

AUGUST 1996

CLOSE UP



30th
CiMa
Awards



**"I don't take much time off...I like to play."
- Sammy Kershaw, page 4**

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VINCE GILL TAPPED AS CMA AWARDS HOST

Superstar Vince Gill, who holds the distinction of winning more CMA Awards than any other performer, will host "The 30th Annual CMA Awards" on Wednesday, October 2. The gala special will be broadcast live on CBS.

1996 will mark Vince's fifth year as host of the CMA Awards telecast. Blending his talents as a top-notch vocalist, songwriter and musician with an ever-affable personality, Vince has become a favorite with fans, fellow artists and music critics alike. Beginning with the release of his MCA debut lp, *WHEN I CALL YOUR NAME*, in 1990, each of his six lps has achieved platinum sales or above.

"I am just really thankful that I have accomplished what I have accomplished," Vince says. "I don't feel any different than when I was 18 and left home and made \$50 to pay the rent. I just play and sing. It might not sound like the truth, but it really is. That's still the motivating factor. It's not how many awards you win or how much money you make. It's like baseball players - they still play for the love of the game. I still do too, and I don't think that will ever go away."

A consummate performer, Vince brings the same enthusiasm to his live shows as he does to his records, and he's quick to give credit to his audiences. "We just have a blast," Vince says. "It's always the crowd that dictates a good show. They'll put the adrenaline in you and make you go. They make us have as much fun as we can stand."

Vince created that same audience chemistry during his stint as host of the 1995 CMA Awards telecast. The special topped the night in the ratings race, giving CBS its first win of the season. Spurred by the CMA Awards' strong showing, CBS also

won its first week for the 1995-96 television season. When the reviews were in, it was obvious that Vince played a vital role in the success of the CMA Awards telecast.

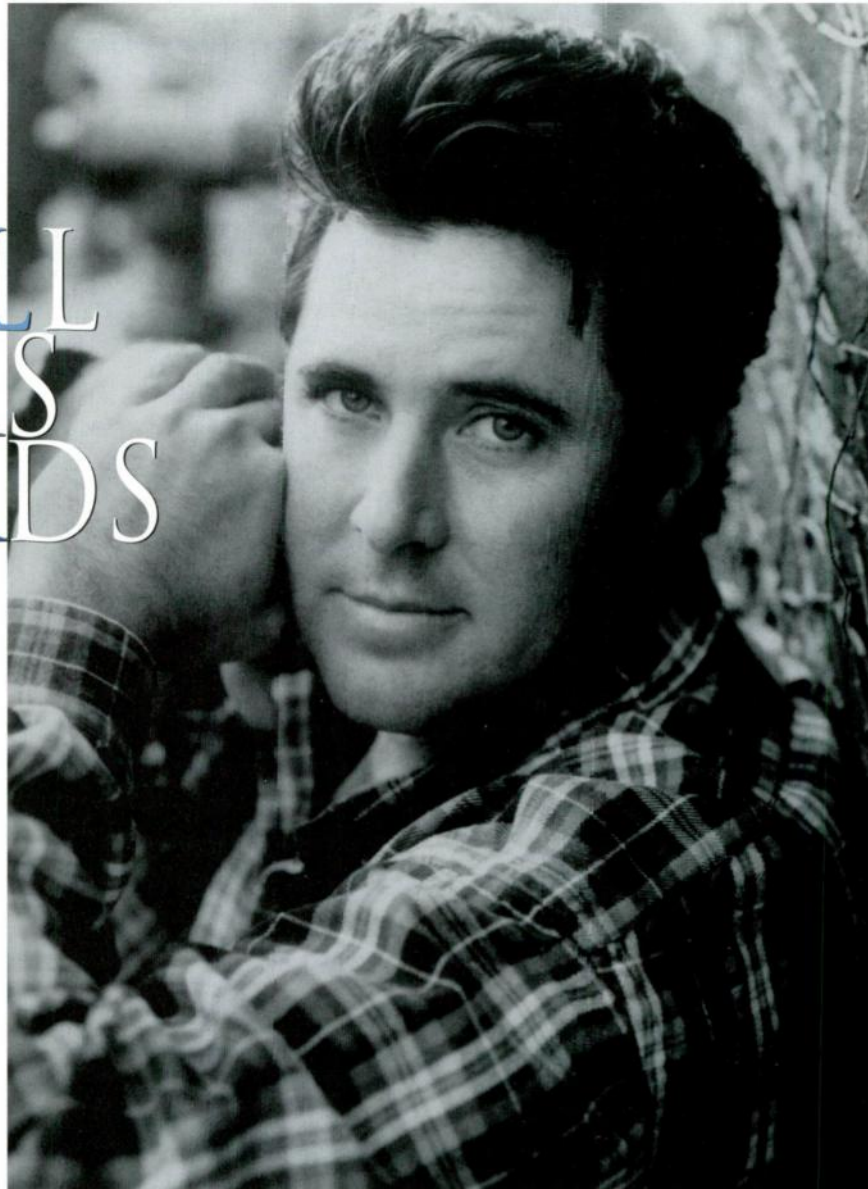
"(Vince) Gill remains a completely engaging host, with the ability to poke fun at Nashville power brokers without insulting them," said Jeffrey Lee Puckett, pop music critic for *The Courier Journal* in Louisville, Kentucky.

"Most people find I'm exactly the same without a camera going."

Dianne Samms Rush, music writer for *The Wichita Eagle*, agreed, saying Vince was "the glue that held the show together...His ad-libs were charming, natural - even excusably corny," Rush concluded.

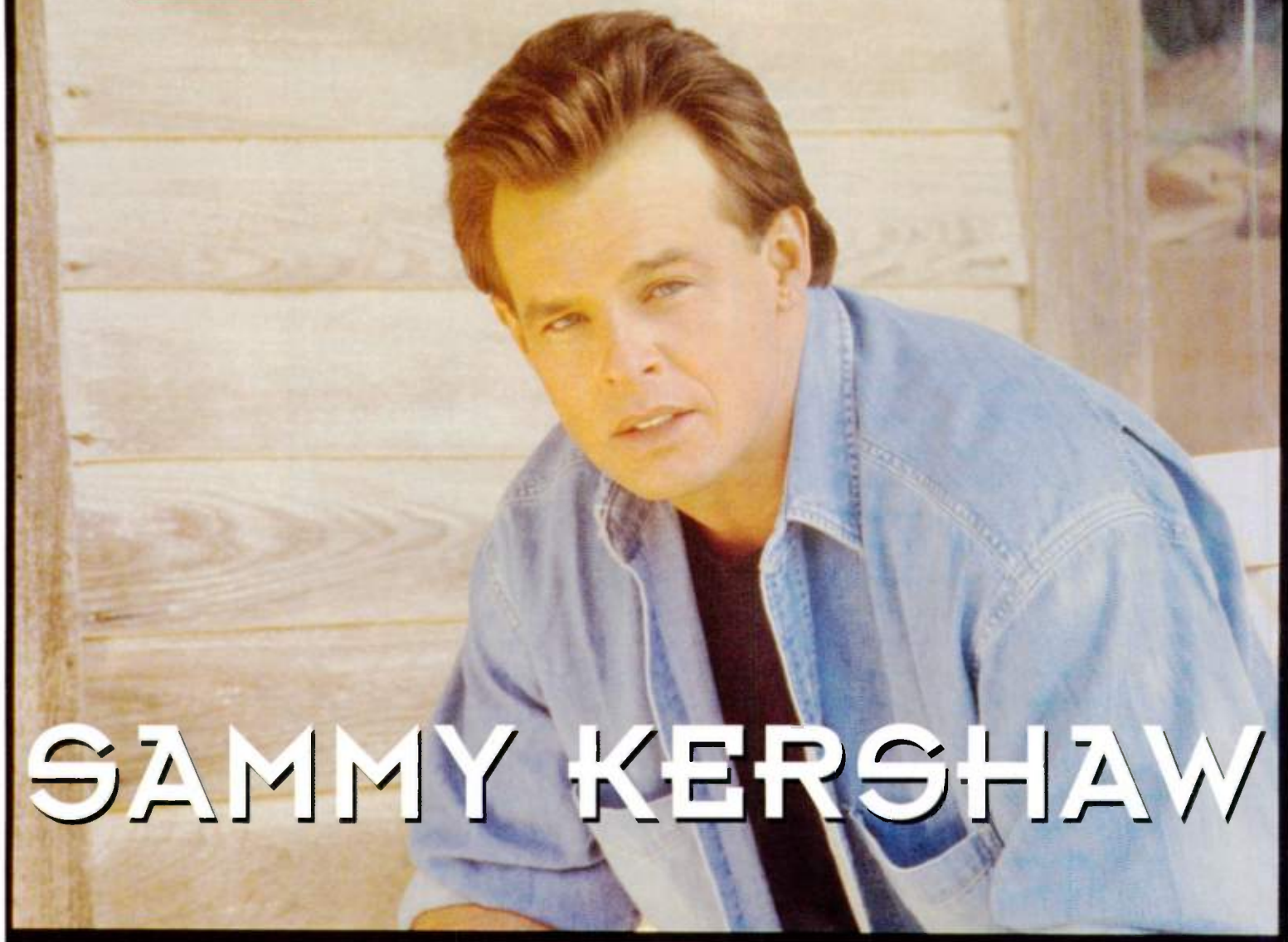
Although Vince says he's honored by all the praise, he really doesn't take people's reactions to heart.

"I just try to do the best I can and not take it too seriously. I'm not above making fun



of someone else or even myself. You have to be able to make fun of yourself before you slam someone like the Postmaster General. I don't know what I intend to do or what I mean to say. It's not planned. When something strikes me as funny, it's funny. If it's not, it's not. I'm just out there being me. Most people find I'm exactly the same without a camera going," Vince explains.

"The CMA Awards host selection process is something that CMA and everyone involved with the telecast takes very seriously," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "Each year that Vince has hosted, there has been overwhelmingly positive response from the viewers. It is CMA's pleasure to work with an artist such as Vince, whose unique talent, professionalism and sincere love of his craft have substantially elevated the excitement and enjoyment of the CMA Awards telecast. We are delighted to announce that he will host the CMA Awards in 1996." **CU**



SAMMY KERSHAW

Sammy Kershaw has always championed maintaining one's musical roots. "Country Music is where my heart is and where I want to stay," the Louisiana native quoted in his record label bio when asked about his future in the movies after appearing in "Fall Time". But even though Sammy chose a musical career over the big screen, he says during the last few years he felt that he was losing his musical focus. It was then that he decided to change direction and bring in a new producer for his current Mercury Nashville lp, *POLITICS, RELIGION AND HER*.

"I got to thinking, 'Who's still doing Country Music out here?'" The artist that came to mind was Alan Jackson. He started Country, and he's still Country. Keith Stegall, Mercury's vice president of A & R,

produces him. I just thought it would be good to work with Keith."

Along with Sammy's longtime producers Norro Wilson and Buddy Cannon, Keith helped craft what Sammy feels is one of his best albums yet. The first single, "Meant To Be," hit the top five on the Country charts and his current release, "Vidalia", promises to be another Sammy Kershaw tongue-in-cheek classic.

"Keith came up with so many good songs in just a week. I called him up at the end of one week, and by the end of the next week, we were in the studio. It was that quick."

Sammy also decided that he wanted to put more ballads on this album.

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"I WON'T START

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WRITING IF THE

•
WRITERS DON'T

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START SINGING."
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"My whole career has been built on up-tempo stuff. It's good in a way, because you can go out there and keep a lively show going. But I thought the time had come to throw some ballads out there. I really like doing ballad Country Music."

He also recorded one of his own compositions for the lp.

"I wrote 'Here She Comes'. But I won't start writing if the writers don't start singing," Sammy says jokingly. "I'd rather sing and be an entertainer. If I write one now and then, good. If I don't, that's still good too. It's not something that I have to do."

But even if he doesn't write them, Sammy has a way of making songs his own. A prime example is his cover of "Chevy Van", Sammy John's top five single from 1975.

"I always thought it would make a great Country record. Sort of like 'Third Rate Romance' - at first, I was scared to do it. I didn't think I could do the song justice. The Amazing Rhythm Aces did a hell of a job on that song. It was a big hit record. If you're going to cover a tune like that, that had so much success, you'd better get it as good if not better than the original. That scared me. I left it alone. And then when they brought it up for the FEELING GOOD TRAIN lp, I guess they just hit me at the right time. I said get the lyrics in here. So they faxed them in, and 30 minutes later we had a record. That's what happened with 'Chevy Van.' I said, 'I want to do this song. Fax the lyrics in.' They did, and 30 minutes later we had a song for this record."

Besides being in the studio, Sammy spends a major portion of his time on the road.

"We do about 150 dates a year. I don't take much time off, even in the winter. We've been going for over four years now, and I don't see us slacking off at any time. I like to play. I asked for this, and I'm not the type to sit around for a year and take off. I'm not into that. I'm out here to work."

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HERO..."

For most of those dates, Sammy has toured solo, but he says he'd like to put a major tour together with another artist who shares his drive for the music.

"I want to try to get a tour together with Aaron Tippin. He's a good guy. Aaron's a worker, and he never stops. I like people like that."

At home, Sammy's every bit the worker he is on the road. He and his wife of 11 years, Kim, have five children between them aged 21, 19, 15, 10 and nine. "Just when they start to get old, you have another baby," Sammy says. "You've got no choice but to stay young and keep up with the kids."

Having the understanding of his family has made it easier to balance his career with his personal life.

"They make more sacrifices than I do. I think they even handle it better than I do. They knew that we'd all have to make sacrifices. It's working out fine. When I come home, it means that much more."

In addition to his latest album project, Sammy narrates "The Legend Of Hank Williams", an audio book recently released by Mercury Nashville. He says the opportunity was a natural for him, given his love of talking, and the experience took him back to his musical roots.

"I like to talk just as much as I like to sing. When they called me up, I said I'd love to do something like that. Of course George Jones is my biggest hero, and Hank Williams was one of them. He was probably the first Country Music I had ever heard. I didn't do it just for the hell of it or for the money, because there was no money in this deal. I just did it because it meant something to me, being Hank Williams was the first guy I'd ever heard, and he was one of George's heroes. We all liked Roy Acuff. It all tied in. So it meant something to me, that's why I did it. I'd like to see it get a Grammy nomination. I'm proud of it."

CU

- Mandy Wilson



UPDATE!

SRO '96, CMA's annual international entertainment expo, is the only

all-encompassing music industry conference designed for professionals in the live entertainment and touring business. This annual event, slated for October 3-5 at the Nashville Convention Center, combines panel discussions, open forums, a comprehensive exhibit marketplace and showcases featuring today's hottest Country artists.

For the last 18 years, SRO has provided a proactive learning environment that:

- Addresses the current industry status and the direction it is headed
- Allows industry leaders to share and explore their views on the trends, issues, opportunities and challenges facing Country Music
- Encourages industry to strengthen and improve the profitability of Country Music

One of the most respected and diverse conferences in the industry, SRO is attended by more than 1,000 domestic and international talent buyers, promoters, managers, agents, record label executives, booking agents, concert producers, publications and support services. SRO brings together the infrastructure that keeps Country Music at the head of the box office, the top of the charts and in the hearts of fans nationwide.

SRO '96 CAPSULE SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Exhibit Set-up
Noon - 10:30 p.m.	Registration open - Convention Center Lobby
4 - 6 p.m.	Panel Presentation
6 - 7 p.m.	Opening Reception
6 p.m.	Exhibit Marketplace Grand Opening
7 - 11 p.m.	Showcase #1 - Showcase Stage
11 p.m.	Exhibit Marketplace closes

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Registration open - Convention Center Lobby
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	International Conference
9:30 a.m. - Noon	Panel(s)
9:30 a.m.	Exhibit Marketplace open
Noon - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1 - 4:30 p.m.	Showcase #2 - Showcase Stage
5 p.m.	Exhibit Marketplace closes
7 - 8 p.m.	SRO Awards Pre-Show Reception
8 - 10 p.m.	SRO Awards Show and Presentation

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

9:30 a.m.	Registration open - Convention Center Lobby
10 a.m.	Exhibit Marketplace open
10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Town Meeting
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Brunch
12:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Showcase #3 - Showcase Stage
4:30 p.m.	Exhibit Marketplace closes

All events at Nashville Convention Center. Schedule subject to change.

Talent is the cornerstone of the touring industry - and of SRO.
 This year's lineup features some of the brightest artists Country Music has to offer:



Trace Adkins



Steve Azar



Mandy Barnett



Stephanie Bentley



Big House



James Bonamy



Paul Brandt



Junior Brown



Roger Brown



Patricia Conroy



Frazier River



Keith Gattis



Tammy Graham



Marcus Hummon



Robert Earl Keen



Charlie Major



Rich McCready



The Moffatts



Night of Reckoning



Gretchen Peters



Eddy Raven & Jo-El Sonnier



The Sky Kings



Chris Ward

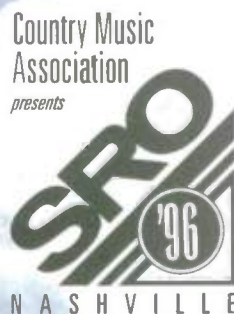


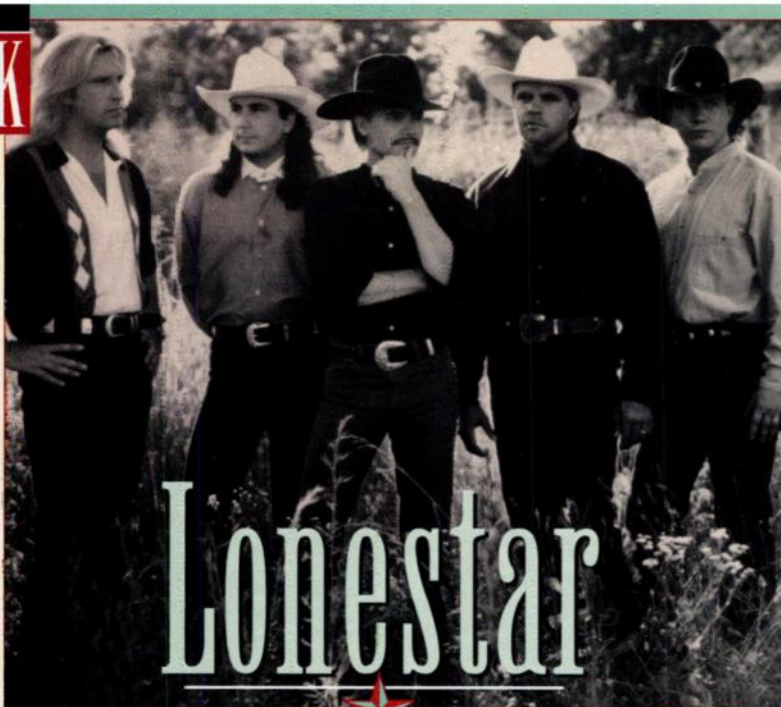
Gene Watson



Mark Wills

For registration information, contact CMA's Special Projects department at (615) 244-2840 or fax (615) 726-0314.





Since the release of its self-titled BNA debut lp, *LONESTAR*, the five Texas natives who comprise the group - Michael Britt, Richie McDonald, Keech Rainwater, John Rich and Dean Sams - have been learning some quick lessons in what it's like to be one of Country Music's hottest new groups. Their second single, "No News", spent three weeks at the top of the *BILLBOARD* charts, making them big news with Country radio and fans. *CLOSE UP* talked with them about their new found success.

CU: The group was formed when Dean and Richie met at an Opryland audition, right?

DEAN: I ended up working at Opryland. Polyester, dancing, sweating, all of that. I worked there for four years, but I met Richie at an audition in Arlington, Texas. A year later, he moved here and recognized me at Opryland. This band was a direct result of our common interests in music. We were fortunate to find the rest of these guys. We've had a lot of success with just the five of us, so this thing must have been meant to be. Think about it, five guys, all from Texas moved here at different times and just somehow came together. I guess the man upstairs knew what he was doing.

CU: Keech and Michael, the two of you were also in the band Canyon right?

KEECH: Michael was in Canyon about a year and a half of the five years I was in it. So we actually got to play together in a band before. Michael was the one who got me in Lonestar.

CU: Your bio says that the first year you guys got together, you did almost 300 shows. Why so much so soon?

DEAN: I think when we first started out, our main concern was to pay the bills. We had to work.

JOHN: We figured we'd kill ourselves before somebody else jumped over us. Nowadays, the people who work hardest get there first.

CU: What's your schedule like these days?

JOHN: We're probably doing 20 shows a month at least.

CU: Your latest single, "Runnin' Away With My Heart", is already zooming up the charts. Michael, how does that make you feel since you cowrote it?

MICHAEL: After two successful singles, it was kind of scary to think about how it would do. I didn't want my song to be bad. If it can keep people talking, then we'll be really happy campers.

CU: Do you guys all write together as a band?

RICHIE: When this band first started, we were in hotels and motels, and that's how we would pass the time. We would get together and write. But since we've gotten our deal, we're kind of spread out now through publishing companies. We're writing with a lot of other people.

CU: How do you go about selecting songs for your albums?

MICHAEL: Our producers do a lot of prescreening for us. We don't hear every song that they get pitched. The good thing about it is that after listening to so many songs, you just get numb after a while, so that when something does hit you, it really stands out. When we first heard "No News" that's the feeling we got.

CU: It's such an uptempo song with so many words. Have you ever forgotten the words?

RICHIE: When we first started doing it, I rewrote that song several times on stage.

KEECH: Richie repeated one line about five times one night.

RICHIE: Try singing that song when you're in Colorado when you're up 7,000 feet and you can't get your breath. It's hard.

**"People always come up and ask us about Parrot Heads."
- Richie McDonald**

continued on page 26...

CMA WEEK ACTIVITIES

Mark your calendars for the following special events which take place in conjunction with the CMA Awards:

Sunday, September 29

NSAI Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame
Induction, Loew's Vanderbilt Plaza
T.J. Martell Foundation Celebrity
Golf Tournament

Monday, September 30

ASCAP Country Awards, Opryland Hotel
T.J. Martell Foundation 5th Annual Bowling Bash

Tuesday, October 1

BMI Country Awards, BMI

Wednesday, October 2

The 30th Annual CMA Awards, Grand Ole Opry House

Thursday, October 3

CMA Annual Membership Meeting, Nashville Convention Center
SRO '96, Nashville Convention Center
SESAC Country Awards

Friday, October 5

SRO '96, Nashville Convention Center

Saturday, October 6

SRO '96, Nashville Convention Center



LORRIE MORGAN AND MARTY STUART TO ANNOUNCE CMA AWARD NOMINEES

Lorrie Morgan and Marty Stuart will announce the nominees for "The 30th Annual CMA Awards" during a press conference on Tuesday, August 13 at the Grand Ole Opry

House. The second ballot, mailed to all individual CMA members in early July, must be returned to Deloitte & Touche by August 8 in order to be tabulated. The five nominees receiving the most votes in each category, to be announced during the press conference, will appear on the final ballot. CMA individual members should watch for the final ballot shortly after the mailing date of August 22. On this final ballot, members vote for one nominee in each category.

The eligibility period for all 12 award categories runs from June 1, 1995 through May 31, 1996.

Winners will be announced during the live broadcast of "The 30th Annual CMA Awards" on Wednesday, October 2. The gala telecast will begin on CBS-TV at 8 p.m. EDT.

The entire balloting process is conducted and certified by the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche.

Staff members of CMA do not vote for the awards, nor do they handle or tabulate any of the three ballots.

CMA AWARDS BALLOTING SCHEDULE

August 8	Deadline to return second ballot to Deloitte & Touche
August 13	CMA Awards finalists announced at press conference
August 22	Final ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
September 25	Deadline to return final ballot to Deloitte & Touche
October 2	Winners announced on live CMA Awards telecast, CBS-TV, 8 p.m. EDT

MEMBERSHIP MEETING SET

CMA's annual membership meeting, open to all members of the association, will be held on Thursday, October 3 at the Nashville Convention Center. The annual election for the Board of Directors begins at 10 a.m., with the membership meeting commencing at 11 a.m.

American Airlines is offering a special Meeting Saver Fare to CMA's activities taking place between September 26 - October 7, 1996. For details on discounts offered, phone American Airlines Meeting Services Desk at (800) 433-1790 or your travel agent. You must ask for STAR File # S0196EJ International travelers, call your local American Airlines reservation office.



INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY MUSIC FAN FAIR CELEBRATES 25TH YEAR



Over 24,000 Country Music lovers from around the world celebrated the 25th anniversary of the International Country Music Fan Fair from June 10-15 at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds. Fans were treated to live stage performances by more than 100 entertainers as well as autograph/photo sessions with over 400 additional artists in the Fan Fair exhibit halls.

Pam Tillis' bass boat booth took top honors in the official Fan Fair Booth Contest. The Arista artist greeted her fans from the boat, posing and signing autographs. Lee Roy Parnell's fan club booth, incorporating the theme of his latest single, "Givin' Water To A Drowning Man", won second prize. Clay Walker's fan club booth was awarded third place for the second year in a row. His booth was based on his popular HYPNOTIZE THE MOON lp.

where he signed autographs for the rest of the day, stopping only when he had to prepare for an appearance on the MCA/Decca Records Show that evening.

Reba McEntire made her first booth appearance in over five years, greeting fans for three hours on Wednesday. The first fan in line camped overnight, waiting 16 hours to get the superstar's autograph.

Although John Michael Montgomery didn't make it to Fan Fair, he did manage to unveil his new Internet website from his fan club booth. Fans had access to the site during the entire event.

There were also some light-hearted hi-jinks in the exhibit halls. Members of Ricochet found themselves under attack by Rich McCready and his band, who assaulted

the popular new group with "silly string". McCready and crew were retaliating for a prank Ricochet played on them during a tour date earlier this year.

Daryle Singletary didn't let a broken leg deter him from his Fan Fair plans. He positioned himself in the Giant Records booth with his leg propped up behind the counter and signed autographs for all who passed

by. One fan, who had learned of his accident, asked him to hold the leg up for a photo.

Down on the Fan Fair grandstand, fans were treated to performances by favorite entertainers and fast-rising newcomers. Those who chose to sit in the shaded area of the grandstand still managed to get a good look at the stars, as Jumbotrons were added to bring larger-than-life footage to the audience. Bouts of rain were unsuccessful in dampening the spirits of both fans and entertainers. Alison Krauss joked, "Where's the ark?" as one short-lived storm moved through the area. She added, "Thanks for staying out in the rain."

Tom T. Hall joined Billy Ray Cyrus for a boogie version of "Harper Valley PTA" during the Mercury Nashville show, followed by superstar Shania Twain, clad in black leather pants. "These are very hot," she imparted to the crowd.



Garth Brooks gets ready for a marathon 23-hour session with fans.

Garth Brooks made an unannounced visit to Fan Fair and was besieged by autograph seekers before he could get to his booth. A makeshift autograph line was set up under the covered luncheon pavilions, where Brooks visited with fans for 23 hours - a Fan Fair record. During the hoopla resulting from Brooks' arrival, Vince Gill nonchalantly strolled to his booth,



Reba McEntire makes a special Fan Fair appearance to meet and greet her loyal fans.

Newcomer Trace Adkins graced the Capitol Nashville show for his first Fan Fair appearance. He admitted that success isn't all it's rumored to be by saying, "My mom and dad think I'm rich, because I have a video on TV. They don't realize that thing cost me money." Collin Raye and surprise guest Trisha Yearwood delivered a rousing rendition of Linda Ronstadt's "Long Long Time" during the Columbia/Epic Records Show, and Brooks & Dunn had the audience on its feet with their hit "My Maria" during the Arista/Career show. Alan Jackson arrived via helicopter for his Fan Fair performance.

Mindy McCready and Lonestar both received surprises during the RCA/BNA show, as each received a gold album for their debut projects.

Comedians Jeff Foxworthy and Bill Engvall had the crowd in stitches during the Warner/Reprise show.

On Friday morning, the Beach Boys were joined by special guests Lorrie Morgan, Sawyer Brown, James House and others to celebrate their upcoming album featuring Country artists. The show drew a



Alabama's Randy Owen cuddles up with an ardent admirer.



A high-kicking Terri Clark enthusiastically embraces an admirer.



Pam Tillis and fan club president Sarah Hamner proudly display their plaque awarding first place in the official Fan Fair booth competition.



Jeff Foxworthy doesn't know how to spot just rednecks... he recognizes his fans as well!

record crowd for the Friday morning spot and was widely hailed as one of the most entertaining shows ever presented during the event. The Beach Boys were so taken with Epic singer/songwriter James House that they asked him to open some shows for them this summer.

Spurred by great live performances on the Fan Fair stage and the chance to meet with favorites in the exhibit halls, fans hurried to the Fan Fair Record Shop to pick up albums by their favorite entertainers. Albums by Ricochet, Paul Brandt and Terri Clark were the bestsellers in the on-site shop.

Over 400 media representatives covered the event for publications and television programs around the world. "Good Morning America" devoted a segment to Fan Fair on their June 12 telecast, including live shots of cheering fans lined up for autographs.

Fan Fair, sponsored by CMA and the Grand Ole Opry, is scheduled to take place June 16-21, 1997.



Patty Loveless turns in a commanding performance during the Columbia/Epic Records show.



Lorrie Morgan finds an unusual spot for her autograph.



Charlie Daniels closes the generation gap with this little admirer.



James House shares the stage with the Beach Boys.



Wade Hayes gets ready for a quick peck on the cheek from an admirer.



Pam Tillis entertains with hits from her ALL OF THIS LOVE lp.



Tim McGraw spots a young admirer during the Curb/MCG Curb show.



Bryan White spends a few minutes with one of his fans.



Alison Krauss gets ready to hit the stage to perform with Union Station during the Rounder Records show.



Shania Twain accepts a rose from a young admirer.



Sawyer Brown wraps up their high-energy Fan Fair performance.



Stephanie Bentley and Ty Herndon team up for their hit, "Heart Half Empty".



Vince Gill shares a sweet moment with an admirer.



Alan Jackson gives fans on the front row the upclose and personal treatment.



Marty Stuart discovers signing an autograph can sometimes be a challenge.

Neal McCoy obligingly signs a t-shirt.



Photos by Kay Williams, Lee Cohn and Chris Hollo.



Collin Raye gets some hands-on attention during his performance at the Columbia/Epic show.



Grandpa Jones was one of the legendary performers appearing at Fan Fair.



The members of BlackHawk endure the "rigors" of getting to know their fans.

Mark Chesnutt creates new memories for two of his fans.



Joe Diffie chats with an admirer.



AWARDS

The Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame will have its first induction ceremony on September 27 in Little Rock. Honors will be presented in five categories: *Performing*, *Non-performing*, *Posthumous*, *Pioneer* and *Governor's*. Nominees for the Performing category include: **Johnny Cash, Mary Steenburgen, Glen Campbell, Jim Ed Brown & The Browns, Al Green, Al Hibbler, Levon Helm and K.T. Oslin.** *Governor's* nominees are: Cash, Steenburgen, **Harry Thomason, Billy Bob Thornton, Randy Goodrum and Tracy Lawrence.** Nominated in the Non-performing category are: Thomason, Thornton, Goodrum, **Wayland Holeyfield, Sarah Caldwell and Melvyn Ensley.** *Pioneer* nominees are: **Jimmy Driftwood, Patsy Montana, Chet Lauck and Norris Goff.** The Posthumous nominees are: Montana, Lauck-Goff, **Bronco Bill Anderson, Alan Ladd, Dick Powell, Charlie Rich, Art Porter Sr., William Grant Still, Louis Jordan, J.C. Flippen, Arthur Hunnicutt, Elton Britt, Washboard Sam, Jim Bridges and Bob Burns.**

Elmer Bird has won West Virginia's highest folklife honor, the 1996 *Vandalia Award*. Bird was presented the award during the annual Vandalia Gathering of folk artists in Charleston on May 25.

Steven Goldmann and Thom Oliphant, directors for **The Collective**, snagged three **Clio Awards** for their work on Country Music videos. Oliphant won the *Gold Award* for **Martina McBride's**

Junior Brown gets some instructions from director Michael McNamara while filming his latest Curb video, "Venom Wearin' Denim".



"Wild Angels". Goldmann won the *Silver Award* for **Shania Twain's** "If You're Not In It For Love (I'm Outta Here)". Goldmann also won an *Honorable Mention* for **Lee Roy Parnell's**, "When A Woman Loves A Man".

The late **Joe Harris** was honored with the *Colonel Tom Parker Award* during the annual **International Entertainment Buyers Association** breakfast. **Bonnie Sugarman**, Agency for the Performing Arts, was named *Talent Director of the Year*. **Charlie Douglas** received the *Hubert Long Award*.

Tim DuBois, president of **Arista/Nashville Records**, was inducted into the **Oklahoma State University Alumni Association Hall of Fame**. DuBois received his undergraduate and master's

degree from OSU. Fellow alumnus **Scott Hendricks** presented the honor to DuBois.

BASF's new *Master Award* recognizes and rewards albums and singles in all music categories which were recorded or mixed on BASF tape and which reach number one status in national charts around the world. The *BASF Master Award* will be presented to producers, engineers and studios who qualify, in addition to a \$1,000 donation to the Preservation of Cultural and Natural Heritages of the World. For more information, call (800) 225-4350.

MEDIA

Sammy Kershaw has narrated Mercury Nashville's first audio book, "The Legend of Hank



River North Nashville's Steve Azar listens attentively to director Chris Rogers during filming of his latest video, "I Never Stopped Lovin' You". Hunter Hodge produced the clip for Pecos Films.

Williams: Audio Book with Music". The audio book is an abridged version of Colin Escott's "Hank Williams, The Biography". There are 13 original tunes sung by Williams included in the audio book. The package will hit stores August 20.



BlackHawk is the latest artist to record "Always Coca-Cola", the theme song for the popular soft drink. BlackHawk's version will hit the radiowaves in every market by mid-August.



Elvis Presley's road manager, Joe Esposito, has cowritten "Good Rockin' Tonight: Twenty Years On The Road and On The Town with Elvis", published by Avon Books. Esposito and Elena Oumano reveal Elvis' life dating back to when Esposito and Presley were in the Army in Germany together. The volume includes numerous rarely seen photos from Esposito's private collection.



Hallway Entertainment, Inc. has acquired the rights from Gibson

Guitar Corp. to produce an authorized musical documentary on the history and influence of Gibson guitars and the musicians who play them. The television special, "A Century of Hot Licks", will celebrate over a hundred years of Gibson and will feature legendary artists.



The Country Music Foundation and Vanderbilt University Press have teamed up to publish "The Country Reader: 25 Years of the Journal of Country Music". The publication is a sampling of writing and photography that appeared in the *JOURNAL OF COUNTRY MUSIC*, put out by the foundation for the last 25 years.



TWANG Magazine launched its premiere issue this month, with articles on **Brooks & Dunn**, **Kim Richey** and **Mandy Barnett**. The quarterly publication will target urban professionals by using innovative photography and in-depth profiles on hot Country acts and rising newcomers. **Tom Smith** is the publish-

er/president, **Curt Koehn**, editor-in-chief, and **Park Van Nest** is the advertising director for the magazine. **TWANG's** editorial office can be reached at 4936 Collinwood, Fort Worth, TX 76107; (817) 377-0970.

NEW COMPANIES

J'ann Selin has launched her own company, **J'ann Selin Associates, Entertainment Production Services**, a production and special events company. The company is located at 2214 Larimore Drive, Nashville, TN 37214; (615) 889-1810; fax (615) 883-4889.



Dur Music has announced the formation of **Prairie Moon Records**, a full service Country Music label. **Steven Craig Harding** has signed as the company's premiere artist. The label is located at 2200 N. Florida Mango, Second Floor, West Palm Beach, FL 33409; (407) 686-7751; fax (407) 686-9406.

Ritter Carter Management has opened a Nashville office, with **Joe Carter** at the helm. The company manages MCA recording artist **Tracy Byrd**. The office is located at 2000 Grand Avenue, Suite 109, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 329-2145; fax (615) 329-0416.



Henry Hurt has entered into a joint venture publishing agreement with **BMG Music**. **Cabin 11 Music Group** will be in BMG's Nashville offices. The company's first signing is **Johnny MacRae**.



Charlie Lico has been named to head the new **Pioneer Music Group**. Launched as a multi-genre record label, Pioneer Music Group is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pioneer North America. Lico has

appointed **Bernie Leadon** as the new label's vice president of A & R. The company is located at 1420 Coleman, Franklin, TN 37064; (615) 595-9028.

NEWSLINE

The 3rd Annual **Mark Collie Celebrity Race for Diabetes Cure**, with over 60 Country music artists and NASCAR greats, will take place Wednesday, October 9 at the Nashville Speedway USA. The event, which has raised over \$500,000, has confirmed drivers **Brooks & Dunn, Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, The Mavericks, Tanya Tucker** and **Terri Clark**. The event will kick-off October 8 with a VIP party, auction and concert at the Wildhorse Saloon. For ticket information, call (615) 255-9600.



Henniger Elite Post (HEP) announced Nashville's first video post production facility with interactive and CD-ROM capability, a technology-driven video editing teaching center and the installation of Nashville's first Quantel (editbox) D-1 editing suite. **Jamie Campbell, George Betts** and **Eddie Hales** have worked with HEP to solidify the company's leadership position in the post production industry.



Songwriter **Gary Burr** is producing **DISNEY COUNTRY** for Disney Records. **Martina McBride, George Jones, Tanya Tucker, Kathy Mattea** and **Pam Tillis** are among the artists featured on the project.



Jim Foglesong will teach a course on "**Business of Music**" at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music. The class, which will explore all facets of the music

Capitol Nashville president **Scott Hendricks** (center) presents silver plates commemorating Fan Fair's 25th anniversary to **Hal Durham** (left) of the Grand Ole Opry and CMA's **Ed Benson**.



industry, will begin August 28. For more information, call (615) 322-7651.



The **Jim Reeves Museum and Enterprises** has been sold to **United Shows of America, Inc.**, which plan to remodel and reopen the museum. **Jim Ed Brown**, an officer and director for United Shows of America, will be active in the reorganization.



The **National Museum of American History** in Washington D.C., has scheduled a series of events entitled "**Electrified, Amplified, and Deified: The Electric Guitar, Its Makers, and Its Players**", from November 9 -16, 1996, that will explore the development of the electric guitar and its role in shaping music and culture. **Junior Brown, Jim Hall** and **The Ventures** will perform concerts as part of the series on November 15 -16.



Ricky Skaggs will host the **International Bluegrass Music Awards Show** on Thursday, September 26, in Owensboro, KY. Over 20 awards will be presented. Festivities also include tributes to **Award of Merit** recipients, musical

performances and the 1996 inductions into the IBMA Hall of Honor.



Tim McGraw has signed an exclusive contract with **Entertainment Marketing Inc. (EMI)** for future sponsorship programs. McGraw joins EMI's current Country Music roster which includes **George Strait** and **Bud Light, Trisha Yearwood** and **Discover Card** and **Sawyer Brown** and **MCI/1-800 COLLECT**.



Mila Mason is the new spokesperson for **Abilene Boot Company**. Mason will appear in a print media campaign and will make personal appearances at sponsored events.



Starstruck Entertainment has moved into its new Music Row office, located at 40 Music Square West, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 259-0001.

ON THE MOVE

Chris Waters has been appointed vice president of **Tree Productions**. Waters, previously a staff writer for the firm and independent producer, will be responsible for assisting young writers/artists in

the Tree family. Waters has penned such hits as **Sammy Kershaw's** "Meant To Be" and **Terri Clark's** "Suddenly Single".



Rachel Melsom has been appointed director, marketing services, **Group W Satellite Communications (GWSC)**. Melsom joins CMT from Harari Page Ltd., where she was an account director. **Jim Babchak** has been promoted to regional manager, Central region, and **Cheryl Constantino** to regional manager, Western division for GWSC. **Mark Benenson** joins the company as account executive, Los Angeles. **Rick Hogan** also joins GWSC as senior research analyst in the ad sales department.



Stephen Medlin has been named director of advertising for **Capitol Nashville**. Medlin, formerly the label's senior marketing manager, is responsible for all album-oriented advertising and oversees all phases of print, radio and television advertising.



Mike Sebastian has rejoined **Starstruck Writers Group** as general manager. Sebastian, who worked with the company for two years, returns after a stint as director of creative services at MCA Music.



James Yelich has joined **Creative Artists Agency (CAA)** as an agent in the music department in the company's Nashville office. Yelich will be closing Chief Talent and taking artists **Alan Jackson**, **Charlie Major** and others to CAA.

William Smithson has been appointed associate manager at **Borman Entertainment**. Smithson, previously media assistant for Columbia Records, will join the

management team that handles the career of Columbia recording artist **Mary Chapin Carpenter**.



Laura Lyness has been added to **The Collective's** staff as director of marketing & publicity. Lyness will be representing the company's three directors: **Steven Goldmann**, **Thom Oliphant** and **Bob Gabrielsen**.



Step One Records has redefined its promotion staff. **Tammy Lovett**, former GAVIN representative, will handle the West Coast; **Roy Perry** will continue as Mid-West regional; **Buzz Ledford** will handle the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic and New England regions; and **Todd Mooring** will be the liaison for the South and Southeast regions. **Linda Johnson** has moved to the newly formed Adult Contemporary division, sharing duties with **Teresa Johnston**.



John Mann has been named general sales manager for **Speer Communications, Ltd.** Mann

previously was the general sales manager for WTAJ-TV. **Tom Weekly** has been named sales manager of **Speer Transmission Services**, a subsidiary of **Speer Communications, Ltd.** Weekly, formerly president of **Independent Network Services**, will oversee all satellite, microwave and fiber-optic transmission services.



Brad Chambers has resigned from his position at **Imprint Records** as vice president of promotion. Chambers will pursue other ventures.



Joe Moscheo has joined the private banking department as principal of the newly formed entertainment/music division for **First Union Bank of Tennessee**. Moscheo, a former BMI executive, was most recently involved in artist management.



Areeda Schneider will serve as senior director, administration & production for **First Media**



Marty Stuart celebrates the gold certification of **TEMPTED** during a recent gathering where he previewed selections from his latest MCA lp, **HONKY TONKIN'S WHAT I DO BEST**.

Communications. She was formerly with Sony Music Entertainment.

SIGNINGS

MUSIC PUBLISHING: Merrill Farnsworth to Sony/ATV/Cross Keys/Molto Bravo Music...Peggy and Patsy Lynn to ASCAP...Tim Wagoner and Chantel Harp to March Music...Zack Lyle to Life Music Group...Gene Nelson to SESAC...Big House to MCA Music...Sterling Whipple to Hamstein Cumberland Music Group...Mark Wills to SESAC...**RECORDING:** Steeplejack to DEJADISC...Mila Mason to Atlantic Records.

VIDEO

M.C. Potts and director Marc Ball teamed up to shoot the Critique Records artist's second video, "Put Me Out Of My Misery". Potts used a more dramatic role in her latest video with Scene Three, which was filmed near Leiper's Fork, TN.

Ty Herndon and actress Donna Scott paired up to film the Epic recording artist's latest video, "Living In A Moment". Directed by Steven Goldmann of Cloudland Productions, the video was shot at the historic Sunset Depot in San Antonio, TX. Scott was Herndon's real-life girlfriend right after high school.

Mila Mason travelled to Rancho De Los Fresnos in Hidden Valley, CA to shoot the debut video "That's Enough of That". Director Jim Shea had the Atlantic artist wrangling cattle, doing some fancy horse riding and just plain having a good time in the video.

Trisha Yearwood and director Gerry Wenner used hip retro decor from the '60s and '70s for her latest video, "Believe Me Baby, I Lied". Using bright prints and clashing colors, the video was shot to be humorous with a fun fashion edge.

Randy Travis performs in a 1940's era Mexican honky-tonk in his latest Warner Bros. Records video, "Are We in Trouble Now". Jim Shea directed the clip, which tells a tale of ill-fated love.

Tony Toliver filmed his debut Rising Tide Record video, "Betting Forever on You", in the bright lights city of Las Vegas, NV. Director Marc Ball utilized a special kaleidoscope technique in the clip, giving the wild footage of lights, gambling and showgirls, an interesting twist.

George Jones jumps on his infamous riding lawnmower in his latest MCA video, "Honky Tonk Song". Marc Ball directed the clip that has Jones being pulled over on his lawnmower and thrown in jail. Junior Brown makes a special appearance as the sheriff. Other celebrity cameos include Little Jimmy Dickens, T. Graham Brown and Ken Mellons.

Billy Ray Cyrus takes a motorcycle road trip along the original Trail of Tears, in his latest video by the same name, "Trail of Tears". Notorious Pictures utilized actual locations along the original Trail of Tears, the path that about 20,000 Cherokees were forced to march in early 1840 in order to relocate them to the Indian Territory.

LeAnn Rimes put her blockbuster single "Blue" to video, when she teamed with Pecos Films director Chris Rogers. Rogers films Rimes poolside, giving the film some Hollywood glamour with nostalgia and summertime fun.

NEW ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

CMA welcomes the following new organizational members:

American Network Radio, Inc.,
Nashville, TN

Destiny Presents, Indianapolis, IN
Great American Talent,
Nashville, TN

Innovative Shows, Clifton, NJ
KSK Music Agency,
Frankfurt, Germany

KGRT Radio, Las Cruces, NM
Lubbock Civic Center, Lubbock, TX
Musical Charities Corporation,
Normal, IL

Nova Scotia Country Music
Association, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
Photography by David Busch,
Clearwater, FL

Provident Financial Management,
Nashville, TN

Ray Quinn & Assoc., Nashville, TN

Ruth Eckerd Hall, Clearwater, FL

Sound Impressions, Nashville, TN

TELMco, Inc., North Little Rock, AR

WDGG Radio, Huntington, WV

WDLY Radio, Sevierville, TN

WGRX Radio, Hunt Valley, MD

WJVO Radio, Jacksonville, IL

WKXK Radio, Chicago, IL

WMJC Radio, Melville, NY

Wolverine Productions,
Kalamazoo, MI

Woodland Studios, Nashville, TN

World Entertainment and
Management Group, Denver, CO

WPCV Radio, Lakeland, FL

WPSK Radio, Radford, VA

WRSF Radio, Nags Head, NC

WSDS Radio, Ypsilanti, MI

CMA/NARM
P-O-P CAMPAIGN
NOW IN 14TH YEAR

CMA and the National Association of Record Merchandisers (NARM) continue a joint fall merchandising point-of-purchase campaign for the 14th year. Targeted to consumers at nationwide music outlets to establish high visibility for the October 2 live telecast of "The 30th Annual CMA Awards", the campaign also boosts sales and awareness of recorded Country Music product both before and after the show.

The campaign features four display pieces: a two-sided poster, a divider card, a double-sided flat and a shelf talker. The materials have been offered to music retailers and wholesalers throughout the U.S. and Canada. Orders will be fulfilled by late August. Display contest forms will be mailed by NARM in conjunction with shipment of materials.

Cash prizes will be awarded to both rack jobbers and retailers. Deadline for entries for the display contest is November 1. Winners will be announced in December.

Last year, over 441,000 display pieces were ordered for use in the campaign. All P-O-P materials are for promotional use only and are provided free of charge.

Participants pay only for shipping and handling.

30th
CMA
Awards

October 2, 1996
8 p.m. Eastern and Pacific
CBS Television

The Australian Country Music Market: 1996 Profile

GENERAL AUSTRALIAN MARKET OVERVIEW

The population of Australia is approximately 18 million spread across six states and four time zones 7-10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. The major cities are Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra (the capital), Tasmania and Darwin. New Zealand, a three-hour flight east, is 11 hours ahead of GMT. Its main cities are Auckland, Wellington (the capital) and Christchurch.

A gold record represents 35,000 units in Australia; 7,500 in New Zealand. Platinum is 70,000 units in Australia; 5,000 in New Zealand. Sales of CD to cassette are approximately 3:1. International repertoire represents approximately 80 percent of all music sales. A number one international album can be expected to sell up to 150,000 units. A number one domestic album can sell upwards of 90,000 units. The U.S. retail value of the Australian music market is estimated to be somewhere between \$450-600 million annually.

Country Music's popularity is on the increase in Australia. A handful of new, high profile artists and established acts, along with a growth in mainstream media interest, is driving demand for more product. At retail, an increasing number of independent retailers are expanding shelf space and product quantities. New contemporary acts from Australia and the U.S. are finding acceptance with both Country Music consumers and people who have traditionally not identified themselves as Country Music buyers.

Country Music's strongest markets are the regional towns and cities of Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory. South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania regional areas then follow.

The major music markets of Sydney and Melbourne provide the most potential. However, there is a lack of media exposure for Country Music acts, especially on radio and TV. Artists that have made some inroads into these markets have

done so on the back of major commercial sponsorships or endorsements.

An EMI study indicates Country is the fifth most popular format, behind pop, rock, dance and heavy metal. A recent survey by the Sydney Morning Herald suggests that 17 percent of Australians say that Country Music is their favorite.

Concert attendance and album sales provide evidence of the strength of the regional markets. Australia's most successful Country artist, Lee Kernaghan, outdraws all but the biggest local superstar acts in regional areas. Garth Brooks, The Highwaymen and Dwight Yoakam all recently had sellout tours. Other recent successful tours included Merle Haggard and John Denver.

RETAIL BUSINESS

In addition to a 200-member Recorded Music Group of independent retailers, major chains include Brash's, Vox, Chandler's, K-Mart, Myer/Grace Bros., Big W, Target, Blockbuster, Delta/Sanity, JB Hi-Fi and HMV, among others.

While there are some reliable estimates made by various industry observers, there are no official figures released by record companies or distributors for sales of Country Music. There are about a dozen acts with major label releases, the majority of whom are debut artists with album sales of up to 5,000 units and averaging 2,500-3,000 units.

Australian superstar acts, including Lee Kernaghan, John Williamson, Slim Dusty and James Blundell, sell to platinum and gold levels. In Queensland, Country Music's best market, Kernaghan's latest album release debuted at number one on the ARIA Top 50, edging out Bon Jovi and Michael Jackson. He retained that ranking the following week. The leading female artist, Gina Jeffreys, recently reached gold status for her debut album - a first for an Australian female singer. Singer/songwriter Graeme Connors has achieved gold with two of his five releases. The next level are emerging acts, such as Colin Buchanan, Jane

Saunders and Troy Cassar-Daley, who sell up to 10,000 units.

•
Sales for U.S. artists are steadily increasing with TV promotion yielding strong results. Garth Brooks has sold more than 500,000 units in Australia, and his IN PIECES album reached number one without any mainstream airplay. A regional TV campaign for Vince Gill reportedly increased his sales from 4,000 units to 20,000 units for his two-CD GREATEST HITS package. Line-dancing compilations (primarily U.S. acts) are proving to be very popular, with combined estimated sales approaching 100,000 units in 1995. Sony Music releases annually a COUNTRY COLLECTION compilation from radio personality John Laws' radio show playlists. Sales of these albums reach gold status.

RADIO

Most commercial radio stations in Australia target 25-39 year-olds, and radio is the dominant medium for breaking new acts even though heavy rotation airplay is only about five plays per day for four weeks. Although surveys suggest that a strong majority of 18-34 women in particular are interested in hearing modern Country Music, there's still virtually no Country programming on commercial radio. However, Country Music radio in Australia has always had many specialist programs on local community or public access radio stations. There are 313 radio stations that include Country Music in their programming; some use syndication, while others are developed locally with 3-70 hours of Country per week. These stations, many with limited signals (100 watts), rate between a 1-3 percent share in their markets. There are reports of playlist adds on "hits and memory"-formatted stations of some contemporary Country acts.

•
National radio broadcaster ABC Radio (talk/current affairs) has a three-hour "Saturday Night Country" program, hosted by John Nutting, which is broadcast to all ABC regional and metro radio stations, while Nick Erby's "Country Music Jamboree" is syndicated nationally. ABC does include some

Country acts in their playlist in metro and regional areas. Australia's most popular radio presenter, John Laws, reaches an estimated one million listeners daily. He has a talk/current affairs format and features Country Music prominently as part of his music programming.

•
In terms of fulltime Country stations, KICK AM/Sydney debuted in October 1995 with a "Cool Country, Rock & Blues" format and has about a 3 percent listening share. In recent years, Country stations 4BC/Brisbane and 2SM/Sydney both switched to other formats.

TELEVISION

There are three commercial TV networks (7,9, 10 Networks). Cable TV in Australia is just beginning, but appears to be popular where people can get it. There are several television networks, and CMT: Country Music Television has begun to appear in a limited number of households in the Sydney area. "The CMA Awards" special has appeared in Australia in the past, but not in 1995. There are a number of variety-type shows that exist for artist performances. The major ones are "Hey Hey It's Saturday", "Midday Show", "Today Show" and "Good Morning Australia". All of the national variety shows regularly include Country Music into the performance part of the programs. The Tamworth Festival and Gympie Muster are featured in news reports, while current affairs programs have also profiled Country acts.

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Meanwhile, CMT began broadcasting 24 hours a day on the FOXTEL cable TV network in early 1996. This new development has plans to launch in the various capital cities, adding new subscribers daily and regional services to debut later this year.

MAINSTREAM PRESS

The common "western" or "hillbilly" image of Country Music in Australia is slowly changing with the contemporary images of the new successful artists getting mainstream media atten-

tion. There are a dozen or so media personalities with state or national broadcast/circulation areas who are Country Music artist-friendly. In general, they are receptive to publicity requests and publicly support and/or endorse Country Music artists.

•
At least one of the daily newspapers in each capital city runs regular reviews of product and concerts. Most of Australia's leading Country acts have had feature stories published in the city dailies.

TOURING

There are a wide variety of performance venues, from small clubs to arenas to stadiums. Most acts perform regionally in the major regional and city centers in venues seating 500-1,000. Outdoor concerts will attract up to 3,000 people. Major promoters include Michael Coppel and Paul Dainty, among many others.

•
There is a growing festival circuit developing around Australia. Most started as a showcase for local talent, while some were developed by community organizations as charity fundraisers. Now there are more than 80 Country Music festivals annually, attracting crowds from 1,000-50,000. One of the biggest is the Tamworth Country Music Festival, running for 10 days in January and attracting 35,000 visitors. The National Country Music Muster at Gympie in Queensland draws more than 50,000 people over three days.

CORPORATE INTEREST

Country Music artists have been used in national media campaigns for major corporations such as McDonald's (James Blundell, Lee Kernaghan, Keith Urban), Hanes (James Blundell), Sunblest Bread (Gina Jeffreys), National Buy Australian campaign (John Williamson) and Cyclone Rural Fencing (Slim Dusty). Major event sponsors include Toyota (Country Music Awards of Australia), Carlton United Brewers (Tamworth Country Music

Festival), along with National Farmers Brand and Hyundai (Gympie Muster).

PUBLISHING

All of the major music publishers are either represented with their own publishing offices or sub-publisher affiliates in Australia.

PUBLICATIONS

There are over 3,000 magazines and newspapers in Australia. TOTAL COUNTRY, CAPITAL NEWS-AUSTRALASIAN COUNTRY MUSIC, COUNTRY MUSIC and COUNTRY UPDATE are the four main fan publications that exist for Country Music.

THE CMAA

As the levels of success and professionalism grow in the Australian Country scene, the Country Music Association of Australia is becoming increasingly pro-active in the Australian music industry. The CMAA is four years old and supports a fulltime secretariat.

The CMAA was the only industry trade body to exhibit and conduct a seminar and the inaugural AMRA (Australian equivalent of NARM) Convention in 1995. Other initiatives, including an industry luncheon and professional member seminar, were well attended. The CMAA also coordinates an annual Country Music Month retail promotion, which is gaining more support from major retailers and record labels.

This report was prepared by CMA's International department, with special thanks to Greg Rogers, Bob Saporiti, David Saunders, Greg Shaw, Jeff Walker and Cindy Wilson. 🌐



INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

The U.K.'s **Country Music Broadcaster's Association** recently celebrated its first anniversary. Since the group was formed, membership has dramatically increased to include broadcasters and the biggest names in regional Country Music broadcasting.

The Association now produces a monthly playlist chart, which is used by both national and local radio, is included in several Country magazines and appears on the national telephone system's Country Line. Its membership list is sought after by promotional and record companies to help them efficiently target their promotional material and music product at those broadcasters who are determined to raise the profile of Country Music in the U.K.

To expand its successful endeavors, the Association requests continued cooperation from the industry through additional product, artist interviews and station liners. For more information,

contact Lloyd Coles by phone or fax at 44-1646-621-497. The address is 29 North Street, Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire SA72 6QT, U.K.

BR5-49 recently completed a 21-day tour of clubs and festivals in England, Norway, Holland, Scotland and Germany. The newly signed Arista Nashville group received rave reviews from international media and was featured in segments on VH-1 in the U.K. *The London Times* said, "The hottest ticket of the night was for an American group that has become the talk of Nashville with a sound that belongs to the 1940s and 1950s. In the early stages of this hurricane performance, the audience could only stand and gawk at a style that is so old it sounds fresh. Their revue of musical styles that shaped Country Music from the end of the war until the onset of the rock era was at once disciplined and hedonistic."

Scott



Gunter

Scott Gunter is learning his way through the music industry one day at a time. A graduate of Belmont University in music business, Gunter tells CLOSE UP that there's a lot more to Country Music - and to having a successful career - than one can learn in a classroom.

Though he moved to Nashville with plans of becoming a studio engineer, Scott is happy he found his way to publishing, particularly to his role as production manager at Almo Irving Music.

"For a while, I was second-engineering just a little bit over at Music City Music Hall, which is now Javelina. Jerry Bradley did a lot of his stuff there. It was really cool 'cause he still did it like the old stuff - there'd be 18 people in the session. Just to see how it was done, it was worth it. Owen Bradley would come in and just hang out. Just to be able to sit and talk to him was the biggest thrill...Then I started at Masterfonics...I thought I wanted to be an engineer. I felt like I could have made a living doing it, but...engineering is the hardest job in town and the most thankless. You work so hard, for so long, for so many hours. You have to love it so much. And I love music more than anything, but I would have had to be obsessive to do that kind of thing.

"I didn't know what the hell I wanted to do. I knew that I'd spent seven years going in a direction that I wasn't wanting to do at this point."

Scott's friend, Chris Oglesby, suggested he give publishing a try.

"I didn't have a clue about publishing. It's stupid, because I had a lot of friends in it. But I just didn't know really what it was. I started work (at Almo Irving) in the tape copy room. It's just been great. We have a little 24-track studio there, and I still get to do a little guitar vocals and stuff.

"I work for the best damn company in town. And one of the coolest things of working there is the writers. To sit down with the writers when they've just come in with a finished idea and they say, 'What do you think?' That makes you feel so good. I mean these guys write songs that change the world, and they're asking me, 'What do you think?'

"Kent Robbins has a song that is going to be Trace Adkins' next single. It's called 'Every Light In The House'. It is an incredible song. It makes you so damn happy to hear it...In engineering, I never got that excited about something. What's so cool in plugging is you hear the coolest song in the world and get so excited, and you can actually do something about it. If you get turned on by a song, you can take it to somebody and do something for the writer. The more you're around writers, it seems like the more you want to do for them

because you know how much they really work at it. There's just not a greater feeling."

But a songplugger's love of a song isn't what makes it a hit single or even an album cut.

"By nature I'm not a salesman," Scott readily admits. "There should be a big pitch. But I'm not the best at that. If you've got a great song, it's gonna play its part. And if it's a song that I really love, I won't shut up.

"What I've learned is that you need to know the artist, what they want to say, the image. You have to have songs that are really solid and great. You have to take songs that say what the artist says and says it really well. You just match them up. That's hard, but it still beats the hell of out digging ditches.

**YOU HAVE TO
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THAT ARE REALLY
SOLID AND GREAT.**

"A lot of times, the deepest songs are the hardest ones to get cut. It's kind of tough for artists to be really heavy, because it's not cool to radio on an everyday basis. I always lean towards sadder songs automatically. That's the most frustrating thing at times - to hear songs that just tear you apart, and the passes on those songs are hard. You can't let it get you down. We had a song that did real well for us - In Between Dances (recorded by Pam Tillis) - that didn't start out with the basic colors and didn't end up on red. It was a melancholy song. - and it was so enlightening to see there is still a place for those songs."

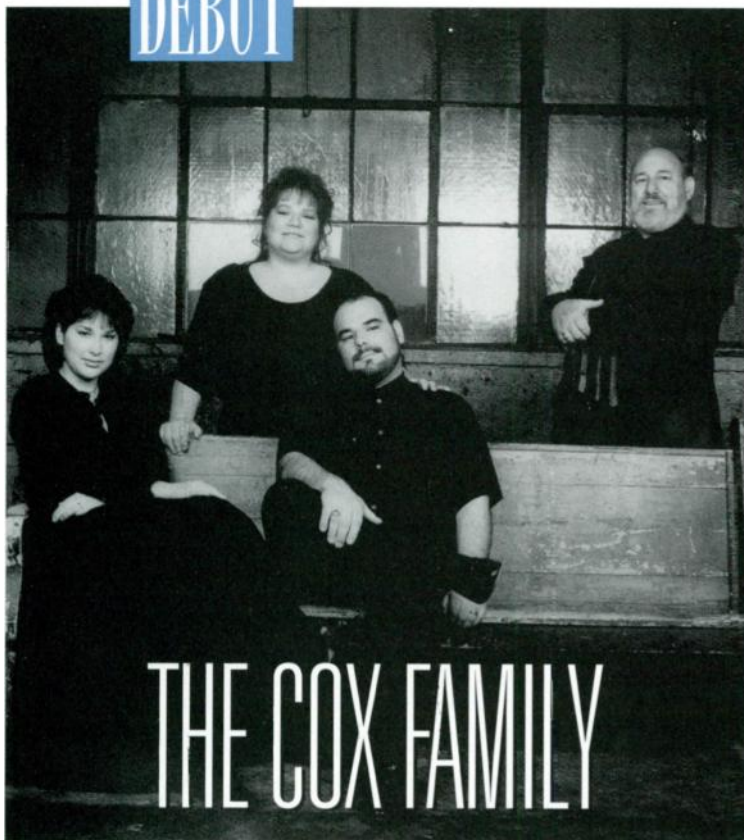
Scott splits his time at Almo between pitching songs and running the tape room. With so much money going into demos today, can a song get cut from just a guitar lick and vocal?

"I've heard a producer say he wants to hear the thing closest to the record. Then there are producers who don't want to hear anything but the lyrics and the chord progression. At this level of songs, the quality is going to be there. You're going to have an obvious hook a lot of times. But the arrangement can sell the hell out of it. It can be the difference between a pass and a single. And I'm not saying you're going to take a bad song, put a cool lick in it and it's going to be a hit. Bottom line, it has to be a well-done song."

Through the years, the most valuable lesson Scott has learned is one his father taught him.

"The thing I've learned is kind of comforting in a way. It's to know that if you really work your butt off and be as unselfish as you can, do what you feel is right in your heart, you'll be successful. It may be wrong, but it's going to take me a long time to find out, and by then it'll be too late. I had to pick something I really love to make me work this hard. And the rest of it is going to fall into place." **GU**

- Shannon Heim



RECORD LABEL: Asylum Records
DEBUT ALBUM: JUST WHEN WE'RE THINKING IT'S OVER
SINGLE: "Runaway"
MANAGEMENT: David Corlew, Corlew-O'Grady Management
INFLUENCES: Jimmie Davis, Webb Pierce, Marty Robbins, Merle Haggard, Vern Gosdin, Don Reno & Red Smiley and the Osborne Brothers

Though new to Asylum Records, The Cox Family - siblings Evelyn, Sidney, Suzanne and father Willard - has been garnering awards and accolades for years. Reigning CMA Female Vocalist Alison Krauss, a fan of the group since hearing them at a Texas festival in the early 1990s, was instrumental in helping them land their first record deal. She also produced their latest album, *JUST WHEN WE'RE THINKING IT'S OVER*, a collection that embraces songs that were once hits for Hank Williams, Tanya Tucker, Larry Gatlin, Del Shannon and Marvin Gaye, as well as including five new compositions.

The Cox Family is also a favorite of the popular rock group Counting Crows. After lead singer Adam Duritz heard the group's music in 1994, he invited them to open for the band during its North American tour. "This first time I ever heard the Cox Family, I was riding through New Orleans...at about three in the morning. Buck Owens was finishing 'Above And Beyond' on the tape deck, and the next song was about as beautiful a piece of Country Music as I'd heard in years. We arrived at the bar...My friends went inside to see the band, but I stayed in the car to listen to the rest of the tape. It turned out to be the Cox Family. I missed the show. Whatever. I stole the tape."

CU: How do the crowds react to the song with all the references to rock acts like Pearl Jam, The Grateful Dead and Jimmy Buffet?

RICHIE: People always come up and ask us about Parrot Heads. For any of those people out there who don't know, it's a Jimmy Buffet follower.

CU: How does it work with John and Richie both taking turns at singing lead vocals?

JOHN: We know pretty much when we hear a song who's going to sing it. There've been a few songs that either one of us could have sung. When that happens, we just look on the record to see who's singing what so far. It's no big strain on us. Whatever happens, happens.

CU: What can audiences expect when they see your show?

DEAN: It's pretty nuts. I guess that's the thing that's kept this band going for so long - the energy you see on stage. You'll see John jumping down on stage hitting his bass. He beats the crud out of his bass. A lot of people write in and make comments about it. Keech is beating the drums to death, and he's got the fans blowing his hair back.

RICHIE: Dean dances behind the keyboard. We had this little boy come through the autograph line and imitate him the other night. He started dancing around like Dean does on stage.

CU: You guys seem to have such great camaraderie. Is that something you've really strived for?

MICHAEL: Over the years, we've become very unselfish, and we don't get into other people's way.

RICHIE: We're a band, and that's how we want to come across. We're all equal members.

- Mandy Wilson

I N M E M O R I A M

Dewayne Hamilton

Dewayne Hamilton, owner of the Little Nashville Opry in Nashville, Indiana, died July 13 following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Hamilton, a retired postal worker, realized his lifelong dream of producing quality entertainment on a weekly basis when he founded the Little Nashville Opry in 1975.

He is survived by his wife, Esther, and one son, Lincoln.

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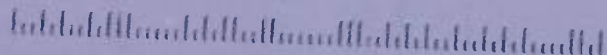
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AUGUST

- 13** CMA Awards Press Conference / Grand Ole Opry Courtyard, Nashville

SEPTEMBER

- 9** Canadian Country Music Awards / Calgary, Alberta, Canada

- 20-21** Country Night Gstaad 1996 / Gstaad, Switzerland

- 27-29** Bluegrass Fan Fest / Owensboro, KY / International Bluegrass Music Association / (502) 684-9025

- 29** Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame / Loew's Vanderbilt Plaza / Nashville

- 30** ASCAP Country Awards / Opryland Hotel / Nashville

OCTOBER

- 1** BMI Country Awards / Nashville

- 2** 30th Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville

- 3-5** SRO / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville

- 3** CMA Annual Membership Meeting / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville

- 3** SESAC Country Awards / Nashville

- 20** 8th Annual Country Gold Festival / Aspects / Kumamoto, Japan / Contact Judy Seale, Refugee International at (615) 256-6615

NOVEMBER

- 13-14** CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Brown Hotel / Louisville, KY



Terri Clark surprises George Strait with a gold album for her self-titled debut album. The Mercury singer credits Strait with much of her success. "Opening for him the first year of my career has not only exposed me to thousands of people but has taught me so much," she said.