

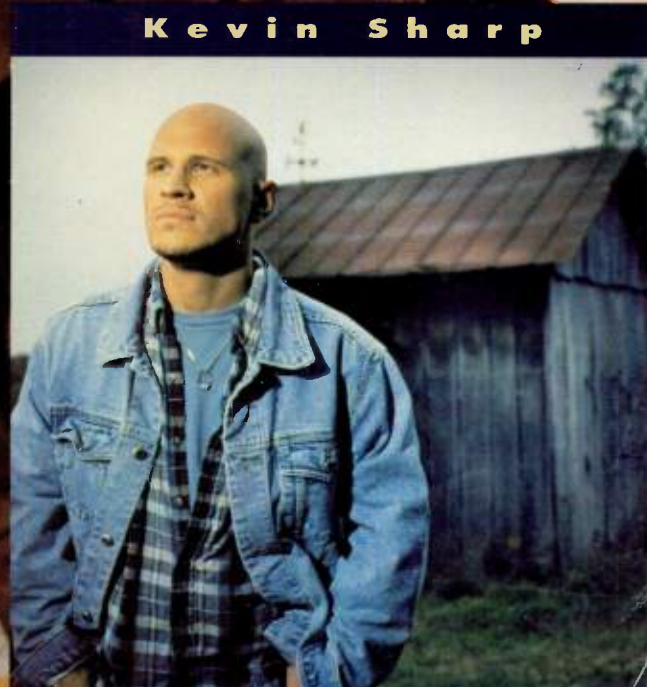
MAY 1997

CloseUp



Kevin Sharp

BlackHawk
MINT '97
America's Sold
On Country



WRH



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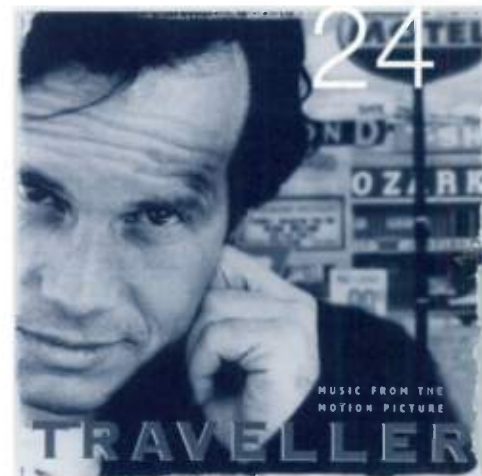


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John Berry

on the cover

While in New York participating in CMA's America's Sold On Country Tour, John revealed some of his upcoming marketing ventures. The first involves the use of the song "Forty Again" taken from his current lp.

"'Forty Again' is not going to be a single, but MCI plans to use it for a series of 1-800-COLLECT commercials surrounding Father's Day. This song is really special to me because it talks about a son who wishes he could go back to his childhood when his father was young. They're doing 30-second and 60-second spots on radio, and I'm doing voice-overs. It's a great deal."

In addition to the commercials for MCI, John also announced that his smash hit "Your Love Amazes Me" is featured as part of a series of CD greeting cards recently launched by The Original Cardtune Company. Each card contains the song title on the front with a special verse or chorus printed on the inside and a side pocket that holds the CD single.

Besides heightening Country Music's presence in the corporate community, a cause even closer to John's heart is supporting the arts and the creative people who derive their income from a profession in

When Capitol Nashville recording artist John Berry

first listened to his latest album, *FACES*, he realized the profound influence that many of the artists he listened to had on his music. Citing performers such as Neil Young, Vern Gosdin and Willie Nelson, John credits each of them as a "face" on the album. In keeping with that theme, *FACES* has three different album covers which were released simultaneously to retail, with each featuring a different image of John.

Such creative marketing plans help to further showcase an artist's musical diversity, but through his involvement as a spokesperson, advocate and ambassador for Country Music and the arts, John has proven that he has many "faces" as a performer.

"My favorite part of doing this is getting to open my mouth and sing."

this field. In March, he journeyed to Capitol Hill during Arts Advocacy Week, co-sponsored by the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences and Americans for the Arts, to convince Congress to support the arts. John, who says he owes much of his career to the school arts program he took part in as a child, was joined by numerous artists voicing their support, including Mary Chapin Carpenter, Anita Baker and Michael Bolton.

"I was a representative of Country Music in general," John says. "The government is really wanting to cut funding for the arts in schools, so we were there fighting against that."

A member of CMA's Board of Directors and its International

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BlackHawk

What do you get when you have three guys, three million albums sold and a third album soon to be released? The Power Of Three, or better yet, the Power Of BlackHawk.

Gearing up for the release of LOVE & GRAVITY, Henry Paul, Dave Robbins and Van Stephenson are currently riding high on the successes of their first two albums.

Their debut album, BLACKHAWK, has been certified double platinum, and all five singles released were top 10 hits, with "Every Once In A While" reaching number one. STRONG ENOUGH, their sophomore release, debuted at number four on BILLBOARD'S Country Album chart and number 22 on BILLBOARD'S Top 200. This was the highest debut of a group since Alabama released THE CLOSER YOU GET in 1983.

CU: With all the success you have had, do you feel you get the credit you deserve?

DAVE: No, we get no respect (laughs).

VAN: The credit we deserve is not exactly how we feel about it. It's not like we feel we deserve it as much as we work very hard at what we do. There are a lot of great things that have happened to us. I guess you look at the glass as "is it half full, or is it half empty?" When you see other people winning awards and doing the same thing you are doing year after year and then you're not winning them, you tend to look at the glass as half empty. But we are very thankful for what has happened to us. We are trying to take BlackHawk to a new level. We are doing whatever we can to kick it up a notch.

HENRY: Our attitudes towards the awards and our careers is to keep working and everything that is going to happen for us is going to happen.

"I have heard people say,
Your music is intelligent.
Your songs are
intelligent."
- Van Stephenson

DAVE: We all have varying opinions on the awards thing. My wife and I were watching the Academy Awards, and Harrison Ford put it best, "Why does there have to be a best of anything?" It's the one little piece of the puz-

zle that is kind of missing for us. We are doing great on the road, doing great on record sales and doing great at radio. It is just one more little piece we would like to have in there. We know that that will come when it is supposed to.

CU: *What is it that each of you brings to this group that makes it work so well?*

HENRY: I don't think there is one creative force in this group. There are three very, very creative people. We have three people with a creative appetite to satisfy. You find that there are going to be advantages to that collaboration.

VAN: It's kind of like everybody brings their strengths to the table. Amazingly enough, where our weaknesses lie, there is someone in the group who has that covered. We help each other out on a daily basis in every aspect of our work. We discover new things all the time about each other and where our abilities are. When there is something lacking, someone else comes in and picks it up. It's like a marriage. We really get along.

DAVE: It's certainly no fun when someone wants to hone in on one person. It's no fun for the other guys. We are all in this together, and we all do more than 100 percent. That is the way it has to be. You want people to recognize that.

CU: *You have such a distinctive sound that pulls fans in from outside the Country format. What is it about your music that appeals to such a broad audience?*

HENRY: I think it is just a lyrical sensibility. We don't make records that are typically centered in traditional Country Music. This Country Music moniker is a tough one for me to get a handle on. I think it has to do with the story of a song, and our stories are a little different. Our musical approach is just different enough to attract people that have lives that aren't rural in their origin. Our subject matters transcend geographics, and musically minded people that understand what we write about cross many social lines.

DAVE: When I was a kid, I didn't listen to Country Music. The music was traditional. Then I heard Glen Campbell. Back to traditional. Then I heard Ronnie Milsap, Kenny Rogers and Alabama. I don't know what it is about our music. It is good music. I have heard people say, 'Your music is intelligent. Your songs are intelligent.'

VAN: I think the record buying public has aged. Rock 'n' roll is going through the same thing that Country Music has gone through. The whole Seattle sort of grunge thing came out because there was this whole new listening audience out there that wanted their own music. They didn't want to rehash Led Zeppelin. They wanted their own Led Zeppelin. The same thing with Country Music. That doesn't mean you have to throw out your old Led Zeppelin. There is a whole new listening audience out there.

DAVE: How can a whole new listening audience for Country Music be anything but good?

CU: *How does your sound fit into today's Country Music?*

HENRY: Country Music is not in danger of losing its identity. Let the growth process in Country Music stand there side-by-side with the growth process of people, which is an even bigger growth process. It lines up with the progression we are making socially as people.

DAVE: It's really kind of scary to think what is being done to this format. I have friends who were so into what was happening two years ago in Country radio that they abandoned classic rock and everything else. They went wild and were saying this is the best kind of music out there. Now they say, 'I don't get it. There are 400 guys with hats who all sound alike.' They are now going back and finding music somewhere else.

VAN: I have been writing songs here in Nashville for not just pop Country artists. I've written songs for Loretta Lynn, Eddy Arnold and Conway Twitty. I have been in this town for 20 years. So what we do, at least my part of what we do, is straight off the streets of Nashville. It's as Country as this town is. It might not be as traditional as this town can get.

CU: *How have things changed for you since your debut album three years ago?*

HENRY: Where we are is a very comfortable place, and I hope everybody who has a dream to be singer/songwriter gets to get to where we are. I dreamed about this for a long time. Getting here was worth the wait.

VAN: One thing that never leaves us is the notion that it can go away as fast as it came if we don't stay on top of it. This is sort of a dream come true, and the culmination of a lot of years of practice and a lot of blown opportunities that I was given along the way. I couldn't capitalize on them because of where I was at as a person.

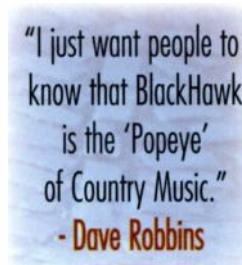
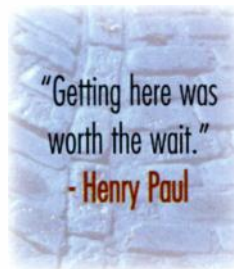
DAVE: The thing that really stuck with me about the movie "Shawshank Redemption" is the the last comment made about the guy who escaped through the sewage system: 'Andy's the only guy who ever crawled through three miles of manure and came out clean on the other side'. We know what that is saying. We have had a nice steady stream of success.

CU: *What does the new album say about you?*

HENRY: The body of work is important. I hope people recognize the quality of our whole body of work. I think this work and record of ours is an extension of what we are trying to do personally. I hope people recognize our efforts of trying to be good at what we do as writers and singers.

DAVE: I just want people to know that BlackHawk is the "Popeye" of Country Music. We are who we are. We are not going to try to be like anybody else, and we have poured our heart and soul into this album as we have on our last two albums. Whether you like us or hate us, this is important to us. We write these songs, and we pour our lives into it. Songs are like your children. This is our shot at making good in life, so we take that very seriously.

VAN: I hear you saying you can't judge a guy by the music. A person is not the sum of their musical ability. Our music is an extension of who we are as people, and what we are trying to do with our lives. Not just an hour on stage every night. It's the best BlackHawk album yet, definitely.





MINT'97

New markets for selling music and multimedia, intellectual property and performing rights, on-line music distribution and doing business with e-mail were just a few of the hot topics of discussion during MINT: Music Industry & New Technologies, the first Nashville conference to explore the Internet, websites, multimedia, hardware and other applications to market Country Music. The sold-out event, presented by CMA and hosted by the Cumberland Science Museum in Nashville, brought together technology and legal experts, marketers and music industry executives.

Throughout the day, more than 400 participants took part in panel sessions and demonstrations as well as networking in the MINT exhibit hall, which included a look at a songwriting session via teleconferencing provided by BellSouth Business Systems. Starstruck Music Group songwriter Sunny Russ worked from the MINT exhibit hall while fellow Starstruck writer Deanna Bryant collaborated from company headquarters on Music Row. One of the day's biggest attractions was the opportunity for hands-on experience on the Internet in the museum's New Century Computer Lab, surfing the net and learning the ins and outs of the world wide web.

Over 40 experts from coast to coast participated in panels or presentations, including keynote speaker Chris Tobey, vice president of marketing and new technology for Warner Music Group; Ken Barnes, editor of Microsoft Music Central; Lisa Lewis, vice president of marketing for the Music Marketing Network; George Massenburg,



Songwriter Sunny Russ experiences the fairly new technology of video teleconferencing from the MINT exhibit hall as she collaborates with tunesmith Deanna Bryant, who was working from the offices of Starstruck Music on Music Row.

president of George Massenburg Labs; Mark Mooradian, group director/consumer content for Jupiter Communications; Deborah Newman, vice president of marketing, advertising and sales for N2K Entertainment; Ed Pierson, senior vice president of legal and business affairs for Warner/Chappell Music; Janice Reese, account manager for Adobe Systems; Jerry Shereshevsky, vice president of marketing and business development for Yoyodyne Entertainment; Carol Walcoff of WALCOFF; and Pat Alger, award-winning songwriter and president of Nashville Songwriters Association International.

Conference sponsors, service sponsors and exhibitors included Adobe Systems, Apple Computer, BellSouth Business Systems, BILLBOARD, country.com, Electric Picture Co./Sony, Gateway 2000, Ingram Entertainment, Intel, InterAccess, ISDN-Net, Lighthouse Publishing, Liquid Audio, Music Row Publications, RADIO & RECORDS, Seedy Software, Telalink, ThunderMoon and WALCOFF.

MOVE OVER FAX MACHINE?



Moderator David Ross gathered Arnold Gum of Eudora, Jerry Shereskevsky of Yoyodyne Entertainment, Titley/Spalding's Marc Dottore and Critique Records artist MC Potts to examine "Doing Business Easily With E-Mail".

Following are some of the points that were discussed during the panel.

Uses of e-mail:

- Sharing documents
- Business correspondence
- Personal correspondence
- Generating business or publicity (to 50 or 10,000 names)
- Selling products, updates, audio clips as teases

Advantages:

- Information is storable and manageable and can be accessed any time
- A fast means of communication
- Messages are easy to file and retrieve,

plus can be organized through folders and mailboxes.

- It's free and convenient
- It's a reasonably secure mode of communication, plus messages can be encrypted for more security.

Drawbacks:

- E-mail doesn't take place in real time, such as a direct telephone call
- Not legally metered by post office
- Not everyone has a computer; even those with a computer may not have e-mail
- It can be less personal than a phone call.



WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT MINT '97

// Developing technology and new marketplaces are important to our business. It was critical that CMA seize the leadership position in helping our industry reach out and find out more about these new areas and embrace them. //

Ed Benson, CMA

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS & ISSUES

Nashville attorney Robin Mitchell Joyce of Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs moderated a discussion of Intellectual Property Rights on the Internet. She presented an assessment of the impact of new technologies, offering that most record companies are taking a "wait-and-see" attitude toward such issues as enhanced cds, cd-rom and other new technologies. In her examination, Joyce addressed the definition of new configurations and how royalty rates are affected by those definitions. Panelists Ed Pierson, senior vice president of legal and business affairs for Warner/Chappell Music, Inc., and Ken Kaufman of Roberts & Eckard, P.C., continued the discussion. Pierson addressed the issue of music licensing and how the lack of Internet licenses are impacting both publishing companies and songwriters, referring to the Internet as "the world wide web of unlicensed music." Kaufman explored interactive activity and distribution, among other topics.

TOP 10 (UNACCEPTABLE) EXCUSES WHY INTERNET SITES HAVE NO MUSIC LICENSES FOR THE SONGS THEY ARE USING:

by Ed Pierson

10. "We are promoting the record, and promotion uses are exempt from copyright law."
9. "Our server is located in South Korea, where copy rights are unprotected."
8. "We're only using 30 seconds of music, and that's 'fair use'."
7. "The label gave us the material and said it was fine to use it."
6. "We're an ISP (Internet Service Provider). Talk to the developer."
5. "Our site is a virtual record store which needs no licenses."
4. "We're using old Statler Brothers songs that must be in the public domain by now."
3. "A transmitter is bouncing the signals off Uranus where copyrights are unprotected."
2. "We're not making a penny on this site."
1. "We showed the site to the band's drummer and he said, 'Go for it, dude.'"

// This has been head and shoulders above anything I've been to like this. There have been serious conversation about some of the opportunities and problems and some of the exciting things going on. It's been tremendous. The meetings and dialogue made this really worthwhile. //

Nick Gutfreund, NettMedia

// What made this different was that it was so tightly focused on a particular industry. I found it to be a really exciting show. I think it was absolutely fascinating that CMA got out in front of this one as opposed to waiting for the train to come and run you over. There are a lot of other industries that haven't even begun to think about this. //

Jerry Shereshevsky, Yoyodyne Entertainment

// The conference was incredibly seamless as far as technical presentations. It was great because you had somebody from all ventures - media companies, record labels, retailers, on-line services. You had somebody from a lot of different areas, and that's what you want - the diversity that brings you a voice that tells you a lot about what's going on. //

Mark Mooradian, Jupiter Communications

// You really got to see a panorama of all of the technology, all of the issues. There's no place else you could get that perspective. Everyone here was very much interested in taking that next step. It was exciting to see people who are normally competitors saying, 'How can we work at this together?' //

Carol Walcott, WALCOFF

the buzz

At 26, Kevin Sharp has a remarkable life story to tell before he ever gets to the part about landing a deal at a major Nashville label. Add to that a debut single topping the charts from his first album that certified gold, and his story just keeps getting better. But if you ask Kevin, the best part of it all is to be able to tell the story through music.

"It's a dream come true. Someday I'm going to come up with some new word to describe how it all feels, because I haven't quite been able to find a word yet that can fairly describe it. I don't think there's one that's out there. It's just amazing."

Almost losing his life to cancer at age 19, the Make-A-Wish Foundation asked Kevin for his heart's desire. He asked to meet famed Los Angeles producer/composer/performer David Foster. They formed a friendship that later led the aspiring singer to the door of Kyle Lehning, co-president of Asylum's Nashville office and a friend of Foster. It would take a few years, though, for Kevin to overcome the illness and strike a musical path that revitalized him.

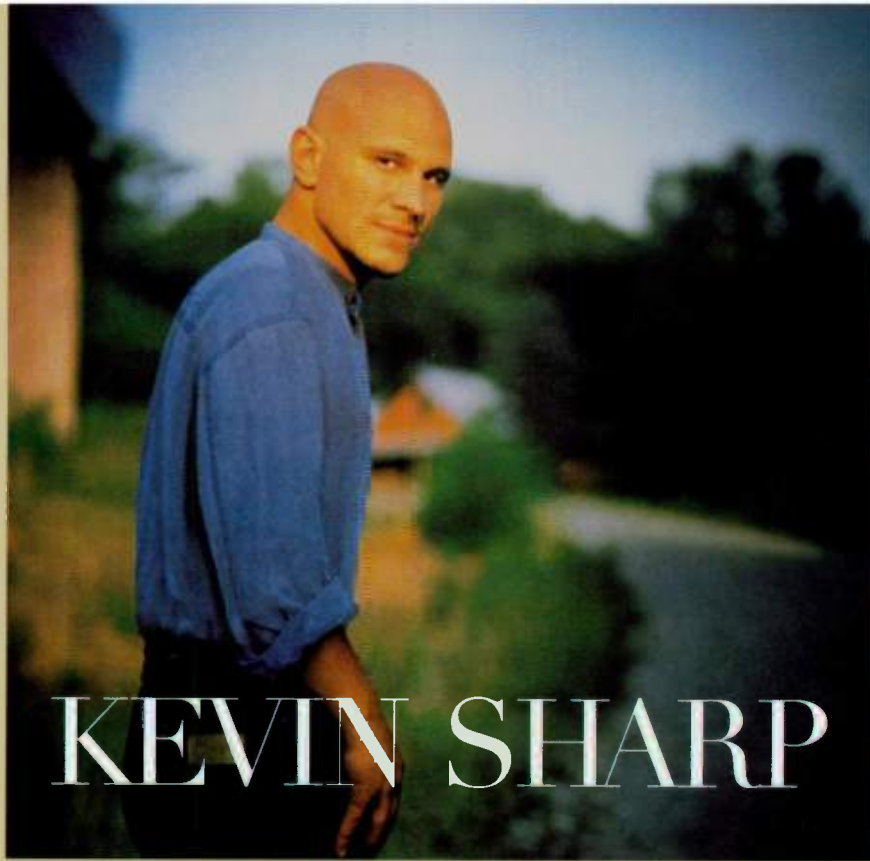
Kevin released his debut album, *MEASURE OF A MAN*, in September 1996. He says he used the "goosebump test" to select the material for the project.

"I really follow my heart and my gut more than anything... This coming from a guy who passed on 'Blue Clear Sky', and thought he was going to have the shortest career in Country Music history. "But I followed my gut on other ones, and it turned out all right. Every song I hear, whether I've written it or not, I feel that there are songs that are out there that are written for Kevin Sharp, and that's what I look for."

The music admittedly provides telltale signs to his life and his character.

From the title track: "It's what you give, not what you take..."

"That whole song kind of comes from a place like the way my parents brought me up. The way the Make-A-Wish Foundation has made a difference in my life... And so many people, writers, artists. To be able to give something back to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, to St. Jude's, to other children who are in a similar position to the one I was



in, to give something back is what this life's all about. It's leaning on each other when you need to, and then letting someone else lean on you when they need to."

From "There's Only You": "Every night I thank the Lord above for..."

"We say a prayer before every show. I'm so very thankful for each and every person that has been a part of my life. I wish in a prayer I could name everybody, but instead it's just a collective thank you to everybody who's touched my life and made a difference in my life. I realize how precious life is and what a gift each and every day we have is."

"To give something back is what this life's all about."

From the current single, "She's Sure Taking It Well": "Don't think twice about being a fool..."

"I definitely can relate to that line. All my friends can attest to that. You know when you're in love with somebody or it can just be the moment and you're having so much fun... With your girlfriend or your spouse on the phone, that different way that you talk. And I prove it every night on stage. I'm so happy and in love with what I'm doing and the music that I do goofy things. I can trip over a monitor, I can drop my microphone, and it doesn't matter. I'm just in love with the moment and so glad to be in the moment."

Before the record deal, Kevin performed at Great America theme park in California, started a singing telegram busi-

ness and traveled a little with a musical troupe.

"Being on the road, on stage is by far my happiest place. It is a lot of work, but that 20 minutes, that hour that I get to spend on stage is the most fun that Kevin Sharp can have.

"But this is all very new to me. The bus stuff is very, very new to me. The bunks. I played football, and I was very involved in athletics my whole life. I never thought I'd spend my life in a locker room, but that's what it feels like my bus is. You get 10 guys on there, and that's what you've got. It's just a moving locker room."

Though Kevin and his band have hit the road, he hasn't left the Make-A-Wish Foundation behind, serving as an official spokesperson. He recently found himself as the wish of a boy suffering with cancer.

"The interesting and the most wonderful thing about it was that this young child who was nine years old had no idea about my past and that I had an illness and was tied with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. He'd heard 'Nobody Knows' on the radio, and it spoke to him like it did to me the first time I heard it. Just from that song, he wanted to meet me. He didn't even know that I knew about where he was coming from. I'll never forget that. That meant more to me than anything. That's something no one could ever take away. Unfortunately, a few days later, he passed away."

With the radio play and fan fare Kevin has garnered, no one doubts he deserves his success. But without his story of tragedy and triumph, would he have gotten a record deal in the first place?

"I have thought about that, and I honestly feel that I would have. I was starting to make a living doing music before I got sick, and no matter what level it was going to be on, whether it was singing telegrams, I was going to do that.

"The illness only enhanced my music and who I am and who I want to be. I would never wish it on anybody, but I learned so much and I'm grateful for it. Everything happens for a reason. And if the illness played a role in getting me where I am today, well, I'm thankful for everything that's happened in my life and that includes the illness."

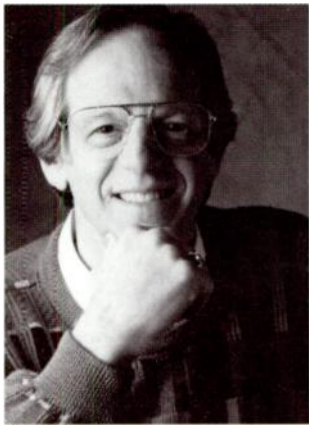
- Shannon Heim



MARKETING *with Country Music*

Ken Kragen added as keynoter; Tammy Wynette hosts registrants

Corporate marketing and ad agency executives as well as leaders in the music publishing, record label and artist management fields will examine ways to merge music and marketing during the second annual Marketing With Country Music (MWCM) conference May 14-15 at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel, presented by CMA in conjunction with ADVERTISING AGE.



Author and artist manager Ken Kragen will be the event's keynote speaker. Kragen, who wrote "Life Is A Contact Sport: Ten Great Career Strategies That Work", is a 30-year veteran of the entertainment business. He has guided the careers of entertainers including current clients Kenny Rogers, Trisha Yearwood, Travis Tritt, and former clients Olivia Newton-John, Burt Reynolds and Lionel Richie. He was at the forefront

when corporate sponsorship became the new marketing twist for the 1980s, partnering with Rogers and Dole and Chrysler. More recently, he lead the way in pairing Yearwood and Discover Card. Kragen is known for using his marketing savvy for humanitarian efforts as well, masterminding "We Are The World" and "Hands Across America".

MWCM participants will hear from some top names in music and marketing during panel sessions on both days of the conference. Panelists and presenters will include Paul Corbin of Gaylord Entertainment; David Corlew of Corlew/O'Grady Management; Steve

Dahl of Monterey Artists; performer Charlie Daniels; John Davidoff of DDB Needham; Tim DuBois of Arista Nashville; Renee Geddis, Blockbuster Entertainment; Paul Hastaba of CMT: Country Music Television; Steve Knill, senior vice president and executive producer for Warner/Avalon; Bill Lardie, president of Anderson Merchandisers; Mike Martinovich of Mansfield Martinovich; Marc Oswald, CEO of Avalon Entertainment Group; Evelyn Shriver of Evelyn Shriver Public Relations; Roush Vance of Garner & Nevins; Colin Watts, business director, Parkay/Blue Bonnet for Nabisco Inc.; and Tim Wipperman of Warner/Chappell Music.

Topics covered in the panel sessions will be "Music Industry Yellow Pages", "Using Personalities As Pitchmen: The Artist As Salesman", "Sharpening Your Sponsorship Sawvy", "Keep The Cash Drawer Ringing: Roping In Distribution With Country Music" and "Carpetbagger Or Corporate Genius: Investing In Country Music".



In addition to business networking, participants will be treated to some one-on-one celebrity attention during the conference grand finale - dinner at the home of the legendary "First Lady Of Country Music" Tammy Wynette. Wynette has built a loyal following around the world with Country standards including "Stand By Your Man" and "D-I-V-O-R-C-E". A former three-time CMA Female Vocalist of the Year, Wynette continues an active tour schedule.

Kathy Mattea will host a luncheon on the opening day of the event at the Wildhorse Saloon featuring a performance by Mark Chesnutt. Later that evening, Trisha Yearwood will present a unique concert with special guest Mandy Barnett at the historic Ryman Auditorium. Tickets for the Ryman show will also be available to the public. Proceeds from the concert will benefit Cumberland Heights in Nashville.

The following day, conference registrants will be treated to a guitar pull at Nashville's Caffe Milano featuring the diverse talents of John Berry, Paul Brandt, Kim Richey and Marty Stuart.

Primary sponsors for Marketing With Country Music are Warner/Avalon, TNN: The Nashville network, CMT: Country Music Television and American Airlines.

A limited number of registrations are available to members of the music industry at a special rate of \$295. This does not include the Trisha Yearwood concert/reception, the breakfast roundtables or the closing event with Tammy Wynette. For more information, contact CMA at (615) 244-2840.



Asylum Records duo Thrasher Shiver recently made their Grand Ole Opry debut. Neil Thrasher (right) and Kelly Shiver performed their popular hit, "Be Honest".

WAL*MART

Country Music Across America Breaks New Artists Careers

Think you need a superstar before you can enter into a sponsorship agreement with a Country Music singer? Think again. More and more tour sponsorships are involving artists who are new to the consumer scene. A case in point is the Wal*Mart Country Music Across America Tour, now in its third year.

Many marketers may believe only a superstar such as Vince Gill or Reba McEntire bring the prestige necessary for a sponsorship or endorsement. Yet new and developing artists are the future lifeblood of Country Music. Often, securing a big name is a lengthy process - Gill just recently accepted the first tour sponsorship of his career (Kraft). Too, the field of superstars available for sponsorship is narrow, as more and more artists are opting to take time off from touring (Dwight Yoakam, Faith Hill, Randy Travis, etc.). Some, including Garth Brooks, have thus far declined tour sponsorship opportunities. With these factors in mind, the Wal*Mart Country Music Across America Tour was developed to provide new opportunities for developing artists. The tour also offers performance opportunities to well-established stars such as Mark Chesnutt, Charlie Daniels, Joe Diffie and Shenandoah.

Inaugurated March 27, 1995, the tour's sole purpose is to establish Wal*Mart as the place to breakout new Country Music artists. In addition, the retail chain wishes to establish its foothold as the primary retail destination point for Country Music purchasing.

"It isn't as much about the immediate spike in sales as it is about all the other elements involved, such as the support that you get from Wal*Mart on an ongoing basis in developing acts," says Mike Kraski, Senior Vice President/Sales & Marketing, Sony Music Nashville. Numerous artists from the company's Epic and Columbia labels, including Stephanie Bentley, Wade Hayes, Ty Herndon and Rick Trevino, have participated in the tour. "Wal*Mart has always positioned themselves as the destination point for new acts in Country Music, sometimes representing as much as a third or more of a developing artist's actual over-the-counter sales. Also it gives the artist the opportunity early on in their careers to get out in front of thousands of people. Those are more the important elements than the actual immediate sales you receive off the tour."



Wade Hayes greets his fans during a 1995 Wal*Mart appearance.

"...it gives the artist the opportunity early on in their careers to get out in front of thousands of people..."

- Mike Kraski,
Senior Vice President/Sales &
Marketing, Sony Music Nashville

As the battle for shelf space in music retail outlets increases, Kraski points out that Wal*Mart devotes a proportionately high percentage of its available space to both Country Music and new artists. "Wal*Mart has greater space limitations for its music department than a traditional music retailer, and yet they're still the destination point for Country Music fans. It's all the more important for the Country Music industry to have that kind of exposure in Wal*Mart locations, or we would suffer in the artist development process."

The tour is structured differently from most tour sponsorships in which artists play existing performance venues. The Wal*Mart Country Music Across America Tour, which will visit over 200 towns in 1997, features two artists performing in a different city every Monday through Friday on a portable stage which is set up in select Wal*Mart locations.

When the performances conclude, the artists head inside the store to the music department, where they autograph copies of their current releases. The latest release of each artist participating on the tour receives an additional promotion push in all 2,300 Wal*Mart stores nationwide, potentially impacting the 70 million customers visiting Wal*Mart on a weekly basis. The scope and reach of this endeavor is unparalleled in any other contemporary music program.

Based on the success of the 1995 and 1996 legs of the Tour, CMT: Country Music Television signed on as a sponsor for 1997. CMT provides extensive on-air promotion of the tour, and music videos by participating artists will be followed by concert information. Additionally, CMT produced a two-hour special about the tour, which aired in April.

In addition to the support received from CMT, each Wal*Mart performance is also heavily promoted one month prior to actual show date, by way of a well-strategized TV, radio and print media blitz. This "conditioning" of the marketplace reaches Wal*Mart customers within a 90-mile radius of each participating location.

The benefit enjoyed by developing artists who have participated in the tour is immense. A week of appearances on the Wal*Mart tour in August 1995 helped then-newcomer Terri Clark fine-tune her show. "It was the first set of dates that she performed with her band," reports Clark's manager, Woody Bowles. "It was a great time for Terri because

she was able to work on her show. She made a lot of changes during that week. Those dates were extremely helpful in getting her involved with the Wal*Mart people, getting her in front of fans and signing autographs. All in all, participating in the Wal*Mart tour was a wonderful experience for her and her band. They got to learn a lot about moving around and setting up and fielding the show. Terri also did her first national television interview during the week she was out with Wal*Mart."

Asylum Records singer/songwriter Bryan White played a five-week stint on the Wal*Mart Tour in 1996 following a successful run of Wal*Mart dates in 1995. "It's a real intimate scene, even though it may not sound like it," he says of his Wal*Mart appearances. "It was kind of like being in their (Wal*Mart's) living room. You're in their hometown, you just pull up and start playing."

"...I credit some of that success with young fans to the Wal*Mart tour."

- Bryan White

White was particularly struck by the audience demographics during that time. The Wal*Mart shows offered the opportunity to reach a younger audience than he was hitting in his club routing. "There were a lot of families and young kids, which was really neat. That may have a lot to do with why we started reaching real young kids. We have a lot of young fans. From the beginning of the Wal*Mart tour, a lot of the kids got to come to the shows, and when we'd play clubs, they couldn't, so I credit some of that success with young fans to the Wal*Mart tour."

Columbia/DKC artist Wade Hayes kicked off the first Wal*Mart tour in Nashville in 1995.

"When it comes to getting consumer exposure, I don't think you could have found a better avenue..."

- Bryan White

"It had a great impact," Hayes says of his many appearances on the tour. "It got bigger and bigger as we went along. There was a big campaign when we first kicked it off with a huge opening ceremony. Then we had a huge concert there right in the Wal*Mart parking lot here in Nashville. We ended up signing autographs for three hours after the show. We did that pretty much every night. When it comes to getting consumer exposure, I don't think you could have found a better avenue without having Brooks & Dunn with you." (Hayes also opened some shows on the Brooks & Dunn tour in 1995.)

Hayes was impressed immediately by the concept of the tour as he, like White, found fans that he might not have reached by playing clubs. "I thought it was a great idea, having a free show where the whole family could attend, not having an age limit on it, not having alcohol there and not having a cover charge. It provided some folks with a great show who might not otherwise get to go to a show."

Hayes signed on for more appearances in 1996, once more kicking off the tour, this time in Warner Robins, Georgia. He even debuted his second album, ON A GOOD NIGHT, during an in-store at the Wal*Mart

location in his hometown of Shawnee, Oklahoma - a direct result of his tour appearances.

Hayes believes that album sales increased not only the night of a Wal*Mart show, but for weeks afterward. "You've got a chance to win a bunch of people over, but they might not have the money on 'em that night. There were nights when we had over 5,000 people there. If you can reach those people and win 'em over, you've won a fan. That'll translate into sales down the road as well."

Even though he's not on the tour this year, fans still have the opportunity to catch sight of Hayes at Wal*Mart - as a consumer. "I buy a lot of fishing tackle at Wal*Mart and a bunch of records. Last night I bought a Shawn Colvin album. Plus, I buy a lot of socks and underwear there."

Socks and underwear...Hayes could be a contender for the next Fruit of the Loom Tour.

- Janet E. Williams

TAKING THE MUSIC TO THE PEOPLE: THE GRASSROOTS APPROACH

- Wal*Mart sales of David Lee Murphy's OUT WITH A BANG accounted for 50 percent of the album's unit sales that week following the MCA artist's Wal*Mart appearance.
- Capitol Nashville artist George Ducas saw album sales increase by 97 percent following Wal*Mart stops in Oklahoma and Arkansas.
- Jeff Carson's debut MCG/Curb album sales soared 85 percent following a Wal*Mart show.
- In-store promotion of Bryan White's debut Asylum Records album resulted in a sales climb of 107% in three weeks, prior to his Wal*Mart appearances.
- Since performing on the premiere run, several artists have had gold or platinum album sales and number one chart positions at both radio and video outlets, including David Lee Murphy, Lonestar, Bryan White, Terri Clark, Jeff Carson, Ty Herndon, LeAnn Rimes, Rick Trevino, James Bonamy, Wade Hayes and Deana Carter.
- In 1996, more than 100,000 Wal*Mart shoppers and music fans enjoyed free performances.
- The '97 kick-off week featuring Ty Herndon and George Ducas saw more than 15,000 fans turn out for shows, with over 3,000 on-hand in Hazlehurst, Georgia and more than 4,000 attending in Waycross, Georgia. The tour also made stops in Jacksonville, Florida and Palatka, Florida. CMT: Country Music Television outfitted winning concert-goers with prizes including cds, baseball caps and tour jackets.
- A March 1997 Wal*Mart show in Oak Grove, Louisiana brought out over 1,500 local fans - reportedly one-half the town's population.

AMERICA'S **SOLD** ON COUNTRY

"AMERICA'S SOLD ON COUNTRY"

TOUR WOVES NEW YORK

Over 200 Advertisers And Marketers Attend Seminar

The first stop of CMA's America's Sold On Country Tour proved to be an overwhelming success. The half-day seminar, which combines information and entertainment emphasizing to ad agency personnel, corporate marketers and those involved with sales promotions the reasons why Country Music works for marketers and how to effectively use it in an integrated marketing campaign, took place April 2 at New York's Plaza Hotel. Over 200 registrants from the advertising and marketing community attended, including representatives from Schering Plough, Best Foods, BBDO, Ogilvy & Mather, Nabisco, J. Walter Thompson, Scholastic, Bates USA, Estee Lauder, Meridian Perfumes, Grey Advertising, DDB Needham, Cotton Inc. and Young & Rubicam.

Attendees began the day with a welcome from CMA Executive Director Ed Benson and Interep Chairman and CEO Ralph Guild. Benson recalled CMA's first meeting with corporate marketers in New York in 1961. That year, Benson relayed, host Tex Ritter introduced a new young Country Music sensation - Loretta Lynn - who performed. To ensure attendance, CMA gave away a Tennessee Walking Horse. As this year's audience members looked around for signs of a horse, Benson assured them that today's program included no door prizes, but rather a program filled with lots of information and ideas along with some extraordinary and exciting artist performances.

The keynote address was delivered by Craig Reiss, vice president/editor-in-chief for ADWEEK MAGAZINES, in which he

stressed that the "era of buying media on price alone is over." According to Reiss, what is important is "that there is a passion among the audience to a given medium or format", adding that the Country audience is known for such passion and loyalty.

To illustrate the size and scope of the Country Music audience, CMA consultant Bob Lobdell of the Cold Spring Harbor Group presented a 30-minute overview, primarily based on Simmons Market Research Bureau data. Lobdell carefully details the size and demographics of the Country Music audience by focusing on radio, television, record sales, touring and magazine readership. After defining the size of the Country Music audience based on these parameters, Lobdell then explored the demographics of this audience, showing how the Country Music fans stack up compared to the U.S. population. He specifically looked at marital status, household income, home ownership and age. Lobdell concluded by stating that advertisers can maximize their reach against the major portion of their customer base and improve their ability to build frequency against those customers by utilizing Country Music in their marketing plans.

After trying to absorb so much hard data, it was time for attendees to learn firsthand what today's Country Music has to offer artistically. Capitol Nashville recording artist John Berry, captivated the audience with a 20 minute acoustic performance of hits including "Your Love Amazes Me" and his latest number one single, "She's Taken A Shine". Along with sharing his singing talent, Berry told marketers how Capitol Nashville is launching a



CMA Executive Director Ed Benson introduces the artists performing at CMA's Acoustic Café, (l to r) Ray Vega, Matraca Berg, Brady Seals and Suzy Bogguss.



John Berry provides the morning entertainment with hits like "She's Taken A Shine".



Marc Oswald of Avalon Entertainment and Warner/Avalon details his experiences with Fruit of the Loom.

marketing initiative with Target Stores' Club Wedd (bridal registry service) to promote his next single, "I Will If You Will". Target customers will be able to register at all Club Wedd locations to win various prizes including autographed CDs, gift certificates and a trip for two to meet Berry and see him perform. The grand prize package includes a live performance by the popular singer/songwriter at the winner's wedding ceremony. The promotion began in late April.

After a brief coffee break, CMA Marketing Director Rick Murray took a few minutes to tell marketers how CMA can help put them in touch with the right people in the Country Music industry. Murray outlined CMA's corporate marketing strategy including opportunities available in conjunction with the CMA Awards.

Marc Oswald, Avalon Entertainment Group CEO and co-managing partner of Warner/Avalon, presented a multi-media case study on Fruit of The Loom's continuing Country Music initiatives. Oswald began by outlining the 1995 Program Objectives, which included repositioning Fruit of the Loom around the "COMFORT" message while building awareness and generating sales. He reported on the success of that program, which included an Alan Jackson tour, festival sponsorships at Alabama's June Jam and the Rocky Gap Music Festival in addition to a Branson, Missouri destination marketing program.

Oswald then discussed the 1996 objectives and strategy of expanding the tour sponsorship element to include Alabama and expanding of the destination marketing program to include the Alabama Theater in Myrtle Beach. The focal event of the summer was the All-Star CountryFest in Atlanta, July 13, 1996. Billed as the largest one-day ticketed event in music history, Fruit of the Loom All-Star CountryFest '96 attracted more than 250,000 fans from the United States and abroad, featured eight acts, a two-hour syndicated radio special that aired on 600 stations and a two-hour prime time network special on CBS in addition to a lead-in program on TNN.

The 1997 program was unveiled to attendees, incorporating many of the video elements used at the press conference at Nashville's Ryman auditorium earlier this year. Oswald outlined the 1997 program which includes a 60-market tour featuring Hank Williams Jr., Travis Tritt, Charlie Daniels Band and Jo Dee

Messina. A new element to this tour includes "The Country Comfort Experience", an interactive festival of Tennessee Treasures including a special interactive blue screen allowing fans to "present a CMA Award." Oswald concluded the very informative case study by presenting each of the attendees with two tickets to CountryFest '97, scheduled for June 14 in Dallas, featuring Vince Gill, Randy Travis, Wynonna, Hank Williams Jr., Travis Tritt, LeAnn Rimes, Bryan White and the Charlie Daniels Band.

After a brief question and answer period, attendees were escorted to the magnificent Grand Ballroom, where, following lunch, the CMA Acoustic Café was presented, featuring Suzy Bogguss, Matraca Berg, Brady Seals and Ray Vega. The foursome traded harmonies and hits, singing in a writer's night format to an enthusiastic crowd. One of the attendees remarked, "I have never seen an event hold a New York audience like this one did."

In addition to the information presented during America's Sold On Country, attendees received a workbook including information from each of the presentations, demographic information compiled by Interep and copies of CMA's marketing resources, including the CMA Fact Book, which includes information on record sales, radio, television and concert tours relevant to the Country Music format. CMA also included music industry organization listings and artist contact information such as artist management, agents, publicists and record labels.

The CMA Marketing department has already received several calls from attendees seeking more information on how to incorporate Country Music in their marketing strategies. Each of the attendees will be entered into a CMA marketing database and will receive regular communication on opportunities and reasons to align with Country Music.

An event of this magnitude can not be undertaken without financial support. Along with CMA, primary sponsors for the America's Sold On Country Tour include Interep and Adweek Magazines. Secondary sponsors include CMT: Country Music Television, TNN: The Nashville Network, COUNTRY AMERICA, COUNTRY WEEKLY, Barnstable Broadcasting, KKBQ and WKXX.

As CLOSE UP went to press, CMA was in Chicago for the second stop of the America's Sold On Country Tour.



BNA singer Ray Vega takes command of the ASOC crowd as Matraca Berg waits for her change to dazzle the audience.

Craig



Wiseman

In a world that's mostly imitation, Craig Wiseman takes the road less traveled with his writing and musical talents. "People have told me all along that I write different stuff. Maybe it is. I don't know. I don't try to be different. I try not to say what's already been said.

"A lot of stars are getting imitated, and a lot of hits are getting imitated. It's gonna happen regardless, because we're all working a very small piece of the pie slice, and similarities are going to ensue.

"It's easy to say the sun's shining and birds are singing, but avoiding that, not letting yourself fall into that...Being hard on yourself just kinda forces you into new areas.

"I try to take the longer, more patient road to getting my stuff out there. I've done this for a long time now. You have to have some faith that, 'My life is on its own path, and music is not what it's all about. It's not every answer. There are others.'"

From the wild stories of "Bubba Hyde", "Betty's Got A Bass Boat", "This Is Your Brain" and "I'm In Love With A Capital 'U'" to the num-

ber one hits "If The Good Die Young", "Walkin' Away" and top five hit "Holdin'", the Almo/Irving writer has proven his distinctive style has a definite appeal. Where did it all originate?

"I fell in love with writing when I was 15. A friend of mine showed me some chords on a guitar, and I learned an REO Speedwagon song and rewrote the words to it. That was about the time I figured out that with the four or five chords that I already knew that I could *play* a million

songs. I walked around for days just stunned. I would just think of songs... church songs. Country and rock songs and nursery rhymes. Then about a week later, I made the jump that you could *write* a mil-

lion songs with these chords. That was it...every night, six terrible songs a night... Just cranking 'em out...horrible, horrible, abysmal. At that time, a lot of it was I figured out a piece of music and I'd write eight songs to it and would just change one little place somewhere to make it completely different."

Although Craig began writing by himself, today he enjoys the art of collaboration.

"I fell in love with writing when I was 15."



Another all-star lineup is planned for the International Country Music Fan Fair June 16-21 at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville. For the seventh consecutive year, Fan Fair sold out in advance before participating artists were announced.

This year's show schedule has been expanded by adding eight new shows to the Monday roster. Fans will be treated to more than 30 hours of live performances throughout the week by artists ranging from reigning CMA Entertainer of the Year Brooks & Dunn to Horizon Award winner Bryan White, as well as numerous other new and established artists.

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MONDAY, JUNE 16

9:45 - 10 a.m.	Opening Ceremonies
10 - 11 a.m.	Magnatone Records
11 - 11:30 a.m.	Step One Records
11:30 a.m. - Noon	Critique Records
Noon - 12:30 p.m.	Sugar Hill Records
2 - 2:45 p.m.	Imprint Records
2:45 - 3:45 p.m.	River North Nashville / Intersound
3:45 - 4:15 p.m.	Almo Sounds
4:15 - 5:15 p.m.	Rounder Records
7 - 10 p.m.	Bluegrass Show

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TUESDAY, JUNE 17

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Curb Records & MCG Curb Records
2:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Mercury Nashville
7 - 10 p.m.	MCA Records & Decca Records

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

10 a.m. - Noon	Capitol Nashville
2 - 4:30 p.m.	Warner/Reprise & Giant Records
7 - 10 p.m.	RCA Records & BNA Records

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THURSDAY, JUNE 19

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Atlantic Records & Asylum Records
2:30 - 5 p.m.	Arista Records & Career Records
7 - 10 p.m.	Columbia/ Epic Records

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FRIDAY, JUNE 20

Shows and times to be announced

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SATURDAY, JUNE 21

10:30 a.m.	Grand Master's Fiddling Championship (Opryland USA)
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Don't forget CMA's website at www.countrymusic.org.

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FOR INFORMATION ON CMA EVENTS,
CALL (615) 244-2840; FAX (615) 726-0314.

FIND CMA ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB AT

www.countrymusic.org.



"I only wrote by myself for the longest time and slowly started cowriting. Now that's practically all I do. I love cowriting. I love my cowriters. It's such a joy to work creatively with somebody you've known long enough to where you can just spout stuff out... 'Oh, I hate that!' instead of 'Well, maybe we should...'. You can move through it, knock stuff out.

"I assumed to be a successful writer, like a Don Henley, you had to be in this band and do all this stuff..."

"Trey Bruce and I write together quite a bit. We have a Randy Travis single, 'Price To Pay' right now. I've known him since he and I were both rockers that came to town trying to write stuff, and everybody just hated us. We were just going to be the death of Country Music."

Little did they know...

"I assumed to be a successful writer, like a Don Henley, you had to be in this band and do all this stuff, so that's the role I was sorta going for. Upon coming to Nashville and realizing that you can just write, you don't have to go through all this headache of being in bands. I was always pretty serious about music. So coming to Nashville where people are really serious about this and make some sacrifices...coming here. I really felt like I belonged for the first time."

"Now that I'm not writing all the time it seems like I write better."

Not only does Craig sing vocals on virtually all of his demos, he takes them another step toward personal perfection.

"I have a studio in my house and generally everything that I demo, I demo at my house as well before. So I kinda do a 'demo' demo which is very time consuming, but I'm able to just play on guitar for musicians what I want. There's nothing like seeing a song go tearing down the wrong bunny trail and you're sitting there just holding your head going, 'Where do we even start to get this thing back where I'm hearing it?' Whenever you're in that position of trying to describe the music you want, it's like trying to describe colors. It's very frustrating. You can just show them."

Writing from experience comes easy when your raised in a small town.

"That's the only way to really write. I mean the Bubba Hyde stuff...I came from a small southern town with big Southern Baptist churches in it. There's nothing like living in a small town like that. You're playing the club that weekend, and Joe's just going nuts at the bar. Next week, you see him in church, and he's very prim and proper, and you're like, 'Yeah, okay, buddy'."

Craig's musical past led him into his successful musical future.

"I played drums starting off in beginner band in seventh grade and played professionally from when I was 17 through college. I came to town here playing drums and doing the band thing. I love drumming, but it comes with a lot of baggage.

"Don Henley was my hero because he was the drummer that could and did. I dug him a lot. Really I'm still quite a fan of his writing. He's able to walk that line between literal and poetic and the metaphor and all that stuff to where even if he's writing about something that you don't understand, the listener gladly fills in any blanks with their own life...True masterful writing."

Craig concentrated on songwriting for years, until he realized he needed some balance with his personal life.

"I've been married for three years now. I realize that a lot of those years, I spent tryin' to get stuff together. My life was falling apart...I was solely working on being a songwriter and made no gains in really any other areas. I've learned to put myself in situations where I'm not a songwriter. Having a successful personal life and a successful spiritual life is so important. Now that I'm not writing *all the time* it seems like I write better."

Writing hit songs isn't his only goal.

"I would like to get into production. I enjoy that, although I'm a little hesitant...it would be great to produce, to bring something intact all the way to the people, but I know that's not an altruistic way to look at things."

Craig reflects on delving more in-depth into the overall creative process. "The music industry is like sausage. You don't wanna know how it was made."

- Jana Albritton

Wiseman's Words of Wisdom

"Let your work speak for itself. This is a town full of bull. Don't add to it."

The Family Man

"My mom is such a huge fan I gave her my first platinum album. Last night she called and said, 'So how's your Joe Digby and Diamond Reno single doing?' I'm like mom, don't give up."

On Stereotypes

"What I say to those people who like to stereotype 'country people' is, 'There's only two chromosomes different between us and apes. How different are you from the mechanic at the BP station?'"



awards

Willie Nelson received the *1997 Merit Award* from the USO of Metropolitan Washington for volunteering his time and talent to help others. In addition to FarmAid, Nelson has helped a countless number of other organizations including Harvest USA, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Second Harvest and Homeless Veterans.

The National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) announced the winners of its *1996-97 Best Seller Awards* based on Soundscan figures. The winner for *Best Selling Country Recording* and *Recording By A New Artist* was **BLUE** by LeAnn Rimes on Curb MCG.

Pecos Films won two Telly Awards. Director Michael McNamara received the *Silver Telly* for the BR5-49 music video, "Even If It's Wrong" and a *Bronze Telly* for the music documentary "One Long Saturday Night".



media

Country Music Foundation Press and Vanderbilt University Press announce the joint publication of "Ramblin' Rose: The Life and Career of Rose Maddox", written by veteran music journalist Johnny Whiteside. The book will be available at bookstores nationwide or can be ordered by calling (800) 937-5557.

Cox Radio, Inc. of Atlanta, GA announced FCC approval of the NewCity Communications Inc. broadcast group acquisition, which includes Birmingham's WZZK and simulcast AM 610. Cox Radio will be one of the 10 largest radio broadcasting companies in U.S. based on both net revenues and number of stations owned.

The National Music Critics Association (NMCA) and Premiere Radio Networks announce the launch of "The Big Bang", a monthly series of 90-minute syndicated radio specials hosted by Walt Disney World Resort featuring live concerts and "insider" looks at the celebrities. The Country series debuted March 16 with superstar Trisha Yearwood.

Country Music star Barbara Mandrell has joined the cast of NBC's "Sunset Beach". In addition to her extensive and award-winning musical career, Mandrell has appeared in a number of television shows including "Baywatch", "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" and "Touched By An Angel".

"Step 'N Out", a new nationally televised dance show, will originate from Branson, MO. The one-hour show, taped live at Guitars and Cadillacs, will play host to dance clubs from around the country, with host Don Hinson interviewing Country artists. Shows will be taped Tuesday through Saturday, May through December. For more information, call (417) 332-1007.



new companies

AS is Management has been formed by veteran tour manager Al Schiltz to guide the career of Mercury Nashville recording artist Billy Ray Cyrus. The company can be reached at 1225-B 16th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 320-9891; fax (615) 320-9541.

Music industry veteran Sherri Halford has formed The Halford Company, specializing in creative services and project management. The company can be reached at (615) 673-9837; fax (615) 673-9822.

The Film Workers Club announces the opening of a third division to be located Music Row. The premiere film-to-video transfer facility will also offer high-end avid and non-linear digital editorial equipment. David James Bennett will be vice-president and general manager with staffers Tom Hoffman as senior engineer and Linda Castleman will serve as production coordinator. The company is located at 1006 17th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 322-9337.



Gretchen Peters is joined by Bryan Adams during a recent sold-out appearance at Borderline in London.

Nashville-based independent label Gotee Records and independent publisher Collins Music announced they have joined forces to form Gotee/Collins Publishing. The company is located at 21 Music Square West, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 255-5550.



newsline

Garth Brooks will bring his sold-out concert tour to Central Park's North Meadow on August 7. The free concert will be produced by Jon Small of Picture Vision, directed by Marty Callner and televised live nationwide by Home Box Office (HBO).

Martha White Foods will sponsor Rounder recording artist Alison Krauss & Union Station's American tour for the second straight year. The tour, which began April 4th in Austin, TX, includes stops in Atlanta, Little Rock, Nashville, Myrtle Beach, Birmingham, Boston, New York City and more.

Chet Atkins' Musician Days, a festival slated for June 23-29 in Nashville to honor musicians, will feature free public performances at several outdoor acoustic stages as well as ticketed events at the world famous Ryman Auditorium. For more information about the festival, contact TomKats, Inc. at (615) 256-9596.

The Louise Mandrell Theater in Pigeon Forge, TN is scheduled to open in September. The first show at the 1400-seat live music theater is scheduled for Friday, September 12, with the official "grand opening" set for September 19. Tickets can be purchased by calling (423) 453-6263.

Grammy-winning songwriters Gary Baker and Frank Myers, who recorded as Baker & Myers, have been granted a contract release from MCG/Curb Records. The duo released one album for the label in 1995.

The Second Annual Lefty Frizzell Tribute Day has been scheduled for Saturday, June 14 at David Frizzell's River Rock Country in Cross Plains, TN. John Anderson headlines the event, with appearances by Johnny Paycheck and others. For more information, call (615) 654-0222.

C.F. Martin & Co. announces the introduction of two Martin "Stauffer" Limited Edition Guitars for 1997. The edition will be limited to 100 instruments each bearing an internal edition label individually numbered in sequence and signed by C.F. Martin, IV. C.F. Martin & Co. also announces a completely new string product, The Martin SP Studio/Performance Series Strings made from high quality steel core and plated with a smooth, acoustic bronze finish and are far more resistant to breaking and corrosion than average strings.

Terrye Seigel Productions in St. Louis has been retained as the exclusive national entertainment buyer for Station Casinos. Seigel will continue to buy and produce talent for major corporations, with clients that include Amway, DirecTV and Harley Davidson Motor Corporation.

The International Bluegrass Music Association's "World of Bluegrass" will take place in Louisville, KY October 13-19.



CMA's Janet E. Williams presents a certificate congratulating Jim & Jesse on their 50th anniversary in show business. The famed bluegrass duo was honored with a reception at the Grand Ole Opry in April. - Photo by Larry Hill

Events include Trade Show '97, The Eighth Annual IBMA Awards Show and Bluegrass FanFest '97. For more information, contact the IBMA office at (502) 684-9025.

The offices of music industry consultant John Hart Media and Bullseye Marketing are moving to Music Row. The companies will be located at 1314 16th Avenue South; (615) 292-0616; fax (615) 262-0828.



on the move

Allen Butler has been promoted to president of Sony Music Nashville. Butler has served as executive vice president/general manager since joining the company in November 1993. Craig Campbell has been promoted to associate director, media/publicity for Epic Nashville. Campbell joined the Epic Records team in January 1994 as manager, media/publicity and was previously vice president/publicity at AristoMedia. Tracy Graham-McGlocklin has been upped to manager, sales and marketing for the company. She joined the staff in 1990.

Scott Siman has signed on as personal manager of Curb recording artist Tim McGraw. Siman, an entertainment attorney, was formerly with Sony Music Nashville.

Songwriter Wayland Holyfield and publisher Donna Hilley of Sony/ATV Tree were re-elected for a two-year term to the board of directors of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

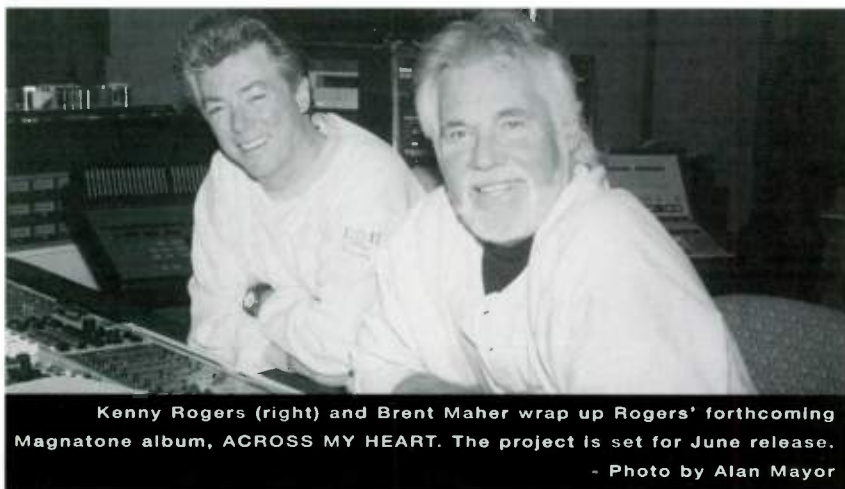
David Haley has been promoted to the position of vice president of national promotion for MCA/Nashville. Haley was most recently senior director of national promotion and has been with the label for 13 years. Bill Macky has been promoted to director of national promotion for the label. He was most recently western regional director of promotion based in Los Angeles. Prior to joining MCA in 1994, Macky held positions at WDSY/WEEP, EZ Communications, KRTY, KMIX, KSON and KUZZ.

Paige Levy earned a recent promotion to senior vice president of A&R for Warner/Reprise Nashville. Since joining the label in 1983, Levy has been responsible for signing such artists as The Forester Sisters, Dwight Yoakam, The Texas Tornados and Paul Brandt. In addition to her creative responsibilities, Levy acts as the administrative head of the A&R department, handles business affairs and has taken on a greater role in overall company management.

Dennis Lord has joined SESAC as vice president, business affairs, writer/publisher relations. Lord will work with the writer/publisher relations staff, signing and

developing songwriters and publishers in all musical genres throughout the U.S. In addition, he will support SESAC's writer/publisher relations staff with respect to business affairs. Lord was most recently managing partner of Lord Entertainment.

Steve Knill has recently been named senior vice president/executive producer of Warner/Avalon. Knill will head the project development department serving as executive producer of Urban Associates/Jamison and as co-executive producer of Blockbuster Rockfest. Previously he served as senior director entertainment marketing for GMR Marketing.



Kenny Rogers (right) and Brent Maher wrap up Rogers' forthcoming Magnatone album, *ACROSS MY HEART*. The project is set for June release.
- Photo by Alan Mayor

Ken Owen has been named vice president, finance and operations for Opryland Music Group's Acuff-Rose Music division. Owen spearheaded the development of state-of-the-art royalty and copyright systems. Troy Tomlinson has been named vice president, creative services and will continue to oversee all aspects of the creative process at OMG. Suzanne Prokasy has been named to the newly created position of vice president, licensing. During her five years at OMG, she has increased the presence of the song catalogs owned by the company in motion pictures, television, radio and television commercials and in the legitimate theater.

The RCA Label Group's sales department recently added three new members to its sales team. Gabriel Aviles joined the department as product manager, sales; Hilary New signs on as manager, field sales; and Deron Bisbikis is the new sales administrator. Aviles was formerly singles sales specialist

with EMI Music Distribution. New was sales and marketing coordinator with A&M Records, and Bisbikis interned with the department prior to his graduation from Belmont University.

Tracy S. Rogers has been appointed director of music programming for Global Music & Media, Inc. Rogers formerly headed programming for CMT: Country Music Television.

Jay Harper joins Marco Promotions as manager of record promotion. He brings 20 years of combined radio and record label experience to the company. He was recently the director of promotion at First Media.

AristoMedia announces some recent staff additions and promotions. In the country video department, Jenny Lee Arnold joins as video administrative assistant and Matt Griffin is now video distribution assistant. Joining the publicity department are Roger Groce, formerly a publicist with FORCE, Inc. and Sarah Hamner, who previously coordinated fan relations for Pam Tillis and Wade Hayes at Mike Robertson Management. Promotions of veteran staff members include Jon Howard, who has been upped to director of video, Angie Watson, who has been promoted to senior publicist, Thomas Field, promoted to video coordinator and Staci Woods, who moves to promotion assistant. Leah Taylor is promoted to coordinator of operations from administrative assistant.

Lou Faust has been added to Jones Radio Network as regional manager for a nine-state area. Faust has worked in the radio

industry for nearly 50 years in both the U.S. and Canada.

William "Buzz" Rawls has been promoted to editor for PVS*SPEER International. Rawls was formerly assistant editor. He also worked for Postmasters, Inc., WTVF-TV, WCYB-TV and WJHL-TV.

Robert Schutt has joined the Glen Campbell Music Group as creative director, where he will be liaison with the various record labels, A&R staffs, artists and producers. Schutt will work with the writers and oversee the placement of songs.

Jones Satellite Networks announces the promotion of Penny Mitchell to assistant operations manager of US Country. In addition to her duties as music director and mid-day air personality, Mitchell will also manage day-to-day operations of the format, the on-air talent and handling US Country's affiliate relations.

Craig L. Simon has been named to the newly created position of vice president, North American distribution, CBS Cable. Simon joins the company from Cablevision Systems where he was regional vice president. He will oversee affiliate distribution for TNN: The Nashville Network and CMT: Country Music Television.

Jennifer Rainwater has been elevated to the position of manager of administration for both Hamstein Cumberland Music and Hamstein Music. She was previously receptionist and administrative assistant for the company.



signings

BOOKING: Noel Haggard to The Bobby Roberts Company, Inc....Lee Ann Womack to Buddy Lee Attractions...**MUSIC PUBLISHING:** Kim Tribble to Balmur Entertainment...Dan Colehour and Randy Bachman to Little Big Town Music...Dave Lichens and Otto Price to Gotee/Collins Publishing...Kenny Beard to Opryland Music Group...Stuart Montgomery to Hamstein Cumberland Music...Tim Nichols to ASCAP...**RECORDING:** Bruce Henderson to Omad/Paragigm...The Woodys to Rounder Records



music video

artist/label

Skip Ewing, Word Nashville
 James Bonamy, Epic
 Regina Regina, Giant
 Mandy Barnett, Asylum
 Daryle Singletary, Giant

title

"Mary Go Round"
 "The Swing"
 "Right Plan, Wrong Man"
 "Planet Of Love"
 "The Used To Be's"

producer/director

Mary Matthews/Chuck Shanlever
 chris rogers
 Marc Ball/Anne Grace
 David McClister/Stephanie Reeves
 Marc Ball/Anne Grace



International Update

- Billy Ray Cyrus will begin his first European tour with two shows at the prestigious Gstaad Festival in Switzerland September 12 and 13. He will also perform in Nottingham, Glasgow, Sunderland, Birmingham, London and Bournemouth September 15-21. The tour is being arranged by Trisha Walker-Cunningham, president of Trisha Walker International, in association with Al Schiltz of As Is Management and the William Morris Agency. "We all believe Billy Ray's first visit will be a huge success and pave the way for future tours," said Walker-Cunningham.
- The winners of the first annual Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame Singing Contest are Saylor Reins and Hugh-Dawn Country. The winner of the Songwriting Contest is Don Castle's "Was He Just A Dream," the runner up was Ron Campbell and David Martin's "I Must Be Getting Better". The Second Annual Singing and Songwriting Contest is now underway. For information write to the Canadian Country Music Hall Of Fame, P.O. Box 1660, Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G4R2.
- Listeners in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle can tune in current Country hits due to a three-station network airing a "Cool Country" format. Located at 1620 kHz in Sydney, 1314 kHz in Wollongong and 1314 kHz in Newcastle, the stations cover about 500 km of New South Wales coastline centered from Sydney and reach approximately 100 km inland. According to Barry McMahon, program director for "The Edge" in Sydney, the mix is 100 percent Country with 85 percent of the content Australian artists.

datebook

*denotes international telephone number with country code in parentheses

May

2-3 13th Annual International Country Music Festival / Country Rose Ranch / Niestetal, Germany / (49) 561-525391; fax (49) 561-527538; www.blitz.de/egrn/rose.jpg

June

25-28 NACA Contemporary Concert Production Workshop / presented by the National Association of Campus Activities / Vanderbilt University / Nashville, TN

October

19 Ninth Annual Country Gold Festival / Aspecta / Kumamoto, Japan / Contact Judy Seale at Refugee Management / (615) 256-6615; fax (615) 256-6717

John Berry

continued from page 3

Committee, John is also very supportive of efforts to promote Country Music worldwide.

"We played Europe twice last year and went to Australia last spring and then went back this past January. We're really doing as much as we can to promote Country Music outside American borders. The perception of

Country Music is starting to change."

"The government is really wanting to cut funding for the arts in schools."

Whatever the task, it looks like John's efforts are paying off. He was recently invited by the Modeling Association of America International to be an honorary inductee into the Modeling Hall of Fame. The organization honors representatives from the entertainment industry who are considered role models for the public. John was selected for his family-oriented reputation as an entertainer

who is a dedicated husband

"The perception of Country Music is starting to change"

and father as well as an artist. Past recipients include Christopher Reeve and Brooke Shields. But despite his recent accolades and accomplishments, John says his first love is performing, and he's happy to use whatever fame comes along with it for a good cause.

"My favorite part of doing this is getting to open my mouth and sing. I think you can use whatever celebrity you have to help protect the art and business end of what we do. I have the responsibility to speak out."

-Mandy Wilson



NAMES IN THE NEWS

DEJA VU:

While in New York for an appearance on "Late Show With David Letterman", Capitol Nashville singer Trace Adkins stopped at the famous Stage Deli for a bite, only to be recognized by members of the restaurant's staff. Before lunch was over, Trace autographed a photo for the restaurant.

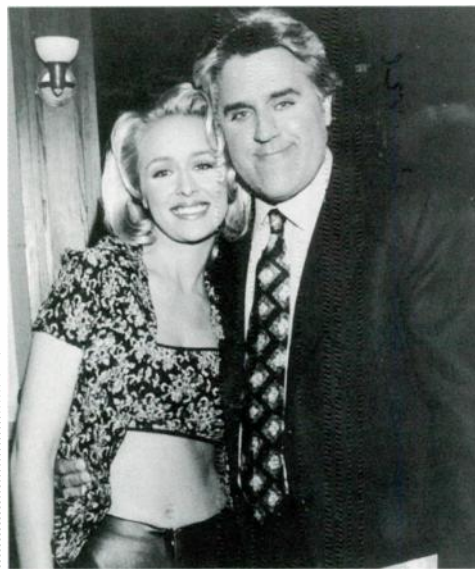
At rival Carnegie Deli, Decca's Gary Allan had a similar experience. Allan, who was making his first visit to the Big Apple, took on the guise of tourist as he studied the photos of the famous folks who have dined at the deli. Two employees recognized him, so now Allan's photos hangs next to that of Phyllis Diller.

NEWS MAKERS:

In the market for a new bus, Giant singer Clay Walker took a turn behind the wheel of Terri Clark's transport for a test drive. Clark, who was sleeping soundly in the back, thought she was dreaming some Beatles songs when she woke to find Walker jamming with her band.

Tracy Byrd was getting ready for soundcheck at a recent concert in Salt Lake City when Utah Jazz MVP Karl Malone showed up with a request. Malone, who couldn't make it to the concert because of a game that night, asked the MCA singer to sing "Don't Take Her She's All I Got". Byrd obliged, and afterward he and Malone promised to get together for a fishing expedition when schedules allow.

Faith Hill is the only Country singer to have a song on the upcoming soundtrack for the NBC series "Mad About You". The Warner Bros. singer's "Who I Am" is included on the project.



Jay Leno snuggles up to BNA's Mindy McCready during her recent appearance on "The Tonight Show." - Photo by Margaret Norton

THE SOAP SCENE:

Reba McEntire continues to host ABC's "Daytime To Remember" series, Monday through Fridays at 12:30 p.m. (Eastern). The MCA superstar is introducing vintage episodes of the network's hit soap operas to fill an open spot on the daytime schedule until new soaper "Port Charles" debuts. It's not McEntire's first run-in with daytime tv - she once guested on the network's "One Life To Live".

Singer/songwriter Victoria Shaw has been nominated for a Daytime Emmy Award, as her song "All For The Sake Of Love", which she wrote for "As The World Turns", has been cited as one of the nominees for Best Original Song. Shaw wrote the tune with Earl Rose. The honors will be doled out from Radio City Music Hall on May 21.

GOOD WORKS:

Trisha Yearwood and her mother Gwen taped a special edition of "Wheel Of Fortune" which

airs this month. Any money the singer and her mom win will be donated to the American Heart Association.

Mark Collie donated \$270,000 to Vanderbilt University Medical Center to be used for diabetes research, which includes a portion of the proceeds from the 1996 Mark Collie Celebrity Race For Diabetes Cure. Collie, who has had insulin-dependent diabetes since he was 17, is striving to help find the cure for and prevention of diabetes.

John Michael Montgomery, Billy Ray Cyrus, The Kentucky HeadHunters and The Oak Ridge Boys were part of Flood Fest '97, a concert held in Louisville, Kentucky's Freedom Hall in April. All proceeds went to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund.

GET WELL SOON:

Singer Eddie Rabbitt is currently undergoing radiation treatment for lung cancer. If all goes according to plan, he'll undergo surgery at the end of May. In the meantime, Rabbitt's been in the studio working on a new album.

Patricia Conroy was the victim of an unprovoked dog attack on a Mediterranean beach in Gaeta, Italy. The Canadian singer and a band member were strolling on the beach when a German Shepherd came up behind them and attacked her. Conroy suffered multiple bites and serious lacerations on her head, back and arms. She was taken to an Italian hospital before being transferred to the U.S. Naval Hospital, where she was listed in satisfactory condition. Conroy had been performing throughout Europe since early March.



BR5-49 made their early morning television debut on ABC's "Good Morning America". Guest host Forrest Sawyer (left) and regular Joan Lunden congratulate the Arista band on a job well done.



brady seals

Record Label: **Warner Bros. Records**
 Management: **Gold Mountain Entertainment**
 Booking Agency: **William Morris Agency**
 Album: **THE TRUTH**
 Single: **"Another You, Another Me"**

Brady Seals was raised in a musical environment while growing up in Ohio. Family members include T.J. Seals, his cousin and cowriter; Troy Seals, veteran songwriter and cowriter of album cut "Kentucky Boy"; Jim Seals of Seals & Crofts and Dan Seals, who was part of the famed pop duo England Dan & John Ford Coley before pursuing a solo career as a Country singer. With a family tree that includes such talented "branches", it's no wonder that Seals has established himself as a highly respected musician, singer and songwriter.

Influenced by artists like Dobie Gray, Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard and Tom Petty, Seals hit the road at the age of 16 with the first of many touring bands. Adept at keyboards, vocals and songwriting, the versatile musician became a hot commodity. Eventually landing in Nashville, he established himself as a gifted artist as a member of the platinum-selling group Little Texas. His songwriting credits include many of the group's hits, such as the Grammy-nominated "Amy's Back In Austin" and three number one singles, "My Love", "God Blessed Texas" and "What Might Have Been".



the buffalo club

Record Label: **Rising Tide**
 Management: **Dan Goodman Management**
 Album: **THE BUFFALO CLUB**
 Single: **"If She Don't Love You"**

Taken simply as a sum of its musical parts, The Buffalo Club stands on high ground in the world of modern Country Music. Creating a sound that is unmistakable, The Buffalo Club includes lead vocalist Ron Hemby, guitarist Charlie Kelly and drummer John Dittrich, formerly with Restless Heart.

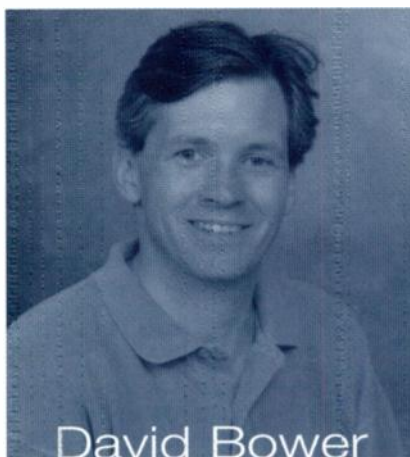
In describing the band's conceptual foundation, Kelly explains, "I grew up on a farm in Maryland, but Washington, D.C. was only 45 miles away. You heard all kinds of stuff on the radio from Bryan Adams to Willie Nelson to whatever. That's how most Americans live - not totally rural, not strictly urban. There's a whole world in between, and that's where our music comes from."

Reaching listeners is The Buffalo Club's primary motivation. According to Dittrich, it depends on active interplay between the groups members. "Everyone thinks about communicating with the audience, but the give-and-take between the guys in the band, that's what lifts a show or a record to that other level. You don't plan something like that. It's just there, and when you learn to trust it, it comes out in the music. That's the extra 'something' you hear in The Buffalo Club."



CMA Strengthens International Strategic Development

CMA has stepped up plans for international market development efforts, recently appointing David Bower as UK/Ireland director, Jan Garich as full-time representative in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, adding Scandinavia to the responsibilities of full-time Benelux representative Karen Holt and promoting Bobbi Boyce to European operations manager.



David Bower

"Since establishing our UK office in 1982, we've watched Country Music grow significantly in the international marketplace," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "While developing new markets around the world has been a long-term strategic goal of CMA, recent developments make this a crucial time to take the initiative. We are encouraged by increased opportunities for radio and television exposure, retail opportunities with some of the largest music store chains, and also the number of top-notch artists who are including international territories in their tour schedules. To continue this momentum, it was imperative that CMA recruit individuals who can focus on opportunities in these key markets and help advance the careers of globally minded artists."

In addition to direct representation, CMA has developed services such as CDX - providing current CDs to radio stations around the world, the monthly Communiqué newsletter, touring information and an extensive communications network via label relations, advisory groups, conferences, research projects, databases and publications.

CMA's efforts have resulted in great strides in the visibility of Country Music to a mainstream audience. "The 1996 CMA Awards" were broadcast in more countries than any other year, and both Sweden and the UK registered their largest audience figures ever. In addition, for the first time, CMA organized a point-of-sale campaign in conjunction with the airing of "The CMA Awards" on BBC. Nearly 300 participating stores including the HMV, Virgin-Our Price, Andy's and Tower retail chains as well as numerous independent dealers generated significant increases in sales of featured artists such as LeAnn Rimes and George Strait. Other strides in the visibility of Country Music internationally have included the expanded reach of CMT: Country Music

Television, special Country programming on BBC Television, as well as a Country Music special on Germany's ZDF with artists including Mindy McCready and John Berry. The CMA International Committee recently established a task force to develop international television opportunities for the future.

The potential of Germany's music market has made it one of CMA's targets for development. "The CMA Awards" has aired on German television the past two years, and Country Music can be heard on dozens of radio stations each week. In addition, more than 60 Country artists performed in Germany in 1996, and over 50 have made appearances in German cities already this year. Among the performers have been BR5-49, Charlie Daniels, the Mavericks, Martina McBride, Travis Tritt and Trisha Yearwood.

CMA continues to work closely with hundreds of international media professionals to enhance coverage of events such as Fan Fair and the CMA Awards.

Bower is a 15-year veteran of the music industry, most recently serving as marketing director at Columbia Records, where he was involved with the success of artists such as Mary Chapin Carpenter, Mariah Carey, the Fugees and Kula Shaker. Prior to Columbia, Bower established The Big Picture, a management and marketing consulting company. He provided a liaison with North American management and record label offices with their allied labels in the European marketplace. He was also co-owner of Che, a record label that serves as an outlet for developing artists in the UK. Bower's experience includes stints in marketing and A&R for MCA Records, general manager for Siren Records and product manager for both CBS Records and Polydor Records.

"I am delighted to be joining CMA in what is a heady time for them in the UK and Ireland," Bower said. "I look forward to bringing my diverse experience of the industry to help advance the international careers of artists who are committed to the UK and Ireland. Great strides have been made over the years, and I view this as an exciting opportunity to be at the forefront of an organization committed to active growth in these markets."



Jan Garich



Bobbi Boyce

Bobbi Boyce has been with CMA since 1992. She coordinates the efforts of the CMA representatives for the Benelux, Scandinavia and G/S/A countries, as well as handles the day-to-day business of the UK office. She has worked extensively in the music industry since the late 1970s, with experience in

administration, publishing, media relations and touring as personal assistant to Davy Jones of the Monkees.

Garich is a 14-year music industry veteran whose experience includes 10 years with EMI in Cologne as label manager, product manager and most recently GM/product management, international pop. His duties included A&R and marketing for artists including Tina Turner, Pink Floyd, the Beatles, Pet Shop Boys, Sinead O'Connor and Garth Brooks. He also was involved in music marketing projects with Volkswagen, Lufthansa, Grundig, Pepsi, Kellogg's and M&M's, among others. Prior to joining CMA, Garich was head of co-op marketing for Germany-based ad agency Feldt & Compagnie, whose key client was video marketer CIC Video in Frankfurt, a joint venture of Universal and Paramount.

"There's an enormous amount of great songwriting talent and excellent musicianship coming out of Nashville, and it's my goal to enhance the international success of Country Music," Garich said. "Artist development plans tailored to the G/S/A countries will help to broaden Country's popularity in Europe."

Holt, who recently undertook the Scandinavian countries among her responsibilities, moved to The Netherlands after graduating from the University of Florida. As promotion and events manager for The Flying Dutchman, one of the first music marketing and promotion teams to focus on the pan-European market, she worked with artist projects including Roxette and Extreme and for events such as the Diamond Awards Festival. Holt also was responsible for international marketing and placement of the Coca-Cola Eurochart and wrote the weekly "Chart Chat" column, featured by dozens of European media using the Eurochart, including MTV. She was instrumental in organizing the annual International Music & Media Conferences in Montreux and Amsterdam. After a stint at the leading Dutch trade magazine publisher Misset, Holt joined CMA as Benelux representative in 1994.

-Shannon Heim

"THE 30TH ANNUAL CMA AWARDS" RATE WELL IN SWEDEN

A 90-minute edited version of "The 30th Annual CMA Awards" aired in Sweden on March 30, commanding a 67-percent increase in viewers over last year's telecast. Contributing factors to the success include an improved evening time slot (10:15 - 11:45 p.m.), promotions broadcast in the days before the special, and a CMA publicity campaign to radio, press and the music industry in the month before the telecast.

SVT1 aired the 90-minute version of "The CMA Awards", edited by BBC Television after the event took place in Nashville last October. In the past, "The CMA Awards" edit for Sweden had been cut to less than an hour. The extended broadcast's reach was 13.3 percent, with 1.1 million viewers tuning in for at least part of the telecast, according to MMS Medimatning. It garnered a 19.6 percent share. An average of 403,000 viewers (a 4.8 percent rating) tuned in for the complete telecast, up from 243,000 viewers (2.9 percent rating) last year. Sweden's total potential TV audience is 8.4 million. In the weekly ratings, "The CMA Awards" reach was second only to the long-standing and immensely popular "Sondagsoppet", a talk and entertainment show.

"This is excellent," said Birgitta Thofelt, head of international programs at SVT1. "We almost never see these kind of figures for any kind of music show whatsoever."

The CMA publicity campaign included press releases, photos, CMA Awards CDs and trivia kits to national media outlets as well as to major regional radio stations with Country Music programs. Record labels, industry organizations and major retailers were also informed of artists appearing in the edited program.

Lars-Olaf Helen, MD of Helan Kommunikations, which distributes Curb product in Sweden, took the opportunity to set his own promotion operation into gear, arranging phone interviews with LeAnn Rimes that resulted in high-profile features in more national dailies. "I'm not sure of the exact impact on sales yet," Helen said, "but it has definitely been helping a lot." "Blue" has since re-entered the national radio P4 playlist.

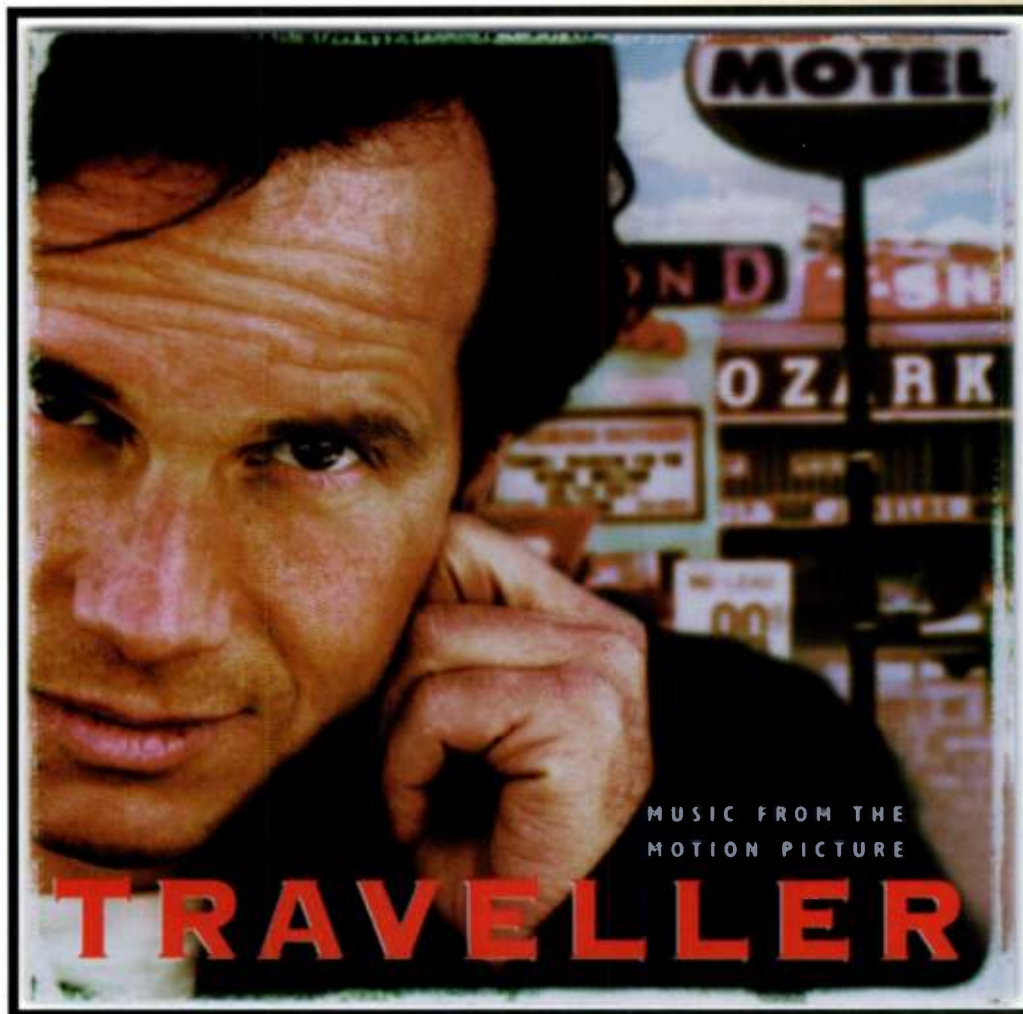
Product by MCA artists George Strait and Trisha Yearwood is showing increased movement, according to Ludwig Werner, sales manager at Universal Sweden. Although it is too early to tell whether the telecast will result in a significant sales impact, Werner said, "We do think any increase is probably resulting from the Awards."

CMA'S INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

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WHEN MOVIE-GOERS GOT THEIR FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE NEW FILM "TRAVELLER" IN APRIL, THE FIRST THING THEY HEARD WAS

Randy Travis singing "King Of The Road". The soundtrack for the film, released by Asylum Records in Nashville, features primarily Country artists singing new versions of classic songs. Also included in the mix are a few R&B artists and standards. With the exception of "Love And Happiness" and "Te-Ni-Nee-Ni-Nu", none of the songs bear copyrights later than 1964.

Actor Bill Paxton produced the film in addition to taking one of the lead roles.

"When we got into post-production, we realized that we wanted to use a lot of source music," he explains. "The movie's a road picture

set against the South. These guys travel from town to town - they're these kind of Irish drifters. There's a lot of roadhouses and bars and grills and inside the trucks. I wanted to have the radio and jukeboxes playing great songs. So I put all this source music into the movie, kind of a wish list. When it got around to pricing the stuff, I was looking at a bill around \$400,000 for licensing and synch rights. I didn't have the money because we'd spent our budget.

So I was faced with having to put in generic library music, which I didn't want to do. We had this great picture, and I wanted the sound to be as important as the picture.

"Seymour Stein, who is an old friend of mine, and Andy Paley, who is an active producer for Elektra, saw the movie and said, 'We'd love to do a soundtrack if

you're willing to go in and replace some of these songs.' Seymour didn't want us just to pull catalog songs from Asylum and Elektra. He wanted us to take a lot of the artists from Asylum and Elektra and record a new soundtrack. That's what we did. Seymour chose a lot of the songs. He is one of the last of the really great record men, a

"THE NEAT THING ABOUT MOVIE SOUNDTRACKS IS THAT THE RESTRAINTS OF COMING UP WITH A HIT RECORD ARE LOOSENED UP."

- KYLE LEHNING, ASYLUM RECORDS

walking encyclopedia of American music. He wanted to pull songs from the '40s, the '50s and the '60s, kind of the golden age of Country Music. This thing just came together, and all the artists just loved doing the songs."

Kyle Lehning, co-president of Asylum's Nashville office, co-produced the soundtrack with Paley. "The neat thing about movie soundtracks is that the restraints of coming up with a hit record are loosened up," he says. "The tendency to do things in a more fun, less serious way sometimes generates really good work. If it is a big hit at radio, that's even better, but that's not what you're thinking about. So it kind of loosens up the pressure, and when that pressure gets loosened up, a bunch of neat things really come out of it."

"It was really Seymour and Andy going through a lot of old songs, songs that had a certain kind of flavor to them and things that were particularly special to Seymour in connection with these tunes," Lehning continues. "It was just a matter of matching them up with the artists in a way that the artists felt good about. And then something that could actually fit into the film in a reasonable way. Everything that's on the album is actually in the movie - sometimes in a pretty obscure way, but it's in there."

Paxton admits some of the tunes were new to him. "I'd say about half of them I was familiar with. I grew up in Texas, and my parents listened to a lot of Bob Wills and Hank Williams, so I had heard a lot of that stuff growing up. I've kind of been re-educated about contemporary Country Music. It was really exciting for me to come down to Nashville and get to know a lot of the artists when we were recording. I gained a new appreciation for Country Music through this entire experience."

Unless you've heard Randy Travis sing "King Of The Road", you might doubt that any artist could equal the quality of the Roger Miller original. Paxton says even Travis had doubts.

"We were looking for a song to open the movie with that had the right rhythm. 'King of the Road' would be kind of the anthem for these people. So we started thinking about it and thought 'Gosh, it's been 30 years since that song has been covered, wouldn't it be nice to bring it back by having another artist to do it?' I thought of Randy because I'd done an HBO movie ('Frank And Jesse') with him two years ago. We called him up and he was a little hesitant, because he had great reverence for the song and Roger Miller. But he thought, 'Well, yeah, I'll take a swing at it.'"

Marketing the album is a significant part of the movie's overall promotion plan. "King Of The Road" was released as a single to Country radio about two weeks before the film opened.

"I've got to say I've really been impressed by Asylum in Nashville," Paxton says. "That whole outfit is first-class. Kyle (Lehning) is such a straight shooter. If he says you get the tapes next Tuesday, gosh, you

get them next Tuesday. He's as good as his word. He made this thing a breeze to put together. The whole experience has been very positive. I've made so many good friends down there in Nashville and at Asylum. I'd like to do another Country soundtrack. I would love to do a classic kind of bio-pic and play a Country singer."

Playing a singer wouldn't be much of a stretch for Paxton. His connection with Elektra's Stein goes back to his days as part of a band called Martini Ranch. Because of his musical roots, Paxton has an appreciation for music usage in other films. "I love this movie 'Jerry McGuire' because the way they use the source music. They'll use popular songs and they'll also use the source music as score at times. I think that's really a great way to go. Sometimes the score can be too heavy-handed for a movie. Our movie needed to be kind of sparsely scored in places. Mostly I wanted the

popular music of the songs to carry the feeling and the emotion of the movie."

-Janet E. Williams

(Next month, CLOSE UP talks with music supervisor Mark Hartley and music publisher David Conrad about placing Country Music in films.)

**"I GAINED A NEW
APPRECIATION FOR
COUNTRY MUSIC THROUGH THIS
ENTIRE EXPERIENCE."
- ACTOR BILL PAXTON**

THE TRAVELLER SOUNDTRACK

- **"KING OF THE ROAD" RANDY TRAVIS**
- **"DREAM LOVER" MANDY BARNETT**
- **"IF YOU'VE GOT THE MONEY, I'VE GOT THE TIME" JIMMIE DALE GILMORE**
- **"SEVEN LONELY DAYS" K.D. LANG & THE RECLINES WITH TAKE 6**
- **"ROCKIN' ROBIN" BRYAN WHITE**
- **"PLEASE HELP ME I'M FALLING (IN LOVE WITH YOU)" LILA MCCANN**
- **"BLUES STAY AWAY FROM ME" THRASHER SHIVER**
- **"SWEET NOTHIN'S" TINA & THE B-SIDE MOVEMENT**
- **"I LOVE YOU A THOUSAND WAYS" JIMMIE DALE GILMORE**
- **"SEARCHING (FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU)" MANDY BARNETT**
- **"GONNA FIND ME A BLUEBIRD" ROYAL WADE KIMES**
- **"I'M THINKING TONIGHT OF MY BLUE EYES" THE COX FAMILY**
- **"LOVE AND HAPPINESS" AL GREEN**
- **"TE-NI-NEE-NI-NU" LOU ANN BARTON**
- **"SWEETER THAN THE FLOWERS" THE COX FAMILY**
- **"DON'T ROB ANOTHER MAN'S CASTLE" ROYAL WADE KIMES**
- **"DARK MOON" MANDY BARNETT**
- **"YOUNG LOVE" KEVIN SHARP**



REMINDER: First CMA Awards Ballot Arrives This Month

Keep an eye on your mailbox - the first ballot for the 1997 CMA Awards goes out on May 19. The eligibility period for all 12 award categories runs from June 1, 1996 through May 31, 1997. On the first (nominating) ballot, each member may write in one nominee per category.

After the results from the first ballot are tabulated, any act, record or song receiving 10 or more nominations will appear on the second ballot.

Upon receiving the second ballot, members vote for their top five choices in each category. After these results are tabulated, the five receiving the most votes in each category will be announced at a press conference and will appear on the final ballot. On this final ballot, members vote for one nominee in each category.

Winners will be announced during the live broadcast of "The 31st Annual CMA Awards" on Wednesday, September 24. 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.

Following is the 1997 CMA Awards schedule:

May 19	First ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
June 16	Deadline to return first ballot to Deloitte & Touche
July 2	Second ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
July 31	Deadline to return second ballot to Deloitte & Touche
August 5	CMA Awards finalists announced at press conference
August 19	Final ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
September 17	Deadline to return final ballot to Deloitte & Touche
September 24	Winners announced on live CMA Awards telecast, CBS-TV, 8 p.m. EDT

IMPORTANT: CHANGES IN CMA AWARDS CRITERIA

The CMA Board of Directors, at its April meeting, approved the following two changes in CMA Awards criteria:

- Regarding Vocal Duo of the Year: Any year in which fewer than five (5) Vocal Duo's are qualified after the first (nominating) ballots are tabulated, those eligible Duo's will be included for that year among the nominees for Vocal Group of the Year.
- CASHBOX Magazine is no longer a chart source for CMA Awards eligibility, as the periodical ceased publication in late 1996.

Reminder: an act must receive at least ten (10) nominations in order to be considered for the second ballot.

A complete listing of criteria for all CMA Awards will be included in the mailing of the first ballot.

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