

JUNE 1998

Close Up



INSIDE:
David Kersh
Donna Hilley
Fan Fair

Terri Clark



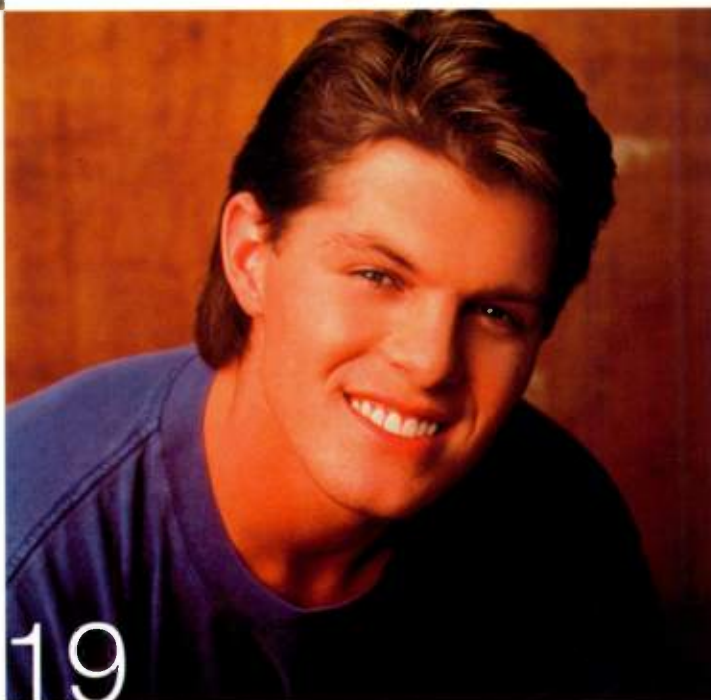
WRH



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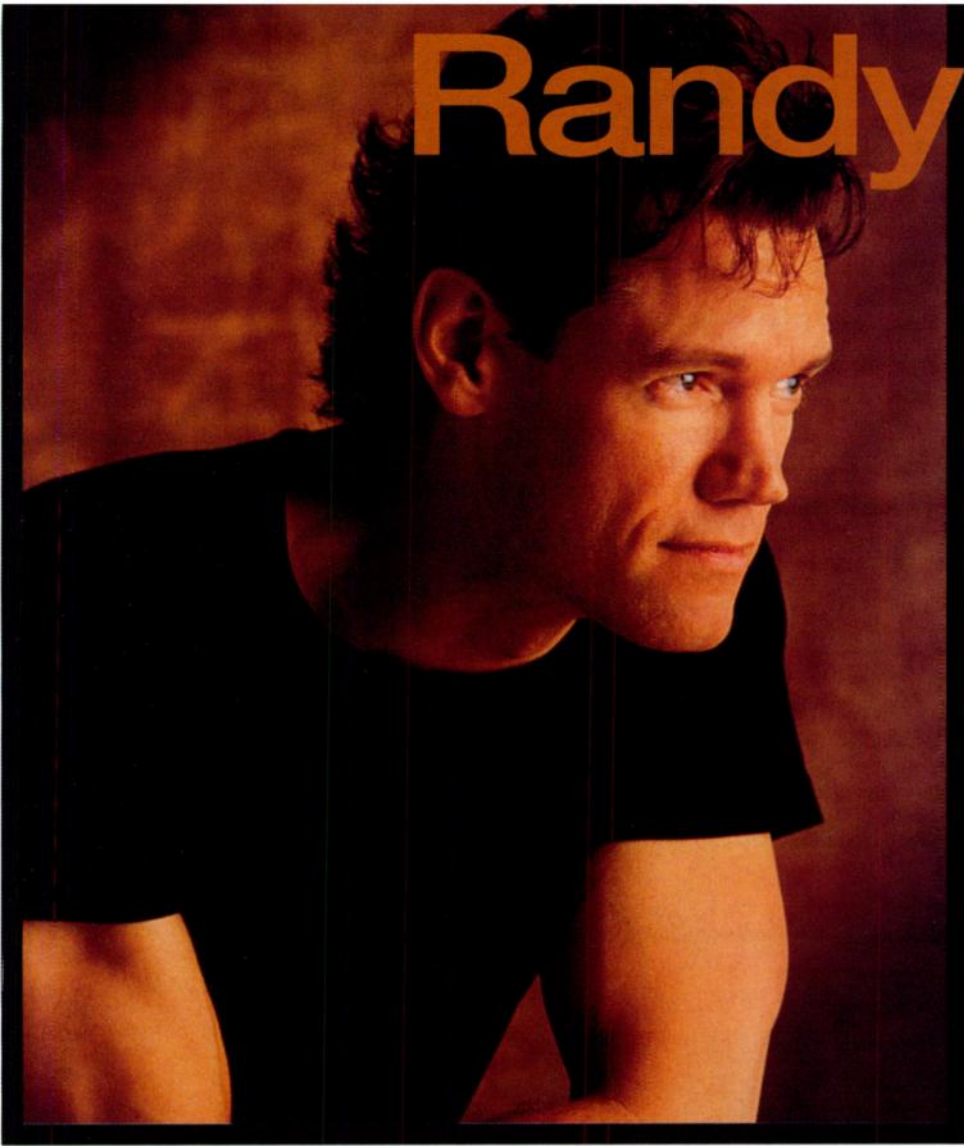
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Randy Travis

onthecover



course, in all the decision making, but I leave most of it in her hands. When we filmed 'Black Dog' we were also making this new album and playing some tours.

"We were listening to material and then going into the studio and putting down tracks. We flew to Las Vegas, for instance, and I did some vocals while we were out there playing Vegas, when we left 'Black Dog' one weekend. We did some of the vocals in Wilmington while we were there filming. We put down some of the music tracks in Los Angeles while we getting ready to go work on 'Black Dog'. It was, logistically, a little bit hectic.

"We didn't want to do those things all at the same time. It's just that once in a while it happens. Hopefully we won't ever again. It's too much, it really is. You have to try and just set aside, say 'These months we are going to tour, we're not going to do anything else. And it's not always going to work out that way, but hopefully, most of the time it will."

Randy has been very successful with his formula for music making. Out of his last 12 albums, four are multi-platinum, four are platinum and two are gold. He is off to his best start yet with his Dreamworks debut. The album's first single "Out of My Bones" is Randy's highest debut single ever. At press time it had reached the top spot in the R&R Country charts.

"I always use the same formula. I mean, I knew this record would sound different. Kyle Lehning has a very distinct sound when he produced my records for so many years. It's a very distinct sound. James and

"It's great to see a song ('Out Of My Bones') going up the charts again."

Byron have their own unique style and sound when they make a record, so I knew it would be different with the two of those running things in the studio. But I approached it exactly the same as I always have and always will. Through James, Byron, myself and Allison Brown, who has been working with James a long time, we all were looking for material independently. When we would find what we liked we'd all sit together as a group and listen to them. That's the way we've always done it. Basically, I sing what I like and if I don't like it, I'll say, 'I don't like it. I'm not gonna sing it.'"

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One week after the release of *YOU AND YOU ALONE*, his 13th career album and first for Dreamworks Records, and just two hours before the premiere of his feature movie "Black Dog" in which he co-stars with Patrick Swayze, Randy Travis finds time to sit down with *CLOSE UP* to talk about his whirlwind career.

Being out of the Country Music scene since 1996 when he released, FULL CIRCLE, Randy Travis is happy to be back competing with the artists he helped pave the way for.

"It's great to see a song ('Out of My Bones') going up the charts again. To have something new to sing for an audience. It's good to be with DreamWorks and be with a label that is really excited about the work that I'm doing. They're pushing this album. I mean they're trying to establish themselves as a record label as well as getting me back in the charts again. So it's great."

The new Nashville-based Dreamworks Records chose Randy Travis as their flagship artist.

"We were meeting with other labels because we had left Warner Brothers. James Stroud came to us before they talked to anybody else, is the way I understand it. He asked if we were interested in signing with them. James told us who would be the promotion staff, who would be running the Los Angeles division, and that he would be running the Nashville division. When that happened, we just said 'No' to the other labels we were talking with, and it was kind of an automatic thing.

"I worked with James Stroud on producing Daryle Singletary's first album. And then, gosh, 12 years ago, something like that, he played drums on the first two albums I recorded. The relationship goes back a long way. It's fun working with him. Just like Kyle Lehning, I mean, when we're in the studio there's more laughing and having a good time than actual work."

Randy's formula for balancing two hectic careers.....

"You just don't sleep. You just stay up 24 hours a day! (Laughs). Lib (his wife and manager) is good at taking care of schedules. She's extremely good at business. And so when it comes to organizing and scheduling the two separate careers, I kinda leave that in her hands. I'm involved, of

Reminder: First CMA Awards Ballot Due June 15



Don't miss the return deadline for the first ballot for the 1998. All nominating ballots must be received by Deloitte & Touche LLP by 5 p.m. on June 15 in order to be tabulated. On the first (nominating) ballot, each member may write in one nominee per category. The eligibility period for all 12 award categories runs from June 1, 1997 through May 31, 1998.

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

Upon receiving the second ballot, members vote for their top five choices in each category. After these results are tabulated, the five receiving the most votes in each category will be announced at a press conference 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. The gala telecast will begin on CBS-TV at 8 p.m. EDT.

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

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:

June 15	Deadline to return first ballot to Deloitte & Touche LLP
July 1	Second ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
*July 28	Deadline to return second ballot to Deloitte & Touche LLP
August 4	CMA Awards finalist announced at press conference
August 18	Final ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
*September 14	Deadline to return final ballot to Deloitte & Touche LLP
September 23	Winners announced on live CMA Awards telecast, CBS-TV, 8 p.m. EDT

*Please note revisions to the balloting schedule.

CMA Ticket Information

Keep an eye on your mailbox - ticket order forms for the 32nd Annual CMA Awards will be mailed to CMA's sterling and organizational members by mid-July. 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 23.

If you have not received your order form by July 20, 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

Sunday, September 20

- Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame Reception and Dinner

Monday, September 21

- ASCAP Country Awards Reception and Dinner/Opryland Hotel

Tuesday, September 22

- BMI Country Awards/BMI

Wednesday, September 23

- 32nd Annual CMA Awards/Grand Ole Opry House
- Post CMA Awards Party/Opryland Hotel

Thursday, September 24

- Election of Directors Meeting
- SESAC Country Awards Reception and Dinner/SESAC

Friday, September 25

- Elections of Officers Meeting/ASCAP Boardroom

Randy Travis

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So how can artists like George Strait, Reba McEntire and Randy Travis maintain such career longevity?

"I think it just boils down to great management. The right decisions have to be made in those areas, no doubt. One of the most important things in maintaining a career in radio is the songs you record. You have to record good quality material. People have to want to hear it or you're not going to continue to be successful at radio."

His acting career is off to a good start, but it has been just as much work getting into the Hollywood community as it was for him getting into the Country Music community. Even with his success as a Country Music singer, Randy has found that the Hollywood community has been no less easy on him.

"Where I am is just now getting to the point that if 'Black Dog' were to succeed, maybe someone would say 'I want him for this part.' Hopefully, that will be where I am after this movie is out. What I have been doing over the past years is I would read for parts, a lot of them, and get turned down by a lot of people. It's pretty much like getting in the music business. And that's as it should be. Just because you have some sort of a name as a singer doesn't mean that you should walk into Los Angeles and say 'I want a part' and they say 'Here, take your choice.' So in the beginning, about six years ago, I begged for every part I got, to be honest with you. I mean, getting stuff like 'Matlock' was no trouble. But I wanted to do more. I wanted to do TV movies. I finally got to the point where I was able to do that a couple of times. And then, of course, I wanted it to lead to doing film work, and now it has done that. But, I'm still not in the position that I can say 'Okay, boys. I want this kind of a script.' It doesn't work that way, not that quick. I've been turned down a lot. You've got to pay your dues."

What do his fans say about his crossover to the acting community?

"It was always the same kind of thing. 'We enjoyed it. We enjoyed 'Matlock', We enjoyed 'Touched By An Angel', but don't stop recording and touring.' My answer is always 'No, I'm not going to do that.' I've been singing for 30 years. I've been acting six. Music comes first."

Some final thoughts on what he looks forward to in 1998.....

"I'm a competitive guy (Laughs). I, no doubt, wish everybody well. I wish everyone could have a number one record with every single, and every album sell millions of copies, but it doesn't work that way, unfortunately. I still want to go out to radio with each single that we have, have a number one record if any way possible. I still want to sell a lot of records. So, I wish everybody well, I just hope I'm doing a little better! (Laughs)" 🎧

Dixie Weathersby

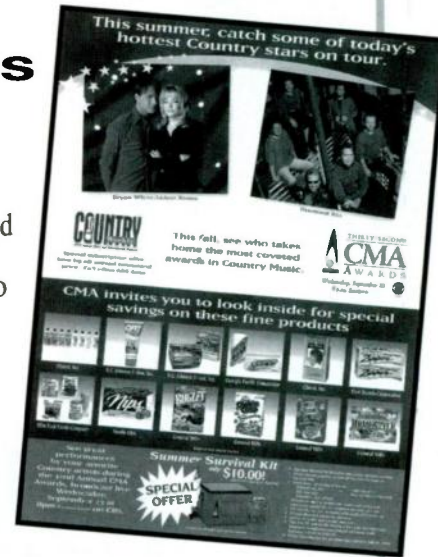
Country Music and Corporate America - Together Reaching 56 Million Households

Look for the third Country Music-themed free-standing insert to drop on Sunday,

June 28 in newspapers nationwide. The front cover of the FSI, featuring

Diamond Rio, Bryan White and LeAnn Rimes, was designed to promote the 32nd Annual CMA Awards to be aired Wednesday, September 23 on the CBS Television Network, as well as provide consumers special savings on products from Clairol, Inc., S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., First Brands Corporation, Slim Fast Foods Corporation, Georgia Pacific Corporation, General Mills and Nestle USA. A second FSI targeting 5.7 million households in C & D counties will drop on September 13.

"The FSI program provides corporations an excellent opportunity to align their products with Country Music and develop a record label cross-promotion," said Rick Murray, CMA director of marketing. For more information on the FSI program, please call Molly Calkins, project sales manager, Marketing Events, at 312-552-4101.



Terri Clark

"I think I am an ordinary person with an extraordinary job."

HOW I FEEL, the third album for Mercury recording artist Terri Clark is more than just a title or a song. It's a statement.

Along with the album came a new direction for Terri. She took time off to write and find songs that represent who she is both musically and personally.

"The first two albums were a more traditional, butt-kicking, hat act, female thing that had to be marketed and put out there," says Terri. That is one side of me, musically, and that is still evident on this album with songs like 'You're Easy on the Eyes'. Songs like 'I'm Alright' have that anthem thing going, but then there is another side that I haven't dug into yet. I have a deep well as far as music goes. I am starting to dig because I have only tapped into a quarter of it. I think I am starting to go into some other areas now that I have been wanting to, but the time just wasn't right. This was just a natural turning point that happens."

"Sincerity is the utmost important thing to me, so every song on the album is very sincere. If people say they don't like it because they say I am changing, then they are saying they don't like a part of what I am. Challenge yourself as an artist because that is what we are here to do and that's why we sing and play."

With the success of her first two albums, platinum and gold certification respectively, Terri felt pressure to have commercial success as well as making a musical stretch. Her previous albums were produced by Keith Stegall and Chris Waters. This time around, Stegall was the sole producer on the project.

“We did make a producer change. Chris Waters is just wonderful. He has helped me get to where I am now. We still write together and the songs that he has written with me in the past have been like little drops of blessings. Without him, I don’t think the first and second albums would have been what they are, and they are very successful albums. He really had a lot to do with contributing to my success. That was scary for me, not having Chris do this album.”

“It was also scary for me going into uncharted territory thinking, ‘oh, what’s this going to be like?’ I totally placed my trust in Keith and went to him and said, ‘I am not ready to do a complete producer change because I want to keep some of the same elements. Let’s do some different things. Let’s not be afraid to mix the vocal dryer. Let’s not be afraid to use more mandolin and fiddle.’ We did some things that changed it up a little. He helped me to deliver what I am really proud of, and he is proud too. It definitely was a growth step and sometimes you have got to change to get a different result.”

“Keith worked so hard on this. He worked around the clock to get this delivered. He really saw the vision I had. Plus, I think he had his own vision. We both put a lot of heart and soul into this and he put a lot of time into this. I spent more time up front writing and looking for songs. I have never gotten as involved into looking for songs as I did for this album. I think it’s important that I don’t feel like I have to write everything.”

While much of the album has the Country Music song theme, there are also evident sounds of bluegrass, alternative and rock-n-roll. Even with the new sounds, Terri remains true to herself by not abandoning her Country Music roots.

“To me a great album is a collection of songs that creates a whole body of work that has a common theme. I think we came up with some really cool outside material, plus combined with the stuff we wrote, it makes a neat collection for the album.”

“It’s definitely a part of me musically and emotionally. That traditional Country Music sound is still evident on this album, but there are also other elements around it that have been absent so far. I think it rounds it out and makes it a little bit different.”

Terri’s emotional side is not one people see too often. In fact, Terri, who will turn 30 this August, says she is more calm off stage than when she is in her trademark ‘getup outfit’ on stage.

“I spend a lot of time at home. I sit around and I light a lot of can-

dles, listen to mellow music, take bubble baths and spend time with my friends. I am just not into a lot of wild stuff. During my show is the only time I am not calm. There are parts about me and my personality that are starting to come out now. I am mellowing out a little bit. I am not quite as ‘petal to the metal’ as I was five years ago.”

“The whole thing with me is that it would hurt my feelings a lot more if someone said they didn’t like me as a person as opposed to saying they didn’t like my album. It kills me to think that somebody out there doesn’t like me. I always try to please others and have other people like me. Some people can say ‘I don’t care what people think’, but I can’t do that. I have a really hard time blowing things off. I just let it eat at me. If I think someone has a negative opinion or if they are saying something mean or if they don’t like this or that, it really gets to me. I am a very patient person. I don’t get angry and I am really sensitive. I will cry before I get mad. People probably don’t think that about me, but it’s true.”

Gaining the respect of her fellow industry peers is something Terri feels can be one of the most important things a person can achieve as an artist and songwriter.

“I think another thing I am striving for with this album is to gain that industry respect as an artist, not that I feel like I don’t have any. I sit back and think about people like Patty (Loveless) and Vince

(Gill), who spent years earning that. It takes a lot of time and I would like to be known as a legitimate singer and songwriter, not just the girl in the hat who bounces around on stage in adolescent euphoria. I want them to know that I do run deep as an artist. I just haven’t shown it too much yet because I have tried to stay with the niche. I realize that is something that isn’t going to happen overnight. I think this album is a step in that direction.”

After a nine-month hiatus from the Country Music charts, there have been plenty of things to keep the Canadian busy.

These days her time is occupied not only promoting her new album, but touring as well. She is currently out on the road with Brooks & Dunn and will soon venture back to her homeland for an eight-city tour. In July, Terri will fulfill another dream as her life-long idol Reba McEntire joins the tour.

“I can’t wait! I am really excited that I get to bond with the Reb-ster!”

“I don’t get butterflies anymore, just really excited. When there are a lot of people there to see a headliner, I just try to go out and win them over. If they didn’t like me before and they weren’t there before, maybe they will come back to see me again. I think I am an ordinary person with an extraordinary job!” 🎸

Christy Grealis

“Challenge yourself as an artist because that is what we are here to do and that’s why we sing.”

MUSIC INDUSTRY & NEW TECHNOLOGIES CONFERENCE A HIT

Nearly 300 registrants and numerous other participants including technology and legal experts, marketers and music industry executives turned out for MINT '98, the Music Industry & New Technologies conference presented by CMA and BellSouth and hosted by the Nashville Arena on May 13. Throughout the day people were dazzled by new technology such as 5.1 audio and high-definition television, gained tips for doing publicity on the Internet and learned the keys to electronic commerce.

Over 70 experts from coast to coast participated in panels or presentations, with the overriding message being delivered early in the day by keynote-speaker Donna Hoffman, associate professor of management, Owen Graduate School of Management, marketing division, Vanderbilt University: "The Internet is a phenomenal business opportunity." Her address also included highlights for Project 2000, which demonstrated the impact of the Internet on the music business.

Considering the global scope of the Internet and its continuous growth, the World Wide Web should be a marketing priority for businesses in the music industry, Hoffman said. There are an estimated 45 million Web users in the U.S. alone, 22.5 percent of the population ages 16 and over. The promise of electronic commerce and online business for the music industry is remarkable, she reported, despite the perils of the Internet such as underground online libraries and bootleg music downloads.

Lisa Crane, vice president of marketing and sales for Universal Studios Online, reiterated the




President of The WardGroup, Eric Ward makes a powerful and informative presentation for "Catching Publicity on the Net" at MINT '98.

importance of the Internet to the music industry during "Impact Of The Internet On The Music Business", when she estimated that online music sales will grow to \$2.8 billion in 2002, up from \$71 million in 1997. This panel session was the most widely attended during the day, drawing nearly 150 people.

Another large attraction was the 5.1 Audio/DVD Presentation in the theatre of the Arena. Participants were able to experience the quality and clarity of the next generation of audio and video technology. Reports from Dolby, DVD and MTSU were part of the presentation.

With 22 exhibitors and 18 sponsors, the MINT exhibit hall encompassed large national companies such as Microsoft as well as local firms such as Everest Technologies, in addition to rapidly growing companies including Interactive Pictures Corporation, which will be publicly traded soon. Other sponsors and exhibitors were ASCAP, AlterMedia, BMG, BMI, Capitol Broadcasting Co. (WRAL-HD), country.com, EdgeNet Media, First American Bank, Gateway 2000, GAVIN, Henniger Elite Post, InterAccess, ISDN-Net, IQcd (Palantir Software Inc.), Liquid Audio, MediaFORM, Music Development Group, MUSIC ROW, New Horizons Computer Learning

Center, R&R, The Recording Academy, SESAC, SunTrust Bank, U.S. Customs, YEAH! Solutions and The Zeal Group.

Traveller Information Services was on-site to cover the event for a webcast, which features audio and video footage of the event's panel discussions, technology presentations and exhibits. The address is www.cmamint.com, and the site will be accessible indefinitely. 



(l to r) Panelists Michael Mason of Speed Serve, Debbie Newman of Music Boulevard Network and Joe Marnell of WebMedia during the panel discussion of "Show Me the Money: Getting Advertising & Sponsorships" at MINT '98.

What They Said About MINT '98

“I was happy to return for my second MINT and to see the expanded attendance from both the online/new media and Nashville country music communities. Since MINT coincided with the launch of Country Music Boulevard and our partnership with CBS Cable and country.com this was a great opportunity for us to make our announcement in person. It was a chance to meet and exchange ideas and consider the many implications for our business inherent in the vast technological changes that are taking place.”

-Debbie Newman, The Music Boulevard Network

“The MINT conference was very exciting. The Internet represents a chance to participate in the creation of brand new ways of doing business. The \$40 billion recorded music industry (\$13 billion of it in the US) has realized the Internet is here to stay. On its face, the issues appear to be pretty clear cut with straightforward opportunities and risks. The promise of Internet based sales is enormously attractive. Indeed, online music sales are forecasted to reach US \$1.6 billion by 2002. And the peril presented by underground online libraries and bootleg music downloads that violate copyright seems well identified, even if the solutions are not immediately obvious. Yet, as many in the music industry are beginning to sense, I believe we are actually looking at much larger issues with the potential for profound shifts in the industry. For example, will consumers abandon traditional record stores in favor of the Net? Will they prefer to "burn their own?" What will happen to traditional channels of distribution? Industry structure? alliances? In other words, MINT gave us an opportunity to examine the real question of whether the Internet change everything?”

-Donna Hoffman, Vanderbilt University

“Although the cyber-train is still far away from the station, MINT '98 helped prove that it is on track and rapidly moving closer to the music industry. Marketing panels presented the current state of online music sales and featured experts expressing their future visions. The ongoing issue of intellectual property rights in cyber space, an important issue for publishers, songwriters and record labels was also addressed. MINT attendees were offered the opportunity to learn about what is happening today, plus discover cutting edge ways to take advantage of the developing concepts. Eric Ward's Catching Publicity On The Net, for example, explored new ground with concrete suggestions on how to drive eyeballs to your website using Internet publicity techniques. MINT renewed my enthusiasm to resist the Ostrich like urge and not bury my head in the sand.”

-David M. Ross, Music Row Publications, Inc.

“MINT was really a quality show, in the same league as the shows I've spoken at for CNet and iWORLD, and even better in that it focuses on a specific industry. The attendees were eager to learn and participate, and the venue and amenities were excellent. I'd come back in a minute.”

-Eric Ward, The WardGroup, specializing in online publicity and event promotion

“Getting The Most From Your Website”

The following are some “Do's” and “Don'ts” that were discussed during the panel.

Do

- Design Your Website So It's Easy To Update
- Keep It Simple
- Make Sure There Is A Reason For Someone To Come Back To The Site
- Create A Community (Opportunity To Communicate With Users)
- Take Time To Customize Content For Users

Don't

- Let Technology Take Over Your Website Design

It's a beautiful early May afternoon and the music community is gathered at Reba McEntire's Starstruck Entertainment building celebrating a recent number-one record. This time the record is not one that belongs to Reba. It belongs to Trisha Yearwood, but the honors are being bestowed upon Sunny Russ, one of Starstruck Writers Group's own, and her frequent writing pal Stephony Smith, with whom she shared her first ever number-one single for Reba's "How Was I To Know". The two had once again joined together and penned Yearwood's hit "Perfect Love".

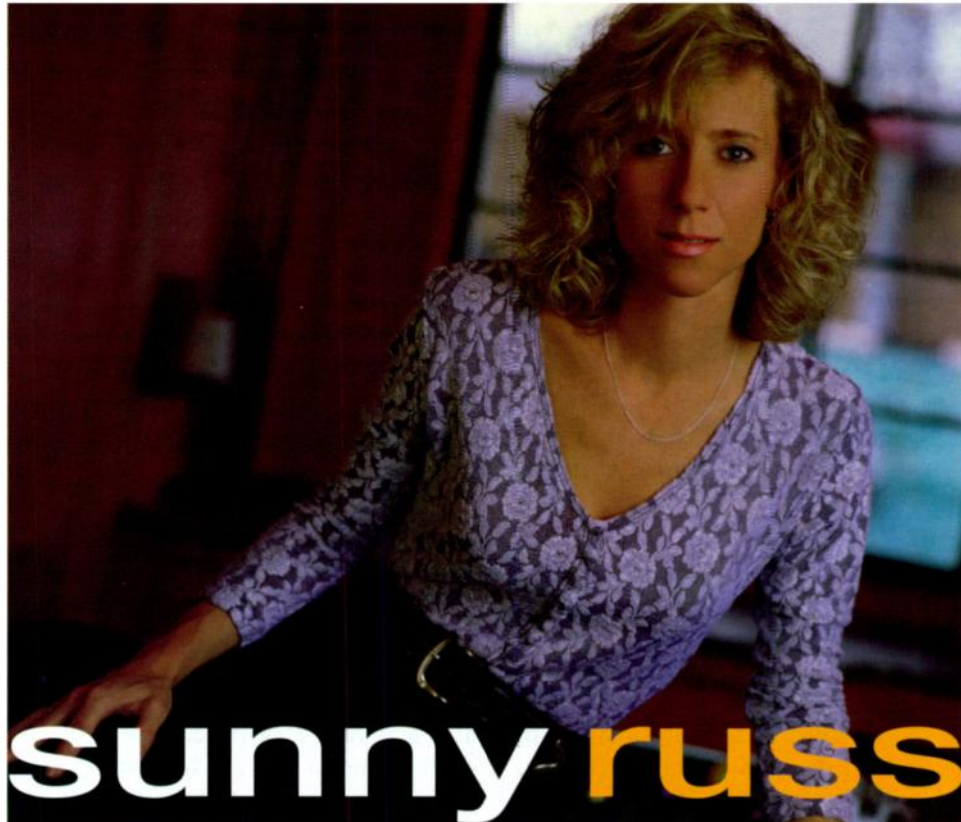
Sunny Russ was bit by the music bug while living in Montana. She and her college roommate decided they wanted to do contemporary Christian music. To earn money for the trip she worked on a wheat ranch in Oregon driving a truck, which was basically a converted cement truck. This is the summer she began listening to Country Music.

"I would be out there for hours in the field, and that's what everybody listened to, was Country Music. So I started listening to Ronnie Milsap, the Judds and Alabama. I liked it! You know, when you're that age you hate Country Music. That is when I started listening to Country. We hadn't intended to come to Nashville. We were going to go to Waco, Texas. Word Records was there, and we thought all of the Christian music was coming out of there. So we packed up the Blazer and headed down to Word in Waco. I remember on the way looking at all of the albums and saying, 'All of the Country Music is in Nashville, and a lot of Christian music is coming from Nashville. Let's go to Nashville!' So we re-routed. We got here right in the middle of Fan Fair; but we didn't realize it of course. There were no hotels, so we spent the first night in a parking lot."

Sunny's intentions were to become a recording artist. She attended Belmont University for a while and started waiting tables. In addition, to help support her dream of becoming a singer, Sunny relied on her songwriting talents. Her first big break came when her song "Younger Love" was recorded by Robin Lee.

"I was not committing to Country at that point. I was still thinking the whole time I wanted to be an artist. I was a little confused about what kind of an artist I wanted to be. I kept thinking, 'The songwriting thing is just something that will support me while I am trying to do the artist thing.' Well, the waiting tables ended up supporting me.

"When I finally let go of the aspiration to be an artist, that is when the



songwriting turned around and really started to become a successful thing. I think you just have to have such a different slant on life when you're an artist. Before I got married, I was dating Billy Crittenden, who is now my husband, and he was with a group called 4Runner. I watched him get on a bus and do interviews and stuff. We thought that he had a four-day slot where we could see each other, buy him clothes, meet with management and get ready for the next trip. It was just 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He would get on the bus at 3 a.m., and I'd pick him up a couple of days later at 3 a.m. I think it helped me kind of narrow things down, like my priorities."

After about eight frustrating years waiting tables and waiting for her big break, Starstruck took notice of Sunny just as she was ready to pack it all in and head back to Montana.

"When I finally let go of the aspiration to be an artist, that is when the songwriting turned around and really started to become a successful thing."

"Starstruck was my first writer's deal. I had spent a couple of years really being very compliant with everyone, going into meetings and being very generous, very sweet, you know (laughs), 'Thank you for the advice.' I remember when I had my meeting with Cliff Williamson (of Starstruck). My attitude was like, 'whatever!' 'If you're going to give me a deal, great. If you don't, fine. I'll go home!' I mean I was just about outta here. Once I saw (Cliff), within two weeks, I had a deal. He

was very serious, and I really appreciate the way he dealt with me. He gave me a very fair deal, and Starstruck has been really great the whole time."

The "song" is the foundation of the entire music business. Without the song, there would not be a Reba McEntire, Trisha Yearwood or a George Strait. With a continually changing climate at radio and at the labels, does Sunny feel any pressure of staying true to writing from the heart?

"This is probably such a jaded view. I feel like so much of the time,

what is going on with radio and with the atmosphere of the record labels, a lot of us take the temperature of what's going on out there and then write from there. Which is really bad. I'd love to say that I haven't buckled under that pressure. 'OK, am I going to write for myself here, am I going to write something that touches me and moves me, even if the chord structure is different, or am I going to stay over here where I think A&R or the artist wants me to be?' So I think the pressure is, are you going to buckle or not. (laughs) You sorta make that choice every time you write a song, I think."

"I think if the songwriters hold to that then, they (radio) don't have a choice. If there were more of us taking chances. I think that it is swinging back around a little bit again. There have been some records out like 'This Kiss', and I just heard a couple of Pam Tillis' songs. She is really taking some chances. I think that some of those girl groups like the Dixie Chicks and The Kinleys are starting to turn it around again. That's really exciting because I'm hoping that the songwriters will spread their wings a little more again."

Sunny obviously has had great luck writing songs about love. "Younger Love", her first album cut; "Perfect Love", her second number-one single; and now a new song she co-wrote with Deanna Bryant and Liz Hengber titled "Forever Love". The song already seems to have made an impact.

"'Forever Love', that's a fun story. The three of us get to this room, and we say we're going to try to write for Reba for her new movie. The movie was called 'Always and Forever'. But Liz had a title called 'Forever Love', and we thought, 'Ooh, go ahead and write that. Maybe they can use it even though the title is not the same.' We are over at a studio because Deanna is mixing over there. We are on the floor eating pizza, writing this song and people are walking over us. We came over here (Starstruck) a couple of days later and put it down on the demo thinking that it probably wouldn't go anywhere. 'OK, we tried, good for us.' Well, they ended up changing the name of the movie for the song! Even put it on Reba's album! And are using it for the movie. So we are so excited about it. You just don't know."

What is it like for Sunny to have her songs recorded by artists like Reba McEntire and Trisha Yearwood?

"You know what, initially it was really hard, because I had several songs that were like, my babies. And those were the songs that I was going to sing, and I knew how I wanted them sung, et cetera. So the first year it was hard to let those songs go and hear somebody else's interpretation. Now it's just really fun because I've let all of that go. It's fun to hear somebody else's interpretation of your song and know that it touched them. I like that."

Sunny's family is very supportive of her career choice.

"My dad is as proud as he can be. Dad is always trying to keep up with stuff, and they have just gotten to the point now where they are not calling it 'Did you sell a song?' They know that it's 'Did you get a song cut?' So I keep training them and they're getting better. That means that they are trying to keep up with me a little better when they know that you don't sell a song, you get one cut. It's fun for them."

Sunny sums up her success in one word.

"Lucky. A lot of people say, 'Well, it's hard work, or well, it's talent.' I've known people who have been in town for years and years and they write so well and they're just as diligent. For some reason they don't get that break. I don't know what it is. But I just really feel like, all that's happening, the success that I'm having, I'm just lucky. I feel fortunate and lucky. I don't want to take it for granted for a second because there are a lot of hard workers out there; a lot of talented people out there that never get a break."

Sunny's success has been an exciting and rewarding experience. As an accomplished and successful songwriter, Sunny still has some aspirations.

"Everybody that I wanted to write with I am. With the exception of Gretchen Peters, which - she writes by herself. I really respect that. That's one of the things I admire about her. I've been so lucky. I really wanted to write with Gary Burr for a long time, and I have gotten to do that. We have a pretty good writing relationship. That is one of the great things about having a little bit of success and being able to co-write. That's the fun part."

"I was telling my publishing company yesterday that I am dying to have a Patty Loveless cut. I really admire her so much. It's been really exciting to be on Trisha's album. It would have been exciting to get anything on Trisha's albums at any time in her career. She went to Belmont at the same time I did. I have been watching her career and just rooting for her all the way. But then to have a song on her album, on a greatest hits album, and at this time in her career. I guess, after that (laughs) everything is just candy."

Success still does not seem real.

"It feels like, especially now that there has been some success, it really feels like somebody else's life. I'm just so glad it's mine!" ☺☺

Dixie Weathersby

"I'm excited about this interview because when I was working for Mike Robertson Management Company in and about all of these odd jobs I had while I was waiting tables, they always had CLOSE UP sitting around the office. It was one of the first trade magazines that I really started keeping up with. I remember there was an article in it about Gretchen Peters. She was talking about how so much of songwriting is letting go of fear, and I swear that was one of the things that got me through! It's really kinda neat to be doing this because I remember that article and I remember her saying that and here I sit."

"It's fun to hear somebody else's interpretation of your song and know that it touched them."

awards

Hugh Prestwood is the recipient of this year's **Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) Achievement Award** for his song "On The Verge" recorded by Collin Raye. The song was chosen as one of 20 favorite Country songs of 1997 and is recognized because of its popularity and songwriting quality.

Former Mississippi State lineman and nationally known Country humorist Jerry Clower has received the **All American Football Foundation's Outstanding American Award** at Sam's Town Casino in Mississippi. His recognition by the Foundation marks a first for Country Music and the Grand Ole Opry.

new companies

Blue Hat Records has announced a new partnership with **Navarre Corporation**, a major distributor of entertainment products nationwide, for the label's projects. The team's first general release will be **The Charlie Daniel's Band's BLUE HAT** album, which is scheduled for a June 16 in-store date.

Gary Younger, former West Coast promotions manager for Imprint Records has announced the formation of his new record promotion firm **GO WEST! PROMOTIONS**. Based in Los Angeles, CA, GO WEST! PROMOTIONS was formed to provide a specialized service to record labels to augment their national strategies to break records by implementing additional support on a regional basis. The company can be reached at (818) 360-1685; fax (818) 832-0221.



(l to r) Kyle Young, associate director of the Country Music Foundation, Karen Williams, Kix Brooks, Molly Brooks and songwriter Jody Williams during the launch of "Bringing America's Music Home" the \$15 million campaign that will partially finance the new \$37 million Country Music Hall of Fame scheduled to open in downtown Nashville in 2000. Photo by Beth Gwinn

Sony/ATV Tree recently purchased **Little Big Town Music**, including 3,500 copyrights and a roster of 10 songwriters.

Buddy Lee Attractions has announced the formation of a contemporary music division at the agency. The division will be headed by Kevin Neal.

DreamWorks/SKG Music has entered into a co-publishing deal with Buck Moore and Princetta Music.

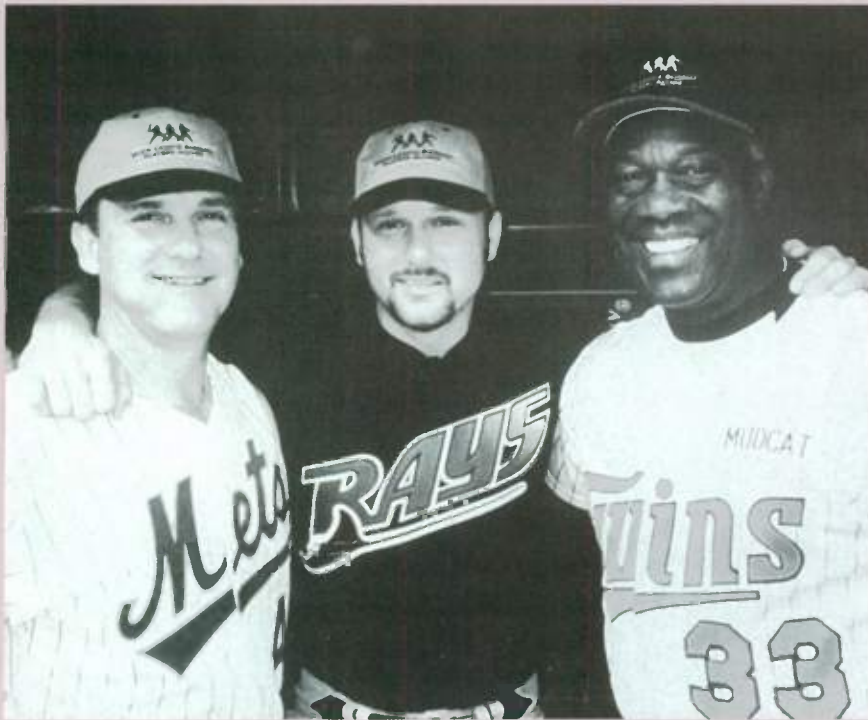
newsline

Leo Kottke, Vince Gill, Will Ackerman, Clint Black, Russ Freeman, Michael Hedges and Amy Grant are among the 21 artists lending their talents for the first tribute album to the SOUNDS OF WOOD & STEEL. This is a joint project between the Windham Hill label and El-Cajon-based Taylor Guitars.

The NFL Players Association, Nashville Chapter announced some changes in its organizational structure. In addition to the events director position being eliminated, an advisory committee of music row executives has been selected to "bridge the gap" between the music industry and the NFL.

CMT and Wal*Mart have joined forces again to provide free concerts by new Country Music hitmakers in parking lots throughout the U.S. The tour launched in Amarillo, TX and is scheduled to tour in Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas in the early summer. Some of the artists confirmed are: **Steve Wariner, David Kersh, Ty Herndon, Gary Allan, Daryle Singletary, Jason Sellers, Sara Evans and Eddy Raven**.

Jim Beam is inviting all unsigned Country Music bands and musicians to submit their best performance on audio and video tape for selection as one of five finalists in the



Tim McGraw (center) joined his father Tug McGraw (left) along with Mudcat Grant (right) for a Major League Baseball Players Alumni Association Game in Florida where Tim took home the MVP award for the "Legends of Baseball" game.

national, **Sixth Annual Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search**. Official rules and entry information may be obtained by calling 1-800-290-2604. Submissions must be sent by August 22 and the search will culminate on November 12 at the Wild Horse Saloon in Nashville.

COUNTRYFEST '98 will be held at the Nashville Arena on Saturday, June 20. Fruit of the Loom has announced seven of this year's eight artists: **Reba McEntire, Clint Black, Neal McCoy, Chris LeDoux, Steve Wariner, The Kinleys** and most recently announced **Wynonna**.

country.com recently launched a country lifestyle bookstore. The bookstore is a partnership with **BarnsandNoble.com** and features books in over 50 different Country Music and lifestyle categories allowing users to purchase books 24 hours a day at discounted prices.

PLA Media is representing three Billboard books this year. **The King of Western Swing: Bob Wills Remembered, Woman on Top: The Quiet Revolution That's Rocking the American Music Industry** and **The Entertainers: Portraits of Stardom in the 20th Century**. For more information, call 615-327-0100.



Sherrié Austin was dancing around during the filming of her current video "Put Your Heart Into It", directed by Gerry Wenner.



"The 1st Annual Black Country Music Special" was held on June 12 in Atlanta, Georgia in conjunction with Black Music Month. The show was hosted by **Star Clarence Gilyard** of the show "Walker" Texas Ranger. Artists that performed included **Big Al Downing, John Keaton, Wil Glover, Rhonda Towns, The Federation of Black Cowboys** among others.

Lionel Conway was recently named partner for the publishing company **Maverick Music**. Conway joined the company as president since its inception in June of 1992 and in addition to starting up the Los Angeles office, he has also opened an office in Nashville.

Patti Duensing has been promoted to business manager for **Jones Radio Network**. Most recently Duensing served as senior accountant. Her responsibilities now include financial reporting, budgeting and general administrative oversight.

Jennifer Skjodt has been promoted to vice president and marketing manager of **WFMS**

and WGRL Country radio stations in Indianapolis. She will supervise programming, promotion, database marketing and creative services for the stations.

Fran Romeo has been appointed to the position of sales representative for **The Don Romeo Agency**. Fran joins the Omaha office where she will take over clients of former agent Phil Potter as well as new clients.

Ellen T. Caldwell has been named account supervisor, public relations at **Bohan Carden & Cherry**, an advertising/public relations agency in Nashville. She was previously director of media relations and publicity at Rising Tide.

Cyndy Turner has been named senior publicist at **Entertainment Services-Nashville**. She was most recently publicist for Kenny Chesney and in-house publicist for Dale Morris & Associates. Turner will assume publicity responsibilities for clients **Freddy Fender, Dave & Sugar, Razy Bailey** and **Kippi Brannon**.

Lee Logan has joined **MJI Broadcasting** as executive director of Country programming. He will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the company's Country radio programming activities. Logan most recently was group director of programming for South Central Communications.

Paul Barnabee has been promoted to vice president of finance for **RCA Label Group RLG/Nashville**. **Britta Davis** shifts to manager, artist development, focusing on **BNA Records** with associate director **Debbie Schwartz**. **Cindy Mabe** remains administrator, RLG artist development, focusing on **RCA Records** with associate **Jon Elliott**. **Dan Nelson** has moved from **GAVIN** promotion representative to southwest regional promotion manager, and **Cindy Heath** is



Jack Daniel's Master Distiller Jimmy Bedford presents George Strait with a one-of-a-kind saddle for his horse named Jack. Jack Daniel's joined forces with the George Strait Music Festival currently touring in cities around the country.

named administrator, RCA national promotion. A&R assistant **Aubrey Parker** has taken on additional responsibilities for the RLG production department by becoming production administrator. New to RLG are **Tiffany Lauer**, manager of product development, and **Michelle Brown**, manager, RLG media marketing.

Mike Whelan has been promoted to director of creative services for the **Opryland Music Group (OMG)**. He was previously creative manager and has been with the company since 1994. Prior to OMG he was creative manager for PolyGram Music. In his position he deals with the daily operations of the creative department, works with songwriters and is liaison between OMG and music industry representatives.

Scott Cosby has been appointed to tour marketing administrator for **Arista/Nashville**. He was formerly promotion coordinator for the label.

Mark Hagan has been appointed to the newly created position of head of programmers for **Unique Television**. Hagan was formerly head of programmes and acquisitions for **VH-1 Europe**.



RECORDING: Johnny Paycheck to Sony Music/LuckyDog Records...**BOOKING: Kelly Richey Band** to Lustig Talent Enterprises, Inc...**PUBLISHING: Red Simpson** to Jiles-Beam Music.



artist/label

Sherrié Austin/Arista Nashville
Joe Dee Messina/Curb Records

title

"Put Your Heart Into It"
"I'm Alright"

director

Gerry Wenner
Jon Small

CMA MARKS 40TH ANNIVERSARY WITH NETWORK TELEVISION SPECIAL

To commemorate its 40th anniversary as an organization, the Country Music Association is planning the biggest reunion in Country Music history. All artists who have won a CMA Award and the members of the Country Music Hall of Fame will be invited to attend the gala celebration that will be turned into a two-hour television special on The CBS Television Network.

"The list of artists who have won CMA Awards over the years is truly remarkable and sometimes surprising. Winners range from George Jones and Vince Gill to Julio Iglesias and actress Sissy Spacek," said CMA Executive Director Ed Benson.

The taping date has been set for Thursday, October 22 at the Nashville Arena. More details about the event and the telecast will be released later in the summer. Some tickets will be sold to the general public. The special will be produced for CMA by Walter Miller.

The CMA was founded on September 26, 1958, but the first CMA Awards were not given out until 1967, with the first televised Awards in 1968. "The CMA Awards" was the first music awards event to be telecast on network television. In addition, television specials have been produced for CMA's 25th, 30th and 35th anniversaries.

In March 1983, CMA celebrated its 25th anniversary in Washington D.C. with President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush in attendance at Constitution Hall.

Forty years ago, CMA was founded as the first trade organization formed to promote a type of music. More than 6,800 music industry professionals and companies from 43 countries around the world are members of CMA. The organization's objectives are to guide and enhance the development of Country Music and to demonstrate it as a viable medium to advertisers, consumers and media throughout the world.

international update

• Sherrié Austin's debut album for Arista/BMG, *WORDS*, debuted on Germany's national record sales chart at number 44. The "Longplay One Artist Chart" bases positions on electronically registered record sales and encompasses all genres. The Australian-born singer just returned from Germany, where she participated in a variety of promotional appearances including a performance on "Geld Oder Leibe". The program is the highest-rated TV variety show in Germany with an audience of more than 7.2 million.

• The 10th Annual Country Gold Festival is set for October 18 in Kumamoto, Japan. The lineup includes Bryan White, Jo Dee Messina, Asleep At The Wheel, Sam Bush, River Road and Charlie Nagatani & The Cannonballs.

• Jim Lauderdale visits the UK this month for a short tour in support of his critically acclaimed new album for BNA Records, *WHISPER*. Lauderdale performs in Preston, Glasgow, Sunderland and London, where he opens for Nick Lowe.

• The Mavericks' MCA release *TRAMPOLINE* has certified gold in the UK for sales of more than 100,000 units. The single "Dance The Night Away" has not been out of the top 10 in the UK singles pop chart since its release April. The band have just announced a return visit to Europe for September, which will include eight UK dates.

• LeAnn Rimes' single, "How Do I Live", is now closing in on platinum sales in the UK. The record has been embraced by both Country and Pop radio alike and has not dropped beneath 12 in the charts since its release over three months ago. LeAnn made a quick visit to Europe to support this release with an appearance on The World Music Awards in Monte Carlo and Top of the Pops.

Rineke Van Beek is a familiar, friendly face to most Country Music artists and their publicists. A tireless supporter for Country Music's growth in the Netherlands, Rineke always knows the latest news from Nashville and seems to always wear a smile. She has been a contributor to the Dutch Country Music magazine *Country Gazette* for 15 years. This year, the magazine celebrates its 25th anniversary, having been launched in 1973 by Jaap Loef, Cor Sanne, Hans Van Dam and Janny Van Dam. Today, Hans and Janny Van Dam continue to oversee the magazine with help from a group of volunteers who donate their time each month because of their dedication to the music.



Marty Robbins was the one who made me realize that Country Music was the music format for me, and with the success of Freddy Fender, Tammy Wynette and Emmylou Harris in Europe, I got hooked completely. I knew that I had to come to Nashville. Finally, the big day came and you cannot imagine a more confused person than I was when I entered the Fairgrounds and saw stars everywhere I looked. It was so overwhelming! And everybody was so nice. There was so much love in the air, love for the music, love for the artists, but probably most important, so much love from the

Rineke visits with Joe Diffie



Thinking about Fan Fair

In 1985 I made my first (and, at that time, most likely only) trip to Nashville as a huge fan of Country Music. There was no way that I could have known that Fan Fair would be so addictive. Just a couple of months before my big trip, I got in touch with the people of *COUNTRY GAZETTE*, the Dutch magazine for Country Music, and slowly started to do some work for them.

artists for their fans. This was something you would never find anywhere else. I knew that at once.

When the week was over (much too fast, of course), I was even more confused than at the time I started my trip because I had met so many new friends and had just done my very first interview for the magazine with Ronny Robbins, my idol's son. I did not want to leave at all, but duty called. To the question, "Will you return next year?", I could only answer with a big smile and a loud, "Of course!" And I have returned every year since then. I even managed to sneak in more trips to Nashville every year. However, the trip to Fan Fair will always be the most important one and I can hardly wait until the announcements for the big event start again.

A couple of years after my first trip, I started to bring over a group of fellow Country Music lovers from Holland to Music City U.S.A., knowing how much this trip meant to them and trying to share all the emotions Country Music

brings us. If you would see this party of people on the way back, you would see a lot of them in tears because everybody wants to stay and to enjoy the wonderful feeling for a much longer time.

As a press person I have had the chance to interview Garth Brooks when he just arrived in Nashville and hardly anybody knew him. To be honest, I had never heard his name before that day. I talked to Waylon Jennings, Gene Watson and the guys of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band during my first trip, and I fell from one surprise into another. Who was I that I could do this? It still shakes me up sometimes, even though I have talked to a lot of artists and songwriters over the years!

Did Fan Fair change over the years? It did, but

only to become even bigger and better: more booths and more artists performing and signing autographs in their booth or their record company's booth. It still amazes me how fans from all over the country and the world stand in line for hours and hours to get an autograph and a picture of their favorite artist; I would do it myself if my situation as a journalist changed. I feel so much respect for these fans, but no less for the artists, for you need both groups to make a thing like Fan

Fair possible.

Where in the world will you find a place like this, where you can meet and greet the new and upcoming stars, the big and mega stars and the legends, and also see them perform? This is what makes Fan Fair and Nashville unique, and I do hope from the bottom of my heart that it will continue for many, many more years to come!

I know there is a lot of talk about taking Fan Fair inside the Nashville Arena, but I truly believe that keeping Fan Fair on the Fairgrounds would be a much wiser decision. The weather (heat or

rain) is also a part of Fan Fair's charm. To be outdoors with all of the booths and stages in one place, with less parking problems than downtown Nashville, is a great place to be! The only thing I start to dislike after a week of running around on the Fairgrounds is that steep hill! Going down is not that bad, but going up! On the other hand, I try to consider this hill as the hill the artists have to climb (over and over again) to get their music career started and to be able to give us what we enjoy the most: Country Music! 🎸🎤



Rineke and Garth Brooks

*Rineke van Beek
April 18, 1998*



VICTORIA SHAW, MICHAEL McDONALD, BRYAN WHITE

looking good:

Bryan White is the only Country star who graced the pages of PEOPLE magazine's 1998 "50 Most Beautiful People in the World." Other Country artists who have held the honor in the past are **Clint Black**, **Deana Carter**, **Billy Ray Cyrus**, **Faith Hill**, **Alan Jackson** and **John Michael Montgomery**.

newsmakers:

Martina McBride will join the lineup of pop star Sarah McLachlan's "Lilith Fair" tour for at least two stops this summer. Martina will join the all-star, female musicians tour in Oklahoma and Kansas in July. **Emmylou Harris**, who performed on the tour last year, will also appear on select stops.

Wynonna will be part of a soundtrack album for the CBS drama, "Touched By An Angel". Her contribution is "You Were Loved," written by Diane Warren ("How Do I Live"). Also providing their talent for the soundtrack is **Faith Hill**, **Celine Dion**, **Vanessa L. Williams** and **Amy Grant**.

yum, yum:

Alabama plans to open their second Alabama Grill restaurant in Myrtle Beach, SC. The restaurant showcases an extensive memorabilia collection from Country stars and legends. In 1996, a third Alabama Grill was opened in Pigeon Forge, TN. The group plans to expand their theme-oriented restaurants to several other locations.

good deeds:

All proceeds from the sale of "One Heart At A Time," written by **Victoria Shaw**, will benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. The song and video features **Garth Brooks**, **Billy Dean**, **Faith Hill**,

Neal McCoy, **Michael McDonald**, **Olivia Newton-John**, **Victoria** and **Bryan White**. All elements of the song and video were donated at no cost to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Sammy Kershaw hosted the "Second Annual Torch Breakfast" at Planet Hollywood Nashville, which raised over \$10,000 for the 1998 Tennessee Special Olympics. **Mark Wills** was also on hand to lend his support to the cause.



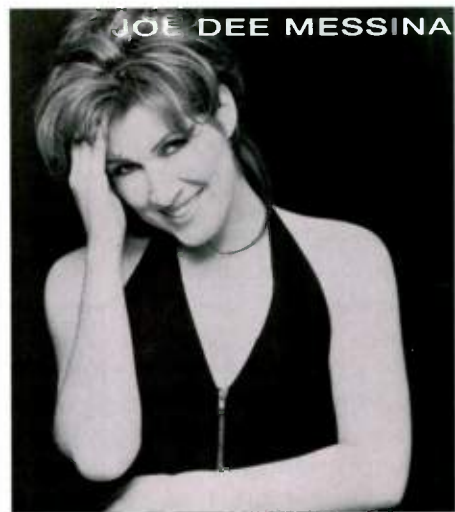
COLLIN RAYE

Collin Raye has been invited to be a celebrity judge for USA WEEKEND's Make A Difference Day, that will be held October 24. Other celebrity judges include founder Paul Newman and pop star Gloria Estafan. Readers of the magazine are asked to do something to "make a difference" in their communities that day and turn their projects in to the magazine to be voted on by the panel of judges.

congrats:

David Kersh recently reeled in the biggest catch of the day among the fishing pros and fellow celebrities for his favorite charity at the 1998 BASSMASTER

SuperStars Benefit. Weighing in with a 6.5 lb. bass, Kersh was honored with a \$10,000 cash prize, which he will pass along to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



JO DEE MESSINA

all in the family:

Jo Dee Messina recently shot her next video for her upcoming single, "I'm Alright", in Mt. Pleasant, TN, a small town near Nashville, directed by Jon Small. Jo Dee portrays a young girl who leaves her "small town" to make it in Nashville. Her character's mom in the video is also her mom in real life, and the president of her fan club.

the big screen:

The duet **Toby Keith** and **Lari White** recorded for Lari's forthcoming album, STEPPING STONES, is being considered for the "Armageddon" movie soundtrack.

on the tube:

Michelle Wright recently guest-starred in an episode of the television series "Due South". Michelle spent 10 days filming the episode in Toronto.



MICHELLE WRIGHT

Riding the waves of success, David Kersh is just at the peak of the surf...

His sophomore album debuted in the top 20, he earned a gig as a spokesperson for Southwest Airlines, and he fulfilled a long-time dream of performing at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, not to mention the recent tour stop he made in Hawaii.

On the sunny day that CLOSE UP caught up with David, he was reminiscing about that trip, but looking forward to an even greater "trip"...touring with Reba McEntire and Brooks & Dunn.

"If there were a dream tour to be had it would be to be with Brooks & Dunn and Reba. Reba McEntire is responsible for many people's careers being shot up to the next level. To have the doors open like that for me is a huge opportunity. I was hoping, praying and begging to become part of a major tour.

"Once the tour dates start (July - December), I'm not going to be in Texas. I'm moving out of my apartment and selling my truck. I am going to try and cut my expenses to a minimum and store my stuff. I have been dreaming for this to take place. I am going to be giving it my all, for sure. I don't care if I never go home. I am paying enough for that bus; I might as well live on it."

David explains what went into the making of his current album IF I NEVER STOP LOVING YOU as compared to his debut release GOODNIGHT SWEETHEART.

"I think there's differences and similarities as well. There are similarities in that I didn't want to veer too much away from the principle behind the first album, which was to give the listeners a good reflection of who David Kersh is through the music. As we did on the first album, we looked a long time for songs because I didn't want to be singing songs about drinking sorrows away or old memories and things like that. It's just not that believable coming from an under-30-year-old artist. The difference between this album and the first one is that I was much more comfortable and had more input on this album. I did songs that were really, really close to my heart."

David says he knew that he would catch flack for his current single "Wonderful Tonight", a remake of the Eric Clapton hit, but fought hard to have it released. The record label didn't stand a chance between the reaction to the song from David's live audience and the radio-play it was receiving.

"I believe there are good remakes and there are bad remakes. I firmly believe this is a good remake. We did two on the album, and both have the potential to be good singles because they are both great songs. They have proved themselves before. One of them is very Country because Willie Nelson wrote it, 'Hello Walls' and the other is Eric Clapton's 'Wonderful Tonight', a song that lends itself to the Country format.

"I may be totally wrong, but you have to take a risk to have great things happen. One of the things I look at is Tim McGraw with 'Indian Outlaw'. That was a very unconventional song. In my opinion, even more so than 'Wonderful Tonight'. Usually it's those 'love it or hate it' songs that become huge songs."

David's live show is a mixture of traditional Country with "a little bit rock 'n' roll". He takes the audience on a musical journey of the tunes many of them grew up with, while managing to fit in a few of his own hits.

"The people that were listening to Country Music, back in the late '70s and all the way through the '80s, listened to more than just Country Music. For that reason alone, I am doing songs that I enjoyed listening to when I was growing up. It's fun to do those songs because it takes me back. I get to thinking that if it takes me back, then it takes a lot of people back. Everybody loves to go back to that time.



"I think if we listen to our audience, then there's going to be those people out there who want to hear the George Jones' and Merle Haggard's. I am all over that because I love that, but that same person will be hollering and jumping up and down out of their seats when we go into rock 'n' roll. It's a lot of fun, and it works, so we are going to keep doing it."

The interview turned to a more serious note when the topic was family.

"I grew up in a wonderful environment. In fact, I think my parents worked too hard at making us kids believe everything was wonderful. Up until I was fifteen, I lived in a fantasy world. It goes back to the old saying, 'If it seems too good to be true, then it probably is.' When I was fifteen my parents got a divorce, and, of course, everything in my world came tumbling down. It's a horrible thing for any family, whether you were brought up thinking that you lived in a perfect world or not."

David has two siblings: Tammy, who lives in Texas, and Michael, who lives in Nashville.

"We are not as close as I would like to be. It kind of goes back to when the family broke up. I can't really put my finger on why, but as kids we didn't learn some things. I think it's really important for kids to learn at an early age that it's okay to fight with your siblings, because you are still going to love each other after the things are said.

"We are really just now starting to learn to open up with each other. There are a lot of things I think my brother needs to get off of his chest towards me, and my sister needs to towards me, and I need to towards them. We have been afraid to do this because we have been so non-confrontational. We need to be real. The world that I was brought up in was very non-confrontational. It was false, and I am just now really dealing with and learning about the real world. It's okay to express your feelings to a loved one or someone who you have a relationship with, whether it's business or personal. You have to express feeling. You can't keep things in and pretend everything is okay, because it's not always okay."

Did David have any regrets sharing those things closest to his heart?

"I think it is really important to share stories like that and really open up. I feel like the more I open up to my fans, the more close they feel towards me. If they have that closeness, the more they are going to stick with me. They are going to remain fans." 🎧

Angie Crabtree

donna hilley

As you walk into the office of Sony/ATV Tree Music Publishing President and CEO Donna Hilley, you can't help but notice the sign that sits on her desk next to the computer - "Thou Shalt Not Whine".

"I have a saying - 'Would you like some cheese with that whine?'," she quips in a tone that quickly reveals her matter-of-fact manner and dry sense of humor.

In truth, Donna further explains that she's adopted the motto as a reminder of her work ethic.

"People shouldn't be in jobs they hate," Donna says. "There's too much good to be done in this world. They could be using their energy for other things."

And the Alabama native knows a thing or two about using her energy. Donna first joined what was then Tree International in 1973 and in 1989 was responsible for negotiating the sale of Tree to CBS (now Sony Music Entertainment, Inc.). Under her guidance, the publishing company has branched into film and television, as well as advertising and Broadway musicals. She also negotiated the purchase of more than 60 major catalogs for Tree, including those of Jim Reeves, Conway Twitty, Buck Owens and Merle Haggard.

At CLOSE UP press time, Sony/ATV Tree had just announced the purchase of Little Big Town Music, including more than 3,500 copyrights and a roster of 10 songwriters. The company also signed hit songwriter Bob DiPiero and acquired his American Made Music Catalog. It also acquired Tom Shapiro Music, the catalog of songwriter Tom Shapiro, who signed with the company in January.

With the United States administrative headquarters for Sony Music Publishing based in Nashville, Donna additionally oversees the entire administration of day-to-day music publishing operations which includes its Country catalogs, Tree Publishing Company, Inc., Cross Keys Publishing Company, Inc. and Timber Publishing Company, Inc. She's also responsible for the pop catalogs of Sony Tunes, Inc. and Sony Songs Inc.,



"When I really want to get away from it all, I play cards."

in addition to the film and television catalogs of Columbia Pictures and Tri-Star Pictures.

But despite her mammoth responsibilities and the countless accolades she's received for her business savvy, including being ranked number four by ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY in a 1992 article "Ten Most Powerful People In Country Music - A Guide To Country Music Clout", Donna feels more comfortable talking about her

people skills. Employees are always welcome in her office, she asserts, which looks more like a furnished room from a house with its carefully placed couches in the sitting area and dining-area like table and chairs.

"This company is like a family," Donna says. "It's very much an open door policy. People know they can talk to me. We know our people well - where their kids go to school, etc. It's important to everyone to know that there's a real interest in them as human beings."

As anyone in the music industry knows, it's not a 9 to 5 job. For that reason, Donna makes herself just as accessible outside the office.

"I always tell people where I'm going to be and how I can be reached. I believe in giving people my home phone number. If someone calls me, and they don't leave their home phone number, then they must not want to talk to me that much."

In addition to her work role, she's also involved in various other music and community-related organizations. Currently, Donna is serving her second term as Chairman of the CMA Board of Directors.

"I've enjoyed my time on the CMA board. I have been able to put my personal needs aside to help others for the good of all. That's what it's all about, and that's how it should be."

Donna first became acquainted with CMA long before serving on the board. After marrying husband Rayford Hilley and moving to Nashville, she joined radio station WKDA, run by the late Jack Stapp, who was also a founding member of CMA. Stapp also founded Tree International. Donna worked for WKDA for eight years before joining Nashville advertising and public relations firm Bill Hudson & Associates. She then rejoined Stapp by going to work for Tree International.

And although she's gained a reputation as one of Country Music's most notable executives, she admits that growing up in Alabama, she really didn't have any ambitions of getting involved in the entertainment industry. Now, however, she's a role model to others, especially women.

"It's important that you put yourself in situations where you can develop your interests," Donna says. "If you want to work at a record label, learn as much about it as you can. Volunteer to do some work if you have to. You

"It's important that you put yourself in situations where you can develop your interests."

shouldn't be in a job where you are constantly checking your watch to see if it's time to go home yet. If you want to be an engineer, you should hang out at the studio. Volunteer to sweep floors if you have to."

As the mother of three children and grandmother of three grandchildren, Donna knows that finding happiness is not all about one's career choice. She has a very active family life and is also very involved with her church choir, an extension of her love for gospel music.

"On Wednesday nights, I go to church and take my grandchildren. That's our night to go out to dinner and spend time together."

Socially, Donna is also an avid card player. "When I really want to get away from it all, I play cards," she says. "When I'm thinking about Rook, I'm not worrying about work."

She also not worried about the future of Country Music. Donna once said that Country Music would always be around because "there would always be churches and always be bars, and people would always either be praying or drinking and some would be doing both to deal with their struggles."

"That's right," Donna says as she laughs at the memory. "Country Music will always be around because it appeals to the emotions of the average person. I have a lot of songs that I love, but there are three that really stand out for me. Every time, I hear 'Friends In Low Places' and

"People shouldn't be in jobs they hate."

'Boot Scootin' Boogie', it makes me smile. I just get a good feeling inside. "Also, 'He Stopped Loving Her Today' – it's one of the saddest songs I've ever heard, but also one of the most moving.

"A song has to hit you right here," she says, pointing to her heart. For Donna Hilley, music, just like her other endeavors, must satisfy the heart. 🎧

Mandy Wilson

PATTY LOVELESS

RETURNS TO

FAN FAIR

AGAIN THIS

MONTH. YOU CAN

CATCH HER ON

THE SONY MUSIC

SHOW, THURSDAY

JUNE 18.

1985

-- Patty Loveless attended Fan Fair as a fan herself, and stood in line for an autograph from one of her favorite stars. She even told him that one day, she too, would be a star. Vince Gill probably had no idea that fan would end up becoming one of his close friends, musical collaborators and one of Country Music's most respected and leading artists.

"I still thrive on what he thinks of what I do," says Patty. "I thrive on what he thinks about it, because I've always been in awe of him. I've been a fan of Vince long before he was having hits. His music has always been a hit with me. His voice was a hit with me. I was always singing along with him. When I listen to him sing, I'm like 'God, he covers it all.' He can do bluegrass, Country, pop and rock'n'roll. And I just think he's an amazing musician, and an amazing artist. He covers all grounds of music, even though that I know Country Music is a real love of his. I just always still get a little nervous around Vince, but I'm getting better at it."

After going full tilt with a recording career that spans over a decade, Patty Loveless has recently enjoyed a few months of much needed time off the road. However, she hasn't slowed down at home, having performed at a benefit show in Nashville for domestic violence, lending her voice to several of her fellow artists' albums and squeezing in a full day of media interviews.

Patty Loveless is celebrating her 10th anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

"It's always great to play the Opry. I was always around it at a real early age. I remember it when it was at the Ryman. There was an excitement to it, and it still is to this day. Old and new go out there and are able to share the same stage. And that's one place you can mix new music with the older style of music. To me, it's almost like going back home. Going back to your parent's house or your grandparent's house. Whenever I have the opportunity to spend time with Little Jimmy Dickens or just any of them out there, it's a lot of fun. It makes me feel good to feel that I'm accepted into the family. It seems like the time stands still when you go to the Opry. You can step back into a little bit of history."

Numerous artists have praised Patty for her ability to always top herself. Her current release **LONG STRETCH OF LONESOME** is yet another masterpiece in the Loveless gallery of music.

Patty once said in an interview that she tries to make each album be better than the last. In 1995, she became only the second woman to win the prestigious CMA Album of the Year for **WHEN FALLEN ANGELS FLY**, an honor she shared with husband and producer Emory Gordy, Jr.

Her follow-up albums, *TROUBLE WITH THE TRUTH*, was *TIME* Magazine's number four album of 1996 in any genre and one of *PEOPLE* Magazine's top-10 albums of the year. Of her current lp, *LONG STRETCH OF LONESOME*, *USA TODAY* has already said, "This may be the year's most deeply emotional album."

Patty was not short in finding friends to help her round out *LONG STRETCH OF LONESOME*. Along with some of Nashville's most renowned songwriters like Gretchen Peters, Kostas, Tony Arata, and Jim Lauderdale contributing to the project, she was able to attract some of Nashville's best artists. Living legend George Jones joined her on "You Don't Seem To Miss Me". Susan Ashton and Harry Stinson joined her on "To Have You Back Again" with Raul Malo of the Mavericks playing guitar. Another artist who lent support to Patty's album was long-time supporter Mary Chapin Carpenter.

"When Emory was talking to me about Kim Richey, he said 'What about Mary Chapin?' I said, 'I think it would be great.' Chapin has always sent me notes on about every album I've done at Epic. How much that it has influenced her, and what it has done for her. I save these letters I get from her. She's a really unique kind of person, and I think she is just a wonderful person inside. Even though I thought that this album wasn't finished, but I handed it in anyway. She left a message on my answerphone that said, 'Even though you felt that this wasn't finished, I think it was a masterpiece.' She's just one of those people that I was really honored that she made the time to come and sing on the record. It's always a joy for me to get those people to come in and sing."

Patty returned the favor and lent her voice to some of her friends' albums.

"With me having four months off, it gave me time and an opportunity to be around town. If somebody calls up and says, 'I want you to come in and sing on the record,' I'm able to do it. There have been times that I've been out on the road, they have a recording session and want you to come and sing on a song, but you have no time.

"This gave me the opportunity to work with some other people [Suzy Bogguss, Ty Herndon and Vince Gill], and that's what I wanted to do. To return the favor. Like Dolly Parton did, I went and sang with her and she returned the favor. I enjoy being able to do that. I think it's important that we do that for each other."

To Patty Loveless, Country Music is a blend of influences and styles. Though grounded in the traditional roots of Country Music, Patty still appreciates other styles of music and today's newer Country artists.

"Country Music is leaning more to the pop style. When it comes to Country Music, I feel that I'm good at it. It's where I belong; it's my roots. It's not that I don't appreciate other styles and other forms of

music, and I'm not afraid to bring those other styles and other forms of music that I have been influenced by. I think we've been doing it over the years. I think the reason some of today's new artists sound more pop is because they were influenced by maybe a Vince Gill or Patty Loveless, but on top of that, they were influenced by Celine Dion, Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston and those type of singers. I think it's OK to be influenced, to be open to the music. I think Martina McBride is a good example. She can handle a Country song well, but she can, also handle a more pop oriented song. For me, I handle a good Country song. I feel I could handle a rock-n-roll song too, if I wanted to, but you won't find me doing Aerosmith.(laughs)

"I was always a big fan of Ottis Redding and Percy Sledge. They were almost Country themselves because of the lyrics in their songs. I feel 'Trouble With The Truth' was almost that type of feel. I could almost hear Percy Sledge doing it or Ottis Redding. I'm always trying to find something a little different, but something that I feel I can perform. There's a lot of songs out there that I have passed on because, when it comes right down to it, they sounded more pop-oriented. I'm not a pop singer. There are times that I wish I could handle a song like Celine Dion or Mariah Carey. But, I'm not that type of singer. I'm in between Country and rock-n-roll, or rockabilly. It's because that's what I was influenced by the most, the early rock-n-roll and the early Country. I think that's the reason that some of the sound that I get from the traditional sound comes from true experience."

As much respect and admiration as her musical peers have for her, Patty Loveless is just as much a fan and admirer of other artists. She is quick to credit many of those artists for helping to keep the music fresh and alive.

"I'm hoping to see Country radio swing back around and play a little bit more of the Country tradition. Lee Ann Womack, I think she does it well. She is opening the ears of Country Music and keeping that door open. I think it's real important that we do what comes from our hearts. There are songs that I hear by Trisha, by LeAnn [Rimes], and I'm going 'Wow. I wish I could cover a tune like that. I wish I could sing like that.' But then, maybe sometimes they look at what I do and say, 'I wish I could sing it like that.' That's respect for each other. I think you need that, especially today. There is just so much out there that sometimes I think it's sad when somebody says, 'You've got to be better than so-and-so.' Shania Twain is doing wonderful, and she has been very, very smart about her career. Making the anticipation to see her show. That's really going to work well for her, but I'm not going to go out there and try to copy, and try to be Shania. I'm not going to copy and be Garth. I'm going to be who I am, and what I have developed. And just because I have respect for Martina, or I have respect for Loretta Lynn, Patsy Cline, Bonnie Raitt, I still have to be who I am. They are who they are and have been very successful at it, and I just want to be successful at who I am." ❧

Dixie Weathersby

"I think it's real important that we do what comes from our hearts."



MORE STARS SIGN ON FOR FAN FAIR SHOWS

Country Music's growing popularity around the world has spurred a special show at the 27th Annual Country Music Fan Fair featuring four artists from Australia and Canada. Pianist and former "Entertainment Tonight" host John Tesh will be the "master of ceremonies". Sony Australia artist Troy Cassar-Daley, BMG Australia's Shanley Del's, Australia's biggest-selling female Country singer Gina Jeffreys and Mercury Canada artist Duane Steele will be performing during the show.

The 1998 International Country Music Fan Fair will celebrate "Fun In The Sun" with Charlie Daniels and The Charlie Daniels Band, Lynn Anderson, Johnny Paycheck, The Oak Ridge Boys, Charley Pride, Bobby Bare, John Conlee and Doug Kershaw as well as the Grand Ole Opry Band during a special finale show Friday, June 19 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville.

Even more artists have been added to the all-star cast of performers scheduled for the 27th Annual International Country Music Fan Fair. Some of the artists recently added to the lineup are: The Bellamy Brothers, John Berry, Suzy Bogguss, T. Graham Brown, Joe Diffie, Wade Hayes, Faith Hill, Alan Jackson, Tracy Lawrence, The Mavericks, Lila McCann, Neal McCoy, Restless Heart, Ricochet, Riders In The Sky, Ricky Skaggs, Connie Smith, Rick Trevino, Clay Walker, Steve Wariner, Gene Watson and Mac Wiseman. A full schedule of artists and show times follows.

(Program & artists subject to change)

monday, june 15

OPENING CEREMONIES

9:45 am - 10:00 am

INTERSOUND COUNTRY

10:00 am - 11:00 am

T. Graham Brown - Host
Lynn Anderson - Co-Host
The Bellamy Brothers
Tim Briggs
Earl Thomas Conley
Jo-El Sonnier

STEP ONE RECORDS

11:00 am - 12:00 am

Charlie Monk - Host
Jack Greene
Gene Watson

ROUNDER RECORDS

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Heather Myles
Riders in the Sky
The Woody's
Wylie and the Wild West

AUSTRALIA/CANADA SHOWCASE

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

John Tesh - Host
Troy Cassar-Daley
Shanley Del
Gina Jeffreys
Duane Steele

DREAMWORKS RECORDS

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Gerry House - Host
Randy Travis w/
Special Guest Linda Davis

BLUEGRASS SHOW

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Del Ann Bradley & Coon Creek
Jim & Jesse
James King
Kel McCoury Band
McLain Brothers
Lynn Morris
Nashville Bluegrass Band
Osborne Brothers
Ricky Skaggs
Mike Snider
Lary Stephenson Band
Mac Wiseman

TNN/ MUSIC CITY NEWS AWARDS/

Nashville Arena

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

tuesday, june 16

THE CURB GROUP

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

David Kersh
Hal Ketchum
Tim McGraw
JoDee Messina
LeAnn Rimes
Sawyer Brown

MERCURY NASHVILLE

2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Jeff Fisher; Tennessee Oilers
Head Coach joined by team
members-Hosts
Terri Clark
Billy Ray Cyrus
Eric Heatherly
Toby Keith
Sammy Kershaw
Mark Wills

MCA RECORDS &

DECCA RECORDS

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

(Decca Records)

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

(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

Steve Wariner - Host/Perform
Trace Adkins
John Berry
Suzy Bogguss
Deana Carter
Billy Dean

WARNER/REPRISE

& GIANT RECORDS

2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

(Warner Bros. Nashville)

Faith Hill
Connie Smith

(Reprise Nashville)

Bill Anderson - Host
The Lynns
Michael Peterson

(Giant Nashville)

Daryle Singletary
The Wilkinsons
Clay Walker

RCA LABEL GROUP

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Tom Rivers, WQYK - Host
Sara Evans
Andy Griggs
Lonestar
Martina McBride
Mindy McCready
Restless Heart
Jason Sellers
Warren Brothers

thursday, june 18

ATLANTIC RECORDS

& ASYLUM RECORDS

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

(Atlantic)

The Great Divide
Matt King
Mila Mason
Neal McCoy
Tracy Lawrence

(Asylum)

Coyote Calhoun, WAMZ-Host
Tom Rivers, WQYK - Host
Noah Kelly
Lila McCann
Mark Nessler
John Randall
Kevin Sharp
Thrasher Shiver
Monte Warden
Bryan White

ARISTA RECORDS

2:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Sherrié Austin
BR5-49
Shannon Brown
Clint Daniels
Diamond Rio
Alan Jackson
Brad Paisley
Pam Tillis

SONY MUSIC SHOW

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

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

friday, june 19

"THE LEGENDS SHOW"

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Charlie Daniels - Host/Perform
&
The Charlie Daniels Band
Lynn Anderson
Bobby Bare
John Conlee
Doug Kershaw
The Oak Ridge Boys
Johnny Paycheck
Charley Pride

Harold (Curly) Chalker

Harold (Curly) Chalker died on Thursday, April 30 of a cancer-related brain tumor. He played steel guitar on "Hee Haw" for 18 years. He also holds the accomplishments of a number of recording credits including Hank Thompson's "The Wild Side of Life", Lefty Frizzell's "Always Late", Marie Osmond's "Paper Roses" and Simon & Garfunkel's "The Boxer". He spent time in the studio alongside such greats as Little Jimmy Dickens, Willie Nelson and Leon Russell. Stepson Carroll Miller told the Tennessean that "He (Chalker) never cared who he played with and what it was, as long as he was making a living." In addition, Chalker has been inducted into the Texas and St. Louis Steel Guitar Hall of Fame. Chalker is survived by Miller; son Jarane Chalker; sisters Pearl Poe and Ruth Chalker and brothers Raymond Chalker and Earl Chalker.

Otto C. Kitsinger II

Otto C. Kitsinger II, 54, a Country Music scholar, writer and researcher for TNN's "Opry Backstage", "Grand Opry Live", "Ralph Emery on the Record" and "Nashville Now" died on Wednesday, April 15 of a heart attack. Kitsinger also wrote a monthly column for COUNTRY AMERICA magazine and was a contributing writer for MUSIC ROW magazine as well as the JOURNAL OF COUNTRY MUSIC. Grand Ole Opry star John Anderson told the Tennessean, that "I've called on Otto to find out things about myself. I've called Otto to find out when I put out records, what album a certain song was on and who the musicians were. He had it all so documented and organized. It was just unbelievable." Kitsinger is survived by his two sons, Otto Kitsinger III and Justin Kitsinger; an aunt, Mary Evelyn Huey; and former wife, Elizabeth Kitsinger Scanlon. In lieu of flowers a fund is being established to cover expenses and benefit Kitsinger's sons. Donations may be sent to Otto Kitsinger Fund, c/o Ralph Emery Television Productions, 404 BNA Drive, Suite 315, Nashville, TN 37217.



Maddox with Emmylou Harris

Rose Maddox

Country Music pioneer Rose Maddox who is known for her part in her brothers act Maddox Bros. & Rose, died at age 72 on Wednesday, April 15. The group recorded for Star Records, Decca and Columbia through 1957 when Maddox came to the Grand Ole Opry for a few years. She recorded "Let Those Brown Eyes Smile at Me" while at Capitol and with Buck Owens recorded Country hits including "Mental Cruelty" and "Loose Talk". In 1996 she received a Grammy nomination, and last year the Country Music Foundation along with Vanderbilt University Press published her biography "Ramblin Rose: The Life and Career of Rose Maddox."

Maddox is survived by a brother, Don; sister, Alta Mae Troxel and grandchildren Donny, Rosie and Kelly Hale.

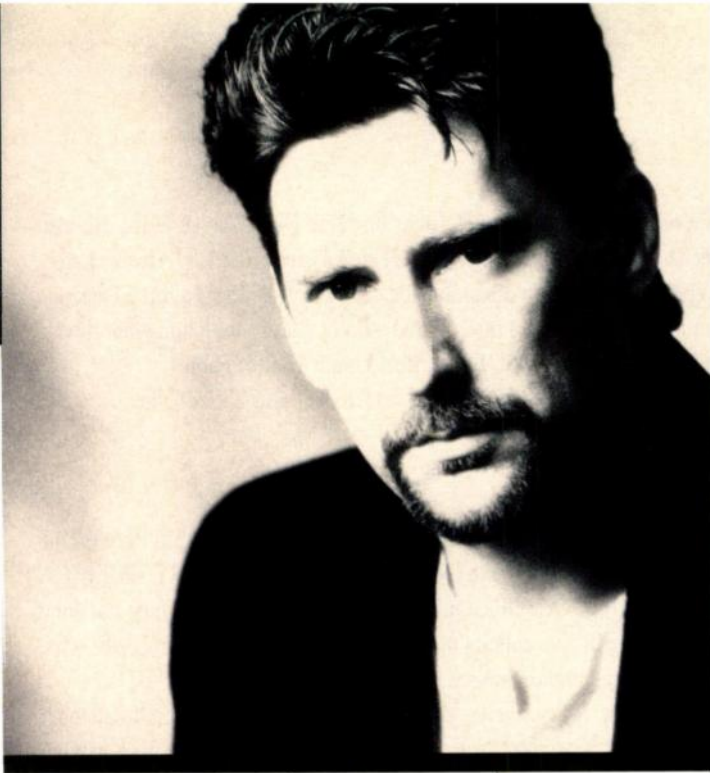


Eddie Rabbitt

Eddie Rabbitt died at 56 on Thursday, May 7 of lung cancer. Rabbitt's achievements include 34 Top 10 singles with 17 number-one hits of which six reached the Top 20 in the pop charts from 1976-1990. "Drivin' My Life Away" and "I Love A Rainy Night" were among those hits. He won top new male vocalist from the Academy of Country Music and received three Grammy nominations and one nomination from the Country Music Association for "You and I", his duet with Crystal Gayle.

His songwriting achievements were recognized with such awards as BMI's Million-Air for hits including "You Can't Run From Love", "Kentucky Rain" recorded by Elvis Presley, "On Second Thought" and "Hearts on Fire". Rhett Akins has done a recent remake of Rabbitt's song "Drivin' My Life Away", which is part of the soundtrack to the current Patrick Swayze/Randy Travis movie "Black Dog".

He is survived by his wife Janine, daughter Demelza and son Tommy. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to: Vicel Inc., attn: Eddie Rabbitt Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 1328, Bosnall, CA 93004. ☎



mark nesler

Label: **Asylum Records**
 Album: **I'M JUST THAT WAY**
 Single: **"Used To The Pain"**
 Influences: **Waylon Jennings, Marty Robbins, Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson, Mel Tillis, the Eagles, Michael McDonald, Lionel Richie, Steve Winwood, Bruce Hornsby**

After he graduated from high school, Mark Nesler and his band went on the road. They toured honky-tonks in every corner of the Country and finally Music Row. He played guitar and wrote several songs for Tracy Byrd including "Heaven In My Woman's Eyes" and "Good Old Fashioned Love". He also wrote Tim McGraw's number-one hit "Just To See You Smile".

Although his first success is credited to his writing, Nesler has decided to become an artist on his own. He wrote or co-wrote every cut on his Asylum Records debut. Working with acclaimed producer Jerry Crutchfield and Kyle Lehning, Nesler says he has achieved "The fulfillment of something I've wanted since I was a small child."



shane stockton

Label: **Decca Records**
 Album: **STORIES I COULD TELL**
 Single: **"What If I'm Right"**
 Influences: **Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash, Lefty Frizzell, Elvis Presley**

Raised in Breckenridge, TX, Shane Stockton often found himself hanging out with his older brother's band and learning everything he could from them. Stockton began playing the guitar at the age of six. By the time he was in his early teens, he was playing the local North Texas Opry circuit.

Upon turning down theater and football scholarships for college, Stockton caught the attention of a Nashville publishing company when he won a statewide talent competition. He eventually signed a music publishing deal and within a year was signed to Decca Records.

Stockton wrote or co-wrote all 10 of the cuts for his debut album. The album is a mix of ballads, uptempo numbers, Western swing and a gospel-inspired bluegrass tune.

CloseUp

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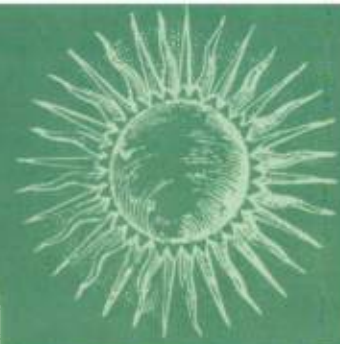
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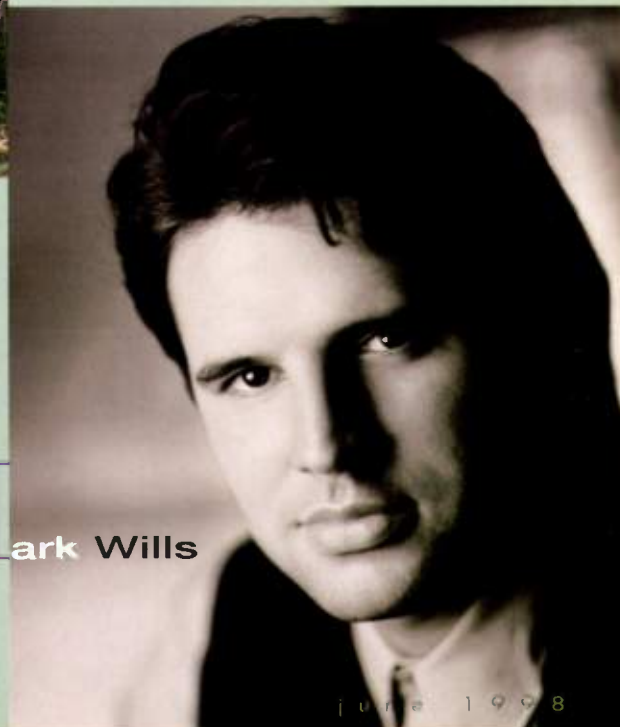
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BR5-49



Sammy Kershaw



Mark Wills

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cm a e v e n t s

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 Board Meeting / 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
24 Election of Directors Meeting
25 Election of Officers Meeting / ASCAP Boardroom / Nashville, TN

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

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www.countrymusic.org.

d a t e b o o k

June

5-6 Annual Country Music Festival / Haag am Hausruck, Austria / Ph: +43 7732 3806 Fax: +43 7732 4354
15 TNN / Music City News Awards / Nashville Arena / Nashville, TN
20 CountryFest '98 / Nashville Arena / Nashville, TN

September

20 Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame Reception and Dinner
21 ASCAP Country Awards Reception and Dinner / Opryland Hotel / Nashville, TN
22 BMI Country Awards / BMI / Nashville, TN
24 SESAC Country Awards Reception and Dinner / SESAC / Nashville, TN



(l to r) Patrick Swayze, Gary Alan, Lee Ann Womack, David Lee Murphy and Rhett Akins during the movie premier for the new film "Black Dog" in Nashville.