

APRIL 1998

CloseUp



Shania Twain

INSIDE:

Mila Mason

Annie Roboff

John Lloyd Miller

Shania-takin' it on the road



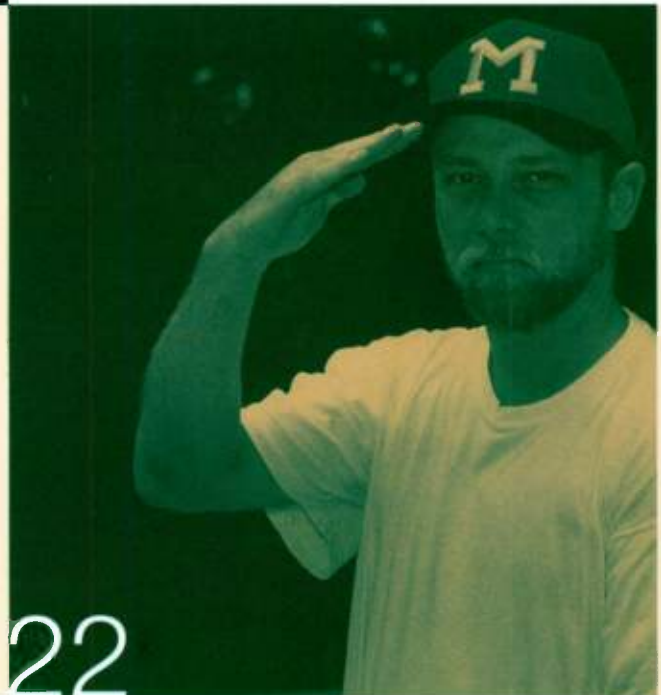
WRN



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Sawyer Brown

on the cover.

CLOSE UP recently visited with Mark Miller, Sawyer Brown's front man, at his cattle farm just outside of Nashville to discuss plans for the group's new album, setting goals, winning awards and much more.

As we sat down, Sawyer Brown had plans to be in their studio in Muscle Shoals, Alabama by the end of the week to work on their 16th album due out in August.

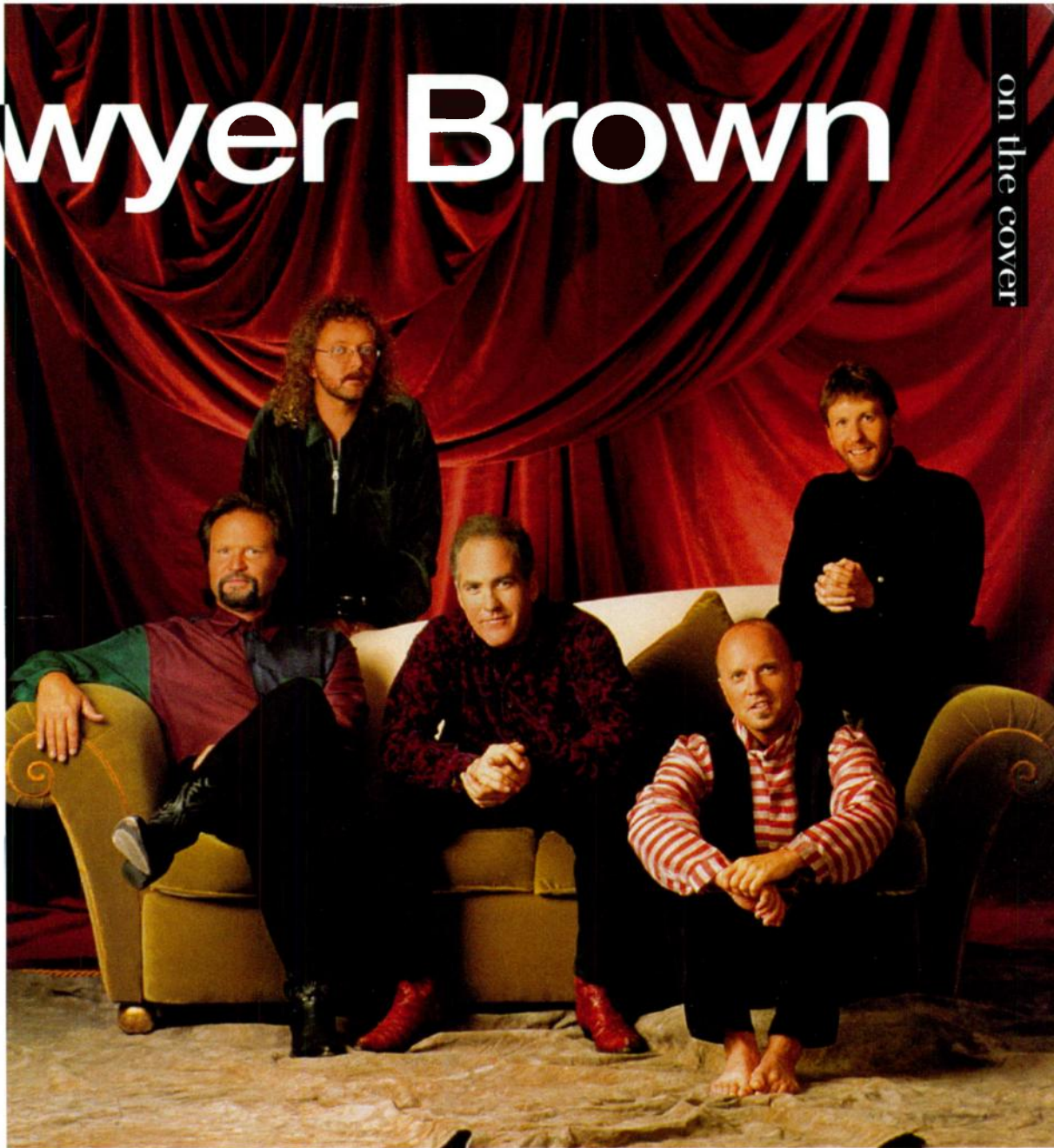
"This album will be much more vocal oriented than any other album we've ever turned in. Duncan and Hobie are going to have to work very, very hard, and they know it. We're going to try to shift the sound just a little. I may try to put a little bit more in their court," Mark says.

"We're in that reinvent stage right now. We're experimenting with some new stuff and trying a couple of different ways of recording. We're going in and reversing the way we've done things in the past. The great thing about having our own studio is that we really can go in and do things pretty different, and we do."

For the boys of Sawyer Brown setting a yearly goal is not a priority, but they did set out with one particular career goal in mind.

"I think in the beginning we set a career goal, and all we wanted out of that was longevity. The only thing we wanted was to not have to get a real job someday.

"We don't sit down and set goals, but I think we do challenge ourselves when we go in



"The only thing we wanted was to not have to get a real job someday."

to make an album. We try to go in and say, 'Okay, what haven't we explored?' 'What haven't we done?' 'What do we feel our weaknesses have been and our strengths?'

"We will never ever go in and try to recreate a hit. Like with the song 'Some Girls Do', that was a hit, but we're not ever going to try to do another 'Some Girls Do'. We just kind of move on. The last thing I want is us trying to compete against ourselves."

Mark is one of the primary writers for the group.

"When you write a song in your bedroom and you go to Portland, Oregon, and you're up on stage singing this song that you wrote in your bedroom and they know it, it's a little mind-boggling for me at times. Because I'm thinking, 'Man these people know this song. No one else is allowed in there, but everybody here knows that song.'

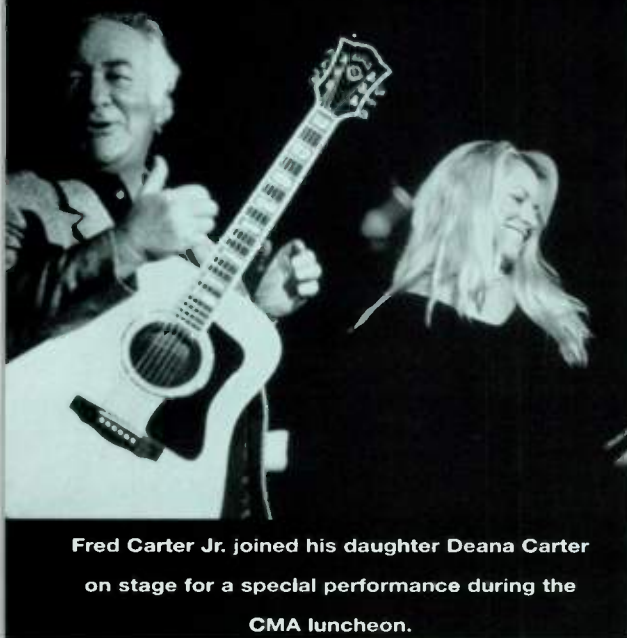
"Sometimes that lets me know how strong radio and television is because you get to see it firsthand. You're right there. For me, from that aspect, I guess it's just because of the miles. That someone in San Jose, California or Portland, Oregon or Bangor, Maine anywhere we go they're singing this song that I wrote in my bedroom and that for me...it's not the people standing there cheering for you, I don't really need that...that's not why I perform. I perform to sing the songs and because I enjoy music."

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CRS-29 *Stars And Industry Issues Take Center Stage*



Lon Helton and Garth Brooks were given Pina Coladas to celebrate with after their keynote presentation at the opening session of CRS-29.



Fred Carter Jr. joined his daughter Deana Carter on stage for a special performance during the CMA luncheon.

Keynote speaker **Garth Brooks** took a break from rehearsing to be host of "Saturday Night Live" and flew in for a personal conversation with RADIO & RECORDS' Lon Helton during the CRS Opening Session on March 26. Brooks addressed issues related to current radio concerns and announced up-coming plans for "ground breaking" production of a live performance album, as well as new '98 tour strategies. Brooks received questions from the audience and when asked why he released "Two Pina Coladas" to pop radio, he simply stated, "It's for one reason...so we can steal their audience!"

Deana Carter and **Bryan White** took the stage during a luncheon showcase hosted by CMA. More than a thousand people packed the room and were treated to their performance. The audience was delighted when **Fred Carter Jr.** joined his daughter on stage.

On Saturday evening, the New Faces Banquet and Show was hosted by **Jeff Foxworthy**. Performers were: **Sherrié Austin, Big House, Anita Cochran, Dixie Chicks, Matt King, The Lynns, Lila McCann, The Ranch, Sons of the Desert and Kris Tyler**. In addition to the



Bryan White took the stage during the CMA luncheon.



John Michael Montgomery was the star of the Super Faces show during CRS-29.



Rick Blackburn talks about recent research done by Edison Media Research in conjunction with CMA.



The New Faces Banquet and Show line up was star studded.

abundant talent and informative panels during CRS-29, numerous awards were presented including Humanitarian Of The Year to **Kenny Rogers**.

The 29th Annual Country Radio Seminar drew more than 2,300 registrants to the Nashville Convention Center (February 25-28). The new downtown location offered attendees a full agenda including a variety of exhibits, panel discussions, luncheons, workshops and artist showcases – all under one roof.

CRS-30 is scheduled for March 10-13, 1999 at the Nashville Convention Center.

CRB Officers for '98-'99 are Ed Salamon/Westwood One Radio Networks, president; Shelia Shipley Bidby/Decca Records, vice president; Gene Dickerson/KRMD, Shreveport, LA, secretary and Jeff Walker/AristoMedia/marco Promotions, treasurer.

Diary From Down Under

A delegation organized by CMA of 20 music industry executives traveled to Australia for a series of meetings with representatives of all segments of the Australian music industry to share information and develop business opportunities. The agenda was not for the faint of heart - 13 meetings in five days. Sleep was a luxury, but there was so much to see and do that I don't think anyone missed it. Besides, the Australians brew some wicked coffee, which helped keep us going.

I had long dreamed of visiting Australia, so I jumped at the chance to join the delegation. Part of the thrill was the chance to learn from some of our industry's most respected leaders. Initial discussions about planning a trip started in July, with the formation of an Australian Task Force, headed by native Aussie Jeff Walker. The next thing I knew, it was February and I was about to board a 747 for a 14-hour flight. Being the youngest and the greenest of the travelers, I was a little weary about playing with the big dogs. To kill some time and keep my sanity on the plane ride, I began keeping a journal.

Monday, February 9: Sydney

We spent the morning meeting with the Country Music Association of Australia (CMAA), learning about their organization and activities. CMAA Board members Jeff Chandler, Slim Dusty, Max Ellis, Dobe Newton and Rob Potts covered a variety of topics, including a wrap-up report of January's Tamworth Country Music Festival and an overview of the Australian Country Music industry, including consumer market research.

CMAA was also kind enough to host a luncheon and concert in the Rocks area of Sydney Harbour. Keeping with our "planes, trains and automobiles" theme, we boarded our chartered coach and headed to Circular Quay. I sat in silence, listening to delegates trade jokes and stories about life on the road. (I can't be sure, but this may have been the first of many requests by the delegation for CMA Board member and former recording artist Jimmy Gilmer to lead the group in a chorus of his hit "Sugar Shack". Sadly, he declined.)

Upon arrival at the Orient Hotel, delegates and members of the press mingled with some of their Australian counterparts. One of the most notable attendees was legendary radio broadcaster John Laws, who was presented with CMA's inaugural International Broadcaster Award. Australian artists Adam Brand, Colin Buchanan, Darren Coggan and Jane Saunders treated the crowd to an acoustic performance. (Colin stole the show as emcee, introducing CMA Executive Director Ed Benson as Muppets creator Jim Henson, much to the delight of the delegation.) Reigning CMAA Entertainer of the Year, Troy Cassar-Daley, was also on hand to welcome the delegation.

With the afternoon free for individual meetings, the delegation reconvened for a record launch



(l to r) CMA Executive Director Ed Benson, CMA's Jeff Green, Broadcasters Nick Erby and John Laws along with Australian superstar Slim Dusty and AristoMedia's Jeff Walker during the CMA luncheon at The Orient Hotel in Sydney.

party for Australian superstar Lee Kernaghan. The event was held at the Taronga Park Zoo, where delegates had a private tour of the Australian animal section. (Let me tell you that a real Tasmanian Devil is not nearly as charming as the cartoon!) After viewing kangaroos, koalas and wombats, we mingled with Australian industry execs on the observation deck, with a Sydney Harbour sunset serving as the backdrop. Lee Kernaghan wowed the crowd with selections from his new album, then chatted with delegates before we headed back to the hotel to recharge for Tuesday. I thought I had dodged jet lag, but the Melatonin wasn't a miracle cure after all, and I hit the sack while the more experienced travelers headed to the lounge to trade war stories.

Tuesday, February 10: Sydney

Delegates met with the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA), where label executives from both continents discussed the state of the music industry in their respective countries and leg-



(l to r) Stan Mores (President, Mores Nanas Entertainment), Tim DuBois (President, Arista Records), Russ Simmons (Vice President, Leisure Management, Nashville), American Country Music artist Teresa, Bob DiPiero (Songwriter, Little Big Town Music Group), Jimmy Gilmer (President, JAG Management), Jeff Walker (President, AristoMedia), Bob Saporiti (Vice President/General Manager, Warner Bros. Records Nashville), Butch Waugh (Senior Vice President/General Manager, RLG), Teresa George (Senior Director of Communications, CMA) and Ron Adsett (The Country Music Store/CMT Asia-Pacific) at the Double Bay Wharf in Sydney.

islative issues concerning the possible end of parallel import restrictions. Additional topics covered included the role of television in record marketing and developing domestic and international Country repertoire in our respective nations.

After lunch (and a nap for a lucky few!), delegates attended a reception hosted by the Nine Network's "Midday Show", one of Australia's top-rated television shows. Midday producer Lyndal Marks, host Kerrie-Ann Kennerly, and crew are planning to shoot the show from Nashville during CMA Week in September. Here's where I got to deviate from the group: Universal MD and CMA Board member Paul Krige chartered an 80-foot yacht to cruise the harbor for the spouses and children travelling with delegates. I felt it was my duty to ensure the spouses were being entertained, so I stowed away on the yacht. Captain Bob provided a colorful commentary about the history of Australia, which was both fascinating and educational. (Who knew it was settled by penal colonists? Maybe that explains why the natives are so friendly!)

Spouses and delegates were reunited in Balmoral Bay, where the Yanks and several Australians feasted on a fabulous seafood dinner at the Watermark Restaurant. The camaraderie of the delegation was already apparent, as we all traded bites of our dinner. (Or supper, as they say.) Never in my life did I think I would eat something called Bay Bugs, but I spent the rest of the trip trying to get my fill of the tasty crustaceans before I returned to the states. The seafood in Australia is unparalleled, period.

Warner Bros. Senior Vice President/General Manager and veteran Australian traveler Bob Saporiti then hosted an informal listening party featuring the new Faith Hill CD. It was also a chance to chat with some of the aussies who had accompanied us to dinner. I mean supper.

Wednesday, February 10: Sydney

CMT International President Carl Kornmeyer and Gaylord COO Terry London held a press conference to announce the formation of a separate CMT Asia Pacific feed, which will incorporate more local programming. Carl also announced plans to open an office in Sydney. Upon completion of some mechanical and staff logistics, the new programming is set to begin in April or May.

Following the announcement, a panel of pay TV executives including representatives from cable networks Austar, Foxtel and Optus Vision provided delegates with an overview of the expanding Australian cable television industry and available opportunities for music programming.

The morning concluded with a presentation on the Gympie Muster, a festival held the last weekend in August. More than 70,000 attend the festival, the majority of whom camp on the grounds a la Woodstock. Attendees have 10 venues to see artists, and all proceeds are donated to charity.

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ABC Records' Meryl Gross, AristoMedia's Jeff Walker (Chairman of the Australian Delegation Task Force) and ARIA's Jim White at the ARIA Meeting held at the Ritz Carlton in Double Bay, Sydney.

Wednesday afternoon was free for exploring the city or individual meetings. No rest for me - it was off to the Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour and then a walk through Chinatown before heading back to Circular Quay for the evening function, a multi-label sponsored showcase of Australian talent.



RCA Label Group Chairman Joe Galante learns about the Wombat at Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo.

Held in a popular Sydney club called The Basement, delegates, media representatives and Australian music industry executives were treated to a three-hour showcase featuring leading Aussie artists. CMA Executive Director Ed Benson also presented the second International Broadcaster Award to Nick Erby, who was so touched he fought back tears as he thanked members of the music community.

Australia's top-selling female artist, ABC Records' Gina Jeffreys, hosted the showcase. Other artists performing included ABC Records' Tania Kernaghan (with a special guest appearance by her brother Lee) and Mitchell Shadlow, Aussie supergroup and house band the Wheel, Shanley Lel (BMG Records), EMI artists Felicity and Clint Beattie, and Sony artists Troy Cassar-Daley and Beccy Cole. I think all the delegates left humming tunes by several of the artists as we boarded the bus back to the hotel.

Thursday, February 12: Sydney/Melbourne

The morning panel was comprised of Australian music retailers who discussed the import situation and ways to maximize potential for Country Music sales. Lunch featured a panel discussion with Australian publishing representatives from the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) and the Australian Mechanical Copyright Owners' Society (AMCOS). Topics included further discussion on parallel import legislation and creating opportunities to link Australian and Nashville-based songwriters.

After a quick packing job, most of the delegation departed to Melbourne for the last two meetings. The one-hour flight was a welcome change to the 14-hour journey we had taken a few days before.

Thursday night was the best meal yet. We dined at the world-renowned Flower Drum Chinese restaurant (several delegates said that meal alone was worth the trip!)

Friday, February 13: Melbourne

I tagged along with Ed Benson, Stan Moress and Aussie promoter Rob Potts for some industrial strength coffee to

gear up for the last day of business. Our morning meeting was with the producers from legendary Australian television show "Hey Hey It's Saturday". On the air for 26 years, the live show features talent from all musical genres. After experiencing some technical difficulties (it was Friday the 13th, after all), we viewed a highlight reel, which had all the delegates in stitches. There are definitely no holds barred in Australian television!

Friday's lunch was the last official meeting function, held at the Stokehouse restaurant in St. Kilda, overlooking the water. Some of Australia's most successful promoters (in every format - rock, pop, and Country) discussed how performers can build careers in Australia through repeat touring. Topics included defraying costs through sponsorships and working with Australian musicians.

For me, it was the last chance to have Bay Bugs for lunch. I felt a little bittersweet as I boarded the bus to the hotel - relieved but saddened to know that the group was about to scatter to the winds for the return home. I really think the best way to get to know people is to travel with them - spending all that time together was an incredible opportunity to establish new friendships and develop existing relationships while learning more about both the Australian and Nashville music industry. But it was Friday, so I decided to think about it later as I boarded my plane bound for the Great Barrier Reef to scuba dive. You know what they say about all work and no play.

-Katie Dean
CMA International Coordinator

What do a2b/AT&T, ASCAP, BMI, CyberCash, Intel, Microsoft, N2K, RIAA and SESAC have in common?

They and many more are coming to MINT '98!

Shouldn't you?

From novice to tech-head - whether you're in records, publicity, music publishing, booking, management or any other facet of the music industry - MINT is packed with essential information to help you keep pace with rapidly changing technology. Learn from a variety of panels, presentations, exhibits and hands-on demonstrations featuring top industry leaders who will share their expertise on the Internet, websites, software technology, intellectual/copyright issues, on-line transactions and much more!

CMA and Bell South Present



registration form Nashville Arena - May 13, 1998

CONFERENCE INFORMATION: *A separate form must be completed for each registrant. Photocopies are acceptable. A confirmation will be sent within two weeks of receipt of your completed registration form. Please print or type. Incomplete registration forms and those not accompanied by payment in full will result in a delay in processing.*

Name _____
as you wish it to appear on your badge

Company _____

Title _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____

e-mail _____

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION: *Registration is limited to 300 participants.* \$225

METHOD OF PAYMENT: PAYMENT TERMS: All registrations must be prepaid. Credit card orders may be faxed to (615) 726-0314, or return order form with check or money order (U.S. funds only) payable to "CMA MINT '98", One Music Circle South, Nashville, TN 37203.

Check or money order payable to "CMA MINT '98" TOTAL enclosed: _____

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Please charge my American Express Visa Mastercard

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NOTICE: Registrations cancelled after Wednesday, April 15 are subject to a \$35 penalty. No refunds will be made after Wednesday, April 29. All cancellations must be made in writing.

Shania Twain

Sporting a new crimped hairstyle, Shania Twain sits in her Nashville hotel suite prepared to do yet another interview. In town for the annual Country Radio Seminar, the Canadian has a lot to talk about these days. Among them, a long-awaited tour scheduled for May, the success of her latest Mercury lp, *COME ON OVER*, which is now approaching sales of 5 million worldwide, and a string of back-to-back hits.

She's been back in the limelight full force since the release of *COME ON OVER* in November of last year. With her last lp, *THE WOMAN IN ME*, Shania became a bonified sensation, amassing an amazing 13 million in sales worldwide to date. This feat distinguished her as the top-selling female Country artist of all time and brought her countless accolades.

But while all this success has been what every artist dreams of, Shania says she had to find a way to balance it with new career challenges and keep it in perspective while preparing for her latest project.

"There came a time when I said, 'I have to stop - *THE WOMAN IN ME* has to end'. I remember just having to draw that line," Shania says. "Of course, it never really ends. But technically, I had to draw some kind of line so that efforts could be concentrated on the new album. At that time though, I was always talking about the success of *THE WOMAN IN ME*. I decided I should stop doing interviews because I had to start focusing on the new album, but it wasn't of interest to anybody because it hadn't been written yet.

According to Shania, her main focus for the past two years has been writing and recording songs for *COME ON OVER*. And while she admits the process was sometimes arduous, her approach with husband producer co-writer Robert John "Mutt" Lange is what works best for them. In some ways, Shania says, she felt more in touch with what the fans liked and the extended recording time

"I love it when music can transcend the predictable or go beyond what you expect."

gave them a chance to experiment with the music.

"We don't just say, 'Okay, we're going to go in and do it in three weeks.' We do it in pieces. Often, you may discover something about the song that you want to change. You know when you write, you have the right to do that as you go. So this is why we thought we would take this approach."

Shania ended up with 16 songs, all of which the couple co-wrote.

"I think that really stretched things out," Shania concedes. "It's a lot of work. I don't know if I'll have 16 cuts on my next album. On long moments, Mutt and I kept telling each other that. We couldn't narrow it down though. It needed to be that way, because all the songs played such a vital role."

The lp's first single, "Love Gets Me Every Time", shot to number one almost immediately, while the follow-up single, "Don't Be Stupid (You Know I Love You)", hit the top 10. Currently, Shania is climbing the charts with "You're Still The One". Fueled by this success, Shania says she's feeling a lot more confident about her much anticipated and speculated upcoming tour.

"I wasn't really sure how I'd feel coming into the tour if the album didn't do well or live up to my expectations. So now I'm able to just concentrate on the touring and really have fun with it. I've been in rehearsals at my house, and plans for the first part of the tour have me going back and forth to various dates in the U.S. and Canada."

Shania is also thinking ahead about the tour's international feasibility, due in part to the success of "You're Still The One" in the UK. The song entered the pop singles chart at number 10.

"The tour will be international. I don't know if I will be able to take it to Europe full-scale the first time around. We'll have to see what happens. It's my first single there ever. I'm really amazed. It's doing well in Europe in general, and that's a good start for me."

In the time period since Shania's last album, she also joined forces with Jon Landau Management. The company's principal force, Jon Landau, and partner Barbara Carr have been at the helm of pop superstar Bruce Springsteen's career since its beginning.

"I want this tour to stretch for as long as the album is strong."

"The experience that they have gained from managing Bruce's career all through the years was certainly something that you can't buy," Shania says. "A lot of people who do have a 20-something-year career as strong as Bruce's has been all this time usually go through different management. So it's very hard to find a manager who's been through a stretch of career like that.

"They are one of the few management teams who've ever done that and maintained integrity throughout the whole time. Rock 'n' roll isn't exactly the most extremely diplomatic world. So that made me think these guys were for me. Because I consider the industry that I am in to be much milder. The every day grind of rock 'n' roll can be pretty harsh."

Landau, says Shania, had a good sense of where she felt she wants to

be in her career. The relief of not having to manage her own career has also helped her become more focused, Shania adds.

"I certainly wasn't prepared to keep managing myself and be able to progress at the same time. Musically, I was prepared to progress - musically this album would still be the same album if I was still on my own. But I've got an international career that's really starting in a very positive way that I have to think about. This is a very difficult thing to do.

"Rock 'n' roll isn't the most extremely diplomatic world."

"I've got a tour that's being put together, and I think it's being put together at a level that I wouldn't have been able to do on my own. So with those two elements alone, I'm sure I wouldn't have had the time or sanity to do it on my own. But Jon has all the experience in the world that I need for where I'm heading."

In Shania's words, on a more immediate level, she's headed for a time in her career where there will be "a lot less talking and more singing."

"I'm obviously approaching a very live musical time in my career. I really want this tour to stretch out for as long as the album is strong. That could be a very long time if THE WOMAN IN ME is any indication. This album has so much more material, and now there's an international market. The touring side could be quite extensive, and I'm excited about that. I'm going into a time when I'll be spending a lot more time with the music. That will be a nice change for me."

When she looks further into the future, Shania is most focused on her songwriting. It's her goal to have other

artists record her music.

"I'm going to have to have the time to write the music, because right now, I'm only writing for myself. That's all I've got time for. I think there comes a time when everyone's career slows down - then I will become more of a songwriter. Right now, I'm writing songs that I can express visually.

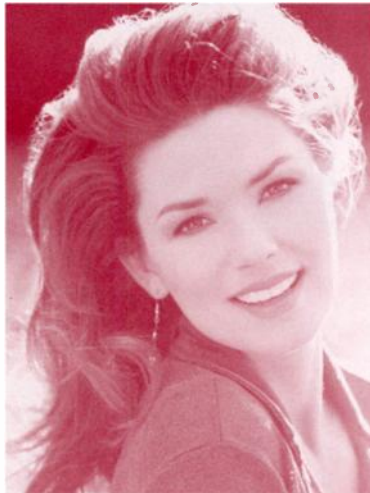
"There are so many songs in the past that I've written that I would never intend on recording myself, so I would like to be in that place again. I'd like to write music that has nothing to do with me as the artist. It's another side to explore - the more creative and artistic side, because I think as a songwriter you're limited if you're performing too. When you're just the writer, you actually sit back and watch and observe other people interpret that music."

And songwriting, says Shania, will be what keeps her going and allows her to continue her musical metamorphosis.

"I can see any one of my songs being done in 10 different ways. I love it when music can transcend the predictable or go beyond what you expect. It would be more hands off. I'm sure a lot of writers find that quite frustrating, but I think for me it would be refreshing not to be responsible for the outcome.

"There's so many different sides to this career. I guess what I'm saying is that when I see the performance side of my career mellowing out, then I see a whole new side of it opening up. I think that will be very fun."

-Mandy Wilson



AWARDS

MusicWomen International, a networking association for women in the music industry, presented Decca Records' general manager, Shelia Shipley Biddy, with the group's President's Award. This award goes to a woman in the music industry who has contributed substantially to the association and to the music industry in general.

Lorrie Morgan and Kevin Sharp announced the final nominees for the 32nd annual TNN Music City News Country Awards. Alan Jackson, George Strait and Billy Ray Cyrus tied as top nominees with six nods each. For the first time, the awards will be produced by High Five Entertainment of Nashville.



Don Light and Bob Kinkead have joined forces and formed Light & Kinkead Management Group. The new company can be reached at (615) 298-9944; fax (615) 292-2396; P.O. Box 120308, Nashville, TN 37212.

Jackie Solomon recently signed a co-publishing venture and administration agreement with Hamstein Publishing. The company will be called The Farm, and Solomon will supervise the signing and development of staff writers as well as pitching the company's catalog. The new company is located at 1212 16th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 321-0065; fax (615) 322-5486.



Baby saplings are now growing from tree seedlings gathered from the yards of Country Music stars. American Forests' Famous & Historic Trees will sell the trees (George Jones Tulip Poplar, Bryan White Black Walnut, Marty Stuart Pin Oak, Trisha Yearwood Dogwood...) to fans with all ben-



Michael Peterson poses with the four dancers who open his latest video, "Too Good To Be True". (l to r) Marnie Buchanan, Melissa Green, Michael Peterson, Kris Morris and Laura Leigh Marlow. (photo by: Mark Schlicher)

efits going to American Forests. The monies collected will help fund their goal of planting 20 million trees by the year 2000. For more information contact Kathy Gangwisch & Assoc. at (816) 931-8000.

Patti Olsen-Garafola and Bobby Young announced the official launch of TEG Entertainment Marketing's new website, www.young-olsen.com. The site was designed for radio programmers to network with their peers, obtain current music information and investigate alternative revenue opportunities for their own station websites.

NARAS Foundation brought the Grammy in the Schools tour to Nashville with special guests Vince Gill and Deana Carter. Three high-school students from Nashville were selected to join 36 other students from throughout the country who performed with the National Grammy High School Jazz Band & Choir the night before the Grammy Awards in New York City.

Austin City Limits launched its 23rd season this year and remains one of television's original live music programs dedicated to singers, songwriters and innovators of

American roots music. In March the program featured the songs of Townes Van Zandt with guests Willie Nelson, Emmylou Harris, Lyle Lovett, Guy Clark, Steve Earle, Nanci Griffith and more.



Carl Kornmeyer has been named president of Gaylord Communications Group and president of Country Music Television International. He was previously senior vice president and began working for the company in 1974.

Bruce Shindler has been named head of promotion for DreamWorks Records in Nashville. A native New Yorker, Shindler began his career in the music industry in 1971 and has worked with every major label and publishing company in Nashville with his independent promotion company Shindler Turner and Associates.

Jon Elliot, a four-year veteran of RCA Records Label Group in New York, has



(l to r) Larry Stewart, Mark Wills, Al Del Greco, Gary Chapman and Jason Sellers are the other Blues Brothers during the Universal Picture's Blues Brothers 2000 Premiere Party at Planet Hollywood Nashville. The Queen Mussette Throne was donated by Steve Cropper, the host of the evening. The event raised over \$20,000 for Gilda's Club.

joined the RLG Nashville team as associate director of artist development. Elliot was manager of artists development in New York. Amy Macy has been promoted to senior director of sales and marketing at the company. A six-year veteran of the label, Macy was formerly director of sales and marketing.

Kent Earls has been appointed to the position of associate director, creative services for MCA Publishing, Nashville. In his new position, Earls will be responsible for pitching songs from MCA's catalog, working with the company staff writers and identifying new writers to sign. He was previously with Affiliated Publishers Inc.

Angee Jenkins has joined MCA Nashville as vice president of publicity. She will oversee all publicity and video operations for the label. She previously worked for MCA Los Angeles as vice president of publicity for the label's pop music division and as executive vice president of Linda Dozoretz Communications.

Retta Harvey has been named senior director of video for Mercury Nashville. Harvey formerly served as director of video. Lisa

Wahnish has been named director of media for the company. She was previously manager of media relations. Claudia Mize has been promoted from director of A&R administration to senior director of A&R administration. John Grady has been named vice president of sales and marketing for the label. He will oversee functions of sales, marketing and radio promotion. Lindsay Saylor has been added to the staff as receptionist. She previ-



The Lynns and video director, Steven Goldmann, take a quick break during their "Woman To Woman" video shoot. (l to r) Peggy Lynn, Steven Goldmann, Patsy Lynn.

ously worked with Kirke Martin in managing the group Anointed.

Eric Hauenstein has been upped to president and general manager of Jones Radio Network. He was previously vice president and general manager. Phil Barry has been named vice president of programming for the company. He will relinquish his operations responsibilities, turning over leadership in this area to newly appointed director of operations Jim Murphy. Debbie Stark is named to the newly created position of director of advertising sales. CJ Johnson has been promoted to succeed Stark as marketing manager. Michelle Tharp also earned a promotion to marketing specialist and will work directly with Johnson to execute all aspects of the company's marketing campaigns.

Kyle Young, who has served as the Country Music Foundation's deputy director for special projects since 1983, has been named to associate director for the organization. His responsibilities have expanded to include day-to-day CMF operations as well as many aspects of the design and construction of the new Country Music Hall of Fame in downtown Nashville. Noted author and American humorist Garrison Keillor will serve as honorary chairman of the Country Music Hall of Fame's \$15 million capital campaign.

Gabriel Briggs has joined Killen Music Group as a member of the creative services

staff. Briggs was previously employed at David 'N' Will Music. He will now be involved with writer relations, as well as pitching and developing the catalog at Killen Music Group.

Pat Finch has been promoted to vice president of Famous Music's Nashville Division. Finch is responsible for the signing and development of Country Music writers and artists. He was previously senior director for the company.

Dale Turner has joined Lyric Street Records and will be in charge of special projects. He was formerly vice president of promotion for RLG.

Dorian C. Doyon has joined Entertainment America Agency to book national and regional artists out of Destin, Florida. He was previously vice president of Parker Entertainment.

Lee Nye has been elevated from general manager of KUBB Country and HOT 105 to vice president/general manager of the stations in Merced/Modesto, California.

Tom Chiappetta has been named director, communications for CMT: Country Music Television. He was previously director, marketing/public relations for Request Television in Denver.

Tanvi Patel has been promoted to director of marketing and promotion for Honest Entertainment. He was previously director of promotion and publicity. Keith Gibson has been promoted to director of sales for the company where he will oversee sales for the company. In addition, Diane Neel has been promoted to art director and Jen Gies to promotion manager.



artist/label

Randy Travis
Michael Peterson
Mark Wills
The Lynns
Matt King



(l to r) Carl Wolfgang (Assistant Cameraman), Joe Murray (Director), Randy Travis and Jerry Sukys (Producer) on the set of Travis' most recent video shoot "Out Of My Bones".

Lisa Ramsey has been added to the Hamstein Publishing staff as vice president of writer development. She will be working in the creative department, exploiting the company's catalogs and developing new writers. Prior to her new position, Lisa worked as a personal assistant to Wynonna.



RECORDING: Steve Wariner to Capitol Nashville... Tim Briggs to Intersound

Country... PUBLISHING: Jim Rushing to The Farm... Gerald Smith to Little Big Town Music Group... Tom Shapiro and Gretchen Peters to Sony/ATV Tree... Wayland Holyfield to Ingram/LeBurn Music, Inc. ... Jamie Kyle to Bases Loaded Music (RBI Entertainment's ASCAP company)... Cal Sweat to Starstruck Writers Group... Ray Scott and Tommy Rocco to Opryland Music Group... BOOKING: Sara Evans to William Morris Agency... Lee Roy Parnell and Jeff Carson to Monterey Artists... Kacey Jones to APA Talent Agency... Joe Diffie to Monterey Artists.

title

"Out Of My Bones"
"Too Good To Be True"
"I Do (Cherish You)"
"Woman To Woman"
"A Woman's Tears"

director

Joe Murray
Steven Goldmann
Peter Zavadil
Steven Goldmann
Jim "Taco" Gerik

•Country Music artists are currently enjoying unprecedented mainstream success in the UK. The Mavericks' new album, TRAMPOLINE, debuted on the UK Album Sales chart for the week ending March 7 at number 17, the fourth-highest new entry of the week, with Madonna debuting at number one. Shania Twain's new album, COME ON OVER, debuted at number 15 for the week ending March 14. Twain's single, "You're Still The One", debuted on the UK Single Sales chart at number 10 for the week ending February 21. LeAnn Rimes' "How Do I Live" entered the chart for the week ending February 28 at number seven, the third-highest new entry of the week, with Madonna at number one. •Tickets are selling quickly for the Australian tour of Reba McEntire and Kenny Rogers. The two superstars will visit Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and numerous other cities during April and May.

•Switzerland's 10th annual Country Festival Worb is scheduled for May 1-3. The line up includes the first Swiss Country Music awards show with special guests Rodeo Ranchers and Branscombe Richmond. Also scheduled to perform are: Cripple Creek

Band, Jennifer Weatherly, Wheels, the Amazing Rhythm Aces and the Jacky's.

For more information, contact Barron Entertainment in Nashville at 615-383-3010.

•Country FM, the only full-time Country Music radio station in The Netherlands, will begin broadcasting via cable in 17 new municipalities April 1, bringing the total potential audience to 1.5 million.

•Charley Pride spent most of March touring the UK, performing in Northern Ireland, Ireland and Scotland.



Charlie Daniels recently returned from a tour of Australia that included three sold-out shows at the Tamworth Country Music Festival. Daniels last performed in Australia in 1981 as opening act for the Little River Band. While on tour, Daniels made time for a visit to the New Children's Hospital at Westmead. The visit stemmed from Daniel's association with St. Jude's Children's Hospital in Memphis, TN.

Sawyer Brown ...continued from page 3

After being overlooked for years in the industry, Mark says he was in complete shock when he heard their name called as the winner for Vocal Group from the Academy of Country Music last year. Yet he says bringing home trophies is not a major priority for this group.

"I feel so blessed just to get to do this for a living. I could never ask for an award or think that I deserved an award. I never think that because this is the award - to get to do something you enjoy and be successful at. God has blessed me so much...for me to go to an awards show and sit there and get upset if I lost. Maybe out of guilt, I don't think I should be allowed to think I deserve an award."

"...this is the award - to get to do something you enjoy and be successful at."

When he isn't writing songs for the group's albums or running a cattle farm or spending time with his family, Mark is busy working on co-producing two acts with singer/songwriter Mac McAnally.

"I'm doing these two acts because I really care about them. They are writers for my publishing company. I want to help them get their music down on tape, and I think I know them well enough, and Mac does, that I guess I just want to oversee it firsthand."

But don't look for Mark to give up touring for full-time producing.

"I'm really enjoying performing as much as I ever did. We've cut it back to 120 shows a year, which for us, that's cake. My family is real important to me so I'm going to try to make as much time for that, but I can always see me involved in music. I can't see me performing forever. I can hon-

estly say that. I could if the need were there, if people were still wanting to hear us sing when I'm 50. I can see me doing that if that's what they wanted, but I wouldn't just be out there for me."

And what would Mark want the industry to understand about Sawyer Brown?

"I go back and look at some of the videos and some of the pictures and how we looked and what we did, and I laugh, but I laughed then. Some people didn't exactly laugh at it, and they thought we were taking ourselves serious and the way we approached things, but we really weren't. We were just so young. I have a lot of people say, 'Well you guys have grown by

your songs.' I have to agree 100 percent, but there were songs on those early albums that had just as much depth as the songs that are out now. Some of the critics say that we've grown up and changed. There were songs on some of those earlier albums, it's just they didn't get released as singles. The fun stuff did because that's what it seems radio started relying on us to be, which was fine. I do believe also that it's part of the reason we're still here. That we were different and still are different.

"I guess I would like to think that when we came in our approach helped us carve our own niche and give us our slot within Country Music. Whatever we did got us to where we are today and I guess wouldn't change the way anything went down or a single thing that we did along the way."

-Angie Crabtree

annie's song

"Whatever you think you can do or believe you can, begin it. Action has magic, grace and power in it." - **Goethe, German poet**



Annie Roboff passed on a record deal as a teenager, appeared in the movie "Fame", composed the music behind CNN's Sportscenter, befriended Olivia Newton-John while writing at Miles Copeland's Castle, ran a public relations firm, has three songs on the current Country singles chart (Faith Hill, Patty Loveless and Kevin Sharp) and is producing Bekka Bramlett's new album. The Almo/Irving writer credits her extraordinary life to following her heart and her love of music.

"I grew up in a family that loved culture," says the native New Yorker. "My older brother and sister were always playing every kind of music. My mother and father loved Broadway music, jazz, Frank Sinatra, big bands. There was no lack of anything...I always loved music, and I didn't know the rest of the world didn't love it as much. I think I thought everybody felt the same way. It wasn't until I went to college and everybody was making their final decisions on what they were going to be and I was like, 'I can't do that.'"

Annie took her first steps towards a career in music as a teenager in New York City, when she joined a group of street singers that needed a piano player. Though she had written music at home, it was when the group needed some original material for club shows that Annie first felt

pressure to be a tunesmith. "I knew if I didn't write a song that my position in the band would be sunk. I came back, and they really loved the song," she says with a lingering hint of disbelief. The group became popular in the city and was given a part in the movie "Fame". Eventually they disbanded, but the exposure earned Annie the interest of a record label.

"I was offered a deal as a solo artist. They wanted me to be like a Madonna. It was right before Madonna broke, but they wanted me to wear short skirts, boots, you know, the pop thing. I was like, 'You've got the wrong girl.' I never saw myself as a commodity. I have never had that kind of personality.

"At the same time, the guy who arranged our showcase for the record labels said, 'I have arranged a lot of television themes but I can't write. If you and I get together, I bet we can get the clients directly. I can teach you how to arrange.'

"My biggest frustration was being with a band and not being able to tell them what to play. I heard it, but I didn't know how to tell them. I love the idea of being in control of making music happen. I love making records, so it always appealed to me to write a song and hear the whole band. It didn't matter to me where I fit into that.

"I had this choice between getting this deal and doing that. I said no to the record deal. I thought the thing I was weakest on was arranging and that was the thing my spirit and my soul really wanted to learn how to do... The record guy said, 'You have made the biggest mistake of your life. You will regret this for the rest of your life.' I said to him, 'If you sign me, you will regret it for the rest of your life. I am not who you are looking for.'

Does she ever regret it?

"Never. Because I wouldn't be as good at what I do now. I wouldn't have fulfilled what I really wanted to do. I think I was accurate in assessing what my strengths are and what they are worth. Maybe I could have had one hit record or something like that, but it didn't matter to me. There are so many great people that I didn't want to be a fool."

Shortly after joining forces with the arranger, the duo secured the theme music for sports shows, and Annie's music could be heard behind coverage of Lady Diana and Prince Charles' wedding as well as CNN Sportscenter.

"It's like I was always drawn to music where ever I could get it. If it was on the radio, great. If it was marching bands at halftime football games, great. For me, to go home and turn on the presidential elections and hear my music over it, that was deep to me...Here I was just this kid at 23 and that year I either wrote or arranged three college football themes. I got all three on the NCAA. I got the princess' wedding, which was a blast. We did all the sports bumpers. We did the Olympics. I was doing movies of the week."

Though her creative journey had taken Annie from New York to Los Angeles thus far, it was only the beginning. She next left music behind and began running a friend's public relations firm.

"I knew I didn't want to be an artist. The TV thing grew tired. I had learned to arrange. It was before there were mini computers and up north many people make their demos on computers. To hire a band in New York

and LA is exorbitant, and I was like 'I don't want to spend three or four thousand dollars per song.' I just wasn't sure what I wanted to do.

"I believe that if you allow yourself to pursue what your heart really feels and you are willing to fail, but you have enough faith and love in your heart to just go with it, then it will take you to the right place."

After four years, her heart led her back to music.

"I went back and the first song I wrote after those four years was as good if not better as any song I had written before I had taken that break. I don't think people's development is linear. I think people should pursue all different kinds of things in their life, and one thing will inform the next. You might be doing this today, and you don't know where this will lead you to. That has also helped me in the music business, because I don't feel so dependent on it in any way. I know I am doing it because I love to do it, and I think that helps."

While writing pop and r&b songs in LA, Annie came to love the Nashville sound on records by Patty Loveless, Wynonna and Trisha Yearwood.

"When I was signing at Rondor in Los Angeles, the president of the company said, 'If we can get you a cut with anybody, who would you want it to be?' I think he thought I was thinking Whitney Houston or Myriah Carey, but I said Trisha Yearwood."

The Nashville connection grew stronger as she befriended a number of Nashville songwriters including John Scott Sherrill, Gary Burr and Steve Seskin during writing sessions at the reknowned Castle in France.

"I always had so much fun writing with them. Everything I was writing, people kept saying would work well in Nashville." When she came to Music City for a visit, she impressed David Conrad (Almo Irving) with her music. "I came back that summer. I was only supposed to come for a month, but I came in July and I left at the end of October. I left with David saying, 'Pack your furniture and come on down.' I went back to LA for the holidays and moved here in January. I just sort of knew right away.

"The songs I write here are now natural in the way I write. There might have been a couple of changes I would have put in a song that maybe wouldn't fly so easily on a pop record or something. I am not writing differently, I am just now more free to write. That's why I am here, because the way I write there is actually a market for."

That's an understatement.

She wrote "Walking Away" with Craig Wiseman on one of her trips to Nashville, and within days it was cut by Diamond Rio. A week later she and Beth Neilson Chapman wrote "Maybe It's Love", which was cut by Yearwood. More and more cuts have followed. "I've been really blessed. I don't take it for granted or with any pretension, I knew it was great and was just really happy."

Annie is quick to compliment and credit her cowriters.

"I write much more of the music than I do the lyrics. A lot of times I do write a title, not always but sometimes. And some of the times I will have a lot to do with the lyric. I have just been really blessed to meet a few lyri-

cists who they themselves are more than lyricists, but they write lyrics with me and we completely gel."

She has turned another creative corner recently, producing a new album for good friend Bekka Bramlett (Fleetwood Mac, Bekka & Billy).

"Bekka and I met in Los Angeles (eight years ago). I had written a song with Robin Lerner and Marsha Malamet. It was kind of a swampy song and we were wondering who should sing the demo. I don't know why, but I said 'Bekka Bramlett'. I had never met her, and I had never heard her. I must have heard her name in passing. I swear it came from the heavens."

Annie called Bramlett out of the blue, and persuaded her to sing the demo.

"If you ask her to this day she will say she has no idea why she sang it.

But the minute she walked in that door we knew we were going to be friends forever. She sang two notes of the song and the three of us were like 'Ah.'

"It became the beginning of a very important friendship for me. I attribute Bekka with waking me up a little bit. How can I explain it? I was in LA and I was writing pop stuff or r&b stuff. R&b was changing and it was becoming very more rap oriented....I knew I couldn't write rap so I said this isn't going to work. I was just kind of going through the motions of being a professional writer. When I met Bekka, she acknowledged something inside of me. She just said, 'When you do this, this is the real deal.' I had so much respect for her, and she floored me so much that there was just this mutual inspiration. You can look at my career from pre-Bekka and post-Bekka and you can just see, in my opinion, that's where I fully came into my own."

Annie describes Bramlett's new album as a mix between her original syle, Tina Turner, Bonnie Raitt, and roots rock-n-roll.

"Of the five songs that are done now, I wrote all of them. She wrote I think three with me. Different people wrote different ones. Bekka is a genius writer, a genius lyricists."

What lies ahead for Annie, even she's not sure of yet.

"In four years I may decide to do something completely different and then come back to it and do whatever. I do love producing this record with Bekka....That to me was the most fun because it was like listening to the radio. You get to listen to the radio over and over again."

"I would like to produce with anybody that wants me to produce them and anybody who wants to make the same kind of music I want to make. I don't want to produce just for the sake of producing. I know some people who are going after the idea of 'they want to be a producer.' I totally dig that and respect that, but I am not just taking people to produce to help build to the next place."

She's even kicked around the idea of running a radio station or managing an artist. The station would be formatted a little like Annie's life – a little bit of everything and a whole lot of good music.

"I would play everything, like when I was growing up. It would have a little bit of a playlist. There would be just enough to keep people's interest."

-Shannon Heim

**"I believe that
if you allow
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then it will
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the right
place."**

27th Annual Fan Fair Promises Top Stars

Initial Lineup Includes Superstars
Olivia Newton-John and Randy Travis
Tickets Still Available



The 27th Annual International Country Music Fan Fair stage will once again play host to some of the music industry's most exciting and talented performers. Among the artists already scheduled for this year's lineup are superstars Olivia Newton-John and Randy Travis.

Newton-John, who won CMA's Female Vocalist of the Year in 1974, eventually branched into pop music with acclaimed roles in movies like "Grease". She marks her return to Country Music and MCA Records with her first studio album in four years, *BACK WITH A HEART*, set for release in early May. Multiple CMA Award winner Randy Travis will release his debut *DreamWorks* lp, *YOU AND YOU ALONE* in April. Travis first release from the lp, "Out of My Bones", marked the highest single debut of his career and is currently climbing up the charts.

Also performing are fan favorites Trace Adkins, Deana Carter, Terri Clark, Diamond Rio, Vince Gill, Sammy Kershaw, Patty Loveless, Martina McBride, Mindy McCready, Collin Raye, Pam Tillis and Bryan White. Additional performers will be announced when confirmed. Fan Fair is co-sponsored by the Country Music Association and the Grand Ole Opry and takes place June 15-20 at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville.

"Fan Fair is extremely fortunate to boast an incredible lineup of talent," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "Because of Fan Fair's reputation as a hot ticket event, many people have assumed that this year's event is already sold out, however tickets for Fan Fair '98 are still available. Interested fans won't want to miss this opportunity to interact with their favorite artists."

Fans may register to attend Fan Fair through the Grand Ole Opry. For ticket information, contact the Fan Fair office at (615) 889-7503, or write Fan Fair, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, TN 37214. CMA handles information on Fan Fair exhibit booths and media requests.

In addition to the regularly scheduled Fan Fair Shows, the TNN MUSIC CITY NEWS COUNTRY AWARDS will be telecast Monday, June 15 at 8 p.m. (EDT) on TNN: The Nashville Network, live from the Nashville Arena. Tickets for the event are priced as follows: Platinum Seating (\$100); Gold Seating (\$75) and Silver Seating (\$50). Tickets may be purchased through mail order only. Orders should be mailed to the following address: TNN Music City News Country Awards Tickets, c/o Nashville Arena Box Office, Dept. T, P.O. Box 24480, Nashville, TN 37202. Ticket orders must be received by Friday, May 8.

Net proceeds from Fan Fair go into a special fund used by CMA to advance the growth and popularity of Country Music. The first Fan Fair was held in 1972. The event regularly attracts more than 600 media representatives from around the world.

Artists Appearing At The 27th Annual International Country Music Fan Fair - 1998

(Program & artists subject to change)

monday, june 15

Opening Ceremonies
9:45 am - 10:00 am

DreamWorks Records
10:00 am - 11:00 am

Randy Travis

Rounder Records
11:00 am - 12:00 N

The Woody's

Step One Records
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Jack Greene
Gene Watson

INTERNATIONAL SHOW
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

TBA

RIVER NORTH/ INTER
SOUND RECORDS
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

T. Graham Brown-Host
The Bellamy Brothers
Tim Briggs
Earl Thomas Conley
Juice Newton
Jo-El Sonnier

TNN MUSIC CITY NEWS
AWARDS
7:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Nashville Arena

tuesday, june 16

THE CURB GROUP
10:00 am - 12:30 pm

MERCURY NASHVILLE
2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Sammy Kershaw
Terri Clark
Mark Wills

MCA RECORDS
& DECCA RECORDS

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
(Decca Records)

Bill Cody - Host
Shane Stockton
Gary Allan
Lee Ann Womack
Mark Chesnutt

(MCA Records)

Vince Gill - Host
Jenny Gill - Co-host
Big House
Keith Harling
The Mavericks
Olivia Newton - John
Chely Wright

wednesday, june 17

CAPITOL NASHVILLE
10:00 am - 12:00 noon

Trace Adkins
John Berry
Suzy Bogguss
Deana Carter
Steve Wariner

WARNER/REPRISE
& GIANT RECORDS
2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

RCA LABEL GROUP
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Sara Evans
Lonestar
Martina McBride
Mindy McCready
Restless Heart
Jason Sellers
The Warren Brothers

thursday, june 18

ATLANTIC RECORDS
& ASYLUM RECORDS
10:00 am - 12:30 pm

(Atlantic)

Matt King
Neal McCoy
Mila Mason

(Asylum)

Melodie Crittenden
Lila McCann
Kevin Sharp
Thrasher Shiver
Bryan White

ARISTA RECORDS
2:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Sherrié Austin
BlackHawk
BR5-49
Jim Collins
Diamond Rio
Pam Tillis

SONY MUSIC SHOW
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Dixie Chicks
Joe Diffie
Wade Hayes
Ty Herndon
The Kinleys
Patty Loveless
Collin Raye
Ricochet
Sons of the Desert
Rick Trevino

friday, june 19

TBA

Mila Mason

thebuzz

MILA MASON'S sophomore album on Atlantic Records is titled *THE STRONG ONE* - an appropriate reflection of the new album, her personality and her musical integrity. Her current single "Closer To Heaven" is moving up the charts, and Mila feels this album is a step in the right direction as far as her music is concerned.

"It was a big team effort. I liked our first album. I truly loved it, but I always listened to other people's albums, who I thought were great, and I tried to make our second one similar as far as it being that strong. Patty Loveless always has 10 good songs on hers. The first album, I listened to it a few times when we were out of the studio. I never stop listening to this album. I don't mean that as being conceited or vain, but I love the writers on this album. They really did some remarkable work. I am excited we got them.

"I think this album best reflects who I am. Maybe that is why I am so excited about it. It's up and down on a big mood swing. I am a woman, so I am a big mood swing. I think the highest compliment you can get paid as an artist is when other women like you. And that is not to slap men in the face. Women are not doing it because you are cute. They are doing it because they like your music. What I would like for others to know is that I am about my music and that's it. I am not about anything else."

One year after performing at the 1997 Country Radio Seminar's New Faces Show, Mila feels the radio climate is friendly to her.

"Radio is made up of people. I think they can generally tell when someone wants something because it's what they do, not because they have contrived it in their head. If you have a good song, it's going to shine through. If you give them something good and different they want to play your music. I think I am accepted really well in radio. I think it's because they know that I am like them. When I go in and we all have conversations, we all have kids, and we all do the same things. We have the common bond or thread that we all love music."

"I think this album best reflects who I am."

One of the highlights Mila has found in her career is having the extraordinary opportunity to share her music with America's troops in countries such as Germany, Italy, Turkey and England.

"They are not Country fans. They are fans of Americans. We performed with such a diversity of blues and oldies groups like The Miracles and Juanita Williams and then Country. They made us all feel so welcome. To me, it was the coolest thing. The troops are so bonded. There is a brotherhood among them. And their camaraderie comes across in the way they accept you. You are an American, so they love you. They are glad to see your face. They will wait in line for two hours just to say 'thank you', not for an autograph, but to say 'thank you' for coming over. That is incredible to me. It's amazing."

As a songwriter, she loves the actual words and phrases that make up the music.

"I always admire people who do things I don't do. One of my friends can ice skate really well, and I love to watch her. You kind of get to live through those people, so one of my other friends who is an accountant/portfolio manager said she always counted steps, and that made sense to me. Since I was a kid, words made sense to me. Like the word silo. I just loved the word silo, what a great word. There are other words, I won't tell you what they are, but I hate them. I think they sound funny on the ear, and they don't make sense to what they go with. I love to read, and I love phrases. I love to hear music. There is some music that just

haunts me, and I will go listen to it in different ways. Like from a music box to a keyboard, and I will ask people to play it. So, it made sense to me that she counted steps because I love to live, breathe and sleep music and words. That will always be a part of my life because I love writing. I am continually reading, listening, searching and scanning, doing everything I can to look for good lines and words."

Despite a busy career and being a single mother of two (Zelphia and Kipp), Mila is still able to stay focused on keeping the unique positive attitude she has towards her career, her life and her children. In fact, she seems so positive, Mila could have written "Chicken Soup for the Entertainer's Soul".

"I think it is a habit that you get into. You have to really try to focus in on staying in a good mood because PMS will take over. I don't care how happy and positive I am. I just get this weepy spell when everything is at its greatest. Truly, I think the people you surround yourself with helps. I am not saying to totally take the negative people out of your life, but if you can, persuade them to try to be better. The worst thing you can do is become helpless, hopeless and depressed. Then you see no future in what you do. If you are always negative, how can you get up and think 'I am going to be better at what I am doing? Are my children going to progress better?' It just won't happen. I get optimistic about things that should be no-way-out situations. I just believe in my heart, that great saying, 'This too will pass.' The worst situation, the worst heartache will heal. It might take years, but there will be a difference."

Mila feels she has progressed since her debut album THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT. When it comes right down to it, Mila is in it truly for the love of the music....

"I don't want to progress by making millions of dollars because I don't think that's what makes you happy. I think the satisfaction of knowing you have done a good job does. I feel like we have progressed from the first album to the second album, and that is what I wanted to do. I don't care what kind of money you make, you just do what you do and love doing, at a better level. I do what I do because I love doing it, and I am very blessed that other people have let me do it right down from radio to the fans buying the records. So that is why I think success is where you are happy, and I am so happy."

-Dixie Weathersby



ALL STAR LINE UP FOR FIRST STEPS CONCERT

good deeds:

Joe Diffie's recent "Country Steps In For First Steps Concert," raised over \$80,000 for the Nashville school program. This nearly doubled the proceeds from last year's event.

Deana Carter is among the stars scheduled to record a song to benefit the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse in Los Angeles. Other stars scheduled to participate are Michael Bolton, former Doobie Brother Michael McDonald, Kenny G and **Olivia Newton-John**. The song is called "Love Shouldn't Hurt".

During a guest appearance on "Oprah", **Garth Brooks** promised to donate the proceeds from his current album, SEVENS, for the following seven days to the Angel Network, a charity Winfrey founded to send underprivileged students to college. He later revised the offer and pledged to donate the proceeds for each week that sales of the album top 100,000 units.

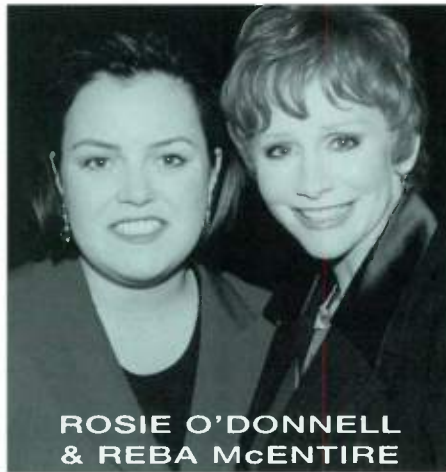
action!

This month MCA Nashville will release THE HORSE WHISPERER (songs from and inspired by the motion picture). The album features 12 tracks by some of the most prominent artists in Country and alternative Country Music, including **Steve Earle**, **Emmylou Harris**, **The Mavericks**, **George Strait** and **Dwight Yoakam**. The film, based on the best-selling novel by Nicholas Evans, stars Robert Redford and Kristin Scott Thomas and is slated for release May 15.

In March, **Dwight Yoakam** followed up his Academy Award-winning role in "Sling Blade" with "The Newton Boys", starring Matthew McConaughey and Ethan Hawke. He will also be featured in an HBO made-for-TV movie, "When Trumpets Fade", this month.

second chances:

Restless Heart enjoyed success in the late '80s and early '90s with such hits as "When She Cries" and "Bluest Eyes In Texas", before the group dissolved in 1996. Four of the original members - Larry Stewart, Greg Jennings, John Dietrich, and Paul Gregg - will reunite for a greatest hits package to be released by RCA this summer. They will be joining **Vince Gill** on his tour beginning this summer.

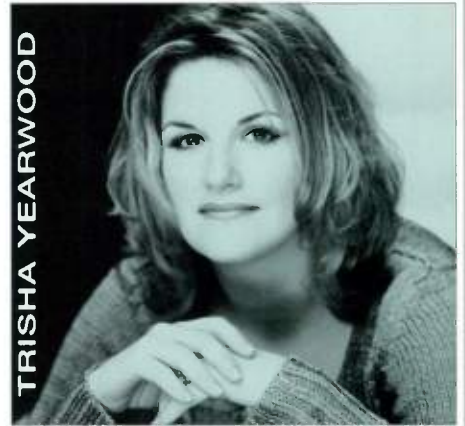


ROSIE O'DONNELL & REBA McENTIRE

on the tube:

In February, **Reba McEntire** became the first ever co-host on "The Rosie O'Donnell Show". When Rosie attempted to teach Reba how to flick one of her trademark koosh balls into the audience it appeared to go well, but what those watching at home didn't get a chance to see is that one of Reba's koosh's landed in a very hot studio light igniting a fire. As a precautionary measure, the audience was evacuated and the situation was quickly brought under control.

Trisha Yearwood will be making her first non-cameo television appearance. This month she will play an archeologist on the hit CBS-TV series "Jag". She will also be appearing on "Dharma & Greg" in the near future.



TRISHA YEARWOOD

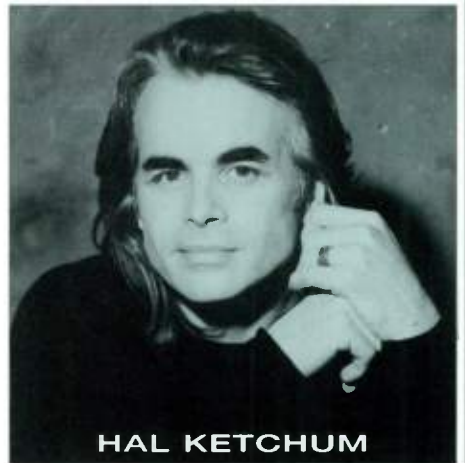
Clint Black's television movie, "Still Holding On: The Legend of Cadillac Jack", will air on CBS on May 5. The story is about rodeo star Jack Favor and will also star **Lisa Hartman Black**.

laughing it up:

Garth Brooks and **Clint Black** recently joined the ranks of **Loretta Lynn**, **Wynonna**, **Martina McBride**, **Suzy Bogguss**, as well as many other Country artists to appear in the comic strip "Nancy". The daily comic strip is penned by artist Guy Gilchrist, a big Country Music fan.

congrats:

Mark Wills and his wife Kelly are expecting their first child in September. The couple plans to use a combination of their first names and name her "Mally" if it's a girl.



HAL KETCHUM

Hal Ketchum recently married **Gina Paconia**, a celebrity hair and makeup artist. They were wed on Valentine's Day in Texas, where they reside.

Faith Hill and **Tim McGraw** will be welcoming their second child in August. Faith plans to try to continue touring into July and return to the stage in October.

The Winner Is... CMA Awards Voting Procedure

Although the 32nd Annual CMA Awards are still several months away – scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 23 – questions about the voting procedures abound. The most frequently asked: “How are the winners chosen?”

CMA Award winners are selected by the combined votes of approximately 6,100 individual members of CMA. Since only CMA members vote for the prestigious honors, it is important to contact CMA's membership department at (615) 244-2840 if you have any questions about the status of your individual membership.

The eligibility period for all 12 awards categories runs from June 1, 1997 through May 31, 1998. The first (nominating) ballot will be mailed to all CMA individual members on May 18. Each member may write in one nominee per category on the first ballot.

After results from the first ballot are tabulated, any qualified act, record or song receiving 10 or more nominations will appear on the second ballot, which will be mailed on July 1.

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 on August 4 and will appear on the final ballot, which will be mailed on August 18. On this final ballot, members vote for one nominee in each category.

Winners will be announced during the live broadcast of the “32nd Annual CMA Awards” on Wednesday, September 23 at 8 p.m. EDT on CBS-TV.

The entire balloting process is officiated by the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche.

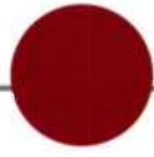
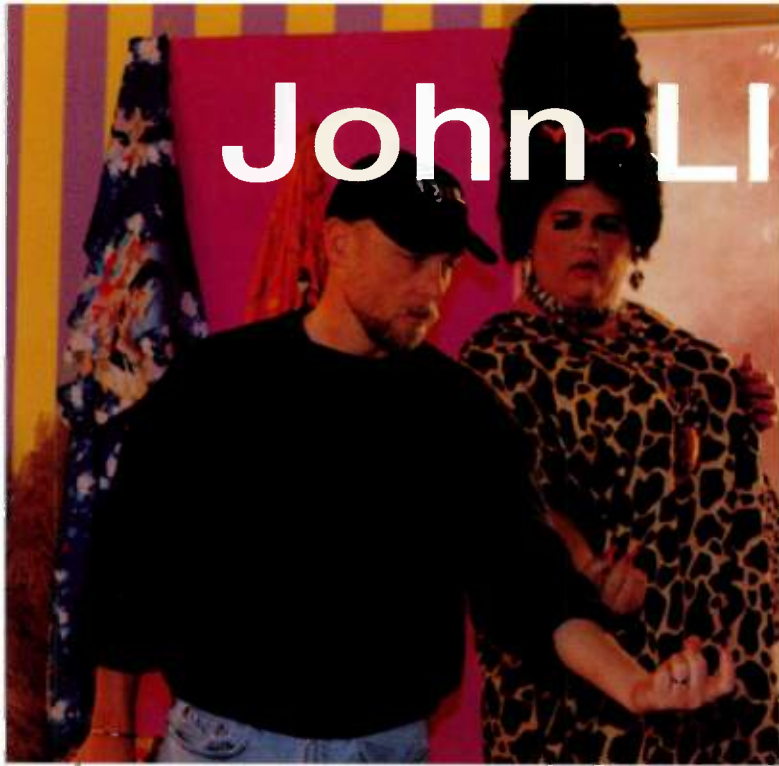
Staff members of CMA do not vote for the awards, nor do they handle or tabulate any of the three ballots.

Following is the 1998 CMA Awards schedule:

May 18	First ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
June 15	Deadline to return first ballot to Deloitte & Touche
July 1	Second ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
July 30	Deadline to return second ballot to Deloitte & Touche
August 4	CMA Awards finalist announced at press conference
August 18	Final ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
September 16	Deadline to return final ballot to Deloitte & Touche
September 23	Winners announced on live CMA Awards telecast, CBS-TV, 8 p.m. EDT

John Lloyd Miller

Lights, Camera, Action...



Selby: As a producer or production coordinator the satisfying moment is when you get to the set and everybody's buzzing around and everything's kind of happening. All of a sudden your job's really over. I finally learned that this is the moment where I can just sit back and make sure nothing bad happens and keep the momentum going.

John: Usually about the point she's relaxing it's tightening up for me. I like it when the artist and I come up with an idea that we are really juiced about, and no one says no. You start to see those shots happen just like you dreamt about, and you didn't have to compromise anything. This doesn't happen that often. The cherry on top of the cake is when the client, the artist, the label and the manager come in and watch it, and they love it. You can tell they love it from three seconds into it when they start bobbing up and down and start nudging each other.

Selby: It's really all about communication. Letting communication be direct, open and on the table. If you can get a record company representative, the artist and manager together and really get a consensus then that works so well.

John: You know what's also fun is hanging out with these artists between takes. The other day when we shot George Jones, between takes we'd have to move the light or move the camera so I'm sitting there just talking to George. I'd say two words and George would launch into a story from his childhood. Things you never would have heard otherwise. He just talks to you like you're a regular guy, and you're two people sitting on the porch telling stories.

CU: John has found the key to working successfully with kids.

Selby: They're the same mental age.

John: I think 4-year-olds and I are on the same level. The nice thing about kids is they don't know how to act. They haven't taken any acting lessons. So if you want a fidgety kid tell the kid, "Sit there and don't move." They will sit there as long as they can and then they'll start to fidget in a way that's normal. If you had directed them that never would have been normal. The problem with kids is being careful what you tell them because they'll actually do it. If you need them to eat a hot dog and look happy, just put hot dogs out, and they'll look happy.

I have a much harder time with adults than I do with kids. One of the biggest parts of my job, or any director's job, is to remove the acting and let them be what they're supposed to be. Some artists get that and some artists have to work harder at it. A lot of times with new artists they're nervous about being in front of the camera. They have had

After working as a Scene Three director for several years, John and his wife, producer Selby Miller formed the AV Squad, their own production company focusing on music videos, commercials and other media.

Located in Nashville, the company focuses on catering to the needs of its client.

"We started the AV Squad in 1995. One of our goals was to be a company that was flexible enough to handle anything from the smallest job that could possibly exist to the biggest job that could possibly exist. It's worked out great. Exactly what we set out to do almost three years ago has come to fruition. I don't think it is because we're so smart, I think we just got lucky."

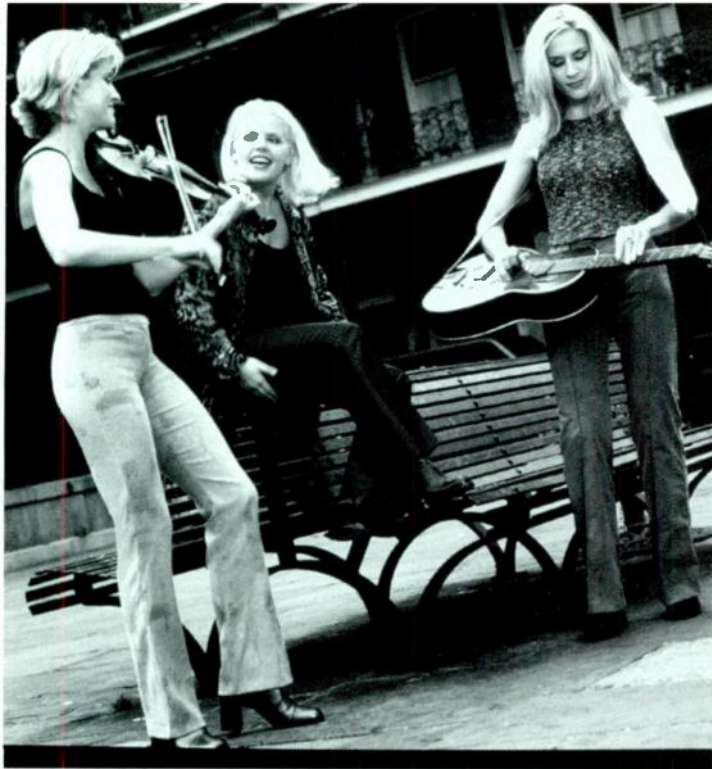
CU: You recently finished directing "Wild Irish Rose" (the new George Jones video), what was that like?

John: 'Wild Irish Rose' is a powerful song about a Vietnam vet whose life got off track, and he became a homeless guy and drinks himself to death. All these big tough guys were crying as we're shooting this video. That's one end of the spectrum. Then this week we're shooting Cledus T. Judd which is like making a Three Stooges show. That's the other end of it. Cledus is going to play himself, of course, and he also plays his wife. He's going to have a big bouffant hairdo and be in a skirt and the whole thing.

CU: What are some of the projects you really enjoy working on?

John: I have a lot of favorites and all for different reasons. We've done a lot of videos with Marty Stuart. I have a spectacular time being with him. He's got a lot of great ideas. We've done at least a dozen Vince Gill videos, and he's hilarious. For a long time the only jokes I knew were the ones Vince told me. People like Dolly and Reba, they show up, they're professional, they know exactly what they're doing.

CU: What is the most satisfying part of working in film?



dixie chicks

Record Label: Monument Records
 Album: WIDE OPEN SPACES
 Single: "I Can Love You Better"
 Influences: Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, Loretta Lynn and Emmylou Harris

Sony Nashville President Allen Butler refers to them as being "The Real Deal". For the group's major label debut and fourth album, the Dixie Chicks are back in full swing.

The Dixie Chicks include Natalie Maines and sisters Martie Seidel and Emily Erwin, the eight-year veterans of the trio. Together they have combined their three-part harmony with a variety of musical instruments including the fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and Dobro for the album. "We were prepared to pay our dues for as long as it took; we were committed to longevity," says Emily. "We know we will always be playing music together, so we wanted to find someone who is just as determined and energetic as we are."

On the label that once boasted legends like Dolly Parton and Larry Gatlin, the Dixie Chicks have been chosen to be the flagship act for the new label, with the hopes of reviving the prestigious Monument name.



jim lauderdale

Record Label: BNA Records
 Album: WHISPER
 Single: "Goodbye Song"
 Influences: George Jones, Johnny Cash, Buck Owens, Merle Haggard

Born in North Carolina and raised on the Country radio shows of the rural South, bluegrass festivals and fiddle contests of the Carolinas, Jim Lauderdale was saturated with the musical heritage of the South from an early age.

Lauderdale's songwriting catalogue boasts major hits for such mainstream Country stars as George Strait ("Where the Sidewalk Ends"), Mark Chesnutt ("Gonna Get a Life") and Patty Loveless ("Halfway Down"). He also has had songs recorded by Dave Edmunds, Kelly Willis, Vince Gill and Shelby Lynne, among many others.

Although he is not a newcomer to the music industry, he is somewhat of a newcomer as a recording artist. "I knew it was time to make a Country album. People were encouraging me to do it. They were hearing my Country demos and responding to them. Sometimes you just know it's time," says Lauderdale. His BNA debut WHISPER features some of Nashville's finest writers - Harlan Howard, Frank Dycus, Melba Montgomery and John Scott Sherrill.

CMA Takes Country On Campus

"It was a great experience at NACA. It was really cool to hang out with people my age and show them how hip Country Music is!"

-Rick Orozco, Arista Nashville

"CMA is a very important aspect of NACA. They help bridge the music industry to the collegiate market, and are capturing the hearts of everyone."

-Colleen Hennessy, Director of Activities, Michigan State University

"I was truly amazed at the turnout. Country Music reaching all ages. I was so proud to be asked to represent the CMA at the NACA Convention."

-Jo Dee Messina, Curb Records

"The reason I'm back at NACA this year is because of CMA."

-Dan Bahry, student

In our continuing effort to bring Country Music to young adults, CMA traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana to participate in the National Association for Campus Activities' (NACA) annual convention. Enthusiastic crowds waited in line to greet Country artists that traveled via "CMA's NACA Tour Bus" to sign autographs and talk with today's young Country fans. The artists included Wade Kimes, Jo Dee Messina, Dean Miller, Rick Orozco, and MC Potts. The Thompson Brothers Band was also at the convention and wowed the audience with their high-energy performance during the Breakthrough Artists Showcase. It was standing room only for Atlantic Recording group The Great Divide during a performance at a local club hosting the NACA activities. Both bands also signed autographs at the CMA booth.

Rick Murray, CMA's Director of Marketing moderated CMA's educational session "Presenting Country Music on Campus". Lending expertise to the panel were Tommy Daniel of RCA Label Group, Greg Gosselin of Atlantic Records, Sally Williams of Compass Entertainment and Country Music artist Teresa. Campus program buyers from across the country questioned the panelists on a variety of topics ranging from the proper procedure for booking artists to the industry support that can be made available for each campus.

"Country Artists are a good choice for campus entertainment buyers," Murray explained. "They are affordable, accessible, easy to work with and come complete with a team that includes a record label, publicist and responsive agents. Campuses can and should play a major role in breaking new Country artists."

During the convention, CMA representatives met with members of the NACA leadership and staff to discuss ways the organizations can work together to provide additional opportunities for Country artists on campuses. Discussions also included ways to educate students on careers in the music industry, college lecture programs and strategies to give Country Music a dominant role in the 1999 NACA Convention, which will be held in Nashville.

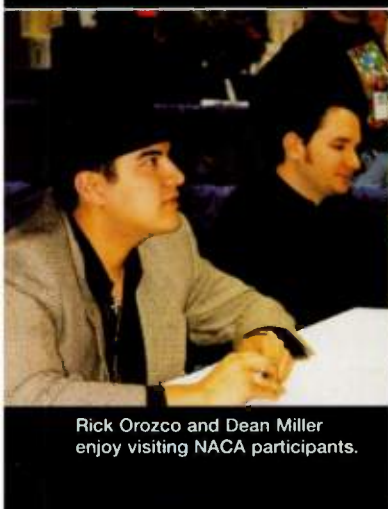
-Rachel DeWane



Matt Thompson and Andy Thompson of the Thompson Brothers Band spent time in the CMA booth before their performance at the Breakthrough Artist Showcase.



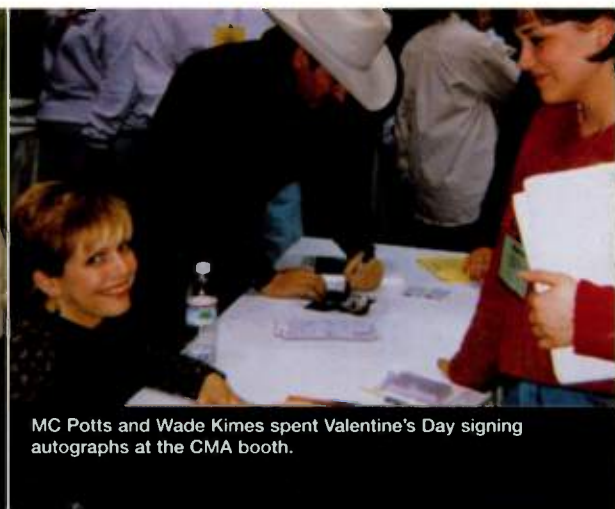
Curb recording artist Jo Dee Messina signs autographs for NACA participants.



Rick Orozco and Dean Miller enjoy visiting NACA participants.



Members of The Great Divide take time out to pose for a picture with Laura Puckett, Director of Student Life, University of South Carolina Spartanburg. (sitting l to r) Scotte Lester, Kelley Green (standing l to r) Mike McClure, Puckett, J.J. Lester



MC Potts and Wade Kimes spent Valentine's Day signing autographs at the CMA booth.

CloseUp

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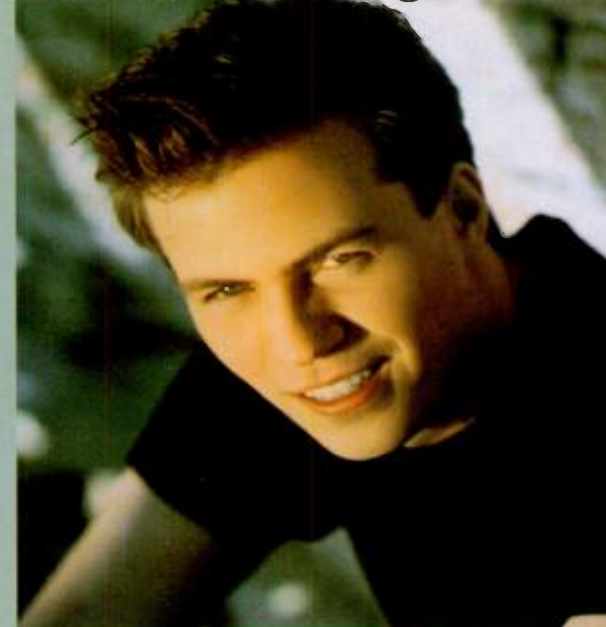
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April

2-3 Board Meeting / Four Seasons Hotel / Dallas, TX

May

13 MINT (Music Industry & New Technologies) / Nashville
Arena / Nashville, TN

June

15 - 20 27th International Country Music Fan Fair / co-sponsored
by the Grand Ole Opry / Tennessee State Fair Grounds /
Nashville, TN

July

16 & 17 Drake Hotel / Chicago, IL

August

4 CMA Awards Press Conference / Grand Ole Opry House /
Nashville, TN

September

23 32nd Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry House /
Nashville, TN

datebook

June

5-6 Annual Country Music Festival / Haag am Hausruck, Austria /
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Asylum recording artist

Bryan White surprised

CMA Executive Director

Ed Benson, when he presented

him with a plaque in honor of

platinum sales for his albums

BRYAN WHITE and

BETWEEN NOW AND FOREVER

backstage during the

CMA Luncheon at CRS-29.

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

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