 1904, C.C. Hudson formed the Hudson Overall Company, which grew steadily and introduced the first Wrangler® jeans to consumers in the United States in 1947. By 1974, the American Pro Rodeo Association endorsed Wrangler® jeans and in 2001, Wrangler® became the first title sponsor of the National Finals Rodeo world championship. Today, Wrangler® is operated by The VF Corporation, the largest publicly held apparel company in the world.

Upcoming issues of *CMA Close Up* will feature additional CMA Music Festival sponsors including Greased Lightning® and Crisco®.



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 ARTIST AND EXHIBITOR PARTICIPATION IN WRANGLER® FAN FAIR AT THE NASHVILLE CONVENTION CENTER IS GROWING AND BOOTH SPACE WILL SELL OUT. FOR BOOTH APPLICATIONS, PROMOTIONAL AND ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS AND RECORD LABELS INCLUDING "MUSIC ROW" BOOTHS AVAILABILITY, CONTACT JOHN PYNE AT CMA, (615) 664-1630 OR JPYNE@CMAWORLD.COM.

ACOUSTIC CORNER PERFORMANCES

Acoustic Corner is located inside the Nashville Convention Center and provides a place for independent artists to showcase their talent in a live, unplugged setting. Only artists participating in the Wrangler® Fan Fair are eligible to perform. Applications for performance slots will be mailed to eligible artists in April. Contact Cassie Davies at CMA, (615) 244-2840 or Sintern@CMAworld.com.

EXCLUSIVE RADIO WINNER EVENTS

Artists make exclusive radio trip promotion events a once-in-a-lifetime experience for winners.

Contact John Pyne at CMA at (615) 664-1630 or Jpyne@CMAworld.com

The popular *CMA Celebrity Close Up* series returns for its fourth year, giving fans a glimpse into an artist's life and personality. The sessions will take place on Thursday, June 8 and Friday, June 9 from 4:30 – 6:00 PM at the Ryman Auditorium, with television and radio personality Lorianne Crook as host. Fans will have the opportunity to turn in questions for the artists, which Crook will ask during the session as time allows. Contact Angela Everett at CMA, (615) 664-1632 or Angela@CMAworld.com for more information. The CMA Celebrity Close Up Series is a separately ticketed event and not included in four-day CMA Music Festival tickets.



Miranda Lambert

Keith Urban



Trick Pony

Gretchen Wilson

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Official publication of CMA. Free CMA Music Festival Program Book given with each four-day ticket. Additional copies will be on sale during the event at various locations and at CMAfest.com.

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For more information on CMA Music Festival trip promotions including airfare options, contact: Grace Reinbold, grace@whataatrip1.com or Darlene Williams, darlene@whataatrip1.com at What A Trip! Inc., TEL: (615) 269-0039. On the Web: whataatrip1.com



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CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL TICKETS ON SALE NOW

Tickets for CMA Music Festival are a hot commodity, with sales far ahead of previous years and Gold Circle and Floor seating at The Coliseum already sold out.

Four-day ticket packages include:

- **NIGHTLY CONCERTS** at The Coliseum, home of the NFL's Tennessee Titans
- **DAILY CONCERTS** at Greased Lightning® Daytime Stages at Riverfront Park, on the bank of the Cumberland River
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- **CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL AFTER HOURS™** where late-night partygoers enjoy live music and specials at Downtown clubs and restaurants
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To order CMA Music Festival tickets call 1-800-CMA-FEST (1-800-262-3378); (615) 770-2041; visit CMAfest.com to download an order form to fax or mail; visit ticketmaster.com to buy online or charge-by-phone at (615) 255-9600. Ticket prices do not include applicable handling fees and are subject to change without notice. All sales are final and non-refundable. Please call 1-800-CMA-FEST to inquire about the availability of Handicap Accessible seating at all pricing levels.

Four-day ticket package categories correspond to a different level of reserved seating at The Coliseum. Children 3 years and younger are admitted free and CMA Music Festival continues its popular program of offering discounts for fans 14 and younger.

Reserved Seating Area	Adult	14 and younger
Gold Circle	SOLD OUT	N/A
Floor Level	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Lower Level	\$135	\$95
Club Level	\$125	\$86



CMAFEST.COM IS YOUR GUIDE TO CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL

Visit the new edition of CMAfest.com for the latest information on artists appearing, schedule of events and ticket information.

"The Web is an excellent medium for regular updates on CMA Music Festival," said CMA Chief Operating Officer Tammy Genovese. "Fans can learn about added features and artists appearing in a way that's quick and easy."

The Web site is designed to give users what they want to know about CMA Music Festival including general information, FAQs, history, ticket seating chart, shuttle map, planning and travel guides and more. Fans can revisit exciting memories by viewing the photo galleries and a 60-second video montage plus reading news stories from last year's event.

"Each year, CMAfest.com evolves with additional user-friendly features and information that is important to Country Music fans all over the world," said Daphne Larkin, CMA Director of Membership and Online Marketing. "In addition to the regular updates with the latest news, we're also developing some new interactive elements that we look forward to sharing with the fans."

From January through June 2005, the site logged more than 1 million visits. Join CMA's e-news list today to receive CMA Exclusive, a weekly e-mail featuring your favorite Country Music artists and events.

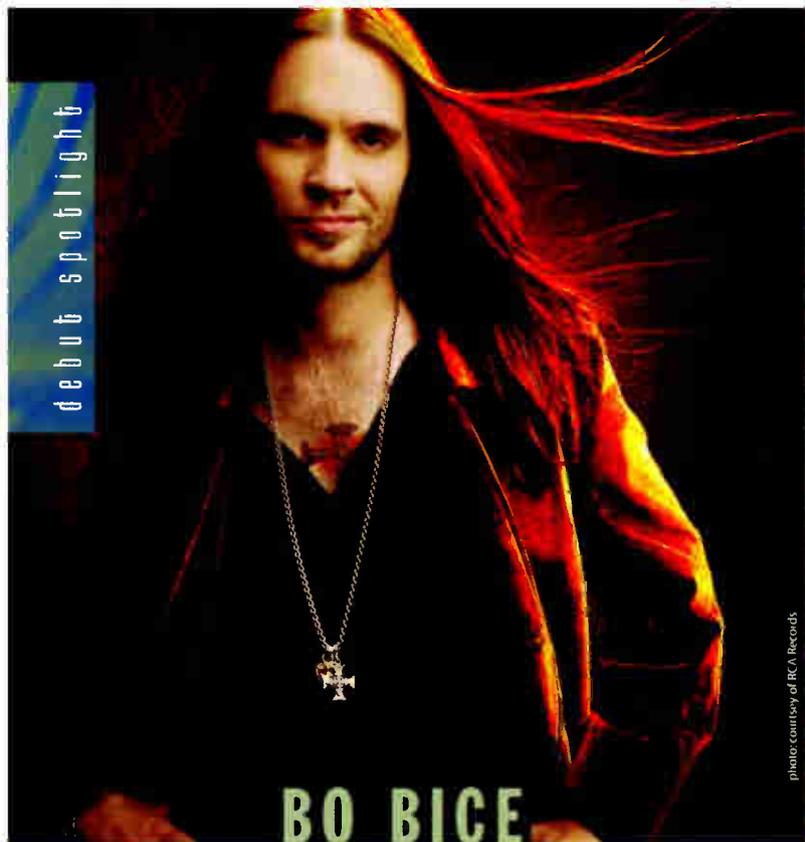


photo: Courtesy of RCA Records

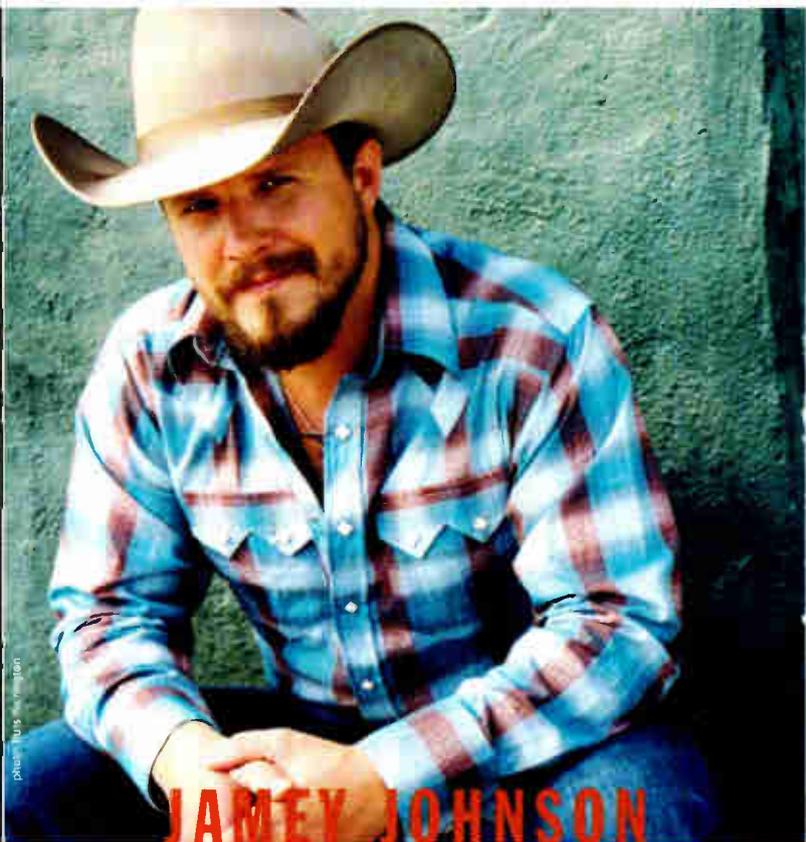


photo: Chris Hamilton

Bo Bice was born in Huntsville, Ala., and grew up in a musical family in the South. He assumed everyone was into music.

"I remember how weird it was the first time I realized not everybody could sing," Bice said.

Bice's parents gave him his first guitar for his 9th birthday, an electric Squire Telecaster. "It cost \$500 and that was a lot of money for my parents," he said. "I had that guitar around my neck all the time."

The same year, he performed in public for the first time, singing "God Bless the U.S.A." in a talent contest at the Atlanta Civic Center.

Bice was 13 when his father's work took the family to England. There he attended an American school on an Air Force base, met other students who were into music and joined his first band. At 17, Bice moved back to the United States and attended college.

Bice was playing gigs with a trio and managing a guitar store in Pelham, Ala., when he decided to audition for "American Idol." He drove to the Orlando Convention Center, arriving at 1:00 AM. By the time auditions started, he was one of 17,000 hopefuls. "It was an incredible experience, sleeping head-to-foot on the floor with thousands of other people," he said.

After a round of auditions, judges Paula Abdul, Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson sent Bice to Hollywood to appear on "American Idol." It was good news, with one hitch — the guitar store in Pelham fired Bice because he was going to miss their annual sale.

Bice excelled on the show and survived the entire season, coming in second to Carrie Underwood on the final episode. He signed to RCA Records and his first single, the combo "Inside Your Heaven" and "Vehicle" debuted at No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot Singles Sales chart. Bice's debut album, *The Real Thing*, was produced by Clive Davis and released Dec. 13. Bice, who counts Lynyrd Skynyrd and Hank Williams as prime musical influences, co-wrote two of the tracks on the album.

IN HIS OWN WORDS:

Who is your musical hero? "Jim Croce."

What is your pet peeve? "Clutter."

What word or phrase do you find yourself saying over and over again? "Much love."

Do you have a lucky charm? "Jesus Christ."

Who is your dream duet partner? "Stevie Nicks."

On the Web: bobice.com



Jamey Johnson moved to Nashville on Jan. 1, 2000.

"That was the day that everything was supposed to stop and I decided if the world is going to come crashing down, then I'm going to Nashville to write and sing about it," Johnson said.

Born and raised just outside of Montgomery, Ala., Johnson grew up loving and playing Country Music. At 10, he started playing guitar and after high school, a little college and an eight-year stint in the Marine Corps Reserve, Johnson felt he was ready to pursue his Country Music dreams. The dawn of a new millennium was reason enough to make a change.

He worked as a salesman for a sign company and in construction while he began to find his way around the music industry. Eventually, Johnson played writers nights at clubs and landed work as a demo singer. Among the first professional demo jobs was recording a duet with Gretchen Wilson.

He wrote "The Dollar," while splitting time between construction and music. Johnson had spent a few months in the Mobile, Ala., area helping to repair the damage caused by Hurricane Ivan and wondered how to explain to his daughter why adults have to go to work so much. The result was the song about a child who empties a piggy bank to buy a little time with his father.

The song became the album title track and debut single for Johnson when he signed to BNA Records. He wrote or co-wrote 11 of the songs on *The Dollar*, produced by Buddy Cannon and released Jan. 31. Country Music Hall of Fame member George Jones sings with Johnson on, "Keepin' Up With The Jonesin'."

Johnson, who includes Alabama, Vern Gosdin and both Hanks among his musical influences, is the co-writer of the Trace Adkins hit "Honky Tonk Badonkadonk."

IN HIS OWN WORDS:

What CD is on your stereo right now? "The CD player in my truck doesn't work, but if it did, I would probably be playing Waylon Jennings' *Dreaming My Dreams*."

What do you sing in the shower? "Nothing. I'm not a morning person."

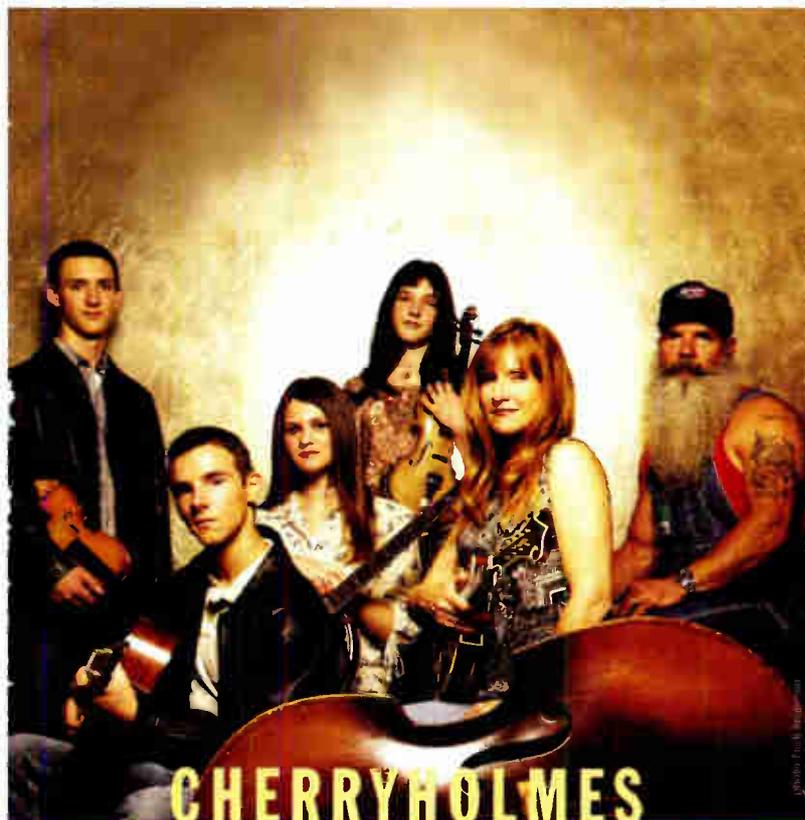
What moment in your life would you relive if you could?

"The birth of my daughter. What a miraculous experience!"

When they look back on your life in 50 years, what do you hope people say about you? "Look! He's still breathing!"

On the Web: jameyjohnson.com





CHERRYHOLMES

Just a few years ago, the family band today known as Cherryholmes didn't exist and several of its young members didn't play instruments yet.

The band is comprised of Jere and Sandy Cherryholmes and four of their six children; Cia, 21, on banjo; B.J., 17, and Molly, 13, on fiddle; and Skip, 15, on guitar.

The family, which hails from just outside Los Angeles, formed the band in 1999 after elder sibling Shelley died at age 20 in her sleep from respiratory failure due to chronic heart problems. They had attended a bluegrass concert to lift their spirits and the parents "assigned" the kids instruments afterward.

Within a year, the family started performing regular shows on Saturdays in the San Bernardino Mountains. When they realized they needed to play for about six hours, they integrated Irish step dancing into their show.

By 2002, Jere had left his job as a carpenter and the family went on the road full-time, traveling first in a car with a tent and later in a vintage bus.

All six band members trade lead vocals, accompanied by stacks of family harmony and high energy bluegrass instrumentation. "We try to take the audience on a roller coaster ride, on purpose. We want them to experience highs and lows, and speed and excitement," said Sandy.

Their first album on Skaggs Family Records, *Cherryholmes*, was released Sept. 27. The CD, produced by Ben Isaacs, contains nine original songs written by various band members. The band won the 2005 Entertainer of the Year trophy at the International Bluegrass Music Association Awards.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

Who is your musical hero? B.J. and MOLLY: "We share fiddling heroes. They are Kenny Baker, Stuart Duncan, Aubrie Haynie, Bobby Hicks, Benny Martin and Ron Stewart."

CIA: "J.D. Crowe is my hero."

SKIP: "My guitar hero is Clay Jones."

What actor(s) would portray you in a biopic about your life?

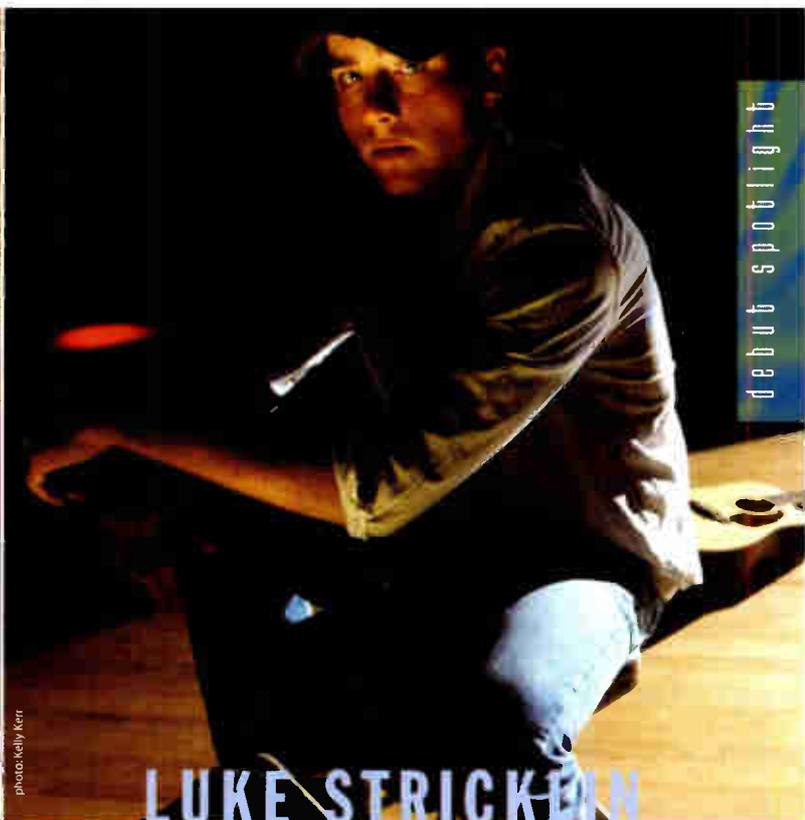
CIA: "The Three Stooges."

What song do you wish you had written?

SANDY: "Lessons in Stone" by Tom T. and Dixie Hall."

What word or phrase do you find yourself saying over and over again? B.J.: "Maybe we can all start together next time."

On the Web: cherryholmesfamilyband.com



LUKE STRICKLIN

Born in Arkadelphia, Ark., Luke Stricklin grew up playing on the river and hunting with his family. His father, who passed away when he was 11, instilled a love of Country Music in his son. Stricklin's early musical influences include Merle Haggard, Waylon Jennings, Keith Whitley and Hank Williams, Jr.

After he studied piano and drums, Stricklin developed a passion for songwriting.

He joined the Arkansas National Guard while he was still in high school. On his second day of small arms training, his drill sergeant announced that the September 11th attacks were underway.

He went to Iraq in March 2004, where he and a fellow guardsman passed their free time by writing songs on a laptop computer. He recorded "American By God's Grace" in Baghdad using a cheap microphone and e-mailed the song back to his family in the states. They sent the song out to local Country stations and demand grew.

By the time he was discharged, CNN, Fox News, *Newsweek* and the "Today" show had reported on the young singer from the military.

Stricklin's hometown Country station, which had first played his military anthem, set up a show for Stricklin when he returned and before long he had a manager.

A week later he was in a Nashville studio recording a CD for Pacific-Time Records, which was produced by Luke Wooten and released Sept. 27. Stricklin penned three songs on the album, including the title track, "American By God's Grace," which fellow soldier J.R. Schultz co-wrote.

IN HIS OWN WORDS:

What do you sing in the shower? "Anything Country."

What is your pet peeve? "A dirty house."

What actor would portray you in a biopic about your life? "Josh Lucas."

What moment in your life would you relive if you could? "All of high school."

Who is your dream duet partner? "Alison Krauss."

If you wrote an autobiography, what would the title be? "What Not To Do."

On the Web: lukestricklin.com



ERIC EDWARDS, 96, singer and songwriter popularly known as Alberta Slim, died Nov. 25 in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada. He had suffered a stroke in early 2004. Edwards, the "Yodeling Cowboy," was born in England and migrated with his parents to Canada in 1920. A survivor of the Great Depression, he landed his first job at Regina, Saskatchewan radio station CKCK. He created "Alberta Slim's Circus," which enjoyed success on the fair circuit for nearly two decades. During this period, he also recorded more than 100 songs for RCA Victor and other labels. Many of his songs were self-penned and reflected his love of Canada. Edwards was also a successful businessman, investing in real estate through Bar-X Enterprises.

SAMUEL GARRETT, 69, songwriter, known as Hank Mills, died Nov. 11 at his home in Hagerstown, Md. The cause of death was not disclosed. Mills wrote half the songs on Del Reeves' 1965 album, *Special Delivery*, including co-writing with Walter Haynes Reeves' first No. 1 hit "Girl On The Billboard," which sold more than 1 million copies. Mills wrote "Little Ole Wine Drinker Me," recorded by Dean Martin, Merle Haggard, Robert Mitchum and Mel Tillis, and Jim Ed Brown's Top 15 hit, "Angel's Sunday."

DANIEL D. HOFFMAN, 70, radio DJ, actor, singer and songwriter, died Dec. 28 in Nashville of lung cancer. Known for his long tenure as WKDA Nashville radio personality DJ Dan, he also acted in roles on stage, in films and in national and regional commercials. Hoffman became a successful songwriter and worked in the RCA Corporation's Sunbury Dunbar Publishing Companies before forming his own publishing entity. In high school, the Joplin, Mo., native performed at Carnegie Hall and the "Ed Sullivan" show as part of the Boy's Town Choir. He studied acting at Montana State University under the tutelage of the late Carroll O'Connor.

Compiled by Gary Voorhies



JAN. 31

Alabama / *Livin' Lovin' Rockin' Rollin': The 25th Anniversary Collection* / Legacy
 Norman and Nancy Blake / *Back To Sulphur Springs* / Dualtone
 Jamey Johnson / *The Dollar* / BNA

FEB. 7

The Avett Brothers / *Four Thieves Gone: The Robbinsville Sessions* / Ramseur Records
 Marty Stuart / *Live At The Ryman* / Superlatone/Universal South
 Trisha Yearwood / *Jasper County* (re-release with new Garth Brooks duet) / MCA Nashville

FEB. 14

Terry Allen / *Pedal Steel* / Sugar Hill
 The Lucky Tomblin Band / *In A Honky-Tonk Mood* / Texas World
 Susan Haynes / *Crooked Little Heart* (electronic version) / Epic
 Mountain Heart / *Wide Open* / Skaggs Family
 Shawn Mullins / *Ninth Ward Pickin' Parlor* / Vanguard

FEB. 21

Gary Bennett / *Human Condition* / Landslide
 Robinella / *Solace For The Lonely* / Dualtone
 James Talley / *30th Anniversary Edition: Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got A Lot Of Love* / Cimarron

FEB. 28

Shannon Brown / *Corn Fed* / Warner Bros.
 Jessi Colter / *Out Of The Ashes* / Shout! Factory
 Hank III / *Straight To Hell* / BRUC
 Alan Jackson / *Precious Memories* / Arista Nashville

MARCH 7

Jace Everett / *Jace Everett* / Epic
 Kris Kristofferson / *This Old Road* / New West
 Lee Roy Parnell / *Back To The Well* / Universal South
 Tres Chicas / *Bloom, Red & The Ordinary Girl* / Yep Roc
 Various Artists / *Voice Of The Spirit, The Gospel Of The South* / Dualtone

MARCH 11

Don Edwards / *Moonlight And Skins* / Dualtone
 Mary Karlsen / *Yelling At Mary* (reissue) / Dualtone
 Scott Miller / *Citation* / Sugar Hill
 Danielle Peck / *Danielle Peck* / Big Machine
 Bruce Robison / *Eleven Stories* / Sustain
 Bryan Sutton / *Not Too Far From The Tree* / Sugar Hill
 Various Artists / *Fresh Faces At MerleFest* / MerleFest
 Various Artists / *Heartworn Highways* (reissue) / HackTone/Shout Factory
 Sean Watkins / *Blinders On* / Sugar Hill
 Warren Zanes / *People That I'm Wrong For* / Dualtone

MARCH 21

Bluegrass Undergrass / *Faces* / Landslide
 Shawn Camp / *Fireball* / Skeeterbit
 Kenny Rogers / *Water And Bridges* / Capitol

MARCH 28

Tim McGraw / *Reflected: Hits Vol. 2* / Curb
 Wix Wichmann / *TBD* / Universal South

APRIL 4

John Corbett / *John Corbett* / Fun Bone
 Bob Delevante / *Columbus And The Colossal Mistake* / Relay
 Radney Foster / *This World We Live In* / Dualtone
 Shooter Jennings / *Electric Rodeo* / Universal South
 John McCutcheon / *Mightier Than The Sword* / Appalsongs
 Rascal Flatts / *Me And My Gang* / Lyric Street
 Jan Smith / *29 Dances* / Landslide

APRIL 18

Rockie Lynne / *Rockie Lynne* / Universal South

APRIL 25

Steve Azar / *Indianola* / Dang
 Ralph Stanley / *A Distant Land To Roam* / Columbia

MAY 2

Susan Haynes / *Crooked Little Heart* / Epic

*CD release dates are subject to change without notice.

Compiled by Athena Patterson



The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and its Music Associations Task Force commissioned the Music Industry Impact Study which was presented at a Jan. 10 luncheon at Belmont University. Participants included Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer and Tony Conway, President and Co-owner of Buddy Lee Attractions, CMA Music Festival Executive Producer and Vice Chairman of the Chamber's Arts, Entertainment and Music committee. photos: Marie Lancaster-Dawson / North Shore Photographics

NASHVILLE'S MUSIC INDUSTRY WORTH \$6.38 BILLION

A recent economic impact study conducted by Belmont University and the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce confirmed what many in the music industry have suspected for years — music is big business for Nashville.

The Music Industry Impact Study, released Jan. 10 at the Curb Event Center on Belmont University's campus, announced that the music industry in Nashville including Country, Christian, gospel, classical, jazz, bluegrass and Americana, has an economic impact of \$6.38 billion per year. The Chamber commissioned the study with the Music Associations Task Force, lead by CMA Board member Tony Conway, President and Co-owner of Buddy Lee Attractions and Executive Producer of the CMA Music Festival.

The figure includes direct spending by music industry firms including labels, studios, music stores, music education and more (\$2.64 billion), indirect spending (\$1.32 billion) and music-related tourism (\$2.42 billion).

"We have felt for a long time that we were an important part of the business community of Middle Tennessee," said Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer. "We knew the value of CMA Music Festival and the CMA Awards to the local economy, but this confirms that the entire music industry is important and woven into the fabric of Nashville's business future."

The music industry "brings people here to visit, but it also brings people here to stay," said Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell.

The study, which took two and a half years to complete, showed that Music Row's sales muscle actually touches 13 counties with 19,437 local jobs (generated by more than 80 record labels, 130 music publishers, 180 recording studios and 5,000 working union musicians), which generate about \$722 million worth of income each year. The report indicates that the average annual income of someone in the music industry is roughly \$37,200 a year.

"The completion of this study is truly a milestone for Music City. And making it all the more relevant is the unprecedented level of support and collaboration from across the music industry," said Conway. "This study proves what we can achieve when we merge the interests, resources and leadership of Nashville's greater business community with that of the music industry."

In order to fully leverage the Nashville is Music City brand, the Chamber felt that an economic assessment of this magnitude was long overdue. "When you're in the business of selling Music City, from a tourism standpoint or from a business recruitment standpoint, having access to the information that came out of this study is invaluable," said Mike Neal, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce.

Similar music industry studies have been conducted by the cities of Austin, Memphis and Seattle as well as the state of Georgia. The cumulative direct spending impact for those studies was \$3.14 billion, establishing Nashville, once and for all, as Music City U.S.A.

Wendy Pearl

To view the full music industry economic impact study for Nashville, visit nashvillechamber.com or belmont.edu.

CMA DIRECTORY AVAILABLE IN MARCH

The new *CMA Directory*, a comprehensive Country Music industry guide, will be available March 15 and can be pre-ordered. The reference guide is \$25 for regular CMA members and \$75 for non-members. Sterling and organizational CMA members will receive a free copy as a benefit of CMA membership. Updated information is available year-round for sterling and organizational members online at My.CMAworld.com. The *CMA Directory* includes listings for artists, record labels, management companies, publicists, talent agents, song publishers, performing rights organizations and radio stations. To order, call CMA at (615) 244-2840. Please note this is not a directory of CMA members. A list of CMA members is not made available for publication.

CMA PARTNERS WITH LEADERSHIP MUSIC FOR DIGITAL SUMMIT CMA Members Receive \$50 Discount On Registration

CMA returns as a corporate partner for the second annual Leadership Music Digital Summit on Tuesday, April 18 at Nashville's Belmont University Curb Center. The day-long event, sponsored by Microsoft, is dedicated to digital music and the important business, creative and legal issues it presents to the music industry. The day will be filled with important keynotes, engaging presentations, dynamic panels, stimulating discussion and relevant exhibits. Registration for CMA members is only \$129. (a \$50 discount off the \$179 registration fee!). For tickets call Leadership Music at (615) 880-7466.

On the Web: leadershipmusic.org



CMA MEMBER BENEFIT AT KARIAN STUDIOS

CMA members receive a discounted rate of \$700 per 24-hour-block at Karian Studios, one of Nashville's newest recording studios. The studio is 20 minutes from Music Row in a 10,000-square-foot gated Mediterranean-style estate. The complex has the feel of a five star resort prioritizing sonic excellence and luxury amenities including special meals from a gourmet kitchen, overnight accommodations, full laundry room, spa treatments, horseback riding and a French courtyard.

"CMA is committed to providing our members with new and exciting benefits," said Hank Adam Locklin, CMA Senior Manager of Membership and Industry Relations. "Karian Studios generously extended this benefit for the enjoyment of our members and we are very grateful."

Karian Studios was designed and built by renowned studio designer and engineer Christopher Huston (WAR, Led Zeppelin, Ozzy Osbourne). The studio is suitable for mixing and recording with four isolation booths, a grand piano and custom DW recording drums in the 1,000-square-foot live room with 20-foot ceilings. The 800-square-foot control room is home to a 72 input SSL console with total recall, 176 tracks and features the newest recording technology including Pro Tools HD 7 Accel system, Lexicon effects, Otari Radar II and more. A nice selection of new and vintage equipment and microphones are also available. The estate features writing rooms and a second floor lounge and conference room. The third floor houses a 600-square-foot mastering facility and a private suite.

"We are thrilled to be in Nashville and meet the members of the CMA. The first thing we learned about this town is how helpful everyone is to everyone else in the industry. We thought the perfect way to get to know our fellow CMA members was to invite them to our studio for an unbelievable rate," said Karen D'Souza, Karian Studios Owner/General Manager.

The special offer for CMA members expires on Friday, March 31.

On the Web: karianstudios.com

photos: Karian Studios live room and control room: photo: Fred Paragono, Karian Studios aerial photo: © 2005 Karian Studios. Logo used by permission.

CMA STAFF CHANGES



KATIE NELSON joined CMA as Events and Projects Assistant in December. Nelson was born in Madisonville, Ky., and graduated from Western Kentucky University in August 2005 with a degree in corporate and organizational communications. Previously, Nelson interned and worked for Universal Music Group Nashville in the radio promotion department.

Nelson assists with various projects connected to the CMA Music Festival, CMA Awards and other CMA events. "In September, Katie joined our department in a temporary position to help out with Awards work, and she truly hit the ground running," said CMA Vice President of Events and Program Development Bobette Dudley. "She is a quick study, very thorough and definitely a team player. I am very happy to offer her a full-time position as Events and Projects Assistant."



BETSY WALKER joined CMA as Executive Assistant in December. A native of Winston-Salem, N.C., Walker graduated from Western Carolina University in August 2005 with a degree in music industry with a concentration in voice. Before working at CMA, Walker interned at Capitol Records Nashville and was a receptionist at Monterey Peninsula Artists / Paradigm. Walker

performs various administrative functions for CMA Chief Operating Officer Tammy Genovese. "Betsy was an intern at Capitol Records and Mike Dungan just raved about her," Genovese said. "So how could I not take the CMA Board President's advice? Betsy was thrown into the fire for the CMA Awards in New York and she handled everything with grace and professionalism. I know that she will continue to build on that foundation in 2006 and beyond."

Amanda Eckard

photos: Amanda Eckard

Meanwhile, the usual alignments remain strong. Terri Clark sings commercials for Dodge pick-up trucks in Texas, Montgomery Gentry hit the highway for Jim Beam and Cracker Barrel Old Country Store continues to expand its line of custom Country Music CDs.

The commercial strength of Country Music and the appeal of its audience demographics are two key factors in the sponsorship boom. "I think that a lot of marketers have gotten a lot more savvy about determining where their audience is and where they want to go in terms of expanding their audience," said Fletcher Foster, Senior Vice President of Marketing for Capitol Records Nashville. "The Country Music consumer has changed too and gotten more sophisticated. Country Music is very mainstream."

So when Swiss company Tissot wanted to expand awareness of its line of sports watches in the United States, aligning with Brad Paisley was ideal. "We're a traditional brand and we wanted to align with a traditional artist and music," said Olivier Cosandier, General Manager for Tissot in North America. He found that the Country audience demographics and its regional patterns of appeal paralleled the people and places Tissot hoped to reach. Paisley's *Time Well Wasted* album was a perfect fit for their campaign, which features radio ads, retail outlet signage and a Paisley sampler CD with every purchase.

For sponsors, Country artists can offer a positive image association and inroads into a prime demographic of active consumers in the American heartland. For artists and labels, sponsorships can help fund tours and provide advertising and promotional opportunities that reach beyond what record labels can usually include in their marketing budgets.

Foster notes how Keith Urban's deal with GAP furthered his exposure. "When you have a billboard on the side of The Mondrian in Los Angeles or pictures on the subway in London, that's going to impact people," Foster said. And he notes the variety of cross-marketing arrangements that can be custom designed to fit the goals of both parties. "It may be money for touring, it may just be visibility, or it may be growing an artist into another audience that steps a little bit to the left or right of Country Music."

Sponsorships can even go beyond promotions focused on just one album release or tour to become long-term career partnerships. That is what has happened between Montgomery Gentry and Jim Beam in a relationship that began even before the group existed. "I go all the way back to 1994 with Jim Beam," said Troy Gentry, who won Beam's national Country Band Search that year. "It gave me the encouragement not to give up on my ambitions in music."

After Montgomery Gentry became a recording act, the relationship "developed very organically," said the group's manager, John Dorris of Hallmark Direction Company. In 1999, a Jim Beam staffer remembered Gentry from the contest and sent congratulations and some product to enjoy. Gentry and Eddie Montgomery were both already Jim Beam drinkers. The duo frequently ordered up rounds of the bourbon from the stage during shows, a fact the Beam's marketers and sales staff had happily noted.

The relationship became formal in 2001 and has continued to grow. The band bus and equipment truck are wrapped with the Jim Beam logo to serve as roving billboards, and a Beam representative travels with the act on the road to coordinate local activities. "The Beam sponsorship has been very beneficial," Dorris said. "Their financial contribution helps us to have a bigger show and offset expenses." It has also gotten the duo full page ads in pricey and influential publications including *Rolling Stone*.

"They're a great vehicle for us," said Jeff Christensen, Senior Marketing Manager for Jim Beam. "There's a lot of brand value behind Jim Beam that is paralleled in Montgomery Gentry." He also stresses the career longevity of Country acts. "Once a Country Music act establishes itself like Montgomery Gentry has done, there's a lot of staying power."

Both parties refer to the alliance as more than just a business relationship. "Jim Beam is part of the Montgomery Gentry family," Gentry said, noting that both the whiskey and his act are from Kentucky.

"We will always have a relationship with Jim Beam, whether it is formal and contracted or just a friendship," Dorris said.

Beam also has regional programs to help build such alliances and cultivate the stars of the future. Texas independent Country artist Jesse Dayton receives a regular subsidy from the company in exchange for putting the Beam logo on his merchandise. "It may not be a lot of money but it sure is a huge help," Dayton said.

And it's those sorts of sponsorships with emerging artists that Foster would like to encourage. "They can become really beneficial when you have that marriage with a B act you're trying to push through to becoming an A act."

In another ongoing program, Cracker Barrel has become a marketing partner not just for artists but Country Music itself. Country acts were included in the Heritage Music and American Legends collections of CDs that the chain sells in its stores. And Cracker Barrel has also released five theme compilations of songs recorded on the Grand Ole Opry between 1961 and '67. "We've always believed that music is an important component of the overall Cracker Barrel experience," said company spokesman Jim Taylor, who notes how Country Music not only fits but also enhances the Cracker Barrel menu and décor.

This year Cracker Barrel instituted a line of exclusive artist CDs, already selling more than 200,000 copies of its *Home On The Highways* release by Alison Krauss and Union Station featuring Jerry Douglas since last May. They've followed with *Country Stars 'N Stripes* by Charlie Daniels and a Sara Evans CD, *Feels Like Home*.

The CDs are a value-added attraction for Cracker Barrel's customers that market the music to a common consumer base. "Alison Krauss and Union Station was a natural fit with our brand and so are Charlie Daniels and Sara Evans," Taylor said. "It's quality music and it's a convenience for our guests."

Although labels can't be sure of the effect of sponsorships on sales, Foster knows from Urban's GAP campaign that they are beneficial. "Did we sell more records? I don't know. Did we get into another audience and make more people aware of who Keith Urban is? Absolutely."

Foster sees such strategic alliances as an integral component in the marketing of musical artists. "They are part of that sum of the parts that has the ability to create even more. When all the elements of a career work together, it's magical. A sponsorship may only be involved in two or three areas of an artist's career, but it can affect the whole picture." As well, he notes, Country artists "are a safe investment" for sponsors, as they are usually free from controversy and scandal and have images that parallel heartland American values.

Even with the growing variety of product alliances and more sophisticated promotional techniques, Foster feels that the best is yet to come. "It's limitless," he said. "I think we've only tapped into a small portion of what we can do. After all, if you want to reach America, Country is indeed America's music."

Rob Patterson

The Business of Placing Country Music in Film ...continued from page 13

also attend many of the film festivals around the country. It's not easy getting access to music supervisors — it's all about networking and building relationships."

Coburn landed Urban's "Somebody Like You" in "How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days."

Even though it's a tough market, getting a Country song into a movie soundtrack is definitely worth the effort. "There is a payoff," Coburn said. "If you can get a cut on a major soundtrack album, that song will earn as much money as a Top 5 single, not to mention boosting album sales for the artist. And exposing Country Music to a wider audience is always a good thing."

Mark Crawford

After a lull in the '80s, the label again became a leader under Harold Shedd in the '90s, with artists including Billy Ray Cyrus, Kathy Mattea and Shania Twain. Its roster today includes Terri Clark, Billy Currington, Tracy Lawrence, Gary Nichols, Julie Roberts, Sugarland and Twain.

Other PolyGram entities have included:

- MGM Records, established by the movie company in 1945, just in time to pick up an unknown Country talent named Hank Williams. MGM would also release early recordings by Conway Twitty, Roy Orbison and Hank Williams Jr. Among the record executives who would head the company in Los Angeles were Mike Curb and Jimmy Bowen. Polydor purchased the label in 1972.
- The A&M and Polydor labels were briefly instated in Nashville during the 1990s. Both of them ended up as homes for Toby Keith, who began on Mercury and found himself shuffled back to Mercury before it was all over.



DREAMWORKS

Los Angeles executives David Geffen, Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg founded the DreamWorks film studio in 1994, and — particularly with Geffen's background in the Geffen and Asylum labels — the company established a recording arm.

The pop division never really caught hold, but the Nashville wing, headed by producer James Stroud, performed well. Following its debut release by Randy Travis in 1997, it helped Toby Keith reach his zenith and established such talents as Jimmy Wayne, Darryl Worley and Jessica Andrews. It came into the Universal fold in 2003. Its current roster of artists folded into other labels within Universal Music Group in September, just as Keith announced his split with UMG and the opening his own separate label, Showdog Records.

LOST HIGHWAY

LOST HIGHWAY

Named after a significant Hank

Williams recording, Lost Highway is actually part of the Def Jam label segment of Universal's depth chart. The label was created specifically to target roots music projects, and its roster has featured Ryan Adams, Johnny Cash, Elvis Costello, Mary Gauthier, The Jayhawks, Lyle Lovett, Tift Merritt, Willie Nelson, Glen Phillips, The Sam Roberts Band, Lucinda Williams and the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack.



UNIVERSAL SOUTH

Founded in 2002 by industry veterans Tim DuBois and Tony Brown, Universal South Records, distributed by UMG, has achieved its biggest success with traditional Country act Joe Nichols. It's also showing more eclectic ideals with Bering Strait, Cross Canadian Ragweed, Matt Jenkins, Shooter Jennings, The Notorious Cherrybombs, Matthew West and Holly Williams. The roster also includes George Canyon, Katrina Elam, Erika Jo, The Louvin Brothers, Rockie Lynn, Lee Roy Parnell, Amanda Wilkinson plus the new Marty Stuart label, Superlatone.

Tom Roland

In the next issue, CMA Close Up will feature part three of the four-part series representing a historical look at the label groups that have shaped the Country Music format for more than 80 years.

some men don't go to therapy you know, but it really helped. It was pretty amazing."

Cagle returned to music rested and rejuvenated. The result is the fastest-selling project of his career, *Anywhere But Here*, released in October on Capitol Records Nashville. The album, co-produced by Cagle and Rob Wright, has already yielded one Top 10 single, "Miss Me Baby," a sweet-sounding serenade that masquerades as a love song but is really an "I hope you miss me" tune, co-written by Cagle and Monty Powell. The title track, written by Wendell Mobley and D.Vincent Williams, about an alcoholic, is the song Cagle most identifies with on the album.

"'Anywhere But Here' is where I want to be, absolutely," Cagle said. "It's funny because it's not as hot, not as uptempo as my other records, but I think it's better. There's a growth and a maturity in the studio and craft, a maturity of topic, but it's still me."

That new sense of maturity and control comes through in songs "Maria," a sultry and powerful look at passionate love and "I Was Made For You" and "You Still Do That To Me," songs that celebrate lasting love. On the rowdier side there is "Hey Y'all," a flat-out rocker about the joys of outdoor partying and "Might Wanna Think About It," which finds the tough-minded Texan staking out his territory in the modern-day battles over rights and obligations.

Happy that the album has been well received, Cagle has been hard at work touring, though he admits he was apprehensive at first about going back out after the vocal problems.

"It was harder than I thought it would be," he said. "I had to stop and relax and go, 'Wait, now you're rebuilding this muscle.' But vocally now, I can start to sense when I'm getting tired — and I'm learning now that it's OK to stop and fix things when they're not right. I've never known that before. So that's a big thing."

Cagle foresees 2006 to be a healing year. "I'm going to be doing my thing with music, but I'm really going to be working on me," he said. "I'm going to find my balance."

"I love what I do and I'm very grateful for my fans," he said. "I care tremendously for them, because right now that feels like all I've got. That's the one thing in this whole deal that hasn't let me down."

Lorie Hollabaugh

On the Web: chrisccagle.com

Sansone and Talbott Q & A ...continued from page 21

stations on a weekly basis. Sharing information with the CMA from this station interaction is one of the key responsibilities of Premiere. We live in an ever-changing environment. The more information that we can share amongst the different contingencies provides the basis for knowledgeable, swift decisions on issues that affect each of us."

CU: Discuss the spectrum of programming opportunities that Premiere offers during high profile events such as CMA Music Festival and the CMA Awards.

JT: "Depending on the needs of the radio stations, the programming can change. Radio is in the business of entertaining. It's the responsibility of Premiere to take high profile events like the CMA Awards and 'translate' them to a listening audience. The anticipation of any great event should be as exciting as the event itself. And Premiere works with the CMA and radio stations to bring that excitement of pre-parties and red carpet events to life on radio. Audiences want to know the nominees and their songs, so that's a perfect opportunity for pre-show productions. In addition, audiences want to share the excitement with the artists before the event. We are able to produce a remote broadcast with 50 stations in a single room featuring interviews with the artists. Hearing the artist's stories told live from the event makes great radio. Listeners want to know what their favorite people are wearing and how they look, so a red carpet production has been introduced over the last year. And of course, we want radio to be first to provide the post party of winners and the excitement that each of them are feeling."

Collection, photos of some of the singer's most remarkable music memorabilia; and *Badlands*, portraits of the Lakota Sioux and their surroundings on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

There was a time, Stuart said, when all he wanted to be was a Country singer who wore a cowboy suit, picked three-chord tunes and kept his thoughts to himself.

"But it didn't work out that way for me," he admitted. "My brain was so diverse and my interests were so diverse and my trails seemed to be so eclectic ... I just finally said one day, 'You know, I'm going to go with this. I don't care where it takes me. Whoever can keep up, fine; whoever can't, see you later.' It's a blessing and a curse at the same time."

As much of the world knows by now, Stuart turned professional at 13, when he began touring with Flatt. He subsequently worked with Johnny Cash and Doc Watson before going solo. But he was never just a simple troubadour. He also produced other acts, wrote movie scores and systematically enlarged his collection of Country Music memorabilia.

"It started in my bedroom in Mississippi when I was a kid with *Country Song Roundup* (magazines) and a picture of Bill Monroe," he explained. "Bill Monroe gave me his mandolin pick the first time I ever met him, way before I came to Nashville. ... I carried it to school with me every day. It was like having kryptonite in my pocket. So that started it. When I got up here (to Nashville), they would send most of my paycheck from Lester Flatt home. I got to keep like \$30 a week to eat on. I'd usually take about \$5 of that \$30 and go to the Ernest Tubbs Record Shop. I really went crazy about collecting in the early '80s."

Stuart numbers among his treasures Hank Williams' handwritten lyrics to "I Saw The Light," "Your Cheatin' Heart" and "Cold Cold Heart." He owns one of Cash's guitars and the original lyrics to "Folsom Prison Blues," Jimmie Rodgers' railroad lantern (a gift from late Grand Ole Opry star Hank Snow), and boots worn by Gene Autry, Patsy Cline and Bob Wills. He has Cline's makeup case, along with her hand-drawn design — never sent — for a dress she wanted the famous tailor Nudie to make for her.

To the great misfortune of Country fans, many of Stuart's finest "acquisitions" exist only in his memory. They include working with Cash, Andy Griffith and Monroe, in the twilight of their lives and discovering to his delight that their creativity still burned brightly.

"When I'd go visit Monroe in the hospital," Stuart recalled, "I'd stick his hat on his head. He couldn't play anymore. And I'd take his mandolin, and we'd sing 'I'm Workin' On A Building.' He'd just mouth the tenor. But he went out of this world swingin', and he wrote mandolin tunes up to the day he couldn't play anymore. I recorded with Johnny Cash four days after June was buried. John Carter called me and said, 'Daddy wants to go to work.' I said, 'Great, I'll be there.' I recorded with him until just days before he passed away."

Having concluded "the world don't need another Christmas album," Stuart had to be coaxed into producing *The Christmas Guest* CD for Griffith. But he agreed out of respect to visit the television icon at his home in North Carolina. "We were just kind of sitting around a table. I had a guitar, and he was going through some hymn books singing Christmas songs. Right before the meeting let up, I said, 'Is there anything you always wanted to do that nobody would let you do?' He said, 'Yes. It's a spoken word piece called 'The Juggler' (that) I've carried around in my briefcase since I was a young man.' He got it out, and immediately I was in. He talks better than most people sing. ... He's relentless."

Although demonstrably self-confident, Stuart confessed that he still hasn't figured out what his place in Country Music will be. "I wonder if I even matter," he said with almost scholarly detachment. "I really wonder that sometimes — because I don't chase the charts anymore. ... It's more about the soul and the spirit than it is about chasing the game."

But don't let this sober assessment fool you. Stuart already knows he's a winner. "I feel like I'm at the most rewarding place I've ever been in my life," he said. "I married the prettiest girl in town (his wife, singer Connie Smith). I've got a guitar. I've got a pair of boots and a cowboy suit and a Cadillac. So there you go."

Edward Morris

On the Web: martystuart.net

Rutherford says his intention in songwriting is two-fold. "First, I want my songs to be entertaining. People listen to music to escape. Secondly, I hope my songs connect with people and affirm what they feel but don't or can't necessarily articulate."

He has earned the respect of many in the Nashville's creative community.

"... Rivers is that unique writer that combines Mississippi Delta blues with Country and rock in every song he writes," noted Arista Nashville artist Brad Paisley. "He's got more soul in his music than almost anyone I've ever heard. I always get the feeling that he really means what he is saying in any song he writes. Getting to know him has only strengthened that notion. With such talent and heart, we are lucky to have him in Nashville."

Honesty is evident in Rutherford's live performances as well. He recently played a sold out show with several other writers in New York at Joe's Pub as part of the "Country Takes NYC" campaign that promoted "The 39th Annual CMA Awards."

"I think New York City is starving for real songs," Rutherford said. "The crowds up there ate up what we were doing."

For Rutherford, performing is an integral part of his identity. He said it gives him the fulfillment of knowing he has someone else's complete attention. He spent time on the road in 2005 opening for Gracin, Pat Green and Keith Urban and released his own album, *Just Another Coaster*, that is marketed from his Web site, riversrutherford.com.

Nashville Underground Record Collective, a coalition of professional songwriters that operates their own record and distribution company, includes two of Rutherford's cuts on their most recent compilation album, *Nashville Underground Rocks IV*. On this project, Rutherford joins Al Anderson, Marshall Chapman, Danny Flowers, Darrell Scott and Jeffrey Steele as they present their renditions of songs they penned for other artists and share the more personal, undiscovered songs they have written.

He also strives to help others find their creative voice. He teaches a continuing education songwriting course at Vanderbilt University each fall and produces several acts, including Columbia Records' Platinum-selling duo Montgomery Gentry, Capitol Records Nashville artist Jamie O'Neal and new Sony recording artist, Cole Degges. Rutherford wrote and produced the song, "She Don't Tell Me To," featured on Montgomery Gentry's greatest hits album released in November.

"My job as a producer is to bring out the best and the most of the artist's talent, to make the artist feel comfortable enough to stretch a little outside of his or her comfort zone and to present that artist's talent to the public in a fresh but accessible manner," he said.

All in all, Nashville has been good to Rutherford and his appreciation shows.

"Nashville is, in my mind, home to the best players, the best business people, the best writers and the best singers on the planet," Rutherford said. "At one time or another, everyone comes to Nashville. Not everyone goes to other creative centers like New York or Stockholm, but everyone ends up here. People are amazed at the talent here."

Rutherford stays active and possesses abundant creative energy. He works with NSAI to help spread the word about illegal downloading. He recently celebrated his fourth consecutive chart-topping single, "Homewecker," recorded by Epic Records artist Gretchen Wilson.

Still, he indicates he's just getting started and admits to a lofty goal.

"I want to be like (songwriters) Tom Shapiro, Bill Anderson or Bob DiPiero. Those guys never run out of things to say.

"Nashville is a 10-year town," he explained. "It takes 10 years to get really plugged in. I have a lot more to write about and I don't ever want to do anything else."

Gary Voorhies

On the Web: riversrutherford.com

established, we now all discuss who we invite to join as additional members, or who replaces anyone who leaves the group."

What is the mission of AAG?

"The group's key mission is to implement strategies that are in unison with the CMA's global strategies and to assist development of the Country Music genre in this territory. We'd also like to grow CMA membership in Australia and New Zealand."

What are the long-term plans of AAG?

"To further develop the strength and impact of the group, to enable us to be more effective in moving Country Music into the mainstream of Australian media, radio and music fans. To help to increase market share for the genre, and to make Country Music more accessible to corporate and advertising sectors of Australian business."

What are the 2006 goals of AAG?

"We currently have in progress, a group travel initiative to bring Australian Country Music fans to Nashville for CMA Music Festival. This includes national TV advertising, print and radio promotions and a major Country Music retail promotion across 120 Leading Edge music stores in January, February and March. The tour will be hosted by Australia's reigning Male Vocalist of the Year Adam Harvey. We are also ensuring, by way of corporate sponsors, that we have two Australian artists attend the Festival to perform at the Global Artists Party and at least one of them perform at the international concert on the Daytime Stages at Riverfront Park. These artists are completely sponsored without any funding from CMA."

What events and activities does AAG do to promote Country Music?

"In addition to the retail initiative I mentioned earlier and its link to the travel promotion, we have ensured through Joan Warner of Commercial Radio Australia (CRA), that two new Country artists will be given two of the eight spots on the CRA New Artists To Radio (NA2R) showcase staged as part of the annual CRA national radio seminar and radio awards show. In previous years, Country Music wasn't considered for this event. CRA also provided a sponsorship to send one of these artists to CMA Music Festival to perform at the Global Artists Party. We worked very closely with *The Music Network* and group member Tim Holland along with Greg Swain from Telstra, through advertising support, to have Country Music coverage in this crucial industry publication doubled within the last six months. We have also ensured that the genre is presented as vibrant, contemporary and international in the publication."

Is there a natural fit between Country Music and Australians?

"Yes, absolutely. Like in the United States, Country Music in Australia relates very closely to our values and self-image. Both countries have also grown up with a very similar frontier history of development."

What do you think Australians like most about Country Music?

"It's similarity to their life-style, that it has a less aggressive style than much of the current pop and rock genres and it's more appealing to the MOR markets."

What are the challenges you face in marketing Country Music in Australia?

"Shifting the national media's stereotypical image of Country Music as regional and rural music for 'folks in the country,' despite it's broad appeal in metropolitan and urban Australia."

What would like us to know about AAG?

"That we have a very strong, diverse and effective group of music industry professionals working voluntarily to help improve the prospects of Country Music, locally and internationally. We are all very pleased to be able to work with and be a part of the CMA. We urge the CMA to continue to support the genre globally."

photo: Dennis Carny



**DOLLY
PARTON**

**COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME MEMBER
DOLLY PARTON IS BUSIER THAN EVER**

s she enters her sixth decade, Dolly Parton could easily rest on her laurels. She's one of the world's most recognizable entertainers, film stars, and a hugely successful singer and songwriter.

Having accomplished so much gives Parton creative freedom, so on her current album she turned her attention to reinventing some of her favorite songs. Her new album on Sugar Hill Records, *Those Were The Days*, features Parton covers of classic hits, most from the 1960s and 70s, including Bob Dylan's "Blowin' In The Wind," John Lennon's "Imagine," Pete Seeger's "Where Have

All The Flowers Gone" and Johnny Mathis' "Twelfth Of Never."

"Being an artist and writing my own songs, people expect me just to do my stuff," said Parton, who recorded and produced the album in Nashville. "But as a singer and an admirer of other writers, I wanted to find a way to try to get to sing these songs, because of all that's been going on. Plus I'm getting a little bit sassier as I get a little older. So I just went for it."

Parton includes several widescreen orchestrations featuring strings and choir, arranged by Tom Howard. She enlisted the help of an eclectic group of collaborators, among them Judy Collins, Norah Jones, Alison Krauss, Roger McGuinn, Joe Nichols, Nickel Creek, Mindy Smith, Dan Tyminski, Keith Urban, Rhonda Vincent and Lee Ann Womack. Kris Kristofferson injects his weathered vocals into Parton's take on his classic "Me And Bobby McGee," and Tommy James sings and plays guitar on the 1969 hit "Crimson And Clover." Yusuf Islam, formerly known as Cat Stevens, plays acoustic guitar on the remake of his 1970 hit "Where Do The Children Play."

Parton chose the songs because they had long been favorites of hers and because she felt they were relevant to current times. "That was what was great about songs like 'Blowing In The Wind.' I mean, does that not exactly say what is going on now? 'The Cruel War' was written about the Civil War, just talking about the situation of the girls being left behind and the boys going to battle. And 'Where Have All The Flowers Gone,' that's so right on the money now, with lots of young men going to graveyards," Parton said. "It doesn't matter what war it is or what kind of trouble's going on in the world. These songs offer hope, and they speak to the times."

Parton's guests are enthusiastic about *Those Were The Days*.

"It's always a thrill to work with Dolly," said Vincent, who along with Collins, contributed vocals to "Both Sides Now," a Joni Mitchell-penned tune that became Collins' signature song. "I love and admire her, and I'm continually amazed at her involvement in so many aspects of the music business. She always creates something unique and exciting, with each new recording project. I am always honored and thankful for the opportunity to sing with the incredible Dolly Parton!"

Joe Nichols agreed. "Being in the studio with Dolly was like a baseball fan getting to play catch with Mickey Mantle," he said.

Parton said she admired Nichols' "beautiful low voice."

"So I thought, we'll just be Johnny (Cash) and June (Carter). That's why that one made sense as a duet."

Lee Ann Womack was equally thrilled to contribute on "Where Have All The Flowers Gone."

"I never had a sister that could sing with me and I always thought that would be fun," she said. "Singing with Dolly feels like I do."

Respect for Parton among a new generation of performers continues to grow.

"Her enthusiasm for the material she records is intoxicating. That's what a great artist does — communicate that passion and respect for the songs to the audience. Working with her in the studio, I also saw that she's a titanic musician. Her scratch vocals can be final tracks without editing take-to-take, it's astounding," said Chris Thile from the trio Nickel Creek, featured on "Blowin' In The Wind."

Parton has transcended her humble East Tennessee roots to become a legend. One of 12 children, she graduated high school on a Friday night and moved to Nashville on Saturday morning. On her first day in town, she met Carl Dean. The two have been married nearly 40 years.

Parton's first Top 40 hit was in 1967 with "Dumb Blonde," but she really gained national acclaim appearing with Porter Wagoner on his popular TV show, where her pretty voice, big buffant hair and heartfelt songs made her a favorite with Country Music viewing audiences. After a painful professional split with Wagoner, Parton forged a successful solo career with hits including "Here You Come Again," "Love Is Like A Butterfly" and "I Will Always Love You," which Whitney Houston revived in the film "The Bodyguard," and turned into a monster hit.

Parton starred in a string of films, among them "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," "Rhinestone," "Steel Magnolias" and "Nine To Five." She went on to open a theme park, Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., which provides much-needed jobs in the area. Parton has also helped her home region through various charitable endeavors. In an effort to raise literacy, Parton's Imagination Library launched a program giving each child born in Parton's native Sevier County a book a month until they start kindergarten. The program is now in 540 communities in 41 states and Parton takes great pride in being known as "the book lady." She says her late father was more proud of kids calling her "the book lady" than he was of her being a recording star.

Parton shows no sign of slowing down.

Her recent GRAMMY-winning Sugar Hill albums have tapped into Parton's mountain/bluegrass music roots and have been well received. She plans to tap even deeper into those roots in the future with an album of gospel material. And she expects to release a book for children, *I Am A Rainbow*. Down the road, she'd still like to create a television show for children and launch a perfume line.

At the moment, Parton is busy writing songs for a Broadway production of "Nine To Five," based on the 1980 movie she starred in with Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin.

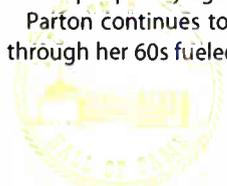
She turned 60 on Jan. 19, and isn't shy about it. In fact, Parton even played on her age to get laughs during her last concert series, "The Vintage Tour." "We're not only from the '60s, we're in our 60s," Parton joked. "On 'The Vintage Tour,' I have a lot of humor from those days that I think people my age are going to get a kick out of ... from letting it all hang out to trying to suck it all back in."

Parton continues to forge ahead with her winning combination of quick wit, business savvy and creative vision. It's a sure bet she'll sail through her 60s fueled by the same drive and determination that made her one of the world's best-loved entertainers. **Deborah Evans Price**

On the Web: sugarhillrecords.com, dollymania.net and DollyOn-Line.com

"WE'RE NOT ONLY
FROM THE '60s, WE'RE
IN OUR 60s... FROM
LETTING IT ALL HANG
OUT TO TRYING TO
SUCK IT ALL BACK IN."

— Dolly Parton



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2006 cma events

FEBRUARY

Tuesday, Feb. 14

Country Music DJ Hall of Fame and Country Radio Hall of Fame Dinner / Nashville Convention Center / On the Web: crb.org
 CMA is a proud sponsor.

Wednesday, Feb. 14 – Friday, Feb 17

CRS-37 / Nashville Convention Center / On the Web: crb.org
 CMA is a proud sponsor.

MARCH

Wednesday, March 1 – Thursday, March 2

CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Nashville

Mid-March

FREE *CMA Directory* mailed to CMA Sterling and Organizational members as a benefit of CMA membership. Directories are also available to purchase at CMA (615) 244-2840.

APRIL

Monday, April 3

CMA Broadcast Awards submissions accepted at Broadcast.CMAawards.com.

Tuesday, April 18

Leadership Music Digital Summit / Belmont University / Nashville
 CMA is a proud sponsor.

MAY

Thursday, May 4 – Friday, May 5

CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Dallas

JUNE

Thursday, June 8 – Sunday, June 11

CMA Music Festival, "Country Music's Biggest Party™" / Downtown Nashville
 For tickets call 1-800-CMA-FEST or visit CMAfest.com or ticketmaster.com

Thursday, June 29

Deadline for CMA Broadcast Awards submissions at Broadcast.CMAawards.com.

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, Sept. 27 – Thursday, Sept. 28

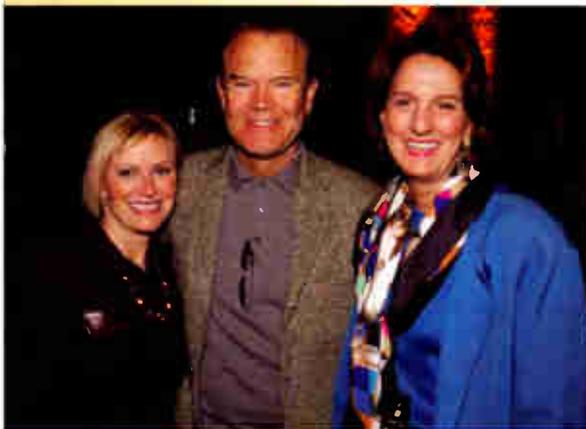
CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Atlanta



Blue Leaf Music recording artist The Road Hammers visit CMA to sign up for membership. The Canadian group's debut, self-titled album of songs devoted to truckers was released in 2005 on Open Road Recordings label. (l-r) Clayton Bellamy; Chris Byrne; Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer; Corbett Frasz; Ed Benson, CMA Chief Strategic Officer; and Jason McCoy. photo: Amanda Eckard



Universal South recording artist Rockie Lynne visits with CMA staff and performs songs from his debut album, due in stores April 18, including first single, "Lipstick." (l-r) Rick Murray, CMA Vice President of Strategic Marketing; Susan Levy, Vice President of Artist Development, Universal South Records; Ed Berson, CMA Chief Strategic Officer; Rockie Lynne, Bruce Larson, Co-Manager, Saddle Creek Artist Management; and Bob Titley, Co-Manager, Titley & Associates. photo: Amanda Eckard



Country Music Hall of Fame member Glen Campbell and CMA Chief Operating Officer Tammy Genovese participate in the Premiere Radio Networks remotes at the Hammerstein Ballroom in the Manhattan Center in New York City preceding the 2005 CMA Awards. (l-r) Tammy Genovese, CMA Chief Operating Officer; Glen Campbell; Julie Talbot, Executive Vice President, Premiere Radio Networks. photo: Marc Andrew Deley/FilmMagic.com

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CMA CLOSE UP magazine (ISSN 0896-372X) is the official bimonthly publication of the Country Music Association, Inc., One Music Circle South Nashville, Tenn. 37203-4312 (615) 244-2840.

Available to CMA members only. *CMA CLOSE UP* subscription price of \$25 per year is included in membership dues. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, Tenn.

Postmaster: send address changes to CMA Membership One Music Circle South Nashville, Tenn. 37203-4312.



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