

AUGUST 1997

Close Up



Tammy Wynette
Jo Dee Messina
Shelia Shipley Bidy



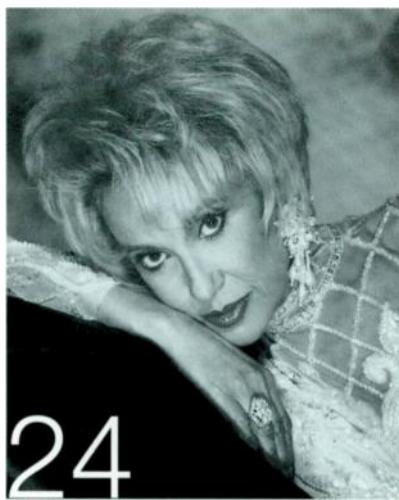


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VINCE GILL SIGNS FIRST MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT TO HOST CMA AWARDS

The Country Music Association has announced that superstar Vince Gill has signed a two-year contract to host the annual CMA Awards telecast. "The 31st Annual CMA Awards" will be telecast Wednesday, September 24 (8 - 11 PM, live ET; delayed PT) on the CBS Television Network from the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville.

The 1996 CMA Awards telecast was the second-highest rated special out of 212 aired during the 1996-1997 television season, ranking only behind the Motion Picture Academy Awards.

"CMA is extremely pleased to extend our association with Vince Gill as CMA Awards host," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "For the past five years, Vince has delighted viewers and attendees of the CMA Awards with his humor, humility and sincere love of Country Music. He is a great ambassador for the Country Music industry, and CMA is honored to have him represent our organization as host of the CMA Awards."

The 1997 broadcast of the CMA Awards will mark the sixth consecutive hosting stint for Gill. The multi-talented vocalist, songwriter and musician has won 17 CMA Awards - more than any other artist. For five consecutive years (1991-1995), Gill won the CMA Male Vocalist Award, an unequaled achievement in the history of the CMA Awards.

In 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1996, Vince took home CMA Song of the Year honors for the hits "When I Call Your Name", "Look At Us", "I Still Believe In You" and "Go Rest High On That Mountain" respectively. In 1993 and 1994, the full-range of his talents were recognized with the CMA's Entertainer of the Year Award.

Since the release of his MCA debut lp, WHEN I CALL YOUR NAME, in 1990, each of Vince's six lps has achieved platinum sales or above. With Country Music fans and fellow entertainment industry peers, he is known and appreciated for his immense talent, unique style, community involvement and willingness to share his success with others.

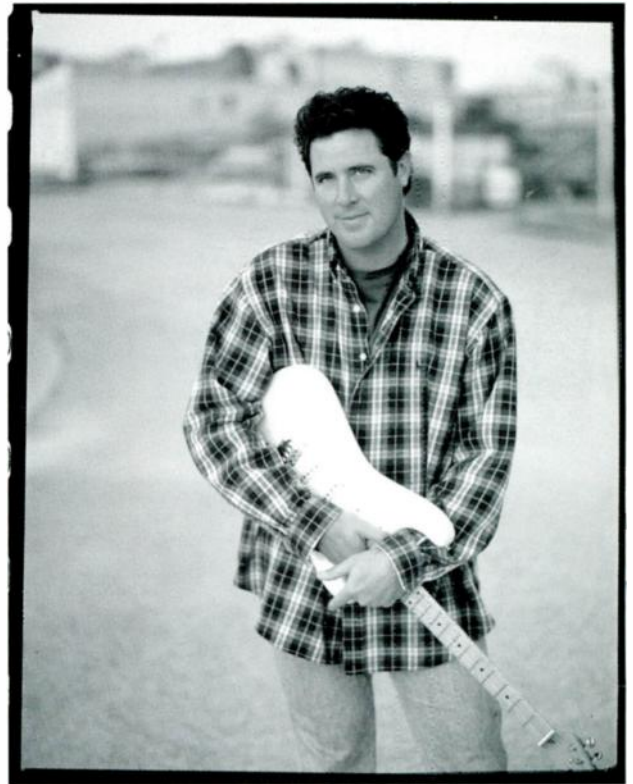
Here's what some of his fellow artists have to say about Vince Gill as CMA Awards host:

Alison Krauss: "He's a natural. I think he's hilarious, and he could talk his way out of any situation. I think he's perfect for that job. I love watching him."

Patty Loveless: "Not only does Vince represent the best of what Country is - the heart, the soul, the voice, the musicianship, but he has a way of bringing you into the heart of what's going on during the show. And he makes me laugh!"

Reba McEntire: "Having co-hosted with Vince before, I can honestly say he has an extraordinary talent for hosting the CMA Awards."

Speaking about his duties as CMA Awards host, Vince said, "Everybody realizes what a great night it is for Country Music in its entirety. That's what I take with me every year when it's over - that my job is to showcase Country Music in a really classy way, and shed it in a great light to the world. It's a great night for the entire industry, and my job is to make it go well and help make us all look good. I do my best to try to do that and showcase us with class."





HOT TICKETS

A look at two sold-out summer spectaculars

Country Music entertainers hit the road each summer to perform at hundreds of fairs and festivals around the countryside. Two such events - much different in size and scope - celebrated their second anniversaries in June, each with an all-star lineup: Fruit of the Loom CountryFest '97 and Country Stampede.

More than 220,000 fans traveled from all 50 states to attend the CountryFest one-day mega concert June 14 at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth featuring Vince Gill, Hank Williams Jr., Wynonna, Travis Tritt, Randy Travis, The Charlie Daniels Band, Bryan White, LeAnn Rimes, Neal McCoy, Jo Dee Messina, Burnin' Daylight and Bekka and Billy. Tickets to the event were free with purchases of Fruit of the Loom or Blockbuster Entertainment products. Marc Oswald and Brian Murphy of Warner/Avalon served as co-producers of the event.

About 3 million more fans experienced CountryFest '97 through a live, Westwood One radio broadcast, while more than a million enjoyed the show live via Fruit of the Loom's web site. CBS will air a prime-time special, which will air twice later in the year on TNN.



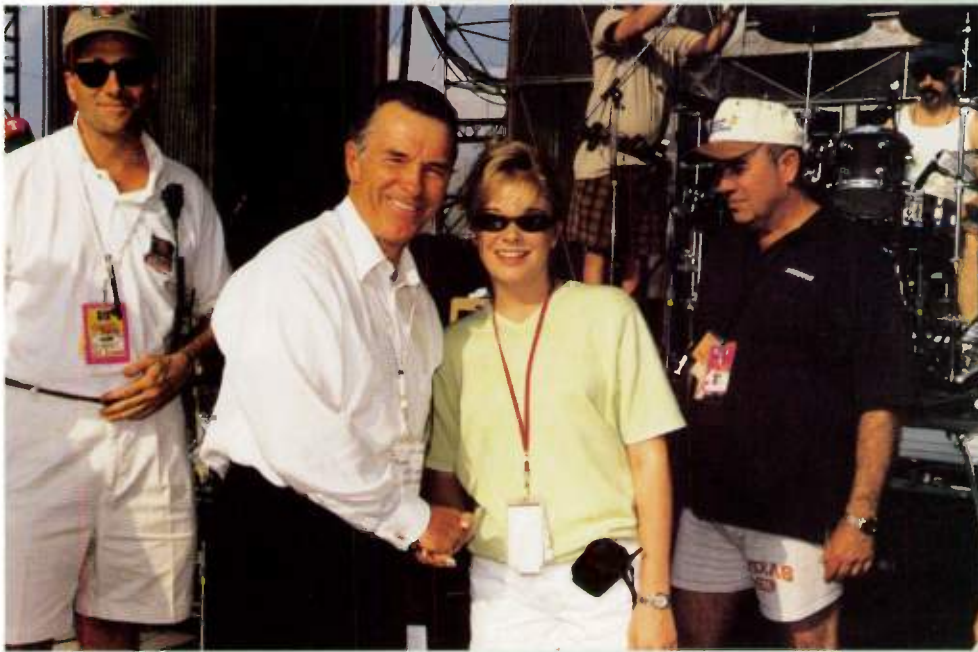
John Michael Montgomery gave the final performance of the three-day Country Stampede festival.

Besides the unbelievable talent lineup, a unique part of CountryFest was "The Fruit of the Loom Country Comfort Experience". The Experience is a 35,000 square-foot mobile festival grounds featuring a variety of Country lifestyle attractions including a Country Music museum, interactive music kiosks, computer trivia games as well as line dancing and songwriter showcases. More than 5,000 employees with about 500 radios and 125 golf carts were on hand to ensure the event came off without a hitch. The Texas heat was taken into consideration when planning, prompting (14) 18'x20' Rain Rooms to keep the crowds cool - that's 5,040 square feet of refreshment, not including the fire hoses that cooled down the crowd.

Officials estimate that 20,000 gallons of water and soda were consumed, as were enough hot dogs and sandwiches to reach 3.6 miles when placed end to end.

The CountryFest stage, which is 430 feet wide, was the largest single stage structure in history.

Country Stampede celebrated its second successful weekend on a smaller scale, with 75,000 people invading Tuttle



LeAnn Rimes takes a break with Fruit of the Loom chairman and CEO Bill Farley during CountryFest '97.

Creek State Park just outside of Manhattan, Kansas. This three-day music marathon included an all-star line up of Alabama, Brooks & Dunn, Mark Chesnutt, Doobie Brothers, Bill Engvall, Toby Keith, Chris LeDoux, Delbert McClinton, John Michael Montgomery, LeAnn Rimes, Kevin Sharp and Sons of the Desert. In addition, local favorites Against the Grain and the Pott County Pork & Bean Band attracted followers. Tickets were \$30 for one day, \$65 for three days and \$350 for VIP, which included access to reserved seats, close parking, access to a hospitality tent, two meals a day and unlimited drinks available in the tents. Talent was booked by Gil Cunningham of the Don Romeo Agency, while John O'Gara served as festival manager.

Major sponsorships from Skoal Music and Southwestern Bell contributed to the staging and the 50-foot jumbo screen, while more than 30 vendor booths lined the surrounding area, offering everything from a slice of watermelon to blackjack games.

The summer heat was taken into consideration here as well, with water provided by the National Guard. The 400-gallon containers were emptied every hour by the hot fans. First aid and Red Cross tents treated more than 500 people, mostly for heat-related problems.



Fan favorite Randy Travis sings to a sea of CountryFest concert-goers.



SRO, CMA's International Entertainment Expo, is an all-encompassing music industry conference designed for professionals in the live entertainment and touring business. Now in its 19th year, this annual event combines panel discussions, open forums, a comprehensive exhibit marketplace and showcases featuring today's hottest Country artists.

SRO '97 will take place Monday - Wednesday, September 29 - October 1 at the Nashville Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee - Music City USA.

International Conference

SRO's annual International Conference presents informative and valuable information pertinent to capitalizing on the growing international touring market.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 1:15 - 3 p.m.

Join industry experts who will present brief reports on new international markets including Australia, Brazil, Germany and Asia-Pacific.

The SRO International Conference also will include a panel devoted to "Building An International Development Strategy", featuring internationally experienced agents and managers.

New This Year!

**MANAGING THE TOUR:
CREATING A STANDARD FOR
DOING BUSINESS ON THE ROAD**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 3:15 - 5:45 p.m.

Presented by CMA in conjunction with the Nashville Association of Professional Managers, this educational session will explore many key aspects of road and tour management. Targeted to road managers, production managers and tour managers at all levels of experience, the session will cover topics such as:

- BOX OFFICE SETTLEMENT
- ADVANCING DATES WITH PROMOTERS AND BUYERS
- UNDERSTANDING CONTRACTS AND RIDERS
- THE POLITICS AND ETIQUETTE OF MEET & GREETINGS, INTERVIEWS, FAN CLUBS AND MORE
- ITINERARY PLANNING
- TOUR MAPPING AND OTHER SOFTWARE AND MORE

SRO Panel Information

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 10:30 a.m. - Noon

ABC's of The Touring Industry Associations (IEBA, NACPA, NATD, NAPM, IAAM, IAFE Representatives)

Moderator: Tony Conway, Buddy Lee Attractions

Panelists: Dennis Finrock, for IAAM
John Juliano, for IAFE
George Moffett, for IEBA
Bob Roux, for NACPA
Clarence Spalding, for NAPM
Robert Swope, for NATD

Focus Groups 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Clubs & Mid-Level Artists 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Moderator: Keith Miller, William Morris Agency

Panelists: Brad Garrett, Police Productions
Ted Hacker, International Artist Management
Bill Mayne, Warner/Reprise Nashville
Gary Osier, Gary Osier Presents
Alan Presley, Kaleidoscope Promotions, Inc.

Traffic Jam - "Exploring Facilities Gridlock" 3:45 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Moderator: Ron Baird, Creative Artists Agency

Panelists: Larry Frank, Frank Productions, Inc.
Bob Roux, PACE Concerts
Rick Shipp, William Morris Agency
Russ Simons, Leisure Management Int'l
Neil Sulkes, Spectacor Management Group
Trey Turner, Starstruck Entertainment
Danny Zausner, Ogden Entertainment Services

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

Radio Forum

(The Changing Role of Radio 10 a.m. - Noon)

Moderator: Bob Moody, McVay Media Nashville

Panelists: Fred Frank, Frank Productions
John King, SFX Broadcasting
James Yelich, Creative Artists Agency

Town Meeting: "State of The Industry" 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Moderator: Barry Coburn, Ten Ten Management

Panelists: Bruce Allen, Bruce Allen Talent
Mike Crowley, Mike Crowley Artist Management
John Huie, Creative Artists Agency
Ken Levitan, Rising Tide Entertainment
Joe Mansfield, Asylum Records

*other panelists to be added

REGISTRATION, EXHIBITS AND SPONSORSHIP

For registration or exhibitor
information, contact

Patti Burgart,

event services coordinator.

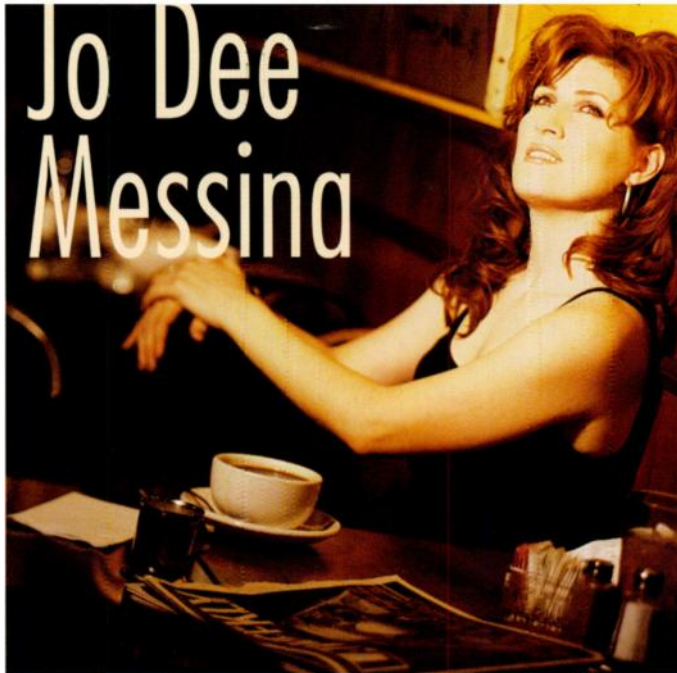
For sponsorship information,
contact

Chris Felder, manager,

sponsorship development.

(615) 244-2840; fax (615) 726-0314

Jo Dee Messina can hardly contain herself as she sits in her publicist's office talking about her upcoming album. Though the release date has not yet been determined, Jo Dee's charging full steam ahead. The free-spirited red head first caught the ears of Country Music fans with her Curb self-titled debut lp produced by Byron Gallimore and labelmate Tim McGraw. That lp spawned two top 10 singles, "Heads Carolina, Tails California" and "You're Not In Kansas Anymore".



Jo Dee Messina

"I'm so excited about this new record," Jo Dee says. "I can't say it enough times. We've been brutal on songs, just brutal. We've been looking since September. We've got a song called 'Bye Bye' on it, and I'm praying to God it's the first single. It's got the same groove as 'Heads Carolina, Tails California'."

Jo Dee bursts into an impromptu rendition of "Bye Bye", half singing and half speaking the lyrics before continuing her story. "I've been sharing it with the radio folks when I play shows and bringing them on the bus to play it for them. I've gotta give all the radio people a big hug because they've been so good to me. They're real excited about it, which makes me real excited about it."

A native of the Boston suburbs, Jo Dee first came to Nashville at the age of 19 to pursue a career in Country Music. Like most people who share her dream, she's experienced struggles trying to get her career off the ground. And even though the lean times are behind her, Jo Dee says the past few months have been challenging both on a personal and professional level. Also on the brighter side, she's been the opening act for the Fruit of The Loom Country Comfort Music Series with Charlie Daniels, Travis Tritt and Hank Williams, Jr. She's faced the loss of her management firm, Starstruck, and the trials of a broken heart. Ever the fighter, she's pouring the assortment of emotions she's faced into her new CD.

"I'm going through a really rough time in my life. We just lost management, the record's not done yet, we're between singles, I'm on the Fruit of the Loom Tour, and I just lost a man I gave my heart to. So I think a lot of the record is going to reflect what I'm going through. I'm trying to keep some light-hearted stuff in there, because no matter what I'm going through, my heart is happy. I mean, I hurt and I'm not exactly where I want to be, but my heart is happy.

"I felt alone, and I said 'God, this is not where I want to be, and I can't imagine that this is the place where I'm supposed

to be, just because of the desires of my heart.' But I said, 'I'm here and I guess you want me here for a reason. So give me the strength to deal with being here.'

"I'm on the Fruit of The Loom tour because Rick Shipp believed in me."

"Narvel Blackstock (Jo Dee's former manager) is my mentor - always will be. He's just an incredible businessman that did something that had to be done. I talked to him yesterday, and I'm telling you, he's a great man. He's taking care of us."

"Everything that I have is because of the hard work of other people."

As with her ex-manager, Jo Dee is quick to credit all of the players involved in her career.

"Everything that I have is because of the hard work of other people. I thank everyone that buys the records because they don't have to do it. I thank everyone that plays the records because they don't have to do it. The label doesn't have to work with me, and the booking agency doesn't have to work with me.

"I gave away my first record advance."

"I switched to the William Morris Agency, and I am so happy with Greg Oswald, Rick Shipp and everyone over there. I'm on the Fruit of The Loom tour because Rick Shipp believed in me. Fruit of the Loom treats me like I'm a princess. I run, and they give me outfits. They give me socks, sweatshirts, t-shirts - they just treat me like I'm something special."

Though she says she's too busy to date much, Jo Dee was involved in a relationship that recently ended.

"I met this guy, and I swore he was a gift from God. But then I joke around and say that the devil comes in many disguises. I will give until I have nothing left. I gave away my first record advance. When Narvel found out about it, he told me 'Jo Dee, you would give away the farm if you could.' I'm that way with my emotions and my love too. I'm a very passionate person, and I would give anything to anyone I care about. My head knew this guy was trouble going in, but I just wanted to love him and fix him."

She credits the tender side of her nature to her upbringing.

"I'm the youngest of four, and my mom was very, very loving and very nurturing. She spoiled me with love, which is why I think I am the way I am. My dad was the hometown hero, the football coach. My mom and dad got separated when I was younger, and I've always missed my dad even though I'd see him every weekend."

Jo Dee's mom was also very supportive of her musical aspirations, even letting her sing in clubs at the age of 13. As Jo Dee relates her teenage experiences in the spotlight, it is evident that the fervor and intensity she projects today have always been a part of her personality, driving her to accept whatever comes her way.

"Without management, I'm having to do a lot of stuff. I like it, I've always done it. I had my own band that I started when I was 16. I read marketing and promotion books to learn how to do it - learned how to advertise and market my band. And I was bringing these things to school and reading them in study hall between classes. I was just trying to figure out how to get my name out there. We did great in Massachusetts and all of New England. I became a big fish in a small pond.

"When I got to Nashville, people asked if I had a plan if I didn't make it. I told them no, I always knew what I wanted. Some things are just obstacles. Life lessons are so hard.

"You know, I'm not multi-platinum and I'm not a platinum act right now. This next album could be, and I pray that it is. I've got a lot of fans out there, and I see the response from the audience. It's so neat how the Lord has taken me along this route, and I can finally see why."

-Mandy Wilson



THIRTY·FIRST

CMA

AWARDS

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

INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY MUSIC FAN FAIR CELEBRATES 26TH ANNIVERSARY WITH STARS, SHOWS, FANS AND MORE

The 26th Fan Fair brought a sold-out crowd of more than 24,000 Country Music fans to the Tennessee State Fairgrounds from June 16-21 for the annual "lovefest" between entertainers and their fans. Throughout the week, registrants saw almost 40 hours of live entertainment and had the opportunity to meet some of their favorite singers in exhibit booths, where photos and autographs were at the top of the agenda.

"Fun In the Sun Friday" signaled the end of the 26th Annual International Country Music Fan Fair. "The Working Man's Show" that morning featured host George Jones, Merle Haggard and Johnny Paycheck teaming up for "Yesterday's Wine". "I can't remember if we've ever sung together," Haggard said. "I know we have. I just can't remember it." They also jammed with Steve Wariner, Sara Evans and Charlie Daniels. The "Honky Tonk Finale" with Hank Thompson capped off the festivities that afternoon.

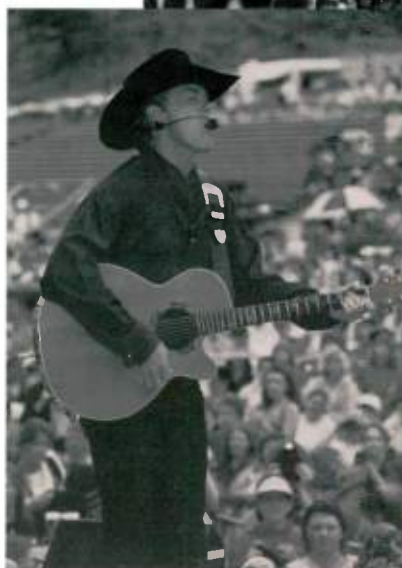
The Oak Ridge Boys kicked off the annual event on Monday with the National Anthem on the Fan Fair stage. Fans were treated to performances throughout the week from a variety of artists, ranging from newcomers like Gary Allan and Tammy Graham to superstars such as Alan Jackson and Trisha Yearwood.

During the Curb Records/MCG Curb show on Tuesday newcomer David Kersh surprised his fans with his rendition of AC/DC's "Back In Black". Unable to keep a straight face, he segued into Lynard Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama", to the audience's approving cries. Tim McGraw surprised fans by bringing wife Faith Hill on stage to perform their hit single "It's Your Love".

During the Capitol Nashville show on Wednesday, Deana Carter was presented



Johnny Paycheck, Merle Haggard and George Jones team up for "The Working Man's Show"



Newcomer David Kersh surprised fans with his rendition of AC/DC's "Back In Black"

Tim McGraw brings wife Faith Hill on stage to perform their hit duet "It's Your Love"

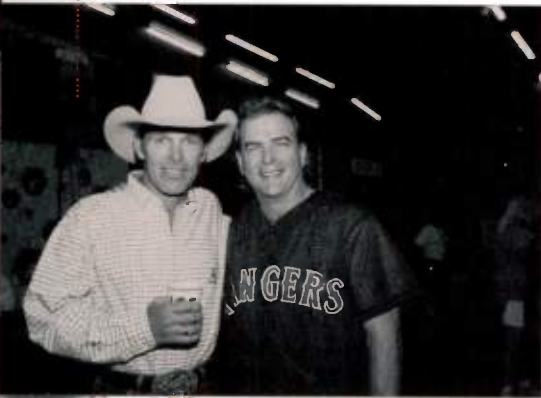


Fan Fair booth winners show off their awards



Deana Carter performs barefoot on an oriental rug

Chris LeDoux and Bill Engvall taking a water break



Clint Black makes a fan's day



Eight lucky fans who played "host" for the Warner/Reprise and Giant Records show



Kevin Sharp is loving his first Fan Fair experience



with a triple-platinum lp signifying sales of 3 million units of her debut disc, DID I SHAVE MY LEGS FOR THIS? Carter, known for her habit of performing barefoot, found that stagehands had placed an oriental rug on stage for her performance to prevent her from picking up splinters. Labelmate Chris LeDoux received a gold album for his BEST OF CHRIS LEDOUX lp shortly before delivering a blazing Fan Fair performance. John Berry was inducted into the South Carolina Hall of Fame shortly before his performance.

Paul Brandt and comedian Bill Engvall also racked up sales honors, as each received a gold album during the Warner/Reprise show on Wednesday. In addition, Little Texas received plaques commemorating three sales achievements for past projects: KICK A LITTLE at double platinum, a platinum album for BIG TIME and a gold album for GREATEST HITS. Eschewing a traditional host, the Warner/Reprise and Giant Records show was hosted by eight lucky fans complete with official "host" T-shirts and hats. They were brought on stage to introduce the artists performing. One of the hosts said the once-in-a-lifetime chance convinced her to make Fan Fair an annual event.

Clint Black, who signed autographs nearly every day, also learned that his career album sales had reached more than 15 million. The announcement was made during the RCA Records/BNA Records show, hosted by Lorrie Morgan.

Following his return to the Fan Fair stage for Magnatone Records, superstar Kenny Rogers was recognized for worldwide career album sales topping 80 million.

Kevin Sharp cooled down the crowd when he hit the stage armed with two "super soakers" on Thursday morning during the Asylum show. He roused the crowd by throwing footballs to them and then jumping down into the walk-around area to sing and dance with the fans.

He described his Fan Fair experience as "wonderful". "I'm having a blast and losing weight at the same time" - probably from the heat.

In the Fan Fair exhibit hall, where 165 booths were set up, Pam Tillis' display took top honors in the booth contest for the second year in a row, winning for her "Greatest Hits"/baseball themed design. Tracy Byrd's hunting and fishing lodge brought his fan club second-place honors, and Clay Walker's giant computer-themed booth took third place, the third consecutive year his fan club took that prize.

Fans could sit in a rocker on the front porch of John Berry's booth and get acquainted with the popular Capitol Nashville artist. In fact, one hearing-impaired fan enjoyed a one-on-one experience with John Berry, "listening" to her request of "O Holy Night" by placing her hands on his vocal cords. Kathy Mattea's booth was the "Love Travels Agency", a spin-off on the Mercury singer's latest album. Other booth highlights included singer Vern Gosdin's "Red Hot Country" theme, accentuated by chile peppers, John Anderson's log cabin, Lee Roy Parnell's dance hall, Wade Hayes' replica of a bus, Alan Jackson's pitch for his Showcar Café in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee and Martina McBride's kitchen.

One fan requested more than an autograph from new Asylum artist Lila McCann. He also asked her out on a date. She graciously declined, explaining that she was only 15, and it would be a few years before she would be dating.

Mercury Nashville artist Terri Clark didn't let a broken cheekbone hinder her Fan Fair activities. After sustaining a fracture at a celebrity softball game, she gamely proceeded with her plans for the week, meeting fans, ordering pizza for them while they were waiting in line and graciously posing for photos, hiding her bruised face and black eye behind sunglasses.

John Michael Montgomery signed over 400 autographs in less than 90 minutes, while Gary Allan posed for 243 photos in one hour.



Kenny Rogers returns to the Fan Fair stage for a special performance

John Berry relaxes with a fan on his booth's front porch



Terri Clark adds to a fan's autograph collection

Trisha Yearwood gave a commanding performance at the MCA/Decca show



Mindy McCready greeting one more fan



Paul Brandt spends a few minutes with a fan



Mindy McCready hosted Fan Fair coverage for "Good Morning America" on Wednesday, interviewing LeAnn Rimes, Trisha Yearwood and Clint Black. She also knocked on the door of an RV, chatted with fans from Dayton, Ohio and then served hot dogs from the concession stand.

Tanya Tucker hits the stage for the Capitol show



Upon their arrival in the artist lounge, members of Curb group Sawyer Brown were congratulated by almost all in sight on their Vocal Band of the Year win the night before at the TNN/Music City News Country Awards.



Mark Miller of Sawyer Brown rouses the crowd

Sales were brisk in the official Fan Fair Tower Record store, where albums by Ricochet, Tim McGraw, Neal McCoy and Lee Ann Womack leading the list of bestsellers.

In addition to Country stars, other luminaries visited the grounds. Animal expert and frequent tv guest Jack Hanna was seen walking around the exhibit halls, while pop duo The Nelsons were also sighted. Wally Kurth, star of "General Hospital", signed autographs with his singing partner Christian Taylor in a number of booths, while Tamra Walker of "The Bold & The Beautiful" also met with fans.

A \$90 Fan Fair ticket included the live stage shows; admission to the exhibit halls; a ticket to Opryland USA theme park, the Country Music Hall of Fame and the historic Ryman Auditorium; plus two meals prepared on-site by the world famous Odessa Chuck Wagon Gang. In addition, fans could play "Name That Tune" and perform karaoke tunes in the Fan Fair luncheon pavilion.

Bryan White chats with Skip Ewing in the artist lounge.



Fan Fair's economic impact on the city of Nashville is estimated to be more than \$10 million, according to the Nashville Chamber of Commerce.

Fan Fair, sponsored by CMA and the Grand Ole Opry is scheduled to take place June 15-21, 1998.



Ricochet at the New Country booth.

Photos by Kay Williams, Lee Chan and Chris Hollo.

Shelia Shipley Biddy



Accept a position as vice president/general manager of a Nashville record label in a marketplace overcrowded with labels and artists, and you've got a lot to prove. Accept that position as a female in a business that for years was dominated by men, and all eyes are on you, scrutinizing you even more because of your gender.

Welcome to Shelia Shipley Biddy's world. But for the ultra-successful Decca Records executive, crossing gender boundaries and rising to the top in a super competitive business environment is all in a day's work. And that's what it's always been about to Shelia – the work. And being the best she can possibly be.

"Being named the first woman to head a Nashville label, my first reaction was pretty much that I want to be viewed on my accomplishments and my vision, and what my achievements have been that brought me to this point," explained Shelia. "I want the gender thing to be secondary to that. Because the bottom line is you have to find the right person who understands leadership and management and has the diplomacy to work with staff, man-

agers, booking agents, and who understands the financial end of things as well as the creative process – regardless of whether they are a man or woman."

Shelia has a good understanding of the juggling act that goes with being a label executive thanks to the years she spent as head of promotion at MCA/Nashville. The position was a great training ground for dealing with many of the challenges she faces as head of the revitalized Decca label. "I think being the female head of promotion was harder, in a way, to have a department I was running. That first year was tougher than my first year heading Decca. In promotion, it was rewarding achieving number ones with artists, counseling them and being on the road with them and the bond of that – that lasted a lifetime with those artists we broke.

I look back at the names on MCA now and so many of them weren't there when I started 10 years before. That, to me, is extremely fulfilling."

She carries that same excitement and zeal over into her new duties as well. "I still have that mindset. I still want the number ones and platinum albums. I still think the greatest thing is when I can stand backstage and see an artist get a standing ovation or get nominated for an award. I'm proud to know that all the hard work we've all put in, the tears we've cried and the support we've given each other has gotten to that point. But now, to be involved in building a company from the ground up even though it had an old name, we had to recreate it for today's market. And to be able to put your personal stamp and vision on something and hire people to become part of that vision is so much larger than the one department. I'm more involved in marketing, video production, publicity and international development, and that to me, is very challenging and fulfilling. I love to be challenged by things I haven't experienced before."

Developing a once-retired label into a current market force has definitely proved a challenge for Shelia, and the battle has sometimes been uphill. She readily admits that the label is not where she had envisioned it to be by now sales-wise, but quickly acknowledges the successes they've already had in the few short years they've been in business. "I couldn't say it's going exactly the way I wanted it to, but I am very pleased with the progress we've seen. We've had a couple of number ones with Mark Chesnutt and Rhett Akins, a top 10 with Gary Allan and a gold record with Chesnutt. With Lee Ann Womack breaking on the horizon before year's end, I think we are on track."

Part of Shelia's strategy for keeping the label on track is to keep their efforts small and focused on the above-mentioned core artists. Several other artists are currently in development stages as well, but Shelia takes care to limit the roster to a small group of artists who share a similar artistic vision. "It all fits when you can look at the roster and say, 'There's an identity there.' That took us about 18 months to come to the point of saying, 'This is who we are, and this is who we want to be.' There have been a lot of artists who have come along that Mark Wright and I have considered who have gone on to sign with other labels, and some who had great tal-

ent but didn't fit the vision of this label. The artists here are extremely close to each other — we spend a lot of time together, and to me, it's important they respect each other's integrity as artists."

Integrity is important to the label that was formerly home to legendary singers like Loretta Lynn. Shelia and her staff feel a responsibility to protect that integrity, through both preserving and honoring the past and producing quality Country Music for the future. The challenge the label will likely find in its next few years is preserving the music's integrity while still trying to maintain contender status in a market that continues to be flooded with artists and record labels.

"There are more labels in Nashville than ever before, and our own distribution company distributes more country labels than ever before! In a sense, it's like competition within our own dis-

.....

"I still think the greatest thing is when I can stand backstage and see an artist get a standing ovation or get nominated for an award."

.....

tribution company, which we've never experienced before. Then you add to that all the other labels that are coming to town, and the ones that are mainstays that keep releasing product. I think it makes A&R departments challenged even more to find great songs and to keep finding exceptional songs to launch an artist's career, because good isn't good enough anymore. It's getting more and more difficult, because songs can get lost, and artists can get lost. There is so much money that goes into trying to break an artist that you have to make sure you're doing everything in your power to position them before they ever come out."

One such Decca artist who looks to be positioned properly for stardom is Lee Ann Womack. An ultra-traditionalist, Womack's album has already been well-received at radio and among the critics. "I think Lee Ann has one of the most solid albums I've heard in a long time. I think she's raised the bar for other artists on our label to think about what they put into it when they go to record an album. That makes it

harder — you have to plan more, and focus more — you can't put out two new artists on top of one another and expect both of them to be successful. It's going to be difficult. People are going to have to start prioritizing their launches at labels."

Along with successfully launching the careers of their artists, future goals for Decca include taking its first big step alone, independent of its parent company, MCA/Nashville. Shelia hopes that goal will become reality soon, although the existing system of sharing certain departments seems to be working well for now. "The initial dream was that in five years we could be a stand-alone company. But the marketplace has changed in these last three years from what that first vision was. I think the plan for now will be as we grow and as our cash flow becomes substantial enough, we will expand, and I think there's a real possibility that someday we could be stand-alone, but at this point it's working fine."

As one of the industry's top executives, Shelia has paid a price for her accomplishments, but the rewards have been worth the sacrifice. Though she spends 12-hour days in the office and some days barely sees her home or husband Ken, she realizes it just goes with the territory. "There are days when I feel like I have no serenity and no life. I probably put more into my business life than I do my personal life, but thankfully I'm married to someone who shares that vision and supports me, and realizes there are things I just have to do. The sacrifices I've made have been on a personal side, on a relaxation and pleasure basis that have been lost."

Though her sacrifices have been great, Shelia has a great deal to show for them. And as the head of a label with a proud heritage and link to the past, she hopes for great things in the future for the fledgling label. "I hope to one day be one of the top-ranked labels in Nashville. That people will look at our label and say, 'They have more integrity than any label in Nashville, and their roster is so strong that it's the cornerstone of Country Music.' I guess I look at it as every day here we're writing a new page in the history books. I feel a tremendous responsibility to Country Music as a format to sign artists, and build the future of Country where it's going to be what real people out there around America and the world want to hear."

**Interview by Janet Williams
Written by Lorie Hollabaugh**



awards

The 31st Annual TNN Music City News Country Awards telecast was hosted by LeAnn Rimes, winner of *Female Star of Tomorrow*, Randy Travis and George Jones. Winners include Alan Jackson, *Entertainer of the Year* and *Male Artist of the Year*; Lorrie Morgan, *Female Artist of the Year*, and *Vocal Collaboration of the Year* with her husband Jon Randall for "By My Side"; Sawyer Brown, *Vocal Band of the Year*; Jeff Foxworthy, *Comedian of the Year*; Wade Hayes, *Male Star of Tomorrow*; Brooks & Dunn, *Vocal Duo of the Year*; The Statler Brothers, *Vocal Group of the Year*; Ricky Van Shelton, *Christian Country Artist*; Billy Ray Cyrus, *Single of the Year* for "Trail Of Tears"; Neal McCoy, *Video of the Year* for "Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye" and George Strait, *Album of the Year* for BLUE CLEAR SKY.

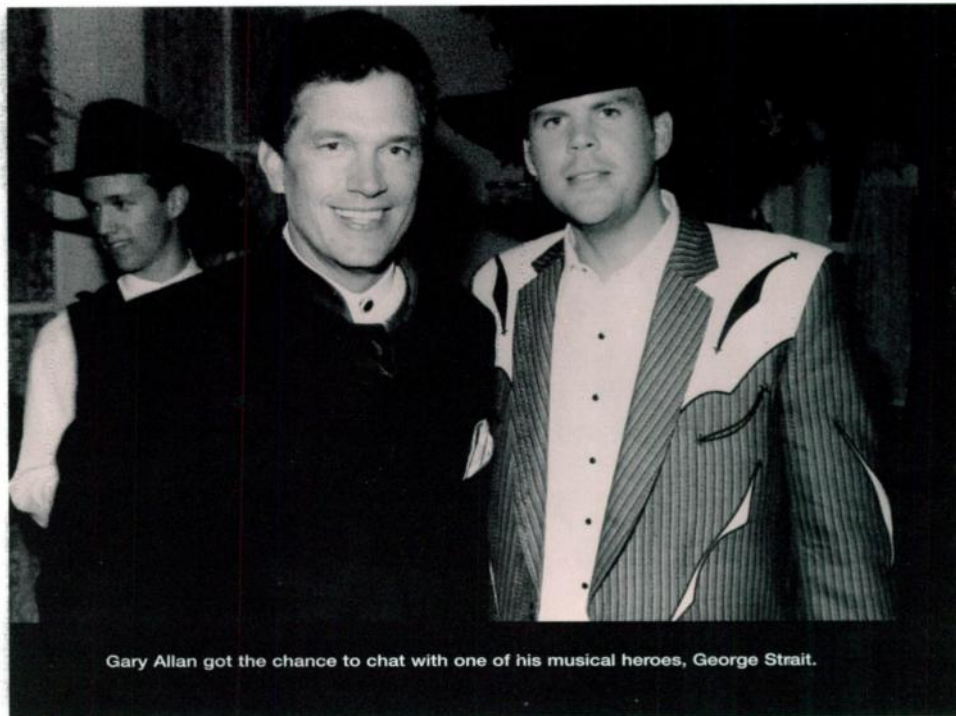
Brian Keith Landrum of WSTE-South 106.1 was named *Radio Personality of the Year* by the Georgia Association of Broadcasters during the group's annual convention at Saint Simons Island.

The third annual *Belmont-Ingram Book Award* for the best book on Country Music was presented to Ronnie Pugh, author of "Ernest Tubb: The Texas Troubadour." Honorable mention went to "Waylon: An Autobiography," by Waylon Jennings with Lenny Kay.

Stewart Harris, President of Edisto Sound, was presented with seven BMI Millionair Awards for a single achieving one million airplays, including a Two Millionair Award for "No One Else On Earth." Decca's Senior VP/Head of A&R, Mark Wright also was awarded BMI's Millionair Award for five of his songs.

The Georgia Music Hall of Fame recently presented Lee Roy Parnell with an original contract between influential slide guitarist Duane Allman and Capricorn Records.

The Oak Ridge Boys are the first Country Music act ever to receive the prestigious *American Eagle Award* from the National Music Council.



Gary Allan got the chance to chat with one of his musical heroes, George Strait.



media

AMUSEMENT BUSINESS, a trade publication for the live entertainment and amusement industry, has launched AB Online which can be reached at <http://www.amusementbusiness.com>.



new companies

Kenny Hamlin, former senior vice president and general manager of Elektra/Asylum, Nashville, has opened Kenny Hamlin and Associates, an independent marketing and graphic design company. The office is located at 330 Franklin Road, Suite 13501, Brentwood, TN 37207; (615) 376-9990; fax (615) 376-9986.

Jessie Schmidt, former senior publicist with Starstruck Entertainment, has opened an independent publicity firm Schmidt Relations. Schmidt's client roster will include Rhett Akins and Joe Diffie. The company is located at 411 Newberry Court, Goodlettsville, TN 37072; (615) 851-3878; fax (615) 851-4878.

The Artist Development Network (ADN) is a network of music business professionals

organized and operated by Cathy Lemmon. ADN helps artists prepare themselves for major label presentation and provides free consultation and high quality services and products at an affordable rate. Send inquires to ADN, P.O. Box 271087, Nashville, TN 37227-1087; (615) 883-0960; fax (615) 885-0260.

A.P.I./Texas Wedge Music and Los Angeles-based Windswept Pacific have announced a joint publishing venture with Kerry Kurt Music, owned by Kerry Kurt Phillips. Phillips can be reached in care of A.P.I. at 1009 16th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212; (615)327-9050; fax (615) 327-9027.



newsline

The Nashville entertainment Association (NeA) is kicking off a three-month nationwide talent search to find the best Country Music performers in the United States to showcase before Nashville's record industry. *Music City Music97* will showcase the best undiscovered new talent from across the country in one of Nashville's downtown music venues. All selected artists will have the chance to perform on October 9, 1997, before representatives from record labels, publishing companies, artist management companies, and booking agencies located in

Nashville. For more information, contact the NeA office by phone (615)327-4308, by e-mail (nea@isdn.net), via the World Wide Web (<http://nea.net>), or by mail at NeA Music City Music97, Nashville entertainment Association, P.O. Box 121948, Nashville, TN 37212-1948.

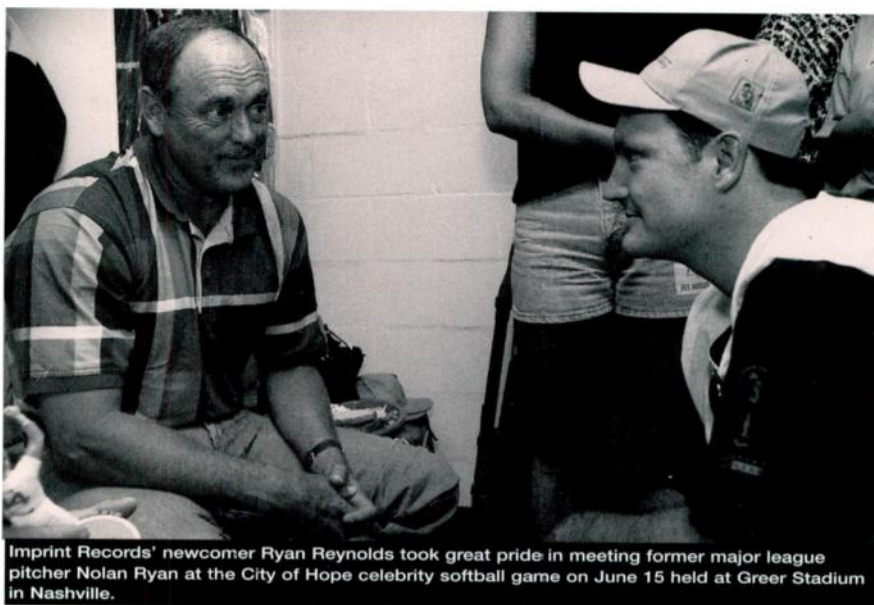
The International Music Products Association brought the '97 NAMM Summer Session to Nashville for the fifth consecutive year. The kick off charity event was a food drive for USA Harvest and a fund-raiser for the T.J. Martell Foundation. Participating artists were: Peter Frampton, Bill Ray Cyrus, Asleep At The Wheel, Jeff "Skunk" Baxter (Doobie Bros.), Big Bad Voo Doo Daddy, Blake & Brian, Bryan Smith, Don Ellis, Jim & Jon Hager, John & Audrey Wiggins, TNN's Katie Haas & Lisa Stewart, Nikki Nelson, Regina Regina, Sara Evans and Skip Ewing.

Bill Anderson's newly opened exhibit at the Grand Ole Opry Museum displays an array of artifacts from his career. Items included are a photo of the singer's last Opry performance with Roy Acuff and a pair of white boots that became synonymous with his on-stage apparel. Located at Opryland USA, admission to the Opry Museum is free. For details call (615) 889-6600.

Tracy Byrd recently golfed in Palm Springs, CA at the Nabisco/Dinah Shore Celebrity Tournament to help raise funds for Desert Hospital, United Way, the Boys & Girls Club among other organizations.

The Oak Ridge Boys, along with American Forests, are working together to create a Country star division of the organization's highly successful *Famous & Historic Trees* planting campaign. The project currently identifies trees associated with significant people, events and places in history. Soon, Country fans will have the opportunity to own trees named after, and from the property of, their favorite Country stars.

Virginia Records, Inc. has announced a new line of children's entertainment cassette tapes-Froggy's Country Storybook. Kicking off the series are Pam Tillis and Bryan White, who narrate "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and "Jack and the



Imprint Records' newcomer Ryan Reynolds took great pride in meeting former major league pitcher Nolan Ryan at the City of Hope celebrity softball game on June 15 held at Greer Stadium in Nashville.

Beanstalk." Product will be available in all K-Mart stores starting November 15, 1997.

The Oak Ridge Boys and Crystal Gayle joined volunteers from the Dow Chemical Company to build a new home for a Pikeville, KY family through Habitat for Humanity, International. The home was one of 54 to be built during the recent week-long Jimmy Carter Work Project (JCWP), an annual blitz held by former President Jimmy Carter.

Arista/Nashville and The RCA Label Group/RLG Nashville launched *TwangThis!* (www.twangthis.com), a genre-based Web site devoted to Country Music. The collaboration marks the largest joint marketing venture between these labels, whose parent company is BMG Entertainment North America.

For the third consecutive year, Neal McCoy headlined the "Celebrity Jam," the benefit concert serving as the kick-off event of the Michael Jordan Celebrity Golf Classic in Greenville, NC. The annual event benefits the Ronald McDonald House of North Carolina.

Tracy Lawrence, Deana Carter, Terri Clark, Vince Gill, Nolan Ryan and Troy Aikman were among the celebrities playing in the sold-out Wrangler/City of Hope Celebrity Softball Challenge at Greer Stadium. The event raised a record \$223,000 to support the ongoing research of catastrophic

diseases by the City of Hope National Medical Center and Beckman Research Institute.

Ricochet and the staff of Sony Music Nashville banded together recently to answer the American Red Cross' emergency appeal for help. According to the ARC, the blood supply level in Nashville had reached a critically low level and Sony Music responded by it's third annual blood drive, the only one on Music Row.

SW Networks now has a new office on Music Row. Beth Torroll and Jennifer Gerlock can be reached at SW Networks, 1108 B 17th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 340-0077; fax (615) 340-0093.

Protect The One You Love is the new joint effort between the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Opryland USA and Suzy Bogguss to encourage Tennesseans to be safe drivers. One Tennessee safe driver will receive a weekend stay at the Opryland Hotel, admission to the Opryland Themepark and see Suzy Bogguss at her Nashville On Stage concert on Saturday, August 30, 1997.

David Renzer, worldwide president, MCA Music Publishing, announced that MCA Music has acquired the music publishing assets of All Nations Music, a music publishing company owned by Pritzker family business interests and Billy Meshel.



While on a recent West Coast tour together, Pam Tillis and Neal McCoy took time off to treat their bands, crews and some local fans to an evening of bowling.

John Michael Montgomery and Ricochet teamed up to help celebrate the one year anniversary of Planet Hollywood Nashville. John Michael Montgomery not only did the honors of cutting the cake, but he also donated a pair of jeans to the restaurant, from his recent tour with Ricochet.

The 20th Anniversary of Country Music Week in Canada is scheduled to take place in Hamilton, Ontario from September 5-8, 1997. For more information on Country Music Week '97, contact the Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) at 3800 Steeles Ave. W., Suite 127, Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 4G9; (905)850-1144; fax(905) 850-1330; e-mail ccma@sprynet.com or visit their website at www.ccma.org.

 **on the move**

Keith Stegall has been named senior vice president of A&R for Mercury Nashville. Previously, Stegall served as vice president of A&R and will continue his duties procuring new artists and developing the Mercury/Nashville roster.

 **music video**

artist/label

Lee Roy Parnell/Career Records
Tracy Lawrence/Atlantic Records
Travis Tritt /Warner Bros.
Little Texas/Warner Bros.

title

"Lucky Me, Lucky You"
"That's How A Cowgirl Says Goodbye"
"Helping Me Get Over You"
"Your Mama Won't Let Me"

director/producer

Michael McNamara/Brian McNamara
Michael Merriman/Bryan Bateman
Michael Merriman/Bryan Bateman
Ken Carpenter

Bruce Van Langen has been appointed to the position of director/sales and inventory for Magnatone Records. Most recently, Van Langen served as director of music merchandise for Magnatone's sister company MOR Music TV.

Jon Baugher has been promoted to director of national system sales at AEI Music Network Inc. Baugher has been with AEI Music since 1993, when he joined the company as a national sales consultant.

Danny Kee has been promoted to the position of director of A & R for Warner/Reprise Nashville.

Kee, who joined Warner/Reprise Nashville in 1987, has worked with Jim Ed Norman in multiple capacities over the past decade, from production assistant to co-producer.

PVS*SPEER International has tapped

Michael Carnes for the position of producer and director of program and production development for its Nashville office. Carnes will oversee all internally generated projects and ventures with outside producers and distributors.

Paul Jankowski has been appointed to vice president of the entertainment marketing division of

SJS Entertainment. Prior to joining SJS, Jankowski was vice president of marketing for Trifecta Entertainment/Nashville.

 **signings**

PUBLISHING: Rivers Rutherford and Terry Burns to MCA Music Publishing...Clay Curtis and Brice Long to Starstruck Writers Group...Bill Miller to Patrick Joseph Music...RECORDING: Pam Gadd to Vanguard Records...BOOKING: Merle Haggard to Bobby Roberts Company...Tommy Tutone to Lustig Talent.



RCA recording artist Martina McBride, actor Tony Danza and political icon General Colin Powell spent the Memorial Day holiday in Washington D.C. taking part in the President's Memorial Day Concert.



International Update

Nearly 100 journalists from around the world packed ASCAP's Nashville headquarters for a reception in their honor during Fan Fair week. CMA and ASCAP hosted the event to give radio, TV and print media representatives an opportunity to meet about 50 artists who also attended the reception. The annual event has grown tremendously in recent years, with the increased interest placed by the music community on international market development. Some media representatives took the opportunity to record brief interviews with the artists, while others quizzed them on their upcoming touring destinations.



CMA Executive Director Ed Benson introduces new CMA Board Member Tracy Lawrence. The Atlantic artist spoke to the crowd of international media about the importance of opening up new markets for Country Music.

Victoria Shaw has made her mark as a Warner Bros. singer/songwriter during several international trips in recent years. She talks with French radio representative J.C. Francois during the reception at ASCAP.



Hans-Eckart Eckhardt, host of the weekly show "Country Club" on Onyx Television in Germany, visits with new Giant Records artists Regina Regina and Decca artist Lee Ann Womack.



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

CMA APPOINTS TREVOR SMITH AS NEW AUSTRALIA REPRESENTATIVE

As part of the Country Music Association's expanded international initiatives, Trevor Smith has been appointed CMA's first representative for Australia.

Smith is a 30-year music industry veteran whose vast experience includes pioneering, managing and programming major commercial radio stations; operating a radio production and music marketing company; concert promotion and extensive radio/television network program development.

"Australia has shown great growth and significantly increased potential as a Country Music market, making it particularly timely for CMA to establish direct representation in this key territory," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "We couldn't have found a better, more experienced person than Trevor, who is also highly regarded in the Australian industry."

In 1995 and 1996, Smith served as chief executive officer of KICK Media, operating the 1269 frequency on the AM band in Sydney. It was there where he initiated the "Cool Country Rock 'n' Blues" format, which received critical and consumer acclaim. Soon after, he launched Australia's first contemporary magazine-style Country Music radio program - "The Outback Club" hosted by Lee Kernaghan, Australia's top contemporary Country performer.

Other highlights of his career include helping to establish MTV Australia, serving as music consultant for the Crocodile Dundee movies and working with or interviewing stars including the Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney, Rod Stewart, Elton John, Garth Brooks and Vince Gill. Currently, Smith operates his own radio and television production company, "Hear & There Communications", and will now also take on his CMA duties.

"I am delighted to be appointed as the Australian representative of the CMA," Smith said. "I have great respect for the organization's global vision for the development of Country Music and am very much looking forward to working with Ed Benson, Jeff Green and the rest of the CMA team, in association with the Country Music Association of Australia, to help make a real difference in terms of Country record sales, media exposure and artist development in our part of the world."

The potential of Australia's music market has made it one of CMA's targets for development. The Australia Record Industry Association estimates indicate that Country already registers approximately 6-7 percent of the \$680 million domestic record



business, which would rank Australia third in the world behind the U.S. and Canada in Country Music market share. An increasing number of U.S. acts are touring the continent with sellout shows, including John Berry, Garth Brooks, Willie Nelson, LeAnn Rimes, Kenny Rogers, Don Williams and Trisha Yearwood, with many more planning concerts in the coming year. CMT: Country Music Television is enjoying 100 percent penetration in the rapidly growing cable TV market, which now reaches over 500,000 homes and has more than doubled in the past year.

Smith's appointment follows recent announcements of other international representatives: David Bower as the new UK/Ireland director, Jan Garich as the full-time representative in G/S/A and the promotion of Bobbi Boyce as European operations manager. Also, Benelux representative Karen Holt has added the Scandinavian region to her responsibilities.

The increased representation throughout Europe is part of CMA's strategic efforts to develop international markets for Country Music. In addition to direct representation, CMA's international activities include services such as CDX record service, the monthly Communiqué newsletter, touring information and an extensive communications network via label relations, advisory groups, conferences, research projects, databases and publications.

Smith can be reached at
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+61-2-9337-5272, fax.

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CMA/NARM P-O-P Campaign Now In 15th Year

CMA and the National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) continue a joint fall merchandising point-of-purchase campaign for the 15th year. Targeted to consumers at nationwide music outlets to establish high visibility for the September 24 live telecast of "The 31st Annual CMA Awards". The campaign also boosts sales and awareness of recorded Country Music product both before and after the telecast.

The campaign features four display pieces: a two-sided poster, a divider card, a two-sided flat and a shelf talker. The materials have been offered to music retailers and wholesalers throughout the U.S. and Canada. Orders will be fulfilled by late August.

Display contest forms will be forwarded in a special mailing coordinated by NARM. Cash prizes will be awarded to both rack jobbers and retailers. Deadline for entries for the display contest is October 27. Winners will be announced in late November.

Last year, over 450,000 display pieces were ordered for use in the campaign. All P-O-P materials are for promotional use only and are provided free of charge. Participants are invoiced at cost for shipping and handling.

THIRTY-FIRST CMA AWARDS

Wednesday
September 24, 1997
8 PM
EASTERN AND PACIFIC



John Hart Media

The battle for a chart position is an everyday struggle for today's artists and their record labels. With only 50 to 75 positions on the Country charts, many artists and record labels are seeking outside help in trying to understand what radio is looking for. John Hart moved to Nashville in 1995 after spending 26 years in radio as an on-air personality, consultant and program director. He now operates John Hart Media, where he consults with record companies, artist management firms, recording artists, marketing firms and radio syndicators. John Hart Media helps clients understand how to better utilize radio and how to use all the tools available in promotion, marketing and research.

What made you decide to leave radio and start John Hart Media?

The Telecommunications Act of '96. It became very apparent that the huge consolidation of radio was going to cause a lot of difficulties for people in my position in middle management. The president of the company I worked for told me frankly, 'John, if you have ever thought about doing something, now is the time. It is getting ready to be real stupid in radio.' He was right. It was a real opportunity to start my own business. I've always wanted to be in Nashville, so I took everything I could beg, steal, borrow or hock and came.

Is this your first experience at consulting, and do you consult your clients primarily on radio issues?

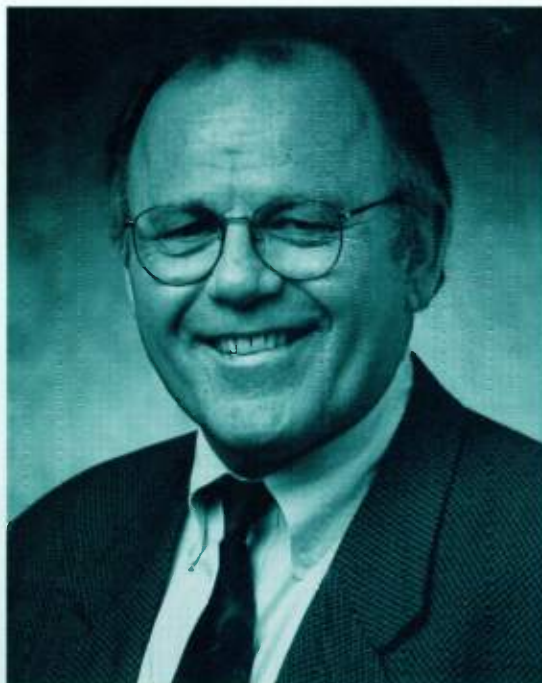
I was a programming consultant at radio. One of the things I felt was lacking at radio and in this business was an understanding by the record industry of exactly what radio does and exactly how radio can help them outside of spinning or playing their records. I had this grandiose idea of coming to Nashville and bringing together the radio industry and the record industry, and we would all go down the path together. Obviously, that is not going to happen. We are radio people, and what we do is show them how to use radio better and show them what radio has to offer.

What are some common problems of clients?

It is usually last minute battles of the charts. We have products that help them get that information to radio easier. A lot of it is sitting down and coming up with ideas for long-term issues like career direction, touring promotions and media buys. We are really trying more to help our clients impact sales. If you don't get airplay, you are not going to sell records.

What are some of the products you offer to your clients?

We put out a lot of products. One of them is called *Monday Memo*. In this, we tell the strong points of the music and how to promote it at radio and how to get it across to radio. We spot the trends and put the analysis in radio programmer terms. We do another piece of research called the *Midweek Report*. The *Midweek Report* is issued every Wednesday morning.



I had this grandiose idea of coming to Nashville and bringing together the radio industry and the record industry, and we would all go down the path together.



the market and find out how they are doing in those markets.

Do you find working on this side of radio more interesting?

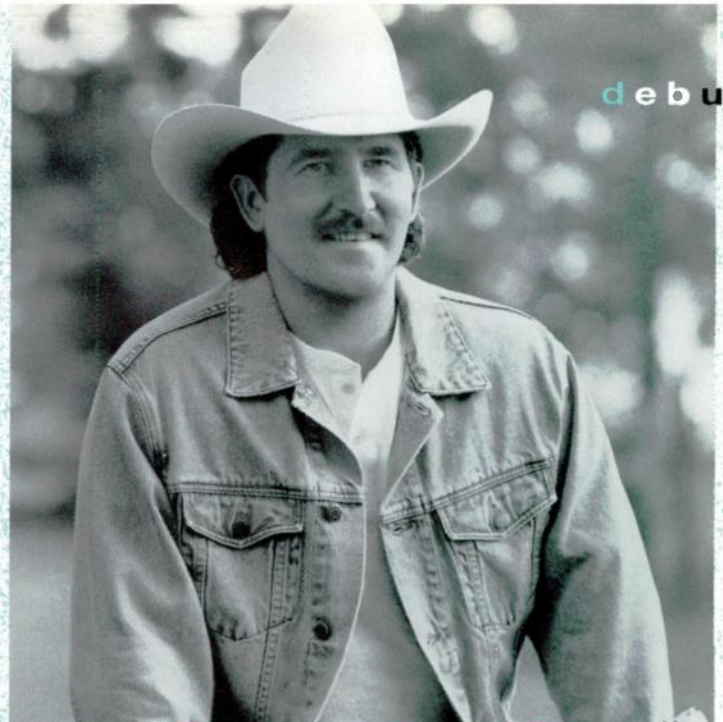
That is a hard question to answer because radio is my life. It is a tremendously interesting career. It is real exciting over here to be at this level of working with artists on planning and looking forward, as opposed to being on the final product end of it. I miss radio to a degree because I miss that day to day ratings battle. I'm just happy to be here. We have a good client list. Putting a business together is not what I thought it would be. We try to keep prices real fair. We are not here to get rich. We are here to build a business and build a reputation. My job is to get my clients a good deal. Basically it revolves around research. Not everybody in this town believes in research, but they use it because it helps you make a better decision. That is the basic core of our business. We are fortunate that the industry here has embraced us. We have brought a product to the table that works for them.

The report is a valuable tool when trying to spot trends with our this week/last week columns. We bring them up to speed on research of how they are doing because promotion is a daily thing. Promoters work radio everyday, and they need information and tools to work with. We conduct a survey called the *Bullseye Consumer Pretest* which is probably the most controversial and biggest thing we do. We go out and test album projects before they ever come out. We find out which cuts will drive sales and why, and which cuts will generate good call out research at radio. It is very imperative that call out be there to get to the top of the chart. If the top of the charts is occupied by hit records, and you are not testing good enough to get into heavy rotation with the 35 radio stations that do call out, then it takes only three of those stations to shut you down. You need to have that research side together. That is what the pre-test does. We also do weekly call out on our own where we call into 20 markets around the country and hook test people on records that are in

-Dixie Weathersby



anita cochran



debut

royal wade kimes

Record Label: Warner Bros.
 Album: BACK TO YOU
 Single: "I Could Love A Man Like That"
 Influences: Carter Family, Bill Monroe, Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn

When Anita Cochran arrived in Music City, she drew attention for her multi-dimensional talents. Not only did her vocal prowess get noticed, so did her multi-instrumental dexterity, poise and studio savvy. In addition to writing songs, Cochran has gained notice as a masterful guitarist as well as being handy with a half-dozen other stringed and keyboard instruments. "I started playing guitar when I was four-and-a-half," Anita remembers.

The Detroit native not only wrote or co-wrote nine of the 10 songs on her debut lp, but also played all the guitar leads, banjo, mandolin and dobro parts. She also co-produced the album, working with Warner/Reprise Nashville President, Jim Ed Norman. This accomplishment is not surprising considering everything Cochran has achieved with her musical talents. Throughout highschool and college, she bounced around from one local band to another before landing a job with Pearl Recording Studio, where she met former record executive Dick Williams who sent her demo to Jim Ed Norman. The deal was sealed with a handshake.

Record Label: Asylum Records
 Album: ANOTHER MAN'S SKY
 Single: "Another Man's Sky"
 Influences: George Jones, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison, Dolly Parton, Tanya Tucker and Hank Williams

Royal Wade Kimes bought his own guitar and started writing songs when he was about 14. By the time he was 19, he says, "I really got into writing." But in the mountains where he was raised, duty to family came first. Kimes put his musical aspirations aside, saved his singing for Saturday night and prepared for the day he would be asked to take over his father's sawmill.

But in 1983, he decided to follow his heart and headed for Nashville. By breaking a recalcitrant horse, he got a job at Loretta Lynn's dude ranch in nearby Hurricane Mills. Some months later, he met Eddy Arnold, with whom he developed a friendship. That connection led to a songwriting deal with Bob Doyle, who paired Kimes with Garth Brooks as a writing partner.

Kimes says he wants his music to make people's life experience more meaningful and easier to understand. "I like to write songs about something serious, but throw in a little humor to make it easier to look at. Now I've also got some songs that are so emotional I'm almost afraid to let anybody hear them."

A visit to the home of Tammy Wynette represents a look inside a Country Music landmark with one of the genre's greatest legends. Purchased by Tammy and her husband George Richey in 1992, construction of the home in West Nashville was originally begun in 1949 by Hank Williams Sr.

"Hank's widow, Audrey, died here, and the house went from one person to the next. When we got it, there were things in the house that I wouldn't take anything for. There were pieces that belonged to Hank. I've got some wagon wheel light fixtures that belonged to him. There was a bar that had HW on it in lights."

Tammy has added her own touches, maintaining a Country Music mark throughout. She carefully decorated everything herself, sometimes going against the advice of her designer.

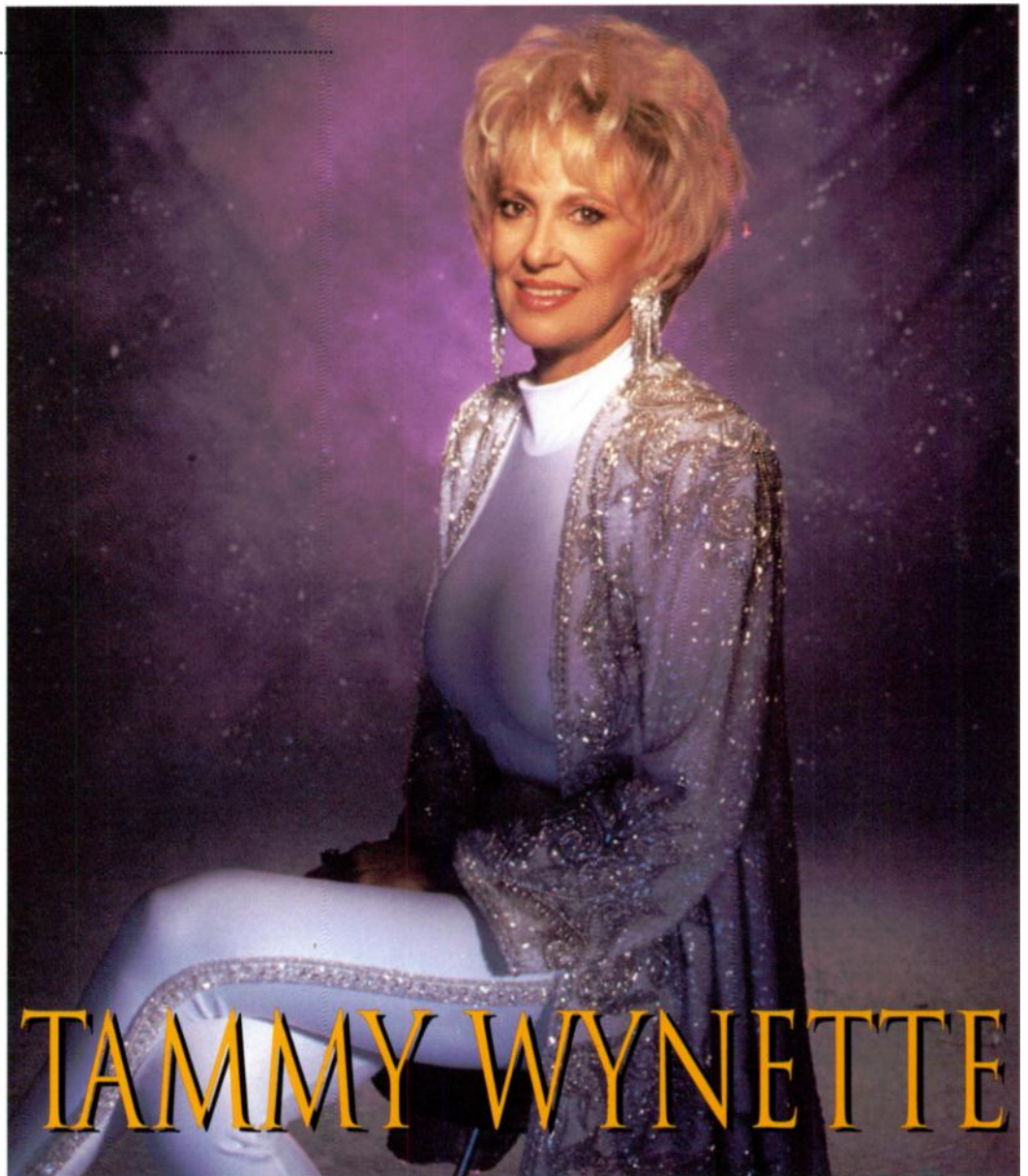
"It was so funny. I had ordered material for the drapes in the living room, and I ended up in the hospital in St. Louis to have surgery on my stomach. I had Richey (her husband) bring the prints and everything to the hospital. I had all kinds of material and fabric of every kind in the world stacked in my hospital room.

"I did most of my selecting while I was in the hospital, and the guy that I ordered the material from said, 'No, Ms. Wynette, you don't want red in your living room.' I said, 'Oh yes I do. I know you're a great designer and a great person to work with, but *I'm gonna decorate*, and this is what I want.'

"One day after that, I heard him showing someone the fabric. He said, 'Aren't these curtains exquisite? I told Ms. Wynette they are so lovely.' I was sitting there thinking, 'No you didn't.' Of course, he loved them once they were up."

But more striking than the house's decor, are the photos and accolades chronicling Tammy's personal life and career. Along with family photos, images of celebrities adorn the walls and shelves. As she explains, these items make her house more "homey".

"I've always loved pictures. To me, a house is not a home unless it has remnants of the family that lives there. I started years ago collecting pictures. After a while, I didn't have any place to put them, so I started hanging them on the walls. It makes my house homey, and I can look at them and say, 'Gosh, I remember when this happened.'"



TAMMY WYNETTE

"THIS HAS TO BE SUCCESS -
PERFORMING WITH
PAVAROTTI AND EATING
PINTO BEANS
AND CORNBREAD."

The home has also become a haven for her various awards, including two trophies for CMA Female Vocalist of the Year in 1968, 1969 and 1970. Tammy hit the top of charts in 1968 with "Stand By Your Man", the song that would become her signature hit, crossing over into the top 20 pop chart and garnering a Grammy in 1969.

In 1979, "Stand By Your Man" also became the title of Tammy's autobiography. The tale of her early life and rise to fame after moving to Nashville from Alabama in 1966 where she worked as a beautician also became a successful television movie in 1982. Now revered for her contributions to Country Music, Tammy's career triumphs don't end with "Stand By Your Man". Though Tammy hasn't *literally* written another book, she has continued to create new chapters in her career with a multitude of projects.

As the nineties began, Tammy hit the pop charts with "Justified and Ancient" with a group called The KLF. The song became an international sensation, reaching number one in 18 countries, and as Tammy says with

a laugh, "made her hip with her grandchildren". In 1993, Tammy joined with two of Country Music's other favorite singers, Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton to record HONKY TONK ANGELS. The next year, Tammy recorded WITHOUT WALLS, an album featuring artists with varied musical styles, including Sting, Wynonna, Elton John, Smokey Robinson, Joe Diffie, Lyle Lovett, Cliff Richard and Aaron Neville. But 1995 brought what has become one of her most highly touted projects by the press. That year she reunited with George Jones as a duet partner for ONE. The duo also paired for a tour that same year, kicking it off with an appearance at the 24th International Country Music Fan Fair.

So what will Tammy do next?

"I've got a few things in the back of my mind, and I'd like to do a couple of things with Loretta Lynn. I don't know if it would be an album or a concert, but we've been talking. I think it would be a lot of fun for us to go out and do a show together where each of us would go out and do three or four songs and answer questions from the audience.

"When we did the album HONKY TONK ANGELS with Dolly Parton, Loretta and I spent an awful lot of time together. I'd pick her up every day and take her to the studio. The night before the session was supposed to begin every morning, she'd call, and I'd say, 'What time are you going to be at the studio?' She'd say, 'Whatever time you pick me up.'

From Tammy's perspective, times have changed a lot of things in Country Music since she, Loretta and Dolly first made their mark.

"I think that Loretta, Dolly and myself are probably the three that I would put in a category that hopefully did something to make it a little bit easier for female artists. It was harder when we came along because we had so little to work with.

"I had to drive my own car and take my three kids with me everywhere I went because I couldn't afford to pay anybody to keep them. I didn't have any money. Loretta didn't either, and Doolittle, (Loretta's late husband) bless his heart, took her everywhere.

"Now everybody has all these privileges that we didn't have. But there were only eight or 10 artists when we came to town, so the competition wasn't that much. There are so many artists out there now, it's almost impossible to get heard.

"Being a woman, I feel for the female artists these days because you've got to find your place and stick with it. You've got to say, 'Hey, I'm here now and nobody's gonna make me go away. I'm gonna stay, and this is what I want.'"

As for the competition between older and newer artists to get radio airplay, Tammy says everyone deserves a turn, even if that means her records don't get played as often as she'd like.

"I can't say it bothers me now, but it did when I first started thinking about it. But I told myself not to be selfish because I've been played for thirty years. There are new artists who want to be played, and this is their time too."

"I STARTED WORKING IN ENGLAND IN 1966."

She does have one beef with radio programmers.

"It bothers me when they play 10 songs back to back on the radio and don't tell who the artists are. When I first started, the radio announcer would say, 'Oh, that's Tammy, and she was in Birmingham the other night.' They would give tidbits about the artists. That doesn't happen anymore, and it bothers me. How do you know which artists sing which songs anymore? It drives me crazy because that's when I really listen."

For many newer artists, the international market is still a thing of the future. Tammy is also a pioneer in that area, first travelling to Europe in the late '60s.

"I started working in England in 1966. I love it over there. You have to cultivate a market. I went for three or four years with no pay.

My record label had told me that if I went, they would take me to the little pubs and introduce me around. In the long run, they thought it would pay off.

"One night, the first time that they sent me over there, I had been in Germany for 10 days. I was miserable. I didn't have a band, and I was by myself working with a little five piece English group whenever I could sit in with them. We got to England and I called my booking agent. I said, 'I'll pay you if you let me come home. Please let me come home.' He said, 'No, you can stick it out. It's going to be fine.'

"It did turn out to be fine. I work there every year now, usually in May or November."

With everything she's achieved, does Tammy feel she's truly experienced success?

"After I had worked with Sting on my album project, he called and wanted me to take part in his annual Rainforest Foundation Benefit at Carnegie Hall. We had all been up on stage during rehearsal, and afterwards everyone was going downstairs to eat.

"When I got down there, they were serving sushi, and I don't like raw fish. I told Richey that I was going to my bus to get something to eat. A few minutes later, he came on the bus and found me laughing hysterically. He said, 'What is it?' I said, 'I'm on stage with Sting, Elton John, Whitney Houston and Pavarotti a few minutes ago, and now I'm out here alone on the bus eating pinto beans and cornbread. This has to be success - performing with Pavarotti and eating pinto beans and cornbread. I've finally made it.'"

So though she's not sure what she'll tackle next, Tammy is sure that once she settles on an idea, whether it may be decorating, recording an album or even writing another book, she will see it through to completion.

"When I want something done, I set out to do it, and I don't stop until it's finished. I may be late getting it done, but I'll get it finished one way or another."

- Mandy Wilson

CMA BOARD MEETS IN WASHINGTON

- **DONATES \$2 MILLION TO HALL OF FAME**
- **VISITS VICE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE**
- **LEGISLATIVE ISSUES KEY TOPICS**

During the CMA's quarterly board meeting July 17-18 in Washington D.C. a \$10 million capital fund campaign will be launched this summer to raise funds for a new downtown facility for The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. The Country Music Foundation, which operates the museum, has acquired a 3.2 acre site at Fifth Avenue South and Demonbreun St., across from the new \$120 million Nashville Arena.

In addition, the 62 music industry power brokers were updated on legislation effecting the industry by experts on the issues. Vice President Al Gore and Mrs. Gore hosted a casual "evening on the lawn", with acoustic performances by Patty Loveless, Kathy Mattea, Kim Richey and Lee Roy. Also during the two-day event.

Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky, U.S. trade representative, spoke during a luncheon hosted by CMA and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).

During a forum discussion, the board heard from Mary Beth Peters, the U.S. registrar of copyrights. Peters has held the position for three years and is author of "The General Guide To The Copyright Act Of 1976". Gwen Lipski, president of Sound Thinking, also addressed the group regarding strategic planning and research.

The CMA Board of Directors voted to contribute \$2 million to The Country Music Hall of Fame capital fund campaign.

CMA ANNOUNCES 1997 BROADCAST AWARDS NOMINEES

The Country Music Association has announced the finalists for the 1997 Station of the Year and Broadcast Personality of the Year awards. This year's winners will be recognized during "The 31st Annual CMA Awards", broadcast live on Wednesday, September 24, at 8 p.m. (Eastern) on the CBS Television Network. The CMA Broadcast Awards are the preeminent honors accorded in Country radio.

The following stations are finalists for the 1997 Station of the Year Award:

SMALL MARKET:

KEAN Abilene, TX
 KYKZ Lake Charles, LA
 WBBN Laurel/Hattiesburg, MS
 WPOR Portland, ME
 WQCB Bangor, ME

LARGE MARKET:

WCOL Columbus, OH
 WFMS Indianapolis, IN
 WSIX Nashville, TN
 WSOC Charlotte, NC
 WWKA Orlando, FL

MEDIUM MARKET:

KASE Austin, TX
 KDRK Spokane, WA
 WSSL Greenville, SC
 WUSY Chattanooga, TN
 WZZK Birmingham, AL

MAJOR MARKET:

KMPS Seattle, WA
 KNIX Phoenix, AZ
 KYGO Denver, CO
 WGAR Cleveland, OH
 WQYK Tampa, FL

Finalists for the 1997 Broadcast Personality of the Year are:

SMALL MARKET:

Dixon, Roberts & Gregory WMUS Muskegon, MI
 Gene Michaels/Allyson Scott WBBN Laurel/Hattiesburg, MS
 Hot Rod & JB KAYD Beaumont, TX
 Johnson & Johnson WKXC Augusta, GA
 Scott Wynn/Tom O'Brien WPCV Lakeland, FL

MEDIUM MARKET:

Bearman & Ken Hicks WUSY Chattanooga, TN
 Bill "Dexter" Poindexter WUSY Chattanooga, TN
 Bob Cole/Sammy Allred KVET Austin, TX
 Ellis & James WSSL Greenville, SC
 Jeff Roper/Andi Weber WCOS Columbia, SC

LARGE MARKET:

CC McCartney WSIX Nashville, TN
 Dale Carter KFKF Kansas City, MO
 Jim & Kevin WFMS Indianapolis, IN
 Mary McKenna/Bobby Quinn KFKF Kansas City, MO
 Paul Franklin WTQR Winston-Salem, NC

MAJOR MARKET:

Chuck Collier WGAR Cleveland, OH
 Duke Hamilton WUBE Cincinnati, OH
 Jeff West KMLE Phoenix, AZ
 Jim Mantel & Crew WGAR Cleveland, OH
 Murphy & Cash WMZQ Washington, DC

The four categories are established by market size based on Arbitron rankings, with Major Market including stations with an Arbitron ranking of 1 to 25, Large Market stations with a ranking of 26 to 50, Medium Market with rankings of 51 to 100 and Small Market including all other markets. Arbitron rankings are determined by the population of a radio station's hometown.

All interested full-time Country on-air personalities and radio stations in the U.S. and Canada were eligible to enter. The entries are judged by a panel of broadcast professionals.

Entrants for the Broadcast Personality Award are judged on aircheck, ratings, community involvement and biographical information. Station finalists were judged on the following criteria: airchecks, ratings history, community involvement and leadership. Finalists are selected during the first round of judging. Winners are determined by the aggregate score of the first round of judging and the second round, which is done by a different panel of judges. Scoring by the judges is tabulated by the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche LLP.

CLINT BLACK, PATTY LOVELESS, BRYAN WHITE ANNOUNCE 1997 CMA AWARDS NOMINEES

Top Country recording artists and former CMA Award winners Clint Black, Patty Loveless and Bryan White announced the final nominees for "The 31st Annual CMA Awards" during a press conference Tuesday, August 5, at the Grand Ole Opry Courtyard. These artists have experienced the excitement of this day many times before, having collectively received 29 CMA Award nominations. "The 31st Annual CMA Awards" will be broadcast live by the CBS Television Network on Wednesday, September 24 from 8 to 11 p.m. (Eastern).

A complete list of nominees will be published in the next issue of *Close Up*.

Don't forget
 CMA's website at
www.countrymusic.org

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cma events

August

5 CMA Awards Press Conference / Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville

September

24 31st Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville

25 Annual Membership Meeting / BellSouth Building / Nashville

29-October 1 SRO / CMA's International Entertainment Expo / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville



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FIND CMA ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB AT
www.countrymusic.org.



(l to r) Nanci Griffith, Melanie & Harlan Howard, Frances Preston, Ed Murphy, Tony Bennett, Judy Collins and Bobby Weinstein join in celebration as Harlan Howard was inducted into the National Academy of Popular Music's Songwriters' Hall of Fame in New York City.