

JULY 1997

Close Up



Lee Roy Parnell

BR5-49
Junior Brown
Hank Thompson



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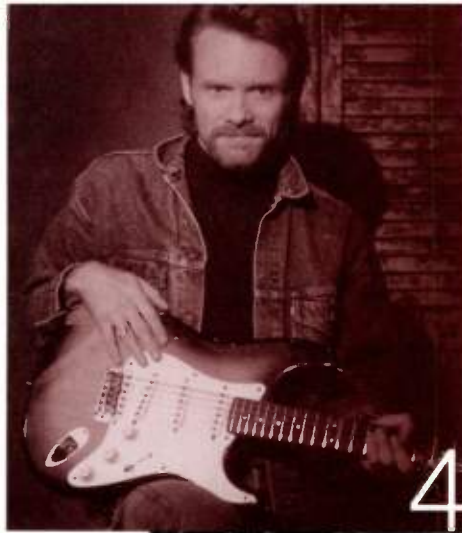
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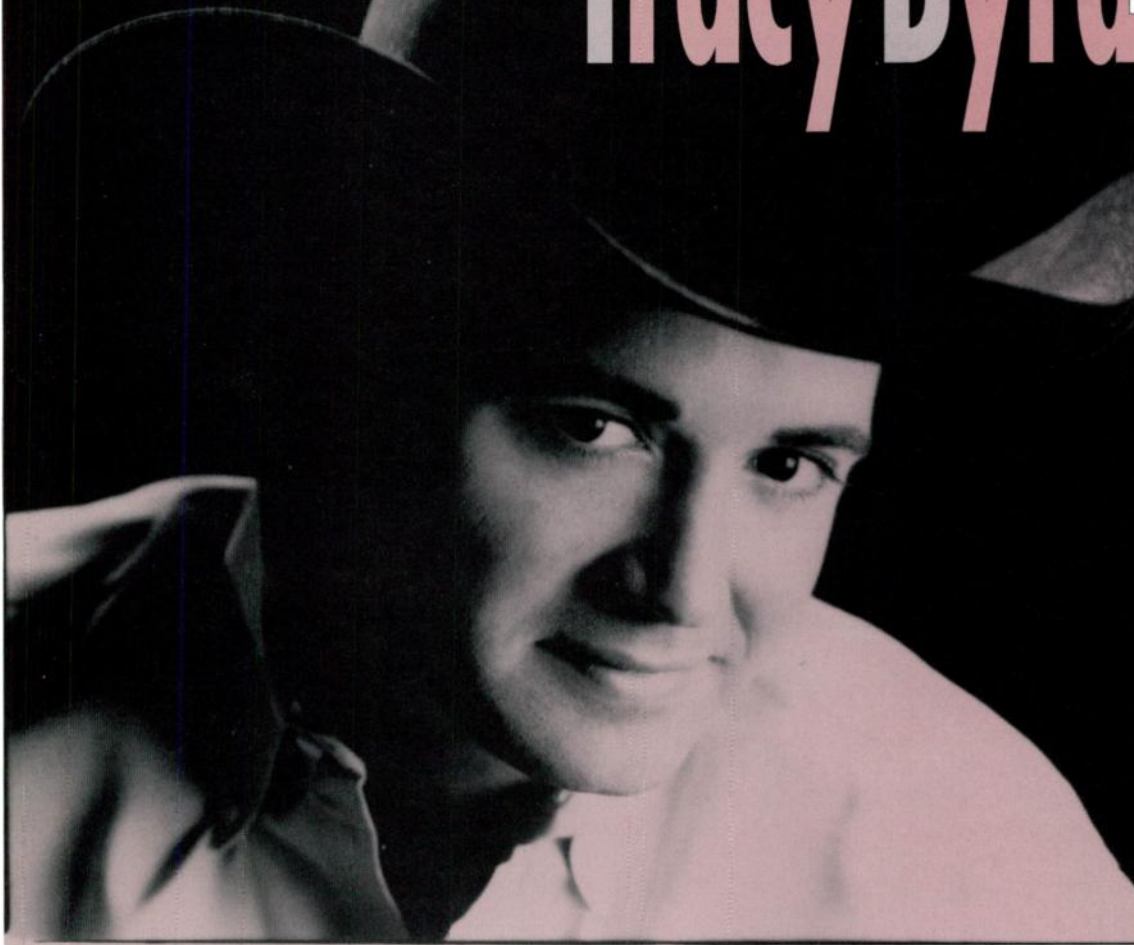
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Tracy Byrd

on the cover



fishing trip. I wear myself out when I do them, because I'm up early and out late, fishing all day and all night, but spiritually it recharges me."

And while he enjoys fishing in Lake Sam Rayburn (near his hometown of Beaumont, Texas), Tracy dreams of traveling to Venezuela for a fishing expedition. "I would fly into Caracas first and catch some bone fish and some tarpon. Then from Caracas, you drive into the mountains. There's this lake called Lake Guri. It's like 20 times larger than Sam Rayburn - that's 68 miles long. Lake Guri is a natural lake. They have what they call these peacock bass there, and they grow to 25-30 pounds. They feed on top of the water, which makes it even more exciting. They're beautiful fish. I'd just love to have one mounted. There's every color of the rainbow down their side, but they're shaped and look just like a large mouth bass.

Tracy Byrd is not only one of Country Music's most popular young entertainers, he's also an avid sportsman - to the extent that even when he's on the road, he's participating in some type of outdoor activity.

"Larry Boone came out on the road writing with me, and I was talking about all these things that I had coming up," the native Texan relates. "He was wanting to come out again, and I said, 'Well, ya'll can come out here, but I'm going turkey hunting that week. I'm down at the beach with my family that week and we're fishing. Ya'll can come out here and try to play golf.' And Larry said, 'Man, you are one recreating son of a gun!'"

Still, Tracy balances his recreational side with an incomparable work ethic. "I feel like I work hard. I'm always working, and I feel like that's what you work for - to enjoy life. I love fishing, and I love hunting. The thing is it's not a new deal. That shows how much I really love it. I've been doing it since I was 4 years old. At least, fishing since I was 4 and hunting since I was 6."

Like most performers, he enjoys the spotlight. But he also enjoys the solitude that hunting and fishing bring. "You want to talk about finding solitude! That's probably another reason that I do all these things. Really people misunderstand hunting and fishing. My wife for one. She thinks it's all about going out and catching fish or killing animals. That's what we do, but it's the companionship of it really. I do this with some of my oldest friends and some of my best friends. It's the companionship and the solitude...there is nothing that recharges my batteries like a good hunting or

"I've thought seriously about it. I've just got to find the time and schedule it. I'm going to do it soon. Now hunting... I'd like to go either to Montana or Colorado and take an elk with my bow. What they do is bugle them up close to about 20 yards from you, and the elk is just a huge animal. It's a very challenging hunt because you basically have to crawl and climb a mountain to get to a point and then bugle them in. I'd like to do that."

An experienced hunter like Tracy can tell you the nuances between bow hunting and using a gun.

"It's a whole different mindset. I'm really thinking seriously about giving up, as far as big game, gun hunting altogether and just starting to bow hunt, because it's a super challenge. It's a whole lot more sporting for you

"...there is nothing that recharges my batteries like a good hunting or fishing trip."

and the animal. What comes into play more in big game hunting with a bow is scent. Outside of 25 yards is a real poor percentage shot, so you just don't take them. And that's close. That's close to be with a totally wild animal."

When he's not dealing with animals in the wild, he's dealing with fans. Whether it's a club, arena, fair or festival, Tracy likes playing venues of all sizes.

"I like performing period. That's another time when I'm really relaxed and happy. I guess the honky-tonker in me really comes out. I still like playing

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LEE ROY PARNELL

Lee Roy Parnell is wearing a Hamilton watch, a replica of those made in the 1930s and '40s, but it's a quartz to help him to get places on time, a constant struggle. His tan leather cowboy boots, made by an old gentleman in Mercedes, Texas, are broken in. And he's dropped 30 pounds, the result, he says, primarily of the breakup with a girlfriend awhile back and too much exercise that he used as a stress reliever. This afternoon, he's eager to play a mini-set for his record label to show off the new album - his fifth. One of the first artists signed to Arista Records, he now looks out on new faces in the crowd of 35 or so sitting in the lobby drinking longnecks and snacking on chips and salsa.

Lee Roy reminisces about his 1990 debut album. The first few songs struggled to hit the top 40. Two years later, "What Kind Of Fool Do You Think I Am" reached number two. Then the record label released "Tender Moment" in 1993. Not long after, he was working in a studio, and Arista chief Tim DuBois motioned him to come out in the hall. "I thought I was in trouble, like I had been called to the principal's office." Tim had quietly brought the entire staff - a handful of people back then - over to the studio so they could pop champagne bottles and congratulate Lee Roy on his

"Whoever remembers the second guy that did anything?"

first number one record. Instead of whooping it up, the whole bunch cried.

Now with EVERY NIGHT'S A SATURDAY NIGHT, the fledgling label he signed with has since grown into a Nashville powerhouse, Lee Roy has moved to Arista's other Country label (Career Records), the musical landscape has changed dramatically (he says not necessarily for the better), and Lee Roy has survived it all without changing his name (some Nashville insiders thought "it sounds too black, too Country") and with his integrity intact.

Lee Roy co-produced EVERY NIGHT'S A SATURDAY NIGHT with his band, The Hot Links, and the fun they had in the studio reverberates on the cd.

"I play music because I have to. I'm just not happy if I don't. It's engraved in me and has been since I was a small boy. It continues to be a source of joy in my life that I don't find anywhere else."

But pursuing his music has come with costs, the least being countless years spent for pork 'n' bean wages in Austin night spots. The biggest sacrifice? Time away from his kids.

"The hardest thing that I've ever done in my life is deal with the knowledge that I'm not there, where I should be. On the other hand, I'm a provider, and I have to provide for my family, and it's an extended family at that. Not only do I have a responsibility to provide for them, my immediate family, but I also have a band family, and they have children. So, all in all, there's like 50 of us that really depend on my health, my ability to write songs and my ability to convince radio programmers in America that they need to play my records."

He said when his children were younger they would draw pictures of the West Texas ranch they dreamed of. "We'd spend countless hours driving around through the hills looking at farms and ranches and what we felt we would have in mind. I thought if there's one thing that I've taken myself away from, this is something I can give back to and give us a home. See, after my folks passed away, which has been over five years ago now, there's really been no center to our home."

Lee Roy's brothers and sisters all live in Austin, so he wanted a place they could gather as well. "So after many years of looking and searching and waiting for the right time when I thought I could financially pull it off, I bought this little place between Fredricksburg and Johnson City. Now I've got to pay for it! Which means more of dad being gone. I've been averaging about two day a month there. My old house was built in 1878, so we're really roughing it right now.

"As I turn the corner here at 40 years old, I look at where I'm at professionally and where I thought I might be. Sometimes that doesn't always add up, especially when your peers around you have exceeded, and I don't mean this in a greedy way at all because I'm proud for everyone of my friends and my peers who have done extremely well, but let's face it. Some of us just get there quicker than others.

"Nashville has a different face than it did when I came to town... But for so long, Nashville would not accept what it was that I was laying on the table, and I wasn't about to compromise myself and chase some rainbow that's already happened. That's the most ridiculous theory in the world, to run after something that somebody's already won? Whoever remembers the second guy that did anything? I knew that there was a sound in my mind and in my heart that I had to find on my own and be able to express... About that time, my cousin Robert Earl Keen moved up here. He said, 'Man, things are changing up here. You ought to bring that slide guitar and see if you can make it.' Then Lyle Lovett moved, and at that time, the hottest thing on the street was Lyle. Lyle could've run for mayor and won! And Nanci Griffith and all these Texas singer/songwriters, and of course Guy Clark and Rodney Crowell and Rosanne Cash were doing very well. So there was a host of singer/songwriters from Texas that were doing well. There was this abundance of depth and material, which is a lot different than today. I stepped in through that door just in time before it closed, and it did close."

Lee Roy also felt some of the resistance that his predecessors felt, but it hasn't hindered him. "I feel a certain freedom today that I've never felt before, and I think that's probably one of the reasons why I produced this record. I knew what I wanted, and I knew I wanted people around me who could enhance what I was thinking and that was a nice feeling. I see today an artist where I once saw a musician. I see a style where once that style didn't always exist. There's something there that by the grace of God this hard work and practice paid off.

"I looked up and wondered how people could have such distinctive styles, and I'm proud of the fact that I have a distinctive style. So I look forward to the years that lie ahead of me, and to find out especially as a songwriter if the songs that are starting to come out of me today are better than anything I've ever written in my life. And I think it's just age and experience, partly... So I have this new-found freedom about my music. It's going to be an interesting next 10 years to see where this road leads me. And I look forward to it with great enthusiasm and high hopes."

-Teresa George

**"I see today an artist
where I once saw a
musician."**

**"Lyle could've run for
mayor and won."**

Advice to the rookies:

"The piece of knowledge that I would give someone new coming along is don't waste your time chasing what's hot, because it's already happened. By the time you get signed, and it happens for you, it will be over. Your best shot is to be who God intended you to be. Be the very best at that as you possibly can. Leave the results up to God, and don't even begin to think that you can manipulate the scores."

The Wild Bunch:

"People take the position that road musicians are wild or just gallivanting around or that they have no conscience at all about what they did. This band has been together for five years, and ever single guy is married, and I've never once seen them falter. I think the hardest thing for me is making the right choices. And I've learned a lot of great lessons. It took everyone one of those steps to make me the man I am today."

Honeymoon in Vegas:

On his three failed marriages, he says, "Part of it is just being a kid and then growing up the way I did in the Church of Christ. I just didn't date. I married. I figured, 'Well, you know, if we're going to be in this thing, then we'd better get in this thing.' Maybe it's not quite the right way to think about things. It takes a long time to get to know somebody, and there's a lot of changes that people face... Nothing is greater, and nothing is worse."



SRO '97

Looking for talent?

SRO HAS IT!

Looking for one opportunity to see some of Country Music's finest new talents? Then SRO '97 is the place to be. The SRO talent showcases have traditionally provided talent buyers, concert promoters and others in the music industry with a prime chance to see for themselves the diverse talent available within Country Music. Early in their careers, superstars such as Vince Gill, Garth Brooks, Alabama, George Strait, Trisha Yearwood and Lorrie Morgan, among many others, played SRO showcases. This year's SRO lineup will be no exception, as 18 unique artists will showcase during the event.

In addition to SRO's usual showcases, this year's event introduces a new showcase element, Club Crossroads, which will feature five artists who are not solely marketed with mainstream Country radio in mind.

"The talent showcases this year will provide a different atmosphere than in past years," explains Barry Coburn, chairman of CMA's SRO committee. "The showcases will be staged in a more intimate, club-like environment, as we'll eliminate the 'barn' feel of the showcase area. It's our hope that the showcases will be much like seeing a show in a club. In addition, the number of acts showcasing has been reduced, as we felt registrants were overly inundated with talent the past few years. Due to that reduction, showcase slots were highly coveted, as we had more than four times as many submissions as we had slots available."

HERE'S WHO YOU'LL



Gary Allan



Sherrie Austin



Buffalo Club



Anita Cochran



Deryl Dodd



David Kersh



Mila Mason



Johnny Paycheck

SEE AT SRO '97:



Michael Peterson



Ricky Skaggs



Ray Vega



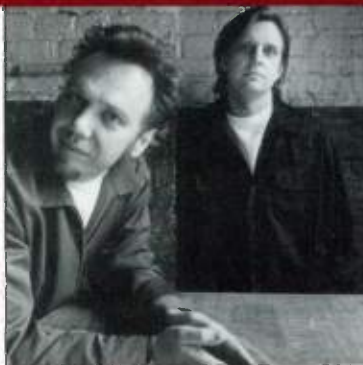
Billy Yates



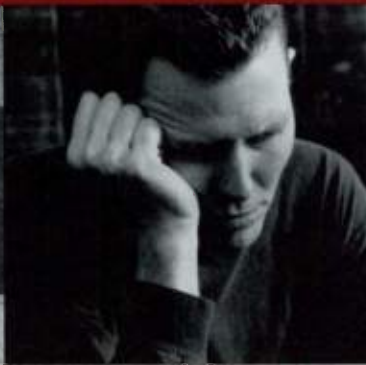
Troy Cassar-Daly

From Australia

Club Crossroads will feature:



The Delevantes



Robbie Fulks



Jack Ingram



The Thompson Brothers Band



Kim Richey

SRO '97 SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Exhibit Set-up
 9 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
 Registration Open
 1 - 3 p.m.
 International Conference
 3:15 - 5:45 p.m.
 Managing The Tour: Creating A Standard for
 Doing Business on the Road
 6 - 7 p.m.
 Opening Reception
 6 - 10 p.m.
 Exhibit Marketplace Grand Opening
 7 - 9:30 p.m.
 Showcase #1

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
 Registration Open
 9:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Exhibit Marketplace Open
 10:30 a.m. - Noon
 Panel: The ABC's of the Touring Industry
 Associations (with representatives from IEBA,
 NACPA, IAAM, IAFE)
 2 - 3:30 p.m.
 Focus Group: Clubs & Mid-Level Artists
 3:45 - 5 p.m.
 Focus Group: Traffic Jam: Exploring Facilities
 Gridlock
 6 - 8:30 p.m.
 Showcase #2
 10 p.m. - Midnight
 Alternative Showcase

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

9 a.m.
 Registration Open
 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Exhibit Marketplace
 10 a.m. - Noon
 Radio Forum
 Noon - 2 p.m.
 Lunch Break
 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
 Town Meeting: State Of The Industry
 6:30 - 8 p.m.
 SRO Awards Pre-Show Reception
 8 - 10 p.m.
 SRO Awards Show and Presentation

It's been said they are reviving the soul of Country Music. Leading an alternative Country movement. Restoring downtown Nashville to its musical glory. Sounds like the five members of BR5-49 are men on a mission. They say they're just having a little fun.

After playing in different parts of the country with other bands, Gary Bennett, Don Herron, "Smilin'" Jay McDowell, Chuck Mead and "Hawk" Shaw Wilson came together a couple of years ago and began a regular gig at Robert's Western World, located in Nashville's recently revitalized but then less-than-sparkling lower Broadway. Eventually people lined the street to get in.

REVOLUTIONARIES

Chuck: That's pretty heavy to lay on someone, isn't it? All we're doing is just pickin' music that we like. As long as we continue to do that, we don't have to worry about being saviors or anything. It's great that people are recognizing the fact that we do things simply because we like it, not because it's commercially successful - because obviously it's not commercially successful.

We've reached a lot of people, though. We do a lot of things like open up for the Black Crowes, and now we see those fans coming to our shows. So basically, we're spreading the word. If we can play the Poke Sallet festival in Kentucky and then open for Bob Dylan, that's a wide range of people you're getting to.

Gary: I think the fans are the saviors of Country Music, because they're the ones that are going out and supporting it and buying the records.

GRATEFUL DEAD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Record sales have hit a few hundred thousand with little radio play but a staunch fan base, leading one Arista Nashville exec to dub them the Grateful Dead of Country Music.

Jay: I'd like that to be true.

Donny: But the difference is our fans take showers.

Jay: We just want to be what we are.

THE MASTER PLAN

When BILLBOARD featured the guys in a cover story before any record deal was underway, rumors stirred about a great marketing scheme. "Yeah, right," they say in synchronized sarcasm.

Jay: I've been told several times, "It was such a great idea you guys had about starting at Roberts." And I'd be like, what?

Chuck: We just got drawn down there to lower Broadway because that was the real spirit of Country Music, in the shadow of the Ryman.

Gary: There's freedom there...The only thing that we were adamant about when we met is we hated to see the way things had come to in Nashville. Tourists go to a bar wanting to see some guy that is just about to break knock

Donny: It's a blast. We're getting to go out and play originals and play music that we cut our teeth on...

Gary: The neatest thing for me is looking at it from the outside. No matter how hard we're working now, it's not as hard as packing bricks or having to work out in the rain all day, which all of us have done at times. We're writing and playing and the records we're making are being put out all over the world. We've got that going for us. No matter how rich or famous you get, the music is getting spread around and that's really what it's about. In 40 or 50 years, people will look back at the '90s and see that this was the music. It's part of history. They'll look back and say this had some soul in it.

ALTERNATIVE COUNTRY

While they relish influences ranging from Faron Young to the Stray Cats, they want to clearly establish their own sound. Shaw has coined the phrase "Ya'llternative".

Donny: We don't fall into a particular category. People call us rockabilly sometimes. I guess we're part rockabilly, part Country, part alternative, we do some old jazz swing stuff, bluegrass.

Gary: We should be at the top of all the charts now! It's a great thing to have a number one song, I'm sure, but you can't pay a lot of attention to that because it's too distracting. There's way too many other things.



them dead, and they want to be able to say, "I saw that guy in Nashville." There wasn't any of that, because hope is so far gone for that kind of an approach to things.

LOOK, NO HANDS

If it hadn't been for the "hands off" approach offered by Arista Nashville and President Tim DuBois, the guys may never have signed to a major label. They brought along their own producers and are recording their third album.

Gary: They have never pushed us on one issue, ever. We got called in to talk to Tim a couple of weeks ago...We thought here comes the clamp. We're going to be trying to find a hit song. Once again I walked out of there with my tail between my legs knowing I shouldn't have felt that way, because all he had to say was that this record had to be more us, more originals...They understand that you need to be yourself and show people that you have something that's different.

HARDEST WORKING BAND IN WORLD

The band has hit the road for more than 200 shows a year, visiting everywhere from Amsterdam to Washington.

Like originals Junior Brown or the Mavericks, who have also landed major label deals without landing extensive airplay, BR5-49 is a favorite among their peers.

Gary: I think the musicians are pushing for freedom and the more that Junior gets it, the more they get it, the more we get it. I think that's why the Mavericks have been so interested in us from the very get go, because we were doing to a huge degree exactly what we wanted to do. I think they thought, "If this works, we'll even get more freedom." Besides being our friends, they always pushed us on, just like we always mention Wayne Hancock and the Deraillers and Dale Watson. The bigger it gets, the stronger it gets.

The bottom line is if we sell some records, other people will get to play on their own records. People will start to focus on originality. That's what is selling. It will take some time, but you can already see things happening on Broadway. More of the old-time approach to things - you learn how to sing and play and you go out there and if you're good enough, you'll turn their heads.

-Shannon Heim



REMINDER: Second CMA Awards Ballot Mailed

Be on the lookout for your second ballot for this year's CMA Awards, which were mailed to individual members in good standing on July 2.

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. Ballots *must* be returned to Deloitte & Touche. CMA cannot accept ballots.

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:

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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 |

CMA AWARDS TICKET INFORMATION

Ticket order forms for the 31st Annual CMA Awards will be mailed to CMA's sterling and organizational members by July 7. The gala event featuring Country Music's most popular entertainers will be broadcast live on CBS Television from Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House on Wednesday, September 24.

If you do not receive your order form by July 15, contact CMA's special projects department at (615) 244-2840.

Remember: CMA Awards tickets are for use by CMA members only. Tickets to the private event are not sold to the general public.

ACTIVITIES DURING CMA WEEK 1997

- Sunday, September 21** Nashville Songwriters Hall Of Fame Reception and Dinner
- Monday, September 22** ASCAP Country Awards Reception and Dinner / Opryland Hotel
- Tuesday, September 23** BMI Country Awards Reception and Dinner / BMI Building
- Wednesday, September 24** 31st Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry House/ Broadcast live on CBS TV
Post CMA Awards Party / Opryland Hotel
- Thursday, September 25** CMA Annual Membership Meeting & Board of Directors Election
SESAC Country Awards Reception and Dinner
Reunion of Professional Entertainers Reception, Dinner and Entertainment

CMA's board continues to evolve strategic objectives to further the development of the Country Music industry. One of our target objectives this year has been in the area of corporate marketing, and we've undertaken quite a few programs to achieve those goals. Now that we've reached the half-way point of the year, I would like to share some of the excitement and successes of those activities.

April could have been dubbed "CMA On The Road Month" as we joined forces with Interep and CMT/TNN to present America's Sold On Country, half-day seminars targeting corporate and advertising agency executives in New York and Chicago. Artists were an integral part of the program, with performances by John Berry, Matraca Berg, Suzy Bogguss, Jim Lauderdale, Raul Malo of The Mavericks, Mindy McCready, Brady Seals and Ray Vega. These two events resulted in a CMA presentation advocating a multi-million dollar ad campaign to one of the nation's biggest advertisers as well as Nabisco's commitment to be involved with CountryFest. Other attendees included representatives from BBDO, Best Foods, Chicago Mayor's Office of Special Events, DDB Needham, Frankel & Company, Grey Advertising, J. Walter Thompson, Leo Burnett, Meridian Perfumes, Nivea, Ogilvy & Mather, Schering Plough, Scholastic, U.S. Postal Service, United Airlines and Young & Rubicam. Additional America's Sold On Country presentations are currently being planned.

In May, CMA and ADVERTISING AGE presented the second Marketing With Country Music conference in Nashville (see story on page 11). This unique entertainment and education event put 250 corporate marketing and music industry executives together for 2 1/2 days. An advertorial reaching 70,000 ADVERTISING AGE subscribers ran prior to the conference providing marketers with a good overview of the industry. Feedback from the conference has been overwhelmingly positive, with CMA receiving a number of calls from corporate marketers interested in utilizing Country Music in upcoming promotional marketing campaigns.

As Fan Fair approached, CMA's Marketing Department moved into the "hosting role". More than 80 corporate marketers from Greyhound to J.C. Penney attended CountryFest on June 14th in Dallas as guests of CMA. Back in Nashville, CMA welcomed several corporate marketers including Ford and J. Walter Thompson, providing them with an "inside look" at Fan Fair.



In February, CMA participated in the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) National Convention in Philadelphia, presenting an educational panel focusing on the music from an artist's standpoint with Marty Stuart, Trisha Yearwood and Robert Reynolds and Paul Deakin of The Mavericks. CMA also had an exhibit booth, where we distributed product on behalf of the labels and collected names of campus entertainment buyers who were interested in promoting Country concerts. Several agents have reported receiving calls from campuses checking on availabilities. CMA has prepared a feature article showing campuses how easy it is to book and produce Country - especially new, developing acts - for inclusion in the September issue of NACA's PROGRAMMING MAGAZINE. CMA will also target college buyers for SRO this fall.

Of course, throughout the spring the marketing department has been working with a number of other projects and supporting specific requests from CMA membership. The CMA Country-themed FSI (free standing insert) program reached 55 million households on June 29th and will include 13 advertisers from OFF! to Gladlock. Several advertisers including Coca-Cola/Texaco, Stetson Cologne and Crystal Springs Water will have CMA Awards sweepstakes programs in stores during June and July. And the marketing department has begun to meet with marketing partners to discuss ideas for 1998, when we celebrate CMA's 40th anniversary.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the volunteer leaders who served on committees and task forces to plan these various events and activities. My sincerest admiration and thanks also to my incredible associates on CMA's professional staff who have flawlessly executed all these complex and significant activities.

We are beginning to see a great deal of momentum and excitement being generated in the corporate arena. CMA's commitment to the aggressive marketing of Country Music domestically and worldwide has never been stronger, and I am confident that we will continue to see these efforts pay off for each segment of our membership.



MARKETING

with Country Music

A Music Lesson For Marketers

CMA's second Marketing With Country Music conference, presented in mid-May, was a resounding success, as over 200 registrants including representatives from American Airlines, Blockbuster, Coca-Cola, Lifestyle Marketing Group, Nabisco, Time Warner Cable Direct and UniRoyal Tire, convened upon Nashville for the entertainment and educational confab. The seminar was presented by CMA in conjunction with ADVERTISING AGE at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel.

Ken Kragen, a 30-year entertainment industry veteran whose credits include managing clients such as Kenny Rogers, Travis Tritt and Trisha Yearwood, kicked off the conference with a rousing keynote address. Kragen told registrants, "We're going to show you the money in these two days. Country Music can show you the money because it's a \$3 billion industry - not just with the \$1.8 billion in



Prior to her performance at the Ryman Auditorium, Trisha Yearwood is greeted by (l to r) CMA's Ed Benson, John Davidoff of DDB Needham and manager Ken Kragen.

record sales, but with touring, merchandising and sponsorships."

Panel discussions, roundtable sessions and educational presentations were used to familiarize marketing and advertising industry decision-makers on opportunities available with Country Music to meet brand marketing objectives. In addition, entertainment was a key element of the seminar's success, with each

performer on the agenda receiving a standing ovation.

Kathy Mattea and Mark Chesnutt delivered outstanding acoustic sets at the Wildhorse Saloon, while Mandy Barnett opened for Trisha Yearwood at the Ryman Auditorium. The conference offered some

intimate moments during CMA's Acoustic Café, a guitar pull at Caffe Milano. And although she didn't perform, Tammy Wynette graciously opened her home to registrants for the event's closing reception.

Mark Chesnutt performs for conference participants at Nashville's Wildhorse Saloon.



Panel sessions covered a variety of topics. "Using Personalities As Pitchmen: The Artist As Spokesman", featured Charlie Daniels, Neal McCoy, MC Potts and Diamond Rio's Marty Roe discussing what they look for in a sponsorship. "A lot of people stereotype (Country



Wrapping up CMA's Acoustic Cafe are (l to r) Kim Richey, John Berry, Marty Stuart, Billy Dean and Paul Brandt.

Music artists)," said McCoy. "We're capable of selling anything."

Daniels offered the insight of an industry veteran when he said, "Artist and corporate sponsorships have been abused in the past. Some corporations have given money to artists who don't give a damn about the product, and it has hurt everyone to some extent." He later cautioned, "Instead of going for the star where maybe you're not gonna get your money's worth of star value all the time, you've better off to get someone's who's believable."

Roe addressed the issue of integrity. "There are very few Dennis Rodmans in this business. Our industry has more folks with their feet on the ground than other industries."

"Music Industry Yellow Pages" offered registrants insight into the how's and who's of the Country Music industry. Panelist Tim DuBois, president of Arista/Nashville, set the stage when he said, "The most critical part of what we do is finding a great song." When assessing the corporate opportunities available to artists in different career stages, he



Tammy Wynette graciously opened her home for the event's closing reception. Thanking her for the hospitality are (l to r) CMA's Ed Benson, Nick Ferrari of ADVERTISING AGE and AristoMedia's Jeff Walker, Chairman of the Marketing With Country Music task force.

..... Roping in Distribution with Country Music" presented a look at how
 to turn your advertising and promotional dollars into retail success.
 Moderator Paul Hastaba, vice president, general manager, CMT:
 Country Music Television, reminded the audience, "There are more
 brands and products than ever before and more outlets...The bot-

Kathy Mattea fields some questions from conference participants following her performance at the Wildhorse Saloon. CMA's Ed Benson handles the emcee duties.



stated, "In a new artist situation, most of the things are an endorsement of the lifestyle, like boots and jeans. A mid-level artist can get involved with more well-known brands. When they become enough of a personality and become a superstar, the money gets big because the company pays for that personality."

"Keep the Cash Drawer Ringing: Roping in Distribution with Country Music" presented a look at how to turn your advertising and promotional dollars into retail success. Moderator Paul Hastaba, vice president, general manager, CMT: Country Music Television, reminded the audience, "There are more brands and products than ever before and more outlets...The bottom line is you have to create a whole lot of noise to break through the clutter and get your message to the consumer."

Renee Geddis, national director of product promotions, Blockbuster Entertainment and Bill Lardie, president, Anderson Merchandisers, contributed their success stories of approaching the Country lifestyle through "grassroots marketing" which entails fitting into the consumers everyday lifestyle.



Panelists (l to r) MC Potts, Neal McCoy, Marty Roe of Diamond Rio and Charlie Daniels discussed "Personalities As Pitchmen: The Artist as Spokesman".

"How can you make a good deal and not end up in a carpetbagger deal?" was the question asked by Marc Oswald, CEO, Avalon Entertainment Group, in the panel "Carpetbagger or Corporate Genius? Investing in Country Music". Oswald, along with Mike Martinovich, partner, Mansfield-Martinovich, presented a plan of attack that outlined the answer to that question. Oswald stressed the importance of "getting everyone in from day one" with the goal of being able to say, "It was our first year. It was a total success, and we hope to make it better next year."



Stan Novak from General Motors gets acquainted with Tammy Wynette during the conference's closing reception.

Case studies profiling the success Fruit of the Loom and Kraft have had with Country Music were also presented. Kraft's Nikol Osborn keyed in on Country's "fit" with her company by saying, "The Country Music consumer is the Kraft consumer. Kraft is a very heart-land company."

Fruit of the Loom's Roger Blankstein also affirmed the appropriate match of Country Music with his marketing objectives. "Research confirmed that the Country Music listener and the Fruit of the Loom consumer are one and the same. Fruit of the Loom and Country Music share the same images - all-American, appealing to traditional values and representing a casual lifestyle." He concluded his presentation with, "Country Music is huge, and you need to think huge if you want to capitalize on the Country Music consumer."

Keynote speaker Ira Mayer, president of EPM Communications and publisher of ENTERTAINMENT MARKETING LETTER, addressed "The State Of Entertainment Marketing". Afterward, Mayer said of the seminar, "The opportunity that the players on all sides have to network is tremendous. I think the particular value of this conference is that it used very effectively two case studies to segue into a very nuts-and-bolts discussion of what every party involved in a Country promotion brings to the table. CMA is in unique position in that it took something that was a sales opportunity and made it informational."



Backstage at the Ryman Auditorium, Trisha Yearwood confers with Mandy Barnett and Kim Richey, each of whom joined her on stage.



Ira Mayer of EPM Communications touched on the state of entertainment marketing today.

JUNIOR BROWN



Junior Brown saunters into his publicist's office on 16th Avenue dressed a little like your high-school principal. He's shy and unassuming, but at the same time happy to see you and ready to talk music, movies and blue jeans.

He's come a long way from early explorations with psychedelic surf music to breaking ground as a songwriter and a mean guitsteel player (his own combination of guitar and steel).

"I was playing in San Francisco the other night, and Bonnie Raitt - she'd come to the show to see me - said, 'Wait till you see that audience. The different lifestyles and types of people that are out there. Some of them have hats like yours on, and some of them have pink hair, and some of them are senior citizens.'"

The variety of fans he attracts may have something to do with the diverse influences on his music.

"I started playing clubs in '66, when the surf music was just going out and the psychedelic was just coming in. Humble Harvey was the name of my group. The song 'Pipe Run' in my

"I don't want to come off like an oddball."

surf medley came out at that time, with that band. Then, of course, I started playing Country full-time in the clubs around 1970.

"Rock started getting really wimpy around that time, around 1970, '71. I liked Country, and I felt like that was what I would grow into. Rock

became less interesting, and Country became more interesting. I don't think there's any denying that the great rock guitar players of the '60s were superior to the ones in the '70s and '80s. Well, I guess people would deny that. There's exceptions, people who would say, 'Well, Eddie Van Halen was better than Jimi Hendrix'. But I just don't believe that. That's not to say that there wasn't any good rock after that, but it was really starting to thin out, from my perspective. I'm just not much of a rocker. I do a little bit of that as far as the guitar playing, but my heart has always been in Country Music."

The sheer originality of his tunes has sometimes locked him out of radio play. He doesn't dwell on that.

"I've always got it in my mind that I don't want to come off like an oddball. But at the same time, if I think a song is good, then I'm not going to dress it up or strip it down just to please a certain kind of audience. If I think it's good, I'll do it. I'll do it the way I hear it, and hear it the way it should be done. I think a song like 'Highway Patrol' is closer to what mainstream radio would play than 'My Wife Thinks You're Dead.' But at the same time, I wouldn't have wanted to release 'Highway Patrol' and not 'My Wife Thinks You're Dead' because of that."

He's found acceptance among his musical peers and has landed in a feature film as well as his own commercial for The Gap.

The movie, entitled "Still Breathing," stars Brendan Frasier, Celeste Holm and Lou Rawls.

"It's a love story. Two people meet at a club, and the girl is supposed to be meeting me. She accidentally thinks that Brendan Frasier is me, because she's never seen me. It's a blind-date type thing. He gets the girl. She's sort of a hustler - she gets these rich guys to take her out and get interested in her, and then she takes their money and dumps them. I've got a very small part. They contacted me, and the director was apparently a fan of mine."

They also used one of his songs. "It's going to be on my new album called 'Long Walk Back to San Antonio.'"

Junior's Gap ad has been showing in United Artists Cinemas across the country and will move to television, where it will run on MTV, VH-1, E! and other networks. Though Junior and his wife, Tanya Rae, rely on suits for their stage attire, they don the trademark denim for the spot. "You wouldn't believe it, but, yeah. They have a certain Gap theme that we play. I'm going to have to lose some weight so that I look good in a pair of those jeans." With only a few

"I'm always trying to come up with original ideas."

artists and actors hand-picked for the spots, Junior may be hipper than he thinks.

Fans can also watch for a new album, currently in the works. "I have done a little bit of it. I'm getting ready to go back and just really plow through it. I try to make every album a little bit different. It will have its own unique aspects of being a new album, and it will also be more of the same as far as my writing style."

On tour with artists ranging from Alan Jackson to The Mavericks, little time is left to dedicate to songwriting. "It's been very tough being on the road a lot. I get a week or two off here and there, and I just try and write during that time. I have a lot of songs that I've been waiting to record. But I always like to have that new fresh

"Blues is blues, you know."

thing...on a couple of my records, there have been songs that I have written actually in the studio.

"Like a blues song or something - a lot of blues songs can sound the same and you can write your own lyrics to them and make them your own, as far as the instrumentation. Blues is blues, you know. Why use somebody else's lyrics? I write my own. That was the case for that 'Guitsteel Blues'.

"That was written, I think, a couple of days before I went into the studio. Pretty quickly, because I already had the music, I already had

like a wammer-jammer type of song. You do this progression fast sort of swing blues thing. And it was easy to write the words to."

A genuine original, Junior doesn't let current musical trends sway his sound. "I don't really listen to anything, because I'm always trying to come up with original ideas. I'm trying to keep my mind clear to create new ideas. The influences that I've had that show themselves in some of the styles I do are all stuff I've listened to long ago. Every once in awhile, I put on an old record, but very rarely. I like a lot of the new artists, but I don't really listen to very much of it."

Don't expect to see any Keystone Kops or Amazon women in his newest video, "GuitSteel Blues", like some of his other far-out clips.

"It's like a fast, rockin' sort of blues. I wanted it to have that energy of the live show. We tried to make it look natural, so it didn't involve lots of skits and things that are really the most difficult. It's gonna have a lot of high energy feeling to it, a lot of action as far as the stage shots. They did really a lot of close-ups of my fingers on the guitar. They had this long telescopic looking lens so they could get right up on my fingers. I was glad I cleaned my fingernails, 'cause it's right there!"

"I've been fortunate to work with a couple of really good directors. They involve me in the process, and that's pretty much understood before we even start talking - that I will take their ideas and then add my own input.

(Like having the stack of cans fall on him and having Junior tattooed on the arm of the Amazon woman in his "My Wife Thinks You're Dead" video.) This latest one is really my own idea. I have done enough funny videos, and I don't like to be typecast as some kind of a comedian. Although, it depends on the song. I've had a couple of the humorous songs: 'Venom Wearing Denim' and 'My Wife Thinks You're Dead', which call for funny treatment. But this new one, I really wanted to see some sweat."

- Shannon Heim



awards

Jim & Jesse McReynolds, the legendary bluegrass duo who recently celebrated their 50th anniversary in show business, has been selected to receive a *1997 National Heritage Fellowship*, bestowed by the *National Endowment for the Arts*. Actress Jane Alexander, chairman of the National Endowment of for the Arts, said of the Fellowship, "Our highest honor in the folk and traditional arts recognizes masters whose extraordinary talents spring from the heart of home and community. With vision and dedication, these (honorees) pass skills from generation to generation, bringing new life to invaluable traditions and shaping a nation where our difference become our strength." An award ceremony and concert will be held in September in Washington, D.C.



media

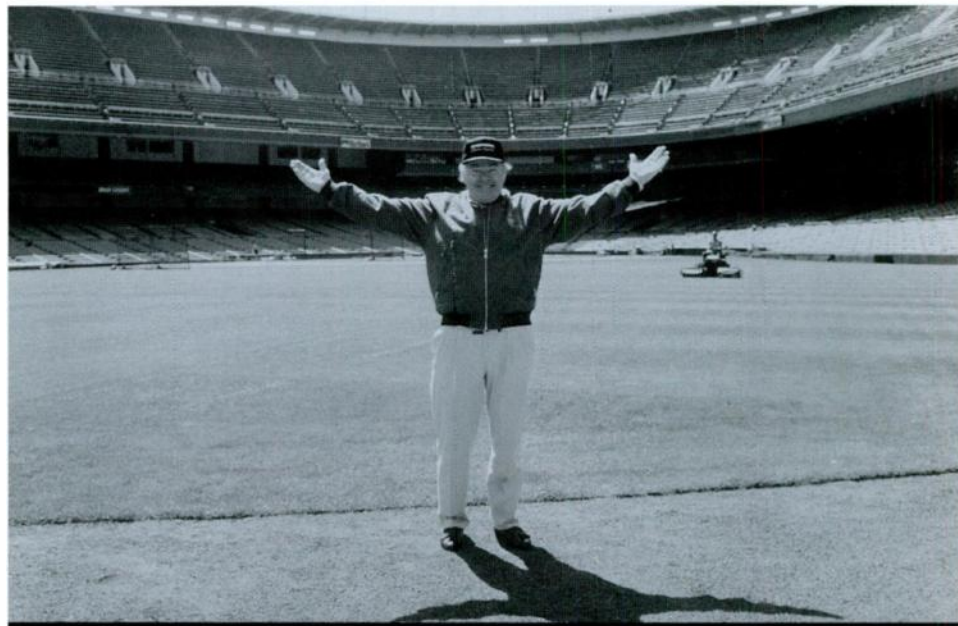
Schirmer Books has published "Eddy Arnold: From Tennessee Plowboy to Nashville Star" by Michael Streissguth. It chronicles Arnold's success as a Country star. The 304-page volume is available in bookstores nationwide or can be ordered by calling (800) 223-2336 or writing Schirmer Books Order Department, 200 Old Tappan Road, Old Tappan, NJ 07675-0795.

AristoMedia has released "Status of Country Video Outlets", a comprehensive annual report which provides individual, comprehensive reviews of the available video outlets to Country artists and labels. The report also includes information on up-to-date technology and new legislation related to the visual medium. Call (615) 269-7071 to obtain a copy.



new companies

James Stroud will head the Nashville office of DreamWorks Records, slated to open later this year. The respected industry veteran, who also heads James Stroud Productions and is co-owner of Hamstein Cumberland Music Group, was formerly president of Giant Records Nashville. Stroud's production credits include Clint



While on a recent trip to New York, Country legend Roy Clark attended his first-ever New York Yankee game. Clark was a close friend of late Yankee great Mickey Mantle.

Black, Toby Keith, Clay Walker, Rhett Akins, Lorrie Morgan and a host of others. Since 1989, his albums have sold more than 50 million units, spurred by 99 top 10 singles - 51 of which charter number one.

Hollywood Records has announced the formation of a Nashville-based record label that will specialize in Country Music. Industry veteran Randy Goodman has been named president of the as-yet unnamed label. He formerly was senior vice-president and general manager of the RCA Label Group in Nashville. Office information will be announced shortly.

Cathy Gurley, an executive with 20 years experience in marketing development and strategic planning, has re-opened Gurley & Co., a marketing and publicity firm. Gurley was formerly vice president, creative services for Liberty Records. Gurley & Co.'s roster includes new Atlantic artist Matt King, Warner Bros. duo Crawford/West and Monterey Artists. The company can be reached at P.O. Box 150657, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 269-0474; fax (615) 385-2052.

Kathy Allmand has formed Front Page Publicity, Inc., a Nashville-based PR firm representing recording artists and entertainment-related corporations. The company, which represents John Berry and Naomi Judd, is located at 5174 Waddell Hollow

Road, Franklin, TN 37064; (615) 591-2442; fax (615) 591-2261.

NorthStar Entertainment LLC is a newly formed management company providing professional management for a new area of talent including painters, sculptors, photographers and other creative talent. The company is headed by Donna Cardellino. NorthStar Entertainment also joins with Star Destiny Entertainment to co-manage the Randall Brothers. The company is located at 9 Music Square South, Suite 288, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 377-3773; fax (615) 377-0510.

JoAnn Berry, founder of World Class Talent, has formed Berry Management Group. The address is PO Box 150845, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 665-0331; fax (615) 665-0330.

Producer Bob Keane launched a new Country division of historic independent label, DEL-FI Records, Inc., DEL-FI Nashville. The office is located at 9 Music Square South, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 252-8203 or (615) 321-0486; fax (615) 321-0384.



newsline

Career Records artist Lee Roy Parnell and Fender Guitars announce the release of

the Roadhouse Stratocaster model guitar. Fender launched a nationwide advertising campaign to coincide with both the release of the Roadhouse Stratocaster and Parnell's new album, *EVERY NIGHT'S A SATURDAY NIGHT*.

Joe Bonsall, lead tenor for the Oak Ridge Boys, presented "Molly", the first title of his new series of children's books, at the Bookexpo America Show in Chicago in June, where he signed books for bookstore buyers. "Molly" and the second book in the series, "The Home", will be released in October 1997.

The 10th Annual Merle Watson Memorial Festival drew over 45,000 people this year from more than 35 states and a dozen foreign countries. Total participation was up 18.6 percent from 1996. The estimated total economic impact of the 1997 MerleFest to Wilkes County is over \$3.4 million.

The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum has acquired a 3.2 acre site in downtown Nashville and has begun building the team that will launch a two-year, \$10 million fund campaign this summer. With project costs estimated at \$26 million, the 105,000 square-foot Country Music Hall of Fame, designed by Nashville's Tuck Hinton Architects, will include 45,000 square-feet of modern, secure gallery space, which will accommodate large environments and high tech exhibits as well as provide more ample space for the Foundation's extensive permanent collections. Public areas also include a 7,000 square-foot conservatory and a 200-seat theater. Funding for the relocation will come from multiple sources including the capital fund campaign, bonds, increased attendance and corporate sponsorship.

Aaron Tippin has departed from RCA Records by mutual decision. Tippin's final release for RCA is *GREATEST HITS AND THEN SOME*, which was released in April. Information regarding Tippin's next label affiliation will be forthcoming.

Kathy Mattea has taken a step in the fight against AIDS by joining with SAVE (Support the AIDS Vaccine Effort), a program that seeks to partner the AIDS Vaccine



Kevin Sharp and three of his co-stars get ready to shoot a public service announcement for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The campaign will begin airing in the next few months.

Evaluation Unit (AVEU) with business, civic organizations and individuals from our community to raise awareness of AIDS vaccine research and HIV/AIDS prevention. Mattea became the first partner in the SAVE Partnership and the honorary national spokesperson for the AIDS Vaccine Evaluation Group (AVEG).

Intersound Entertainment's Country Music publicity department has moved to Music Row. David Friedman will be working exclusively for the Country Music division as director of publicity. The office is located at 122 16th Avenue South, 3rd Floor, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 327-0770; fax (615) 327-1214.

NEW COUNTRY magazine has relocated its editorial offices to Nashville. The company is now located at 1207 17th Avenue South, Suite 202, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 322-5368; fax (615) 322-5338.



on the move

Bill Velez has signed a multi-year contract extension with SESAC to continue his role as president and chief operating officer. Additionally, Velez has been elected to SESAC's Board of Directors.

Blake Chancey has been appointed to vice president, A&R of Sony Music Nashville. Chancey was formerly the senior director, A&R, Columbia Nashville. In his new

position, he will be instrumental in setting and guiding the overall creative and strategic direction of Columbia and Epic Records Nashville. Chancey also will be heading up the A&R responsibilities for Sony's new alternative label, Lucky Dog.

Patrick Quigley has been named executive vice president and general manager of Capitol Nashville. Quigley will be responsible for the general management of Capitol Nashville's day-to-day operations. He will oversee the sales, marketing, promotion, publicity and artist development functions at the label reporting to president and CEO Scott Hendricks. Judy McDonough has been named director of publicity. McDonough will continue to work closely with national print and television media to secure publicity opportunities for Capitol Nashville artists. She previously held the position of associate director of publicity for the label. Joanna Carter has been named director of video development. Carter will oversee all aspects of music video production for Capitol Nashville's roster of artists. She was previously associate director of video development for the label. Carlton Davis has been named associate director of production. Davis will be responsible for creating and maintaining the label's single and album schedules, including establishing A&R deadlines and long-range strategic planning. He oversees the production of all CD and cassette packaging and promotional materials.



Capitol Nashville president Scott Hendricks (right) dropped in on Emilio's (center) recent video shoot for "She Gives". David Abbott directed the clip.

Arista Nashville announces the promotion of two sales and marketing personnel, Deb Markland and Kelly Lynas. Markland assumes the newly created position of associate director, sales and consumer marketing, where she will oversee the consumer marketing duties while taking on the New York and Boston BMG branches as her sales territories. Lynas assumes the position of associate director, sales and marketing and will take on San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles and Dallas BMG branch areas. Lynas will continue working out of the Dallas BMG branch office.

Step One Records announces changes within the company's promotion department. Vice president of promotion Buzz Ledford, Gavin rep Teresa Johnson/Chance and R&R regional Roy Perry exit the company. Linda Johnson has been upped to vice president of promotion. Todd Mooring moves to national from regional. Sharon Pennington will move to sales to assist vice president sales/marketing Jeff Brothers. Lynn Reed moves to sales representative from customer service.

Michele Cedzich has joined Asylum Records as new manager of creative services. She will be responsible for advertising, album design, photography and video production. She was formerly with Mercury Nashville.

Mark Ketchem has been appointed management associate at Ten Ten Management. In his new position, he will assist in the daily

management of Ten Ten artists in addition to assisting in the publishing workings of Ten Ten Music Group. He was formerly affiliated with Billy Joe Royal.

Bob Cannon has been hired as editor-in-chief of NEW COUNTRY Magazine, replacing David Sokol, who departs to pursue other interests. The magazine's headquarters will shift from Peterborough, NH to it's Nashville office.

Calvin Gilbert joins Westwood One as its Nashville-based producer/correspondent, writing "Westwood One Country Prep" and producing "Celebrity

Connections" from Nashville. He will continue as associate editor of Radio & Records.

Gary F. Roth has been promoted to assistant vice president of legal & business affairs, performing rights for BMI. He will supervise the legal matters of BMI writers and publishers.

Clay Bradley has joined Opryland Music Group as creative manager. He will be responsible for recruiting writers and marketing their songs. He was formerly with BMI.

Tom Paquin has joined Noble Vision Music Group, Inc. of Nashville. He previously was producing commercial jingles with Penguin Productions.

Kim Rygh recently joined Radio One Networks as

the affiliate sales representative for the Northeastern U.S. and the Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana regions. Formerly she was with Disney/ABC as a regional marketing manager.

Michael Henderson has been appointed to director of affiliate sales for Jones Radio Network. In this position he will oversee the sales department and eight regional sales managers. Henderson most recently served as vice president of sales and marketing at Paragon Research, Inc.



signings

MANAGEMENT: Ruby Lovett to GC Management...PUBLISHING: Sunny Russ to Starstruck Writers Group...Dan Truman of Diamond Rio to peermusic...Ed Hill to AMR/New Haven Music...Kix Brooks to Sony/ATV/Tree...RECORDING: Julie Reeves to Capitol Nashville...Michael Young to Tra-Star Records...Raybon Bros. to MCA/Nashville...Jim Wise to Critique Records...PUBLICITY: Kurth & Taylor and Bob House to The Mercer Group... BOOKING: Daryle Singletary to Buddy Lee Attraction...Gary Morris and Janie Fricke to Bobby Roberts Company.



Martina McBride and Clint Black (front row) united the talents of producers Paul Worley (back left) and James Stroud for a duet which will appear on the forthcoming albums of both singers.



music video

artist/label

Reba McEntire/MCA Nashville
 Trisha Yearwood/MCA Nashville
 Big House/MCA Nashville
 Anita Cochran/Warner Bros.
 Lee Ann Womack/Decca

title

"I'd Rather Ride Around With You"
 "How Do I Live"
 "You Ain't Lonely Yet"
 "Daddy Can You See Me"
 "The Fool"

director/producer

Gerry Wenner/Robin Beresford
 Gerry Wenner/Robin Beresford
 Jim Shea/Kevin Hinds
 Jim Shea/Maureen A. Ryan
 Gerry Wenner/Robin Beresford



International Update

•Mandy Barnett has piqued the interest of VH-1 Europe viewers, reports Head of Programming Mark Hagen. He found a copy of her video "Planet Of Love" (on the recommendation of Trisha Yearwood) and "began spot-playing it to see what would happen" throughout daily programming. Viewers called in wanting to know more about her. "We've never had a reaction like it. You just don't get calls. It was a fantastic response." The problem for the viewers is that the record hasn't been released in the UK.

•Almost 50 percent of the repertoire being placed by Amsterdam-based Rondor Music Publishing for recording by Dutch artists is from Nashville songwriters, according to Yvonne Elenbaas, managing director of the company. Songs included on recent releases by major artists such as Rob de Nijs, Benny Nyman and Candy Dulfer include "The Thunder Rolls", "I Can Make You Love Me", "If Tomorrow Never Comes" and many more.

•Warner Music Sweden MD Sanji Tandan was again voted the most powerful man in Swedish music business when trade magazine TOPP40 recently conducted its annual poll of the most important and interesting people and companies in the music and media industries. Others whom the Swedish industry thinks are tops include:

- Most Important Music Publisher - Warner/Chappell
- Most Interesting Music Publisher - MCA Music Publishing
- Most Important Distributor - Record Service
- Most Interesting Distributor - Skandinavisk Musikdistribution (MD)
- Most Important Promoter - EMA Telstar
- Most Interesting Promoter - Motor
- Most Important & Most Interesting Newspaper - Expressen
- Most Important & Most Interesting TV - Per Sinding-Larsen (ZTV)

•BBC Radio 2's "Country Club" music show recently was voted tops by Dutch listeners for a second year. David Allan presents the daily program to listeners in Holland via cable and satellite, and Dutch listeners are tuning in by the thousands.

•Family Brown - the Canadian group that released 14 albums and 41 singles, had its own TV series and won numerous awards in its 22-year history - will be inducted to the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame of Honour during the 20th Annual Country Music Week '97 in September in Hamilton, Ontario. Also joining the Hall of Honour will be veteran record industry figure Sam Sniderman, the well-known individual retailer in Canada. His long-standing support of Country Music will be recognized with the Stan Klees Industry Builder Award.



Tammy Graham delivered an emotional performance while filming the video for "A Dozen Red Roses". The Career Records hit was directed by Bob Gabrielsen and produced by Susan Bowman and Tamara Brooks for The Collective.

datebook

*denotes international telephone number with country code in parentheses

July

26-27 Craonne Sur Arzon Festival / Craonne Sur Arzon, France / Contact Trisha Walker-Cunningham at (615) 269-0858

August

1-3 Mrogowo Festival / Mrogowo, Poland / Contact Trisha Walker-Cunningham at (615) 269-0858

September

12-13 Country Night Gstaad / Gstaad, Switzerland / Contact Trisha Walker-Cunningham at (615) 269-0858

October

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

Women Of Country Music Wow England

While Wynonna took her first promotional trip to the UK recently, Suzy Bogguss, Alison Krauss and Trisha Yearwood were touring the area as well. And about that same time, Garth Brooks wrapped up three sold-out dates in Dublin (sharing the stage with Yearwood and Susan Ashton), while Martina McBride (whose husband John is Garth's sound engineer) and Robert Reynolds of The Mavericks (married to Yearwood) came along for the ride.

One stop for Bogguss, Krauss and Yearwood as well as Dale Watson was in Manchester, England on May 25 for BBC's "Country Music Spectacular". The program will be broadcast on BBC Radio 2 August 25. The concert was just one of more than 90 events staged in Manchester during BBC Music Live '97.



Alison Krauss & Union Station

Following individual performances, the three women joined voices for an encore of "Farther Along", reported UK publicist Richard Wootton. "This is a song they all remembered from the Dolly Parton/Emmylou Harris/Linda Ronstadt album TRIO, except no one could recall the third verse. It was Sunday night (the night before the concert), and though we rang people in the UK and USA, we could find no one who had the album. Then Doug Crider, Suzy's husband, called up the song on the internet. He found dozens of entries, tapped into TRIO, which reduced it to about 10, then tapped "lyrics", and there they were." In the end, Wootton continued, "The performance was quite magical."

The concert was taped in the NYNEX arena, and 3,500 tickets were sold, reported Paul Fenn of Asgard Promotions, who brought the artists. "The venue looked very full, and there were excellent performances and audience reactions for everyone."

All three women performed elsewhere in Europe, and each tour did very well, Fenn continued. Yearwood's schedule included 10 other dates in the UK, Germany, Switzerland and Holland. Alison Krauss & Union Station visited Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and the UK for more than 10 additional shows. Bogguss continued on for shows in London and Glasgow.



Trisha Yearwood

"For Alison, the response each night from promoters and show audiences was amazingly strong. Suzy was overwhelmed by the strength of the audience reaction. This was continued through the tour (all sold out). It is extremely encouraging for the future. Trisha's ticket sales were very good. It was pleasing to see that Germany worked well. The label and their licensees were very pleased and have high hopes for the forthcoming single."

Wynonna's premier trip to the UK was a promotional powerhouse, hitting virtually all the largest television shows on the air: GMTV, "The National Lottery Show", VH-1, CMT, Channel 5 "Exclusive", NBC Europe "The Ticket", "Later With Jools" and "Kenny Live" in Dublin. "The National Lottery Show" is viewed by more than 10 million people in primetime. In its 18-months on the air, the program has played host to dozens of major pop acts. On the radio front, Wynonna's COLLECTION was picked as Album of the Week May 12 on BBC Radio 2 and could be heard on Heart FM as well as numerous regional stations. She also found time for interviews with major London newspapers including the *Independent* and the *Guardian*, in addition

to magazines such as MUSIC WEEK and COUNTRY MUSIC INTERNATIONAL.



Wynonna

Wynonna will return to Europe for a full tour this fall in support of her forthcoming. Plans are being made in conjunction with The Hit Label, Curb's UK licensee, whose compilation CDs include NASHVILLE ROCKS, NASHVILLE WITH LOVE, LINE DANCE FEVER I & II and WOMEN OF COUNTRY have been scoring significant sales.

Sherri

*Sherri Halford has taken a step in a new direction by launching **The Halford Company**, specializing in project management, creative direction and consulting.*

I feel good about this concept and it's been getting a very good reception. As far as I know, this has not really been done before. Most labels have a production and creative services person in-house. But times are changing, companies are downsizing and concerned about costs. Even if a company has someone in-house, they need to bring in another person to help with overload. My company offers a range of services including label copy coordination, creating and managing packaging budgets and deadlines, and printing and manufacturing services. I also consult on production/creative services department procedures and organization."

Halford entered the music industry as receptionist for MCA Records and worked her way up to vice president of production/creative services for Capitol Nashville/Liberty Records before forming her own company. She was creative director for *Asleep At the Wheel's* "Tribute To Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys", the 1994 Grammy Awards Best Recording Package.

"I've been fortunate to work with a lot of really good people. I've worked with John Berry, The Highwaymen, Tanya Tucker, Garth Brooks, Suzy Bogguss, Billy Dean, Deana Carter and others."

Halford's company caters to the needs of the client, even the client with a small budget that may not know where to turn or which direction to take.



"Everybody's looking for ways to save money, and outsourcing makes good financial sense. The key is to have a good vendor that is reliable and offers good service. Record labels would be my obvious client, especially the smaller labels. Typically a small label with a small artist roster can't afford an employee with the level of experience and skills that they want. And a benefits package adds another 25-35 percent to that salary cost. A label can hire someone like me that brings 12 years experience, a track record of having worked for major labels and the necessary

"Mainly, the artist should feel comfortable."

skills and knowledge, on a per project basis. I offer such a range of services that my clients can tailor my services to fit their needs.

"Nashville has an incredible talent pool of designers, photographers, graphic artists and printers. The key is finding someone who can help pull together the right creative team of people for the project and the budget. What I do with my clients is ask, 'What is your budget? What do you think you're getting for that budget?' And be honest with them about what they can and can't do for that amount of money. Sometimes their expectations are far greater than the budget. Part of my job is helping the client create a workable budget that will allow us to accomplish the results that they want and produce a finished product they are happy with. You can spend thousands of dollars putting together an elaborate pack

Halford **talentpool**

age, but there are times when a very simple package works just as well."

In the process of developing a new-sprung package for an artist, the music tends to be where it all starts. Often the album cover and packaging end up last on the food chain.

"Imaging and packaging are very important. The cover and the entire package is a marketing tool and has to convey the artists' image to the consumer. We're in the business of selling emotion and life experiences wrapped up in a great melody with a great voice. The package is part of the presentation and has to communicate the artists' personality and their music inside that package."

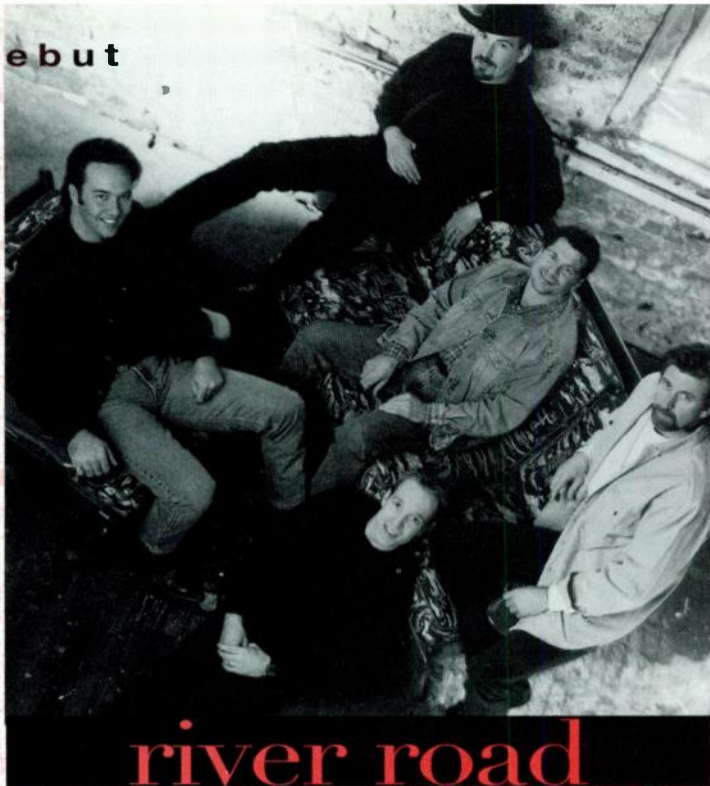
Does style come naturally or is it something that has to be developed?

"There have been some artists that just walk in the door and have it. I'd say Deana Carter is one of those artists that from the very first had a pretty good sense of her style, of who and what she is. You have to start with the basics. A good hair stylist, someone who understands facial structure and how to enhance it is important. Makeup is very, very key. And then wardrobe. The wardrobe stylist must be able to understand what you're trying to achieve and style the artist in a way that fits their personality and gives them a marketable image."

Putting together the perfect package has to be introduced from the start.

"I like to involve the artist from the beginning. Initially, I meet with the artist and manager to listen to the music and get to know the artist... where are they from, what's important to them? The label always has input on imaging and positioning that are taken into consideration. Mainly, the artist should feel comfortable. The image has to be real. If you try to make the artist something they're not, they won't convince the audience."

- Jana Albritton



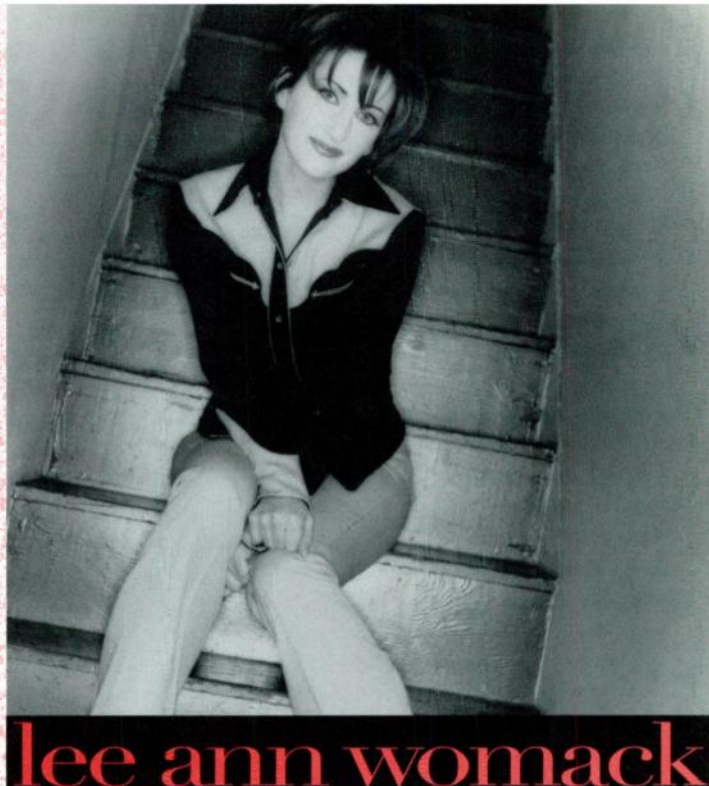
river road

Record Label: **Capitol Nashville**
 Album: **RIVER ROAD**
 Single: **"I Broke It, I'll Fix It"**
 Influences: **Sammy Kershaw, Johnnie Allen, Mason Dixon, Buckwheat Zydeco, Jimmy Buffett and Ty Herndon**

The talented players who make up River Road - lead singer and bass player Steve Grisaffe, guitarist Tony Ardoin, keyboardist Charles Ventre, steel guitar player Richard Comeaux and drummer Mike Burch - feed off of each other on stage. "We're more like a family than a band," says Ventre. "We've known each other for so long that everything we do on-stage is second nature."

It took some time to take advantage of the various talents that made up River Road and to find how they could complement each other. "There were a lot of nights at the beginning when we were playing to four walls, a table and chairs so we played for ourselves some of those jobs," says Ardoin. "It helped to tighten us as a band, but we also had a chance to experiment and see what happened."

Once they refined their sound - an eclectic mix of Country, blues and jazz with a healthy dose of adrenaline to shake things up - River Road became *the* band to see on the Louisiana/Texas/Mississippi club circuit, where they opened for such acts as Keith Whitley, Tanya Tucker, Garth Brooks and Diamond Rio.



lee ann womack

Record Label: **Decca Records**
 Album: **LEE ANN WOMACK**
 Manager: **Erv Woolsey**
 Booking Agency: **Buddy Lee Attractions**
 Publicist: **Rogers & Cowan / Los Angeles**
 Influences: **Bob Wills, Ray Price and Glen Campbell**

No Olympian ever trained harder for success than Lee Ann Womack has. From her earliest years in the small town of Jacksonville, Texas, she immersed herself in Country Music. Her father was a part-time disc jockey who frequently took her to the studio and let her pick out records for him to play. At home, the youngster would lie between the stereo speakers and - when weather conditions were right - absorb the music beaming in from the Grand Ole Opry. Instead of taking her senior trip with the rest of her class, she bargained with her parents for a visit to Nashville where she toured Music Row and watched TNN tapings.

As a staff writer for *Tree* since 1995, Womack has cowritten with such heavy hitters as Bill Anderson, Sam Hogin, Ed Hill and her producer, Mark Wright. Anderson has recorded one of their joint compositions for his new Warner Bros. album, and Ricky Skaggs is including a Womack cut on his upcoming Atlantic Records project. Best of all, one of Womack's songs earned a place on her own debut album.

Tracy Byrd

continued from page 3

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clubs more than anything else. There's differences to them though. The intimacy of the club is great, and being able to really jam. I don't ever feel comfortable jammin' in a coliseum, like just saying, 'Heck with the playlist! Let's do some Haggard!' In a bar, you feel pretty relaxed doing that. In a coliseum, I feel pretty much like I gotta stick with the show. But the coliseum...there's something about being in a place that puts goose bumps up the back of your neck, standing backstage ready to go on and they kill the house lights and the 10-12,000 people in there just start screaming. The echo, the way it's bouncing off the ceiling, is a pretty exciting thing."

Earlier this year, Tracy scored a huge hit with "Big Love". Many feel the single pushed his career up to a new level. "I think so, as far as musically. I don't know if it was another level or maybe I departed from my norm for a little bit. 'Big Love' (the single) is a little different for me. It's a little rockin' kinda thing, a little distorted guitar, which I had never really dealt with before. It really did have a big sound."

For every artist, the song search is a crucial career element, sometimes causing singers, musicians, producers and label execs to ask, "Is it enough to find a great song, or do you have to think about radio?" It's a question that might never be answered satisfactorily.

"We were just talking about that over dinner the other night. I've had some songs that stopped at two or three or four. I've had a lot of them. I've only had two number one records, but I've had a load of top fives. And part of it is that radio...there's the left side and there's the right side. There's stations that all play the right side, the pop stuff and that's what they really like. There's stations that will play traditional stuff. Then there's stations that will play both of it. I think that on the right, those pop-sided stations, that's usually where I come up a little short.

"I've only had two number one records, but I've had a load of top fives."

"I believe that more good things happen to you from hard work and confidence and faith."

"You can go in and cut formula hit records. We could do it no problem. I hear them all the time. But I don't want to cut formula hit records. There's a whole lot more to music. You don't want to be on stage every night singing songs that you really don't care about or feel proud of. That's why songs like 'Love Lessons' and 'Heaven In My Woman's Eyes' and 'Don't Take Her' are so special to me, because I love them. They're traditional Country

songs, and they really represent me well and what I want to do. I could go ahead and cut formula hit records, but I don't think I would be happy doing that. I might be more successful, but in the long run, I'd be less successful because building a style and an artistic responsibility to be true to yourself and the music - that's where longevity is going to come in. If you really build yourself and it means something, you stay in it. You don't just float around from ditty to ditty."

Five years after his debut release, Tracy reflects on his career with serenity and contentment. "I'm very satisfied with my career. There was a point early on when I was dissatisfied with it, because I saw so many people just sky-rocket and boom up to superstardom. I was sitting there envying them, which I shouldn't do but I was going, 'Gosh, I wish mine would take off like that. What am I doing wrong? Am I not good enough? Am I not going to make it?' But some of those people now are struggling, and I'm seeing my good days.

"I'm really glad that it happened this way, because it took a lot of hard work and a lot of faith in myself. I believe that more good things happen to you from hard work and confidence and faith. That's good for life, not just for career. It makes a better person out of you. I think the good Lord intended it to be that way to teach me a few things. Now it looks like my career is just building more and more all the time. It's a steady pace. I'm building a good fan base, and it just continues to grow and get bigger. Unless I do something stupid to screw it up, I guess it'll just keep going."

- Janet E. Williams

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HANK THOMPSON

Still
Living
On The
Wild Side
Of Life



Some singers settle for the chance to perform in public. Others pursue recording contracts, with the lucky ones scoring a hit song. Some settle for a life on the club circuit. But Hank Thompson never settled for anything. In fact, he continues to fulfill his dream at the age of 71, hoping to become the first Country Music artist to make the charts six decades in a row.

The Country Music Hall Of Famer spent much of the past few months in the studio working on a project that teams him with some of today's hottest Country artists. Some of the tracks have Hank re-recording his early hits with a guest artist, while others are songs Hank has always wanted to record, but never did.

Several years ago, Mike Curb had the idea of Hank recording his hits with current artists. Although both were excited about the prospect of such a venture, they had trouble finding financial backing. Another missing element was a producer who could create the sound of Hank's earlier recordings.

"I played Mike Curb some real honky-tonk stuff, and he really liked the sound. I would see people like Tanya Tucker and tell them about this album. Most everybody said they would sing with me. But time kept going by, and nothing was happening. We had a hard time finding the right producer until Bill Millet came along. They finally came up with the money, and we started to get in touch with the artists we wanted," said Hank.

Still, it wasn't all smooth sailing, as now they had trouble securing guest artists to sing on the album. Many artists may have been excited about singing with a legend, but there were some roadblocks until one top artist stepped forward to get the ball rolling.

"Some labels did not allow their artists to sing on this album. It has been a real struggle to get this together. Vince Gill was the first artist that was confirmed. I have known Vince forever. He wanted to do 'Six Pack To Go'. His brother was a big fan of mine too, and that was his favorite song. After we recorded that, all the rest fell into place."

What fell into place was what Mike Curb and Hank Thompson envisioned from the beginning. They wanted to match the quality and dynamics of Hank's early Capitol recordings during the 1960s. That cutting edge technology of the '60s produced spectacular quality which made for an amazing album.

Not only was the production in "high gear," but the spirits of all involved were at an all-time high.

"The cooperation and enthusiasm everybody had was great. Everyone really got a feel for playing this old stuff, without updating it. Just made it sound warm and friendly," Hank smiles as he recalls. "Some of the artists enjoyed it so much that they just hung out in the studio."

Producer Bill Millet comments on his plan to promote the album. "We are in the process of talking to TNN and other folks about using existing footage from our studio sessions as well as live footage from concerts. We will have a series of concerts all over the U.S. We'd like to do something at the Ryman in Nashville with whomever is in town."

Hank and his band, The Brazos Valley Boys, previewed some of the new album at Fan Fair. The show provided a historic first for Hank, in that he and Kitty Wells performed together for the first time. Hank recorded the hit "Wild Side of Life" in 1952, which stayed at number one for 15 weeks on BILLBOARD's Country singles chart. Kitty recorded the answer song, "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels," a few months later. That tune not only proved to be a hit but brought Hank back to the top of the charts. Even though the two legends did some tour dates together, they never shared the stage to sing together until Fan Fair.

HANK ASKED JOE DIFFIE TO DUET WITH HIM ON "BEEN DOWN THAT ROAD", A SONG WRITTEN BY JOHN NORTHRUP, JEFF CARSON AND GERALD SMITH THAT HE'D CARRIED AROUND FOR YEARS WAITING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECORD. DIFFIE SAYS HAVING THE CHANCE TO PLAY WITH A LEGEND LIKE HANK MAKES THE DUET SPECIAL.

"HIS MUSIC WAS JUST A PART OF MY EVERYDAY LIFE, JUST LIKE BREATHING," SAYS DIFFIE.



GUEST ARTISTS APPEARING ON HANK'S UPCOMING CURB ALBUM

**DAVID BALL
BEKKA & BILLY
BROOKS & DUNN
JUNIOR BROWN
JOE DIFFIE
VINCE GILL
FLACO JIMENEZ
GEORGE JONES
LYLE LOVETT
MARTY STUART**

Hank can be credited for not only Kitty's initial success as a top-selling act, but for catapulting women in Country Music to become superstars. Hank has this to say when asked what would have happened if there hadn't been a Hank Thompson.

"That's an interesting speculation because it hadn't happened before me, so maybe something would have come along later to open the opportunity to women. Kitty came out with her song and made both our songs zoom up to number one. Radio would play my song, then they would play hers. I know I got a lot of longevity from that. That record was her acceptance, and she went on to record duets with Red Foley and Ernest Tubb. Kitty then had enormous popularity that had not happened in other forms of music. There were no women in the pop field that were comparable to Frank Sinatra or Perry Como. Because of Kitty, you had Jean Shepard, Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, Tammy Wynette and the honky-tonk dynamo Wanda Jackson."

Hank may have helped Kitty's career with his record, but he also helped many other aspiring singers throughout his career. Wanda Jackson was one of those young singers, who went on to record on the same label as Hank's, Capitol Records.

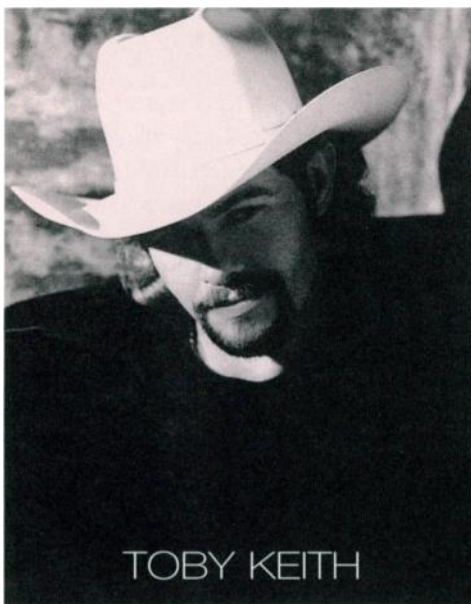
"Wanda wasn't in my band, but I did feature her as a singer," said Hank. "Wanda had a show in Oklahoma City where she picked and sang. I heard her on the radio and thought she had a good voice. I went up and introduced myself and asked her to come up and sing with me. Back then she had a little trouble with her meter, because she wasn't used to locking herself into a definite beat with the band. I had that difficulty too. But the talent was there and the voice, so I knew it would happen."

Hank obviously had that same confidence in Wanda that others had in him when he started his career in 1948 with, "Humpty Dumpty Heart." He had the voice. He definitely had the talent; but his unbelievable drive to achieve new heights is how Hank Thompson keeps "Breakin' The Rules."

-Lyn Aurelius

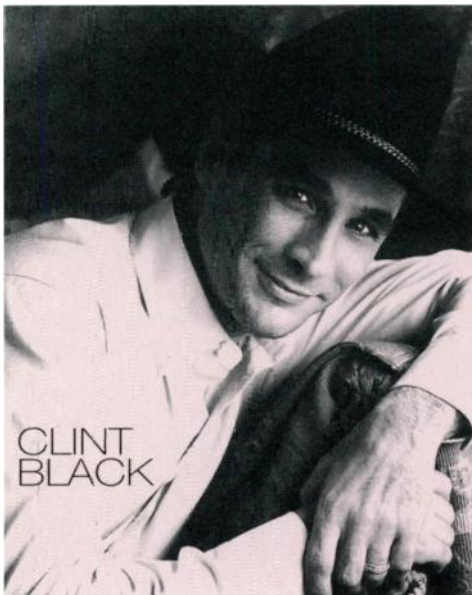
NAMES IN THE NEWS

GOOD WORKS:



Toby Keith has been named honorary chairman of the March of Dimes' "Blue Jeans For Babies" campaign, which supports maternal and infant health. During the October 20-24 fundraising campaign, anyone who purchases a button or sticker will theoretically be permitted to wear jeans or casual clothes to the office on October 20, National "Blue Jeans For Babies" Day.

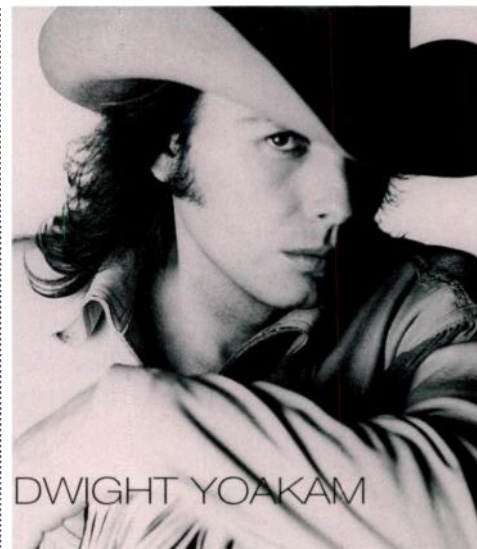
STUDIO TIME:



Clint Black recruited an all-star cast to join him on his forthcoming RCA album. Steve Wariner collaborated with Clint on the song-writing end, as did Marty Stuart, Kostas, Matraca Berg and Skip Ewing (as well as longtime cowriter Hayden Nicholas).

Wariner also added some guitar licks, and at press time, Clint was hopeful that Mark Knopfler and other guitar greats would add some licks to a tune paying homage to Chet Atkins.

Faith Hill traveled to Los Angeles to record her third album, working for the first time with producer David Foster. In her absence, husband Tim McGraw admits he's been having trouble sleeping, as he's used to their newborn Gracie Katherine (who made the trip to La-La Land) falling asleep on his chest.



Dwight Yoakam recorded a duet with Sheryl Crowe for his forthcoming Reprise album, UNDER THE COVERS. The two teamed up for "Baby Don't Go", a number eight pop hit for Sonny & Cher in 1965. Yoakam covers a variety of tunes, including Glen Campbell's "Wichita Lineman", a Rolling Stones song, "Claudette" by the Everly Brothers, The Clash's "Train In Vain" and "Tired Of Waiting For You", a Kinks hit.

Toby Keith's new Mercury album DREAM WALKIN' contains a duet with pop superstar Sting, who wrote the tune they sing, "I'm So Happy I Could Cry". Apparently Sting felt the tune was perfect for a Country singer, got it placed in Music City and then decided to add harmony vocals once he heard Keith's solo version.

Deana Carter and Kathy Mattea added background vocals to a Janis Ian track that will appear on an upcoming Christmas compilation album. Ian wrote the tune "Emmanuel" with Kye Fleming.

AT THE MOVIES:

Trisha Yearwood's track of "How Will I Live" is featured on the soundtrack of "Con Air". She racks up a career first with the tune, as it's her first credit as producer. MCA Records Nashville prez Tony Brown co-produced.



Mary Chapin Carpenter covers Dionne Warwick's classic "What Do You Get When You Fall In Love" on the soundtrack of "My Best Friend's Wedding". The movie stars Julia Roberts.

Bryan White will sing in a new animated feature film called "Quest For Camelot". However, the producer asked the Asylum singer to modify his Oklahoma accent, so fans may not immediately recognize the vocal.

Lorrie Morgan adds a track to the soundtrack of "Trial And Error". Her "Leading My Heart" made the finished production for the film starring Michael Richards and Jeff Daniels.

Willie Nelson's "Down In The Everglades" is on the soundtrack of "Gone Fishin'". Joe Pesci and Danny Glover star in the film.

NEWS MAKERS:



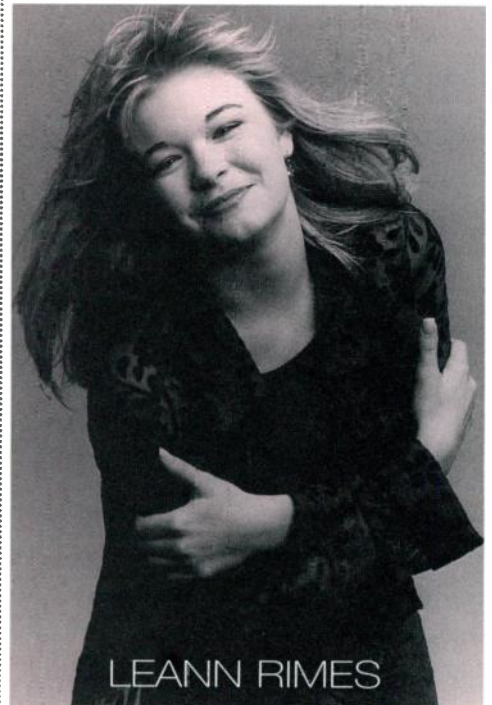
Barbara Mandrell launched "Country Sentiments", her signature fashion jewelry line on QVC in May. The exclusive QVC line of keepsake jewelry, priced from \$20-\$125, includes necklaces, earrings, rings and bracelets.

At a recent concert in Peachtree City, Georgia, Alabama invited some special guests to the stage. Former President Jimmy Carter and wife Rosalyn joined the RCA group on stage, dancing to "Tennessee River".

Vince Gill recently took his daughter Jenny on the road, marking the first time she's gone on tour with him. He told Jay Leno he thinks she was along for the ride because Bryan White is his opening act.

Tracy Lawrence rescued four dogs that were about to be put to sleep at an animal

shelter. He saved a collie, a German Shepherd and two mixed-breeds, who now have joined Tracy and his new bride Stacie at their Nashville farm.



LeAnn Rimes told TV GUIDE that she turned down a role in the Robert Redford movie "The Horse Whisperer", based on the best-selling book. Apparently her parents felt it would be too much, too soon at this stage of her career.

Alan Jackson is such a fan of Lee Ann Womack's that he got 25 copies of her debut Decca album - one for every cd player he owns, whether it's in a boat, car, bus or at the house. Womack said she's amazed, adding that she only needs two Alan Jackson cd's to take care of her cd players - one at home and one in the car.

Garth Brooks has a fan in award-winning bassist Me'Shell N'Degeocello. "I love Garth Brooks!" she says. She'd love to play bass for him should he ever need someone to step in.

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Garth Brooks, director Michael Salomon (left) and producer Jon Small take a break before shooting a scene in the Wicklow Mountains outside of Dublin, Ireland. The scene will be used in a 1998 television special featuring the Capitol singer/songwriter's record-breaking outdoor concerts at Dublin's Croke Park.

