

JANUARY 1999



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Lisa Brokop
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CloseUp



Vocal Group Of The Year And Horizon Award Winner
DIXIE CHICKS



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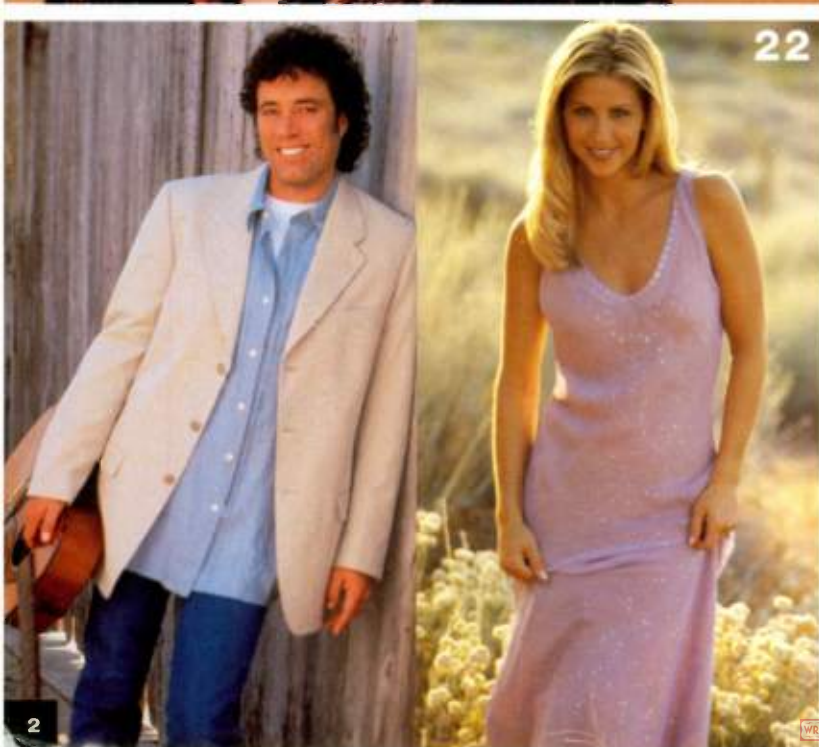
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F LASHBACK: January 1998, one short year ago, the Dixie Chicks released their major record label debut – **WIDE OPEN SPACES**. At that time, Martie Seidel listed three goals for the group to obtain that year: To have a number-one record [check] For the album to sell gold [check] To receive an awards nomination from the Country Music Association [check] Three out of three came true – not bad odds for the new kids on the block. Especially when they far exceeded their goals by not only receiving CMA Awards nominations, but going home winners of the Horizon Award and Vocal Group of the Year. They have continued to surpass those goals by selling double-platinum and scoring not one, but two number-one records this past year. So what goals have the Dixie Chicks set for 1999?



Dixie Chicks

“When we’re old, that will be our job... We’ll be at the carnival where you can pay to see the chicken foot tattoo ladies...”

“I know what number one would be, just put out a killer second album,” says Natalie Maines. Which is precisely what the three-some is currently working on. They have already recorded a few songs for the album and will continue recording through March. As they diligently look for songs to include on their upcoming album, they are also in the process of writing a few of their own. Sisters Martie and Emily Erwin wrote one of the songs

on the first album. Martie explains, “The first album is about just getting ready to record and being part of a major label. We were just kind of learning our way. We really didn’t have the opportunity to write with some of the writers we did this time. We went on retreats this summer, like a week at a time, and went like an hour outside of Nashville each time. We got continued on page 15





Billy Ray Cyrus

It's a mildly cool afternoon in Nashville as Billy Ray Cyrus takes a break from rehearsing a segment of "Prime Time Country". As he walks through the backstage hall of the Grand Ole Opry to the door of his dressing room, he takes a moment to reminisce about the Opry's history.

"There's just such an awesome magnetism - almost a haunting feeling and special presence about this building," Billy Ray says. "I can't come in here without feeling a little bit of Roy Acuff and Minnie Pearl. You know - some of the greatest stars who have ever blessed Country Music."

And while Billy Ray reflects on the mystique of the Opry, he admits that the past year has also been a time of rejuvenating his own spirit. He spent the first six months of 1998 out of the public eye, then reemerged in June to capture five trophies at the fan-voted "TNN/MUSIC CITY NEWS COUNTRY AWARDS." He was ready for change, and in his words, adjusted "my music, my attitude and my appearance".

Part of Billy's plans for change included recording his sixth Mercury Nashville lp, SHOT FULL OF LOVE, using studio musicians and working with noted producer and Mercury vice president of A & R Keith Stegall. He also looked to Nashville's songwriting community for material more extensively than ever before. Though Billy Ray says he may have gone about doing things "backwards" by using his own band and material for his first five albums, since most new artists enlist the help of a lot of outside sources, he wouldn't change his career progression.

"Keep in mind everything that I've gone through in this business. I paid my dues for over a decade, playing the honky tonks, and bars and everything. I started singing in my dad's gospel quartet when I was a little boy and sang in my mom's bluegrass band when I was a little kid. I paid my dues and spent over 10 years getting a record deal. All of that stuff was in line with the way that it happens. Or that's the way it used to happen, maybe not so much these days.

"So I paid my dues, but when I went in to record the album *SOME GAVE ALL*, that's when I began doing things backwards. I have no regrets about that. I knew that what I was doing in Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia was working. I'd been playing my originals for years, and I had developed my grassroots following.

"I had a lot of pride in the fact that I played my own songs. So when I was gonna get my chance to record my first album, I wanted it to be my band and me. I didn't want to reach a certain point and then all of a sudden do something that I hadn't been doing. I wanted to do what my fans wanted to hear.

"...I'd been to the top of the mountain, and it was time for me to come back down."

"I said, 'Please, let me use my band on this album. Let me be who I am'. And the record company said 'Yeah, you're an original person. Let's take our chance, and it's either gonna fly or it's not. But you are an original.'"

And with that, Billy Ray recorded his first four albums in the same manner using his band. But after the phenomenon of "Achy Breaky Heart", Billy Ray suffered a lot of backlash, being dubbed a one-hit wonder that could quickly be dismissed by the entertainment industry establishment. It wasn't until he released his fourth lp, *TRAIL OF TEARS*, that Billy Ray felt he got the respect he was due. He also says that album laid the groundwork for his career turnaround.

"I read in *BILLBOARD* before the album came out that Chet Flippo said that I deserved respect. I've never had anybody step up and say that. And then all of a sudden the tide began to turn and people really began to see, thanks to the TNN 'Life and Times' show and *MUSIC CITY NEWS* articles. People really began seeing the truth and looking at who I am and where I'm coming from and the music that I make. That provided the foundation for a new beginning.

"And 'It's All The Same To Me' getting back on the radio last summer was the next step. We knew that we had to get back on the radio, so we made a record and didn't make a video for it. It could just be radio's song, and it was either gonna live or die. It was up to radio and the fans. The fans stayed there through the whole thing, through thick and thin.

"You know what goes up must come down. Just like for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. Well, I'd been to the top of the mountain, and it was time for me to come back down. And that's just the way life is. *TRAIL OF TEARS* brought critical acclaim. The natural thing to do after 'It's All The Same To Me' being successful and getting back on the radio is to go in and do a whole album in that same manner."

"[They] made some original music that took my sound somewhere else, with me still right inside of it."

So Billy Ray immediately began looking for new songs to record for *SHOT FULL OF LOVE*.

"It's the first time I had really used the A&R department to its full effectiveness. I came in, and I listened for songs that were true to my life like 'Busy Man'. I heard that song, and I said, 'God, that's my life - past, present, and future.' I can't sing a song if I haven't lived it. And those are the songs that sounded like hit records.

"And then I went in with the band that Keith had selected. I give him

and John Kelton all the credit in the world for knowing the right musicians to put in there with me. I think they kinda put the 'Sly Dog' of studio musicians in there with me. The guys really formed together as a unit and made some original music that took my sound somewhere else, with me still right inside of it."

Does he feel it's his best work yet?

"It's definitely a new phase. Without a doubt, it's a new level I haven't been to before. And I will say that the artists that I truly, truly love and worship like Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Bruce Springsteen and Bob Seager - you never know what they're gonna do from one record to another. The one thing you know is that they'll do something different. I think the artists that I consider great artists are constantly evolving."

Billy Ray also confirms that acting maybe another new phase for him.

"There's one project that is my passion piece, if you will. It's called 'Enough Is Enough', and it's a story about child abuse that I've known since I was a teenager that I was gonna tell the world. Now I get to do that."

Though Billy Ray can't elaborate much more on that project, he is very excited about a program for TBS, called "The Return Of The Eagle".

"It has really become something even much more than I anticipated when I got involved in it.

"Number one, I've spent a whole lot more time on it than what they originally asked for because I don't do anything halfway. 'Some Gave All' is my motto, and that's what my right arm says and what my first album said. That's my way of life. It's about the human spirit and our country. It talks about what the eagle represents to some real special kids that live in some of the roughest parts of Washington DC, and what the eagle means to some Native Americans that live in Alaska. It's a whole lot about the eagle and what it means to this great country we're living in right now."

But for now, Billy Ray is occupied with *SHOT FULL OF LOVE*, enjoying the success of "Busy Man".

"I can't sing a song if I haven't lived it."

"I've found myself so busy with this song. It's neat. I did an in-store appearance the other night at a store that was packed with over a thousand people up in Cincinnati, Ohio. I had people coming through telling me 'Man, I heard that song 'Busy Man', and I turned around and went home and hugged my kids'. My goal is always to make music that touches peoples' lives. And 'Busy Man' is touching people's lives out there.

"But, how it touches mine is that I was being this great dad and family man and working really hard. I was still touring quite a bit and working on this album, and working on some projects. But all of a sudden this record started hitting, and I mean, that's been it. I haven't gotten to see my kids very much lately. It's been really weird. I've been having a lot of sad phone calls from them, but they're cheering me on. It's kind of ironic."

As he takes one more look around his dressing room, Billy Ray looks toward his future.

"I remember the first time I ever got to be on the Opry. Obviously it was to play 'Achy Breaky Heart'. It was a real special feeling. I have that same excitement and anticipation to get on the Grand Ole Opry and play 'Busy Man'. I just can't wait to go full circle. **CU**

-Mandy Wilson

DreamWorks breaks new gro



Songwriters usually sit in a room with another writer to come up with ideas for a song. But for the DreamWorks epic drama “The Prince of Egypt”, songwriters watched a film based on the biblical story of Moses’ life – the story of two brothers raised on a lie and torn apart by a secret revealed – to see what emotions stirred their imaginations.

“It’s a deep film that inspired the songs,” says Beth Nielsen Chapman one of the singer/songwriters on the Nashville project. “And I know that when I was there [viewing the film] different artists’ were getting up and talking about the songs that they were going to write and how they were inspired by what they saw. It was interesting how everyone picked a slightly different scene that touched them and that would be the spark for something.”

Top Nashville artists and singer/songwriters were given the opportunity to view the film before its release on December 18. They were then asked to write or chose a song that was inspired by themes

inherent to the film’s story, including love, faith, freedom, deliverance and family.

Executive producer for the project James Stroud explains, “Jeffrey Katzenberg [one of the principal partners of DreamWorks SKG] showed the movie to each individual artist and sat with them over a three-hour period, and explained to them what he felt that he needed for the film. And then, of course, the artist let him know after seeing the film, ‘This is what I feel like, what can I do?’ It was that kind of process that not only made what I think is a great record, but it’s also going to be a statement that says, ‘You know, this might be the way to do films in the future.’ To let artists have this unique and special way of creating music to put on these films.”

“Many artists who saw the movie all came away from it with different emotions,” says Shavoni, executive co-producer for THE PRINCE OF EGYPT - INSPIRATIONAL album. “Although they know the story of Moses, they’ve been able to pull from the movie, and through the songs on the ‘inspired-by’ album, actually speak to scenes that moved their heart.”

“The Prince of Egypt” has inspired two special albums – THE PRINCE OF EGYPT - NASHVILLE [a collection of songs representing Nashville singer/songwriters] and THE PRINCE OF EGYPT - INSPIRATIONAL [a collection of songs representing r&b, pop and gospel]. This marks the first time that two complete albums from different musical genres have been created in support of a film release. “The Prince of Egypt” is also the only motion picture in history to produce three simultaneously released albums, including a soundtrack and the two “inspired-by” albums.



and with their latest venture

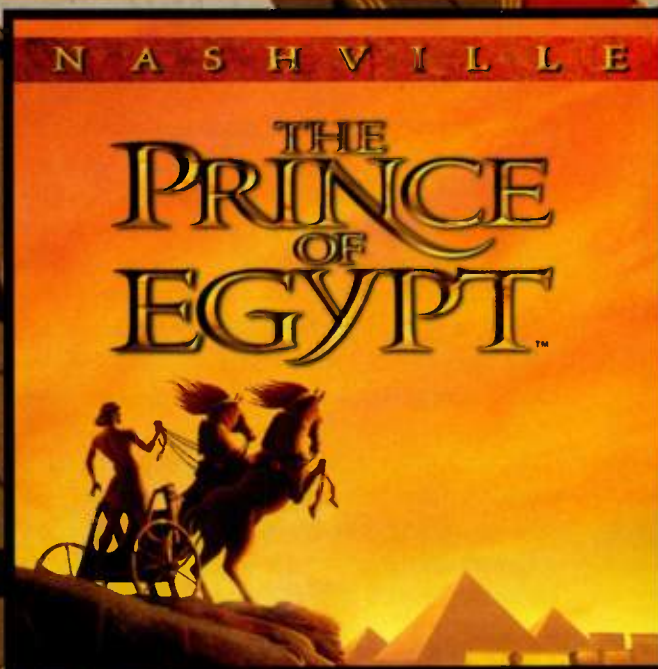


"The Prince of Egypt", DreamWorks' first full-length animated feature, stars Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes as Moses and Rameses. The film also includes the vocal talents of Sandra Bullock, Danny Glover, Jeff Goldblum, Steve Martin, Helen Mirren, Michelle Pfeiffer, Martin Short and Patrick Stewart. Assisting in telling the story are six new songs written by Academy Award-winning lyricist Stephen Schwartz ("Pocohontas") and a score composed by Academy Award-winning composer Hans Zimmer ("The Lion King").

For more information about "The Prince of Egypt" and the "inspired-by" albums, visit the film's website at www.prince-of-egypt.com. **CU**

Angie Crabtree

- Wynonna "Freedom"
- Randy Travis and Linda Davis "Make It Through"
- Allison Krauss "I Give You To His Heart"
- Steven Curtis Chapman "Heartbeat Of Hope"
- Pam Tillis "Milk And Honey"
- Vince Gill "Once In Awhile"
- Mindy McCready "Walk In Glory"
- Faith Hill "Somewhere Down The Road"
- Reba "Please Be The One"
- Clint Black "Slavery, Deliverance And Faith"
- Beth Nielsen Chapman "Godspeed"
- Alabama "The Voice"
- Gary Chapman "You Are My Light"
- Mac McAnally "The Moving Of The Mountain"
- Jessica Andrews "I Will Be There For You"
- Toby Keith "I Can't Be A Slave"
- Charlie Daniels "Could It Be Me"



January 1999

WRP

When most people think of Country Music storytellers, the first thing that comes to mind is the wealth of

talented songwriters the genre boasts, many of whom are located right in Nashville. But Steven Goldmann represents another kind of storyteller – a music video director. He recently shared a CMA honor with Faith Hill for “This Kiss” when it won Music Video of the Year at the 1998 CMA Awards. Steven also holds the distinction of directing CMA’s 1997 Music Video of the Year, Kathy Mattea’s “455 Rocket”. Aside from those honors, he’s also been named CMT’s Video Director of the Year twice.

After directing over 100 videos, Steven can’t quite put his finger on how the “story beyond the story” comes together. It takes a lot of inspiration, and often a lot of perspiration to take a song to the next level, as he illustrates with the story of Alan Jackson’s video for “I’ll Go On Loving You”.

“Most people probably wouldn’t have thought about saying something to Alan Jackson about an underwater ballet because you think of him as a cowboy and straight ahead honky tonker. But yet there I was talking to him, and literally I showed up at his house at 9:30 a.m. listening to the song going, ‘Oh, man I’ve got to have an idea. I’ve only got three days because we have to shoot on Tuesday. It’s got to happen so fast.’ Then I had one image in my head, and conceptually I had all these things that I was playing with in my head that had to do with little things that I knew about Alan Jackson. I’d never met him, but I knew he loved the water. I heard the song. I heard the violins and cello and the lyrics speaking of the rain, the moon.

“I sort of saw Alan in front of a lakebed. In my mind, I was imagining the violins and cellos just floating in space. I was asking how they could be floating in space because we didn’t have time for special effects. In early conversations, we talked about a woman. I kept imagining how I would show a woman, but something kept bothering me. And I said, but I don’t want to make this video about a woman. We could do all of this, but something is bugging me.

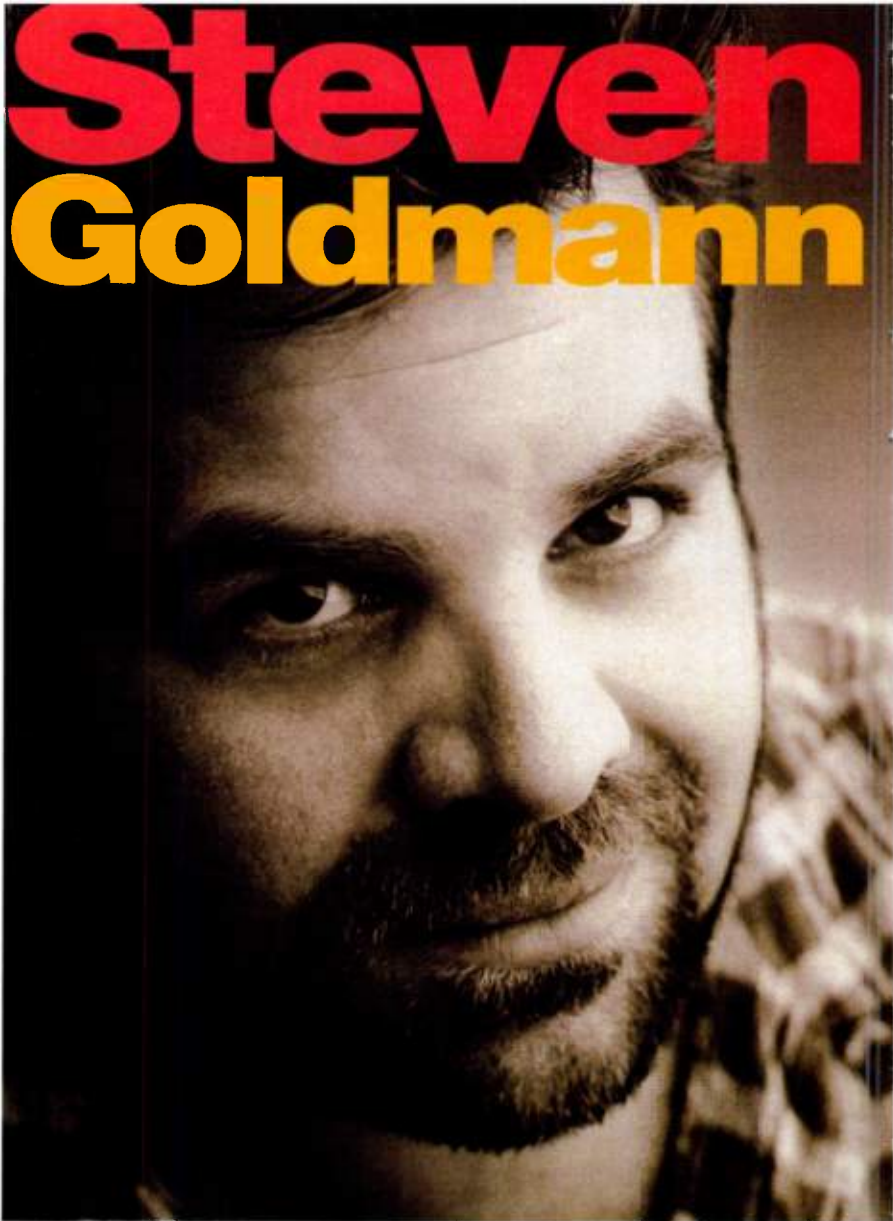
“He already loved the idea of the instruments floating on the water and him walking on the water. Then literally, I said ‘What if we go under the water and use dancers. That way it’s not about a woman, it’s about emotion. It’s about the music. They’re moving to this music. He liked it.”

The story of Steven’s move to Nashville and consequent rise as one of the town’s most sought after directors came together in small pieces, just like one of his many inspired works.

“It was one of those crazy tailspins that life can take. I was going through a period where I was practically out of work. I hadn’t worked for months. I was doing editing jobs. It was a very low period in my life. My wife was actually working at a record company – RCA in New York under Joe Galante.

“Then I got a phone call. There was a company in New York that wanted to bring me on as a

Steven Goldmann



director. They couldn’t believe that I’d fallen on hard times because I looked like such a promising young director at the time. At that office, I got a phone call from someone in Nashville and someone from Montreal Canada on the same day.

“The call from Montreal came from the owner of a production company who had seen the work of a cinematographer that had done a bunch of videos and commercials for me. He wanted me to come to Montreal so he could represent me. Then I got a call from a woman named Cynthia Biederman in Nashville who was working at Scene Three. They had a Canadian artist and video idea already in place. They just needed a Canadian director and wondered if I would be willing to come in and do it.

“They think you just turn the camera on, and all that life happens.”

"Cynthia had given me my second video that I had ever done when she was working at Capitol Records in LA. She was a champion of mine early on. I came to Nashville and did the video for her. Pretty quickly after that, I got two videos out of Nashville right away. Paulette Carlson's 'I'll Start With You' created probably the biggest stir because I didn't know anything about Country Music.

"We didn't have CMT in New York. I learned that it came on for a few hours a day up there after I started coming to Nashville, so I started looking at what they were doing. But I

"There are artists that excite you because they push your buttons, and they make you better."

had no clue, so when I heard 'I'll Start With You', I guess I never thought about what was Country and what was not."

Next, Steven directed Michelle Wright's video "Take It Like A Man".

"That video didn't look like anything else. It was a simple video, but it captured a bunch of people's imagination. She was the first Canadian artist to go number one on CMT. It won all sorts of awards for me that year."

From there, he took on Pam Tillis' "Shake The Sugartree", and says he really didn't stop after that.

"I was either in Montreal shooting commercials or in Nashville. After about the first year when we had our child, we counted that I was away from home about 306 days just doing videos and commercials.

"With a lot of input from the inlaws and my father, we thought we should just pick a place and live. We were sort of stuck in the middle in New York. Though I was shooting all over, I was finishing the jobs in Nashville which I thought was a very important thing to do so people could get to know me."

At the urging of people like Kathy Mattea and artist managers Mike Robertson and Stan Moress, Steven finally decided to take the plunge.

"Those three people were very encouraging. That's what brought me here, and it was very scary because I wanted to be a filmmaker. I never wanted to be a Country Music video director.

"It never occurred to me that way. My own musical taste range much more toward the Americana bent, like Chris Knight and Steve Earle. I like singer/songwriters. I learned about Hank Williams in a weird way through Bruce Springsteen and Elvis Costello.

"I don't like labels very much, and I think that is reflected in my work. I've tried not to allow my career to be labeled as 'Steven does this', yet you can pick out my videos because there's a professionalism or maybe an artfulness that serves the song well. I want to do the right thing for the artist and the song and do it with quality and care."

Part of that care involves really hearing what the artists want to achieve with their videos.

"Quite honestly, I think that I've been successful, in that I listen. In this town, for the most part I've found that artists and management work very closely together, and they work very closely with the record labels. For the most part between the artists, the management and the record label things are defined well enough for me that I can walk away with enough information to come back with something. It's a really cooperative relationship.

"In some ways my favorite relationships are the ones where it's real give and take and a real collaboration. Like Collin Raye. The best videos are not done in a vacuum – just in my head. Pam Tillis and I will be on the phone for hours when we've worked together to collaborate. They're my favorite because in some ways there's a little less stress when an artist knows what they want."

Of all the work that he's done since he began working in the Country Music industry, Steven says he has three projects that he holds very

closely to his heart.

"'The River And The Highway' with Pam Tillis was one of the great adventures that I've been on in music videos. I think that of all the videos that I've done, I was sad that it wasn't really recognized in any way. But yet we got so many letters and and Native Americans reacted very strongly to it.

"We were the first people ever allowed to film in a big house in northern British Columbia. The eagles were feeding all around us. It was just a spriritual experience. We had to wait for that clearing in the sky for five days to get the helicopter shots. It rained every day for two weeks. We just felt like we were making a movie.

"Then magic happened on the set. There's a whole narration at the beginning which started out as a conversation that I had with the elder of the tribe. He understood what I was going for. He told me what he was going to do. When Pam heard the song, she never thought of it as a Native American song. But when she thought about it, it worked because she'd always wanted to do something like that."

Kathy Mattea's "I'm On Your Side", in which she lampoons the Beatles, among other musical artists and styles, is another standout for Steven.

"Mercury only wanted to do a video if we came up with something that we really loved. You can tell that Kathy and the three guys in the video bonded big time. We bonded like a family. Kathy surpassed all expectations. If you just watch her doing her Paul McCartney, she came to the set prepared with little bits for everything. That kind of collaboration is a dream."

Finally, Steven says he especially enjoyed working on "Better To Dream Of You" with Mary Chapin Carpenter.

"She allowed me to satisfy my 'art monster' and go places that are not traditional in Country videos. We shot it at 20 degrees below in an ice rink. I had to skate and shoot at the same time. I got to create images that were recreations of images that I love. Some were adaptations. Some were just right from my head. That's why I liked it. We were a small group of people creating a little art film."

And Steven says no matter what his future holds – music videos and/or movies, he hopes to continually be inspired by the artists he's worked with.

"I learned about Hank Williams in a weird way through Bruce Springsteen and Elvis Costello."

"There are just a couple of artists that no matter where I am or what I'm doing, I hope that I will be able to get together and work with them. Like Kathy – make a video for her or just be able to say hello and give her a hug. I feel that way about Pam Tillis too. They do something in me that inspires me. There's a special magic with those two women.

"There are artists that excite you because they push your buttons and they make you better. Shania Twain, I can't do an interview and not talk about that though I haven't worked with her lately. Working with her is always a complete collaboration. 'If You're Not In It For Love' was really a blast. Some people might look at that video and think that it was really easy. They think you just turn the camera on, and all that life happens. That was a very hard video to make. That was 20 hours of work. It was Shania and me and those kids choreographing some stuff. There's a brilliance there that once again allows her to push everyone to work at their peak.

"It's invigorating and challenging. You don't relax. Quite honestly, that's it in a nutshell. That's the secret to my longevity in this town." **GU**

-Mandy Wilson



Merle Kilgore

Some people search half a lifetime or more to find "their calling", that wonderful matching of opportunity and innate talents. Merle Kilgore is one of the lucky ones. He knew at age 14.

a hangout called Murrell's Grill in Merle's hometown of Shreveport, Louisiana was his introduction into show business. That's where the musicians hung out waiting to perform live on KWKH radio station each Saturday morning.

"And so I asked a musician, 'Excuse me. How do you get started in show business?' And this one guy looked at me over his coffee and cigarette and says, 'Hang around somebody famous.'"

Hank Williams, who was about 24 at the time and enjoying a couple of hits, came to Shreveport for the Louisiana Hayride. "We saw this old beat up Town and Country Chrysler with the wood on the door, but the wood had rotted off, and it was smokin'. You heard it before you saw it. And we was looking and I said, 'Wonder if that's Hank Williams?' and Ed (a childhood friend) said, 'No, that can't be.' He got out in a white suit. I mean, there's nobody there, at 5:30 in the morning. And his wife Audrey was pregnant with Hank Jr. And he was trying to get her out of the car, and wrestle his guitar out. And boy, I cut out running across that street, and Ed came right behind me. And we started fighting over getting that guitar. And he didn't know us

from Adam, and he said, 'Boys, boys, what the hell's going on here?' And I said, 'Listen Hank, the elevator doesn't work until seven o'clock. You're gonna have to walk up two flights of stairs. Let me carry your guitar. And Ed said, 'No, I'm the guy that brought you down here. I know everybody.'" And we were eyeing that guitar, and Hank looked at me and said, 'Grab it, Hoss.' So that's how I got in the business."

That began a friendship with the legendary Hank Williams. "One time we was playing this little show about 60 miles from Shreveport. And he was reading a True Romance comic book. I said, 'Hank, why you reading them old sissy books for?' He said, 'Sissy, hell. Boy, that's where I get my ideas from.'"

Hank asked Merle at one point, "Have you ever been in love, or are you too young to be in love?" I said, "No, I hadn't been in love." And he said, "Well let me tell you, when you get in love and have your heart broken in a million pieces then if you can put in a song how you really feel, that'll hit everybody else out there that's had a heartbreak."

Even as a child, Merle had heard from other musicians that Hank was a teenage drunk, but he had never witnessed Hank drink more than a few beers. From 1949-1952, Merle didn't see Hank at all.

"I'd come home from college for Thanksgiving weekend. And I said, 'I'll just go down and see if anybody's hanging around Murrell's.' And it was like Friday afternoon I believe. And there was a guy, an old bum in an old wrinkled suit, and he was smoking a cigarette and had his foot up against the building. And then you had to open a screen door to go in this café. I opened the screen door, and this guy said, 'Ain't you gonna speak, Merle?' And I looked at him and said, 'Hank?' He said, 'You gonna be there Saturday, carry my guitar?' I said, 'I'll be there.' He said, 'I'm gonna count on it.' About that time a brand new Cadillac pulled up and he got in the back."

Merle quit college at 18 to pursue show business and ended up as "The Tall Texan", hosting a television show out of Monroe, Louisiana. On the way to the show one night he wrote the hit "More And More". Webb Pierce saw him perform it on that TV show and had a million-seller with it. Merle recalled, "I thought I invented songwriting." He had the number-one record in the country, but because of a previous contract Merle signed, he didn't receive any royalties on it for five years.

Merle continued to perform and write songs for others such as "Johnny Reb" for Johnny Horton. Johnny Cash ended up putting Merle on a package show along with June Carter.

"I lived maybe four or five blocks

**"That has been
my greatest
strength. I've
never wanted
for anything."**

from June out in Madison. She said, 'Now Kilgore when we get back, let's just write some songs you know. Because Anita (Carter, June's sister) is getting ready to go record for Mercury.' So we wrote three or four songs for Anita. And we started 'Ring of Fire'. Carlene was making us sandwiches. She was like 10 or 12, I guess. And June had found a letter that somebody had sent her - an old friend of hers saying that they were getting a divorce, you know, and love was just like a burning ring of fire... We got interrupted, and we ate sandwiches, and the worst thing you can do is eat 'cause it takes all the creativity out of you. She said 'Well, we'll finish it up tomorrow.' I said, 'Yeah, that's a good idea.' Because it was getting like one o'clock. So she called me and said 'Merle, come over here, quick. They called, and they need one more song, and I fudged. I told them we had a song called "The Ring of Fire'." They finished it, and Anita Carter chose to record it as a beautiful, folksy ballad.

"It was so pure. And Johnny, he loved it. A couple months later, he said, 'You know, I dreamed that I recorded "Ring of Fire'.' I said, 'You did?' He said, 'And I dreamed there were Mexican trumpets in it...I

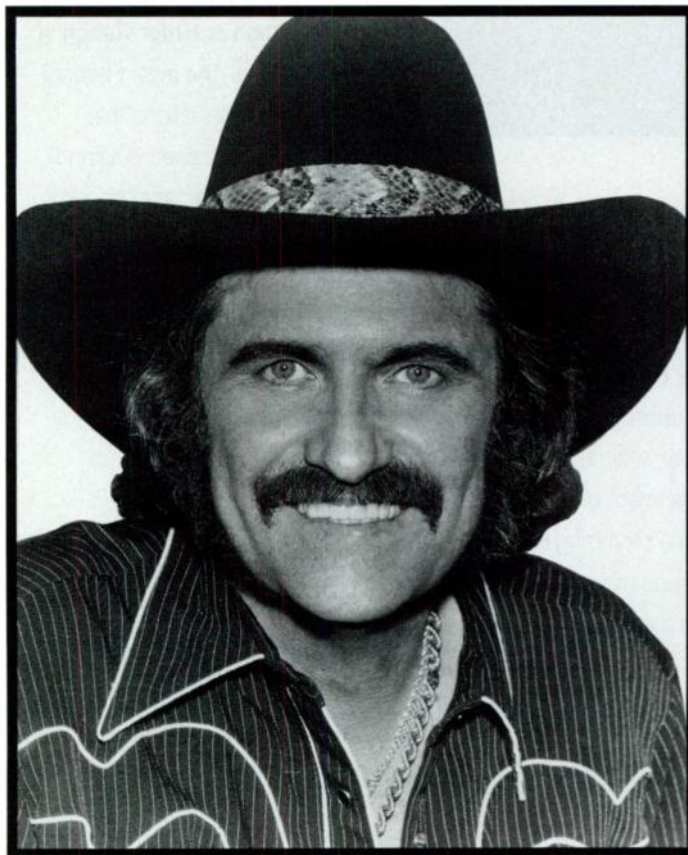
remember exactly what they were playing. I'm going to wait and see if Anita hits with hers. If it don't, I'm cutting it with Mexican trumpets.'" That record became one of Johnny's signature songs.

That original advice of "hang around somebody famous" has paid off. Merle has been with Hank Williams Jr. since the star was 14 - his opening act for 21 years and his manager for 13.

When Hank asked Merle to go from being his opening act to being his manager, Merle said, "Well, Hank, I have a \$5,000 check, and I've spent it." He said, 'Give me your pen. I made this much. Here's what you would have made last year.' Merle replied, 'I don't care if I ever sing again.'"

But in 1986, Merle's name was on all the contracts so he had to learn the ins and outs of the management business as well as perform. One night Merle kept stretching Hank's introduction, including the number of records he had sold and just about anything he could think of. Later Hank said, "That's the longest introduction I have ever had in my life." I told him, "I couldn't remember your name. This business is killing me."

The business also took its toll on Hank Jr. "I had to watch out and not be like a old daddy or an old uncle or something... At one time he was kind of heading that way (in his father's footsteps), and then he pulled back on his own. I never ever told him 'Don't do that.' Never, ever... When he would mess up on a show, he would say, 'Well, what did that cost me?' I said 'A lot.'" Now he says



continued on page 16

awards

1998 BILLBOARD Music Video

Award winners have been announced. Highlights include the **Dixie Chicks** video "Wide Open Spaces" won in the Best New Artist category in Country Music. **Shania Twain's** "You're Still The One" video won the Best Clip category for Country Music.



Cowboy singer /song-writer, **Michael Martin Murphey** duets with Texan, **Lyle Lovett** on **COWBOY SONGS FOUR**, Murphey's first release on his newly formed label, **WestFest Records**. Murphey and Lovett combine their unique styles on the cut "Farther Down The Line", which Lovett co-wrote. Recently Murphey and Lovett shared the stage for a special performance at **New York's Bottom Line**.

The **Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum** has joined **Belmont University** to establish an annual fellowship in memory of former **Hatch Show Print** bookkeeper **Mai Cook Fulton**. The \$4000 fellowship, available through the university's Department of Art, will be awarded to the promising Design Communications major and applied to tuition and fees at Belmont University.

Larry Gatlin has been awarded the **Barrymore Award** from the

Theatre Alliance of Greater Philadelphia for the score of his musical "**Texas Flyer**". In addition to composing the original music, lyrics and the book, Gatlin also played the lead role in the production at the **Bristol Riverside Theatre** this spring.

Garth Brooks was among the artists being honored at the **Distinguished Artists Awards** presented by the **Music Center of Los Angeles**. **Kirk Douglas**, **Jerry Herman**, **Ann Reinking** and **Lalo Schifrin** were also recognized for their accomplishments in the arts.

Michael Martin Murphy was recently presented with the prestigious "**Golden Smokey Award**" from the **USDA Forest Service** and **Smokey the Bear** during ceremonies held at the **WestFest Kick-Off Celebration** at **Hofer Ranch** in Ontario, Canada. The award honors individuals or organizations that have provided "sustained outstanding service in wildfire prevention at a national level for at least two years." Murphy has been helping the Forest Service promote their campaign "**Keep It Country, Keep It Green**".

newsline

Country Radio Broadcasters, Inc. has announced early agenda highlights for the "**30th Annual Country Radio Seminar**" to be held at the **Nashville Convention Center** Wednesday through Saturday, March 10-13, 1999. As

CRB turns 30, an impressive line-up of panelists and speakers – including label heads and Country radio movers-and-shakers – are being confirmed for a variety of provocative topics. For event details or registration details contact the **Country Radio Broadcasters Inc.**, office at (615) 327-4487 or check the web site at www.crb.org.

on the move

RCA Label Group has recently announced several staff changes and additions. BNA staffer **R.G. Jones** has been promoted to manager, marketing research, RLG. **Andrew Stines** moved to administrator, recording services. New to RLG is **John Johnson** who will take the position of administrator, A&R. **Carole Ann Mobley** joins as director of A&R.

TBA Entertainment Corp. has appointed **Joe Galante**, chairman of RCA Label Group RLG/Nashville, to its Board of Directors.

Capitol Records has named **Scott Stem** and **Karen Byrd** vice presidents of publicity. Stem and Byrd are currently publicists for Garth Brooks, overseeing all media for his album releases, tour and special events.

Larry Hughes has been named vice president of promotion and **Doug Baker** has been named national director of promotion for **Virgin Records Nashville**.



Musicland Stores Corp. has named **Cynthia Holland** vice president of book merchandising. She will oversee Musicland's book and magazine merchandising efforts at Media Play, On Cue, Sam Goody/Musicland and Suncoast Motion Picture Company stores.

Jen Brody joins **StarTracker**, marketing software and data service, as new sales manager for the northern region. **Keith Gibson** has been named sales manager for the southern region.

AristoMedia announced staff additions and restructuring. **Kay Clary** joins the company as manager of media. **Gary Conway** rejoins the company as manager of marketing and promotions. **Kathi Atwood** has been promoted to manager of operations. **Mary White** joins the company as video promotion assistant.

Gaylord Entertainment Company announced management reorganization within its **Grand Ole Opry Group**. **Jay Haywood** assumed the position of vice president for Opryland Productions. **Cookie**

Callahan has been named vice president, marketing & brand development. **Jim Ditenhafer** has been named vice president, operations. **Debbie Ballentine** has been named executive director of operations. **Bud Davis** has been named executive director of product development. **Trish McGee** has been named administrative manager and **Randal Graby** has been named controller of the Grand Ole Opry Group.

Wayne Brayfield has been promoted to president of **McFadden & Associates Booking Agency**. He has been an agent for the company for four years.

Operations managers **Rick Brady**, **Rich Bryan** and **John Holiday** will expand their responsibilities and join the consulting team for **Jones Radio Consulting and Programming**. As associate consultants they will be responsible for hands on station programming and music consulting, strategic planning and overall philosophy of the stations formats.

Marcie Allen, formerly with Cellar Door Concerts and William Morris Agency, has joined **Crescent Moon Talent** in Nashville as national agent for colleges, festivals and corporate events.

Todd Wilkes has joined **Fame Publishing** as creative director. He will be representing the catalog and writer's for the company.

new companies

Angie Watson and **Amanda Kares** departed **AristoMedia** to pursue a new venture within the public relations field. They will continue their client relationship with Curb recording artist David Kersh. While the new company name is unofficial, Watson and Kares' current contact information is 1222 16th Ave. S., Third Floor, Suite A, Nashville, TN 37212; (615) 342-0033; fax (615) 342-0036.

left: On the set of Arista/Nashville's newcomer Clint Daniels' video shoot for his new single "When I Grow Up (I Want To Be A Kid)", directed by Steven Goldmann, a good time was had by all. The video features extensive action by yo-yo world champions and Clint even illustrates a trick or two...

below: Vince Gill celebrated his latest release THE KEY when MCA Records, CBS Cable and the Country Music Association recently threw a party in his honor at Manhattan's Blue Water Grill. Gill treated the audience to an acoustic set of songs from the album. Pictured here are (l to r) Bruce Hinton, chairman, MCA/Decca Nashville; Gill; Jeffrey Ceppos, vice president/director of fashion & apparel licensing, IMG.; and Jack Sussman, vice president specials, CBS;



right: MCG/Curb recording artist Trini Triggs (right) entertained Vice President Albert Gore, Jr. and his supporters at the Second Annual Family Barbecue.

Tamara Saviano has left her position as senior writer for **COUNTRY WEEKLY** magazine to open

Tamara Saviano Media devoted to promoting the music and entertainment industry. They specialize in Country Music journalism, artist bios, tour press and non-traditional marketing promotions. She will continue to freelance for **COUNTRY WEEKLY** and **COUNTRY TODAY** magazine. Her new company can be reached at 2011 Richard Jones Road, Suite E25, Nashville, TN 37215; (615) 269-4500 or Tsaviano@aol.com.



Veteran personal manager, **Mark Bliesener** has formed **Mark Bliesener Consults** a consulting firm specializing in building artists careers within the growing global marketplace. He can be reached at (303) 477-6987; email BLIESENERM@aol.com.

signings

PUBLISHING: **Scott Miller, Bruce Bouton** and **Mary Danna** to Famous Music...**Rick Huckaby, Gene Cook** and **Jason Matthews** to Hamstein Publishing...**Jennifer Hanson** and **Casey Beathard** to Acuff-Rose Music

Publishing...**Vicky Banks** and **Russell Smith** to Fame Publishing/Rick Hall Music...

PUBLICITY: **Deryl Dodd** to Schmidt Relations...BOOKING: **Lisa Brokop** and **Leon Russell** to Agency for the Performing Arts, Inc....**Deryl Dodd** and **Del McCoury Band** to



BR5-49 recently appeared on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" promoting their latest CD **BIG BACKYARD BEAT SHOW**. (l to r) "Smilin" **Jay McDowell, Chuck Mead, Conan O'Brien, Don Herron, Gary Bennett** and "Hawk" **Shaw Wilson**.

Hastings Entertainment, Inc. a leading multimedia entertainment superstore retailer, announced the opening of its newest **Hastings Entertainment Superstore** in Fort Wayne, IN. The store is a 28,000 square foot building with 27,000 music selections, books, software, periodicals, videotapes and accessories items as well as a video rental selection.

Lisa Gladfelter Bell has left **FORCE** to form a new public relations company, **LGB Media**. The company's roster includes Lyric Street Records, Lari White, Aaron Tippin, Shedaisy and Kortney Kayle. The company is located at 2012 Enclave Circle, Nashville, TN 37211; (615) 834-4944; fax (615) 837-2715; email LGBmedia@1musicrow.com.

Monterey Artsits...**Barry Mann** and
Cynthia Weil (songwriters) to
Creative Artists Agency...**Terri**
Clark to William Morris
Agency...MANAGEMENT: **Deryl**
Dodd to Byron Boyd...**Terri Clark**

to Fitzgerald-Hartley
Company...RECORDING: **George**
Jones to Asylum Records...**Julie**
Reeves, River Road and **Roy D.**
Mercer to Virgin Records
Nashville...

music videos

| artist/label | title | director |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Clint Daniels/Arista/Nashville | "When I Grow Up (I Want To Be A Kid)" | Steven Goldmann |

Dixie Chicks

continued from page 3

away and really focused. I think that really helped. And then, hopefully, we'll have a good handful of originals on this album. But we're also listening to songs today, so we're also taking stuff from other writers. Our motto is 'The best song wins, always.'

While the group enjoys writing with other writers, they also find there is a benefit to writing with each other.

"One thing that I find that I don't do as well [with other writers]...is just throw my ideas out there, as much," says Natalie. "It's a little intimidating to be writing with these big, wonderful writers and...You're like... 'Well, what about if the girl... Maybe... No wait. No, that's bad. That's bad isn't it! Is that bad? No, that's good. And you're like... Or!... Or, what if... ' With us we're a little more, 'Nah, that sucks! Think of something else.' We're straight ahead with each other."

As the Dixie Chicks continue to hit the road in 1999, they have an addition to their tour...

"We just got a trailer! Woo!" Emily laughs. "We're growing. We like to be smart businesswomen, too, you know. We don't just want to spend money until we have it, and I think a lot of people get in over their heads at the very beginning. Because they want to have the show; and they want to have all the equipment, and the gear, and the personnel that they need. But you have to get through that first year of old contracts and make sure you can pay for it."

Martie continues, "Your overhead grows faster than your price grows. The biggest misconception where we're from, the people that aren't in Country Music, is that... People are asking my husband if he's quit his job yet. And whether he's managing the band, and all this stuff, or when are you gonna move into a bigger house?"

The Dixie Chicks reflect on the music industry after their incredible year.

"Well, since all of this has happened, it's really so incredible the support from other people, not only artists, but also the industry itself," says Emily. "The Horizon Award is really special to us because it's kind of the rest of the industry whether it be radio, or here in Nashville saying, 'We think you'll be around for awhile.' Our biggest goal is longevity and that's the ultimate compliment. I think it's really neat that artists support other artists and it's not as backstabbing, maybe, as some other industries and that's really cool."

Martie says, "I'm really pleased to find out that the more success we're getting how genuine a lot of the people are especially when there are a lot of preconceived notions of what people might think about Nashville. And then you come and you find out that a lot of people are genuine and good people. When you're a little girl you picture, like these big guys with a cigar behind a desk, 'I'm gonna make you a star!' kind of people. And there is that camaraderie and that support.

"I hear our regionals at Monument all the time saying, 'It's so cool. My friends from other labels will call and say, 'You know, I just want to say that I went out and bought the Dixie Chicks record and I really love it.' And just support from people that are not on their team. They're the competition, and they're coming out to our shows and really supporting us, and we get so many letters - like when we went gold, or platinum or won the awards. People just come out of the woodwork in the industry and give us congratulations. So we feel like we've been warmly welcomed."

Along with their career goals, the Dixie Chicks made a pact to get matching chicken feet tattoos for every number one single and gold or platinum album.

"People are now saying we're gonna have to get 'em for the awards and that wasn't even in the initial pact. I don't think we're gonna be adding rules!" says Natalie.

Martie says, "This says nothing about how important the awards are! It's just like 'We gotta cut it off somewhere!' Or else we're just gonna be 'tat-too ladies'. When we're old, that will be our job... We'll be at the carnival where you can pay to see the chicken foot tattoo ladies..."

So what does the future look like for the only breakthrough act of 1998?

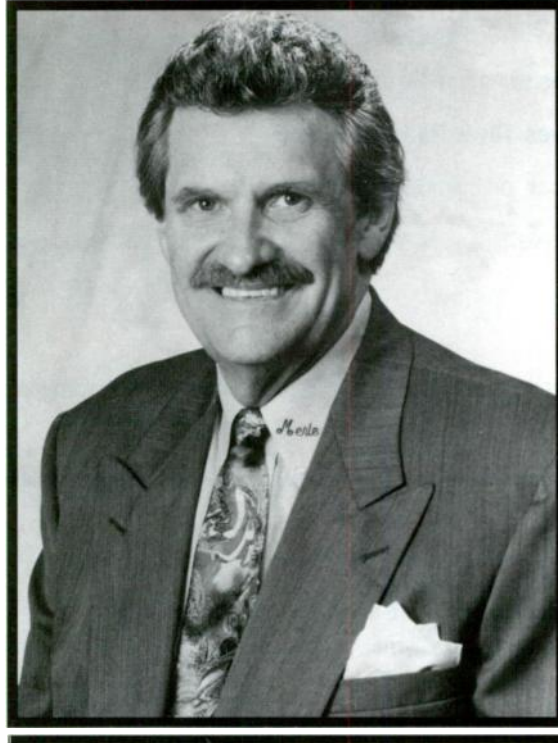
Martie sums it up for the group, "I see us still touring, and still doing what we're doing, but maybe with some more luxury. Maybe with our own tours instead of opening for other people... Maybe calling a little more shots at the label [laughs]. Making some more decisions that we can't make at this time. Maybe some more chicken feet tattoos on our feet..." **CU**

Angie Crabtree

Hank is relishing in his role as husband and father and is writing more songs.

Like many performers who've been around awhile, Country radio no longer plays Hank's music as often as they once did. Merle said at times it's been rough on Hank "especially when he wrote the song, 'Young Country.' And you know they adapted the name young Country for the formats across the country and when the floodgate opened with all the young acts. But it really hadn't hurt Hank with attendance. You know, we came in top five last year when we were working the Fruit of the Loom tour. It's amazing. You figure '79 when Hank hit and started this rebel thing, you know. And now, those same people, teenagers, got families. They bring them to the show to see Hank."

Merle's biggest strength through the years? "I'm a tither- I give 10 percent. My wife started me about 1980, and I said, 'You must be crazy to give 10 percent to the church.'" Judy prevailed and he says now, "That has been my greatest strength. I've never wanted for anything. Everything's paid for. Houses - I've got several houses, a



"I thought I invented songwriting."

lot of land. Everything's paid for. And my biggest weakness is wanting too much!"

And what does he still want?

"Just a couple more young artists for his management firm." And of course his other important goal he says, "is to take Hank to the next level." He adds, "I've had a lot of thrills in my life. I really have." **CU**

- Teresa George

Inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame this past September
Wrote the hit "Wolverton Mountain" as a gift to his uncle

Winner of SRO's first Manager of the Year Award
A CMA Board Member for 10 years

Negotiated Hank for the ABC Monday Night Football theme song for the last nine years. It's also made Hank an international star wherever Monday Night Football is shown.

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Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of second-class authorization.

"If you don't know where you're going, **stand still.**"

When Sony Music Nashville executives Allen Butler, Paul Worley and Mike Kraski stood still to consider the state of the Country Music industry and where it was headed, they created TRIBUTE TO TRADITION.

"This record is a reaction to the way things are," says Mike Kraski, senior vice president, sales/marketing. "We had all these Country singers paying homage to everything except Country Music. The question I posed was, 'If you were to pay homage to one song in Country Music history, what would it be?'"

More than 20 artists and a dozen producers contributed their talents to the album. The label placed no restrictions on song selections, historic eras or musical styles. Yet as the project came together virtually every era of Country Music history since World War II emerged in the collection.

Country Music historian, singer and songwriter Marty Stuart rounded up a few of his friends...Dwight Yoakam, Emmylou Harris, Merle Haggard, Ricky Skaggs, Travis Tritt, Pam Tillis, Clint Black, Earl Scruggs and others to perform on his powerful, journey-through-heritage, tribute tune "Same Old Train".

"I just remember getting a call about a project called TRIBUTE TO TRADITION and that there was a number of people singing songs that were famous from Country Music's past. They asked me if I would be interested in doing that. I declined and said I really don't know that I can top anything that has been done and I think I've done enough of that. I'd be interested if I could write an original piece for it.

"I was working on an album and one of the songs that I had started was this song that turned into 'Same Old Train'. The first line of the song, 'I got on in Bristol by the 'ol Virginia line with a suitcase full of dreams and a brand new spending dime.' To me that represented when Ralph Peer, The Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers recorded for the first time in Bristol. And there was a line about the little old man who took my ticket and he told me, 'Bring what it is you do because that is how you will be remembered when your traveling days are through.' I remember that. That old man to me was Lester Flatt and the kid was me. That piece of advice was the piece of advice he used to tell me. 'Be what you are and who you are at all times because that is how you will be remembered in the history book when it's all over.'

"And so I remember singing a piece of it to Connie [Smith] one night. She said, 'It's really good,' but it didn't quite fit the project that I was doing so I kind of laid it to the side. And when this project came back around...I got that song back out and got to work."

The TRIBUTE TO TRADITION collection not only pays homage to Country Music's past, but it will also benefit a Country Music Retirement Center for artists, musicians and songwriters. Proceeds from the album will go to the fund-raising efforts to build the center. Sony is making an up-front donation of \$50,000 to the facility on behalf of TRIBUTE TO TRADITION.

"If we're paying our respects to the traditions of Country Music, we ought to be giving something back," says Kraski.

CU
Angie Crabtree



Martina McBride



Patty Loveless



Marty Stuart & Clint Black

Trace Adkins
Clint Black
Mary Chapin
Carpenter
Joe Diffie
Dixie Chicks
Merle Haggard
Emmylou Harris
Wade Hayes
Alison Krauss
Patty Loveless

Tribute To Tradition Trivia

- Mary Chapin Carpenter's "On Lonesome Me" was produced by Chet Atkins. He produced the original Don Gibson classic exactly 40 years ago.
- Atkins also produced Alison Krauss' remake of "The Three Bells", as well as the original by The Browns.
- Vince Gill made his debut as a record producer when he manned the boards for his longtime friend Patty Loveless on "Wine, Women and Song".
- Also making their debut as producer are Trace Adkins on his track "I Never Go Around Mirrors", as well as Joe Diffie and Collin Raye on their version of "Honky Tonk Heroes (Like Me)".

Martina McBride
Earl Scruggs
Ricky Skaggs
Doug Stone
Marty Stuart
Collin Raye
Pam Tillis
Randy Travis
Rick Trevino
Travis Tritt
Dwight Yoakam

Second chances don't come around everyday, especially in the music business. Lisa Brokop has been given the gift of a second chance with Columbia Records. She will make her Columbia Records debut in 1999 when her new album, *WHEN YOU GET TO BE YOU*, is released. This album will not only unveil her talents as a songwriter, having penned eight of the 10 songs on the album, but more importantly it will reveal a new sense of confidence and freshness....what Brokop likes to refer to as "the new Lisa".

The new Lisa... Well, she has a new haircut and maybe that's what changed everything (laughs). My level of confidence is so much higher than it's ever been. I feel bulletproof in a lot of ways, like I could just go and conquer the world. That's what I plan to do—which I don't know if I had that confidence before. I've always loved to sing. That's been my love from the time that I was 3 years old, but never have I enjoyed things as much as I have been lately. And I think that has a lot to do with losing some of the fears, any insecurities that you have. I started so young. I was 15 years old when I started professionally. Of course you are going to have some fears and insecurities. You always have them, but I think I've been able to get over some of those, get rid of the shy little girl that was inside of me and bring out the new and improved Lisa.

"I would love for people to know that I'm not the shy, quiet person that they once thought I was. I think that's the perception. That's changed because I'm out doing things and people are getting to know me. I think they'll be pleasantly surprised to hear this new album [*WHEN YOU GET TO BE YOU*] and how different it is from the other two. I think you can see that in the person coming up on the surface."

After Brokop left Capitol Nashville she took everything in stride and

where I said, 'Man, maybe this one shot I've had is it, and I'm not going to get another chance.' But then there was the bigger part of me that said, 'I'll be darned if I let that get me down. There's got to be another deal out there somewhere,' because I've always felt that I was destined to be in this business in some way. And I don't feel that I've accomplished what I'm supposed to do yet. So that's always been deep down inside of me. So, I just hung tough with Bill [Carter]. We just hung in there and waited to see what was out there... and there was Sony."

A first record is always very exciting for an artist because everything is still so new and, for the first time, the "dream" is finally being realized. Even though this is her third album, Brokop feels like *WHEN YOU GET TO BE YOU* is that album for her.

"I feel a lot of that same excitement I did when I got my first record deal and maybe even more so this time because I know that I am so much more ready for it than the Lisa before. The difference in this album is there's so much of me in this project—more so than the other two records. Because I stayed off the road, I was in town throughout the whole recording process. I got to write so much of the material, and I got to see some of those songs go from a little demo on a jam box with a guitar and vocal to this huge production. That's the coolest thing. I

"I would love for people to know that I'm not the shy, quiet person that they once thought I was."

took her time getting to know herself and building up the confidence and self-determination to get that second chance so few ever find.

"They [Sony Music] actually came to us first. It was around Christmas time that year. I had left Capitol. I had just gotten new management [Bill Carter Career Management], and we decided we weren't going to look for a deal right away. We just said, 'We will lay low, see what happens. No rush.' Then Allen [Butler] called Bill [Carter] and expressed some interest over at Sony. Bill said, 'I think you should go over and talk to Allen yourself and get yourself a record deal.' So, I made an appointment to go see him, and I was really nervous. I walked in there, sat down and basically just stated my case and said that I felt I was ready for another shot in this business—more ready for it than I ever had been before. I just told him the truth. I was real honest, and I guess it worked because I got myself a deal."

When asked what kept her in Nashville after leaving Capitol her answer was simple, "My pride."

"I was pretty determined. There was a couple of minutes, I guess,

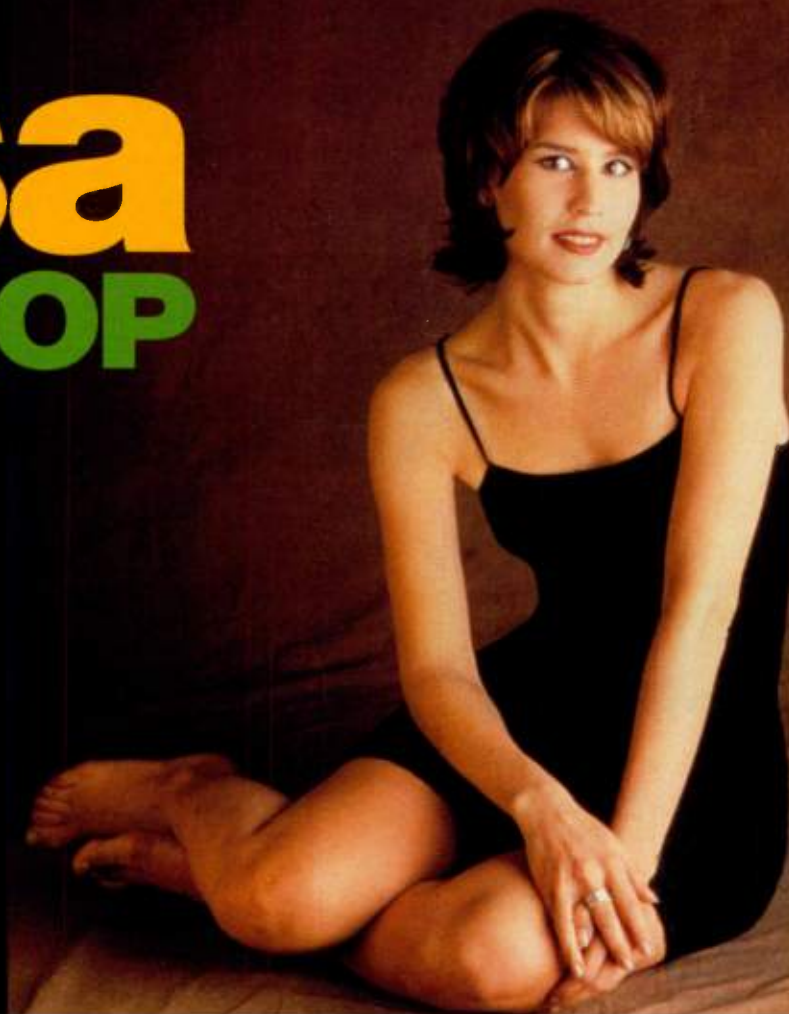
think just being in the studio, even when you're not doing anything—just being there and being a part of it, watching the producers do their thing. I think some of that comes through onto the album, and that's how the heart and soul gets into the record."

During the "time off" between her Capitol Nashville deal and her Columbia Records deal, Brokop took the time to discover the craft of songwriting.

"I had decided I was gonna write, and I wasn't exactly sure how to go about it. They hooked me up with samples and with Phil [Barnhart]. He's been writing for years and years and years. He wrote Martina McBride's 'Broken Wing' and tons of other hits. He hooked me up with some other writers he'd been working with, Bob Regan and Ed Hill. From there I just branched out and met a whole bunch of other people. Before I knew it, I was writing with them.

"It was new in some ways. I had written before. I had one song on my last album that I wrote. But I was on the road so often that I never really got the chance to focus just on that and get good at it and really get

Lisa BROKOP



into that writing circle that happens here in Nashville. So, that was the first time I got to do that...to take the time. I wrote every day at one point, sometimes twice a day. It was strange because I'd get up in the

career. Lisa Brokop is not taking this second chance lightly. This is the shot she's been waiting over ten years for. She says of herself, "I'm a brand-new artist with 10 years experience."

"I'm a brand new artist with 10 years experience."

morning, go to work like normal people, come home at night like normal people, and then I'd go, 'What is this?' But it was good to do that. After a while I started to get restless. I would see the buses coming down the highway, and I'd say to myself, 'Is one of those mine yet?'"

Brokop has spent weeks on a radio promotion tour that took her to at least two sometimes three cities a day throughout the country. Having had such a long leave of absence from radio, Lisa feels that she hasn't skipped a beat with her radio friends.

"It was pretty neat. I wasn't sure what the response was going to be for me because it's been probably three years since I've actually been to radio. A lot of them remembered me. They were really receptive of the new record, even the ones I didn't know. Some of the new people really liked the new stuff and seemed pretty gung-ho. I think things are good out there right now. The traffic is very busy. There's lots of new artists, so it's definitely very competitive. It will be a lot of work, but I enjoy the challenge. I've always loved a good challenge. So, I'm up for it."

Brokop feels a renewed sense of confidence about herself and her

"I feel stronger than ever this time. I really do. I feel like I've never been more ready for this. I think that you think that you are ready sometimes, and maybe I wasn't before—the last time around. But I sure am now. I know that for sure. I just have this renewed energy that's come from somewhere, probably from taking the time off that I did. I was able to step back a little bit and refocus, regroup and say, 'Okay, what needs to be done now to move forward?' Plus, I got to write so much during that time, and that was a huge thing because I got eight of the 10 songs, which was a huge surprise for me. I never expected that many. I was hoping for one or two. I thought, 'Well, if I don't get that, well, then maybe somebody else will cut my songs.' I couldn't believe it. I was really overwhelmed with that. Columbia Records is a wonderful team, and I've made some real good friends over there. They're really behind this project. I'm just raring to go."

It's amazing what happens WHEN YOU GET TO BE YOU. **CU**

-Dixie Weathersby



Mark Collie and Pam Tillis wished each other good luck before the races began at the 5th Annual Mark Collie Celebrity Race for diabetes cure.

Photo by G. Shaker

congratulations:

Mark Chesnutt and his wife Tracie welcomed a son, Cameron Zane Chesnutt on November 3. Cameron, weighing in at 8 lbs. and 7 oz., will be joining brothers Waylon, 4 and Casey, 3. Both mother and child are doing fine.

Decca recording artist Chris Knight recently wed his hometown girlfriend, Debbie Wells.

lending a helping hand:

John Michael Montgomery recently raised over \$14,000 for the Jessamine, Kentucky Humane Society. The "Putt For Paws" golf tournament and concert was held near Montgomery's Nicholasville, KY home.

Collin Raye joined host Paul Newman and others for "Make A Difference Day". The event, now in its eighth year, encourages Americans to volunteer for some type of positive or charitable work. Raye was one of the judges for the event.

Vince Gill and friends came together for the ninth annual "Celebrity Basketball Game and Concert" at Belmont University. The event raises money for music education and sports programs. Over 40 stars joined him for the event. Gill's team lost 32-to-39, while Sawyer Brown's Mark Miller was the only person to score in the double digits.

Deana Carter, Anita Cochran and BR-549 took part in helping ex-Eagle Don Henley, James Taylor, Sheryl Crow and others for a night of paying tribute to "One Hit of Wonders". The event benefits the "City of Hope" medical research center.

making milestones:

Alabama has become the newest members to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Hollywood Mayor Johnny Grant honored band members Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry, Jeff Cook and Mark Herndon at a ceremony on 7060 Hollywood Boulevard, which also features stars for Paul Newman, Sophia Loren, the Supremes, the Temptations, Stevie Wonder and Miles-Davis. The group also celebrated their 42nd number-one single, giving them more sold number-ones than any other group in any genre of the music industry.

The boys from Sawyer Brown recently played the 3000th show of their career. Utah Jazz basketball buddies, Karl Malone and John Stockton were in attendance to celebrate the occasion.

on the tube:

The soundtrack for the CBS-TV series "Touched By An Angel" includes some of Nashville's best voices. Martina McBride, Wynonna, Faith Hill, The



Deana Carter was all smiles during the world premiere of her new album, EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE ALRIGHT at Planet Hollywood Nashville. The performance was broadcast live via satellite to radio stations and all Wal-Mart stores in the country.

LeAnn Rimes' "How Do I Live" has set a new record for being the longest-running single on BILLBOARD'S Hot 100 for 70 weeks. It was also the longest single to remain on the top 10 Country charts and the top 10 pop charts for 32 consecutive weeks.

Kinleys and Deana Carter have recorded songs for the album. Wynonna also made her acting debut on the November 15 episode.

Atlantic recording artist Neal McCoy joined "The Bold and the Beautiful" actress Tracy Bergman to announce the Opryland USA Aqua Parade, one of four segments in the three-hour CBS-TV All-American Thanksgiving Parade. The Nashville segment was broadcast from the Opryland Hotel.

Michael Peterson appeared in an episode of Chuck Norris' series, "Walker, Texas Ranger." Peterson appeared as himself and performed his songs "Drink, Swear, Steal and Lie" and "By the Book."

shining moments:

LeAnn Rimes received a phone call and opportunity of a lifetime recently. Fellow artist Elton John phoned the youngster to ask about doing a duet together. The song, "Written in the Wind" can be found on John's current album, *ELABORATE LIVES: THE LEGEND OF AIDA*.

On December 11, Mercury recording artist Shania Twain performed at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo, Norway. She sang her hit "From This Moment On."

news makers:

Faith Hill's recording of "Piece of My Heart", the Janis Joplin classic is one of the songs added to *LOST VOICES: THE SONGS OF JIM HENDRIX, JANIS JOPLIN, AND JIM MORRISON*. Proceeds from album sales will be used to benefit drug abuse services.

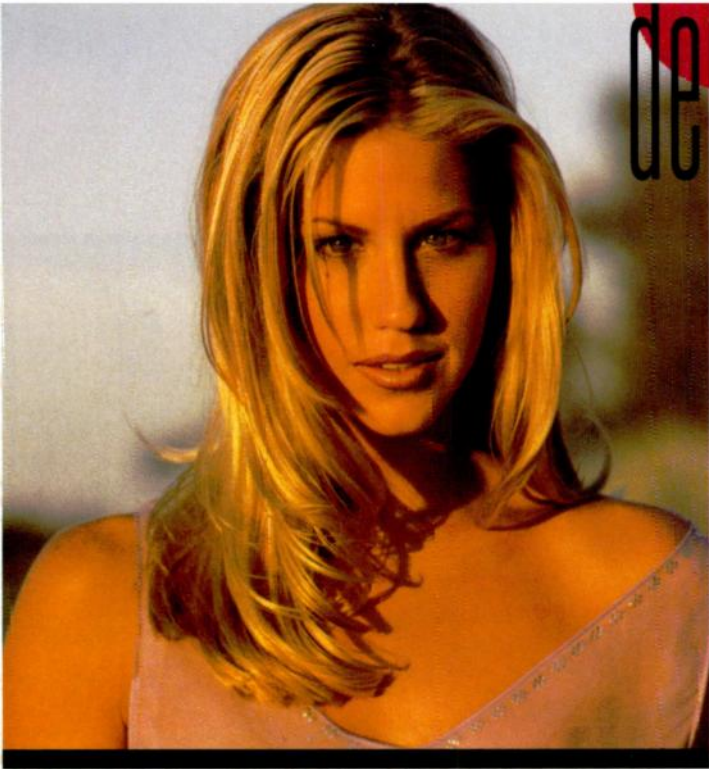
NFL stars and some of Country Music's best have teamed up to record *NFL COUNTRY*. The album features Country artists Randy Travis, Jo Dee Messina, Kenny Chesney, Steve Wariner, Bryan White, Michael Peterson, Kevin Sharp and Mark Wills. Representing the NFL are Peyton Manning, Howard Cross and Brad Johnson. Album sales will benefit the United Way.



The community of Rayville, LA joined together with Tim McGraw to host a very successful Swampstock. Long time Sheriff Lorrel Graham pitched in by umpiring the celebrity softball game. Pictured (l - r): Sheriff Lorrel Graham; Drew Womack (Sons of the Desert); Tim McGraw. Photo by Glen Rose



Epic Records Collin Raye and the legendary Kenny Rogers placed a friendly wager while raising funds at Collin's benefit concert for Childhelp USA. Kenny told Collin he would give him \$100 for every one of his songs that Collin could name. Pictured (l - r): Kenny Rogers; Collin Raye.



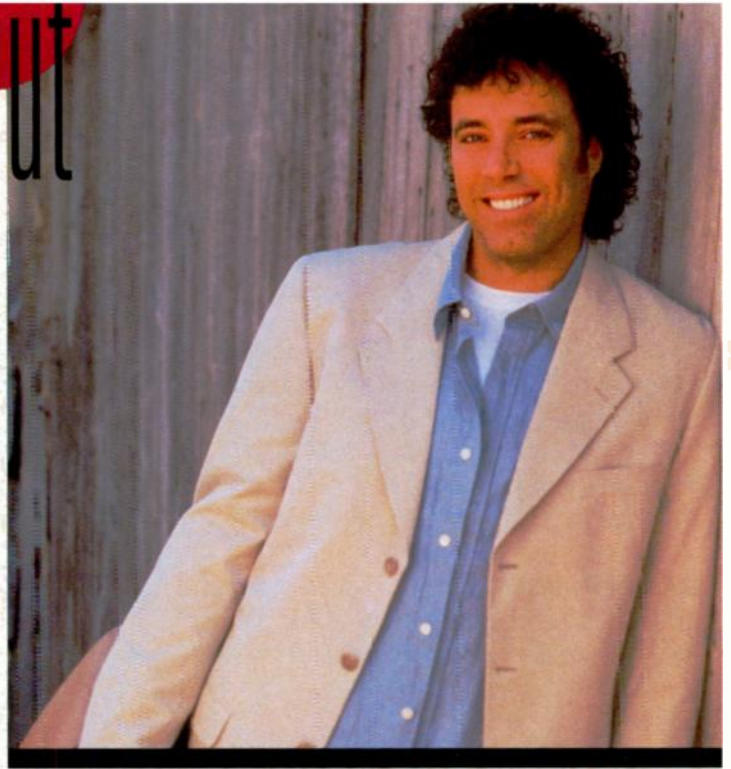
shannonbrown

Record Label: **Arista/Nashville**
 Album: **A TOUR OF MY HEART**
 First Single: **"I Won't Lie"**
 Influences: **Aretha Franklin, Barbara Mandrell, Glenn Miller and Ray Charles**

"I loved every genre of music, although Country is what I relate to most," explains Shannon Brown about her musical background. She grew up listening to such greats as Barbara Mandrell, Aretha Franklin, Glenn Miller and Ray Charles.

Shannon's father was a musician and songwriter and her parents owned nightclubs and restaurants around her hometown. While attending a local community college, she waited tables and sang at her father's nightclub. A club owner from Minnesota watched her perform one night and offered her a regular gig at his nightclub. After singing for a year at the club, Shannon spent the next four-and-a-half years performing throughout the Midwest.

Shannon made the move to Nashville in 1994. She began singing songwriter's demos while continuing to fly back to the Midwest to perform. Shannon was offered a record deal after Arista/Nashville President, Tim DuBois heard her demo.



montyholmes

Record Label: **Bang II Records**
 Album: **ALL I EVER WANTED**
 Single: **"Why'd You Start Lookin' So Good"**
 Influences: **Merle Haggard, Lefty Frizell, Stoney Edwards, Vern Gosdin, Gene Watson**

Monty Holmes had never planned on becoming a Country Music singer and songwriter until he found himself driving across Texas one night and was suddenly astonished and inspired by a song he heard on the radio. The song was "I Need A Shoulder To Cry On," and the voice was Merle Haggard. Holmes remembers, "The moment I heard Merle Haggard, I 'got it.' I realized that I wanted to do that, to touch people that way."

Arriving in Music City with \$47 in his pocket, Holmes quickly began writing songs for several publishing companies. After years of writing and trying to land a record deal, Holmes had decided that maybe he was meant to be a songwriter, and not a performer. Just when he had almost given up his dream, fate stepped in and Bang II Records asked Monty Holmes to become the flagship artist for the new record label. His debut album, ALL I EVER WANTED, is proof that dreams do come true.

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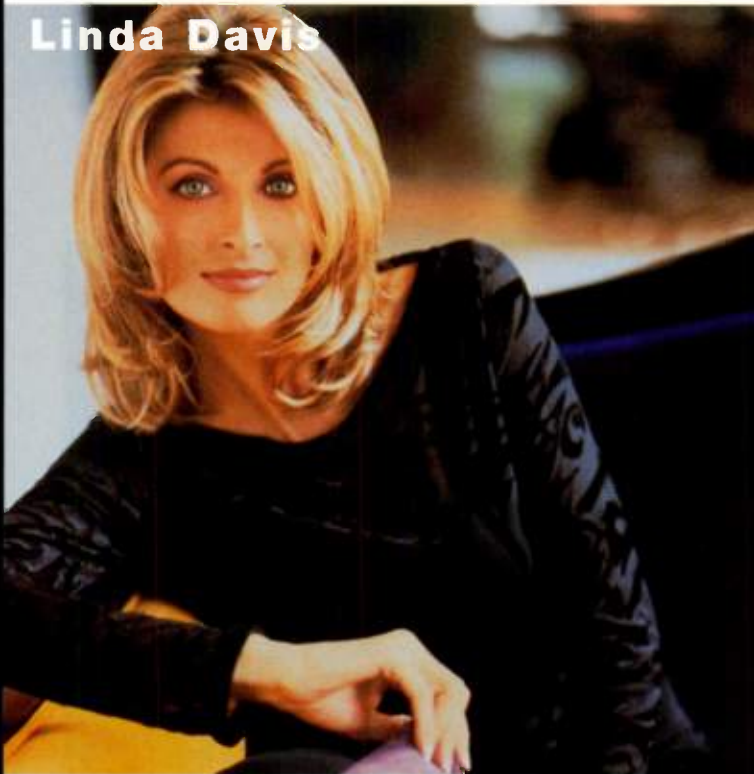
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1-2 Board Meeting/ The Luxury Collection Hotel / Houston, TX

March

10-13 30th Annual Country Radio Seminar / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville, TN

April

29-30 Board Meeting / The Palace / New York, N.Y.

July

22-23 Board Meeting / Hotel Monaco / Seattle, WA

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www.countrymusic.org

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Ed Benson and
CMA president
Lon Helton of R&R
share a moment
together at the
CMA Award
pretelecast party.

