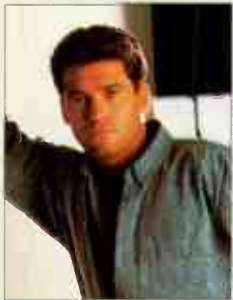


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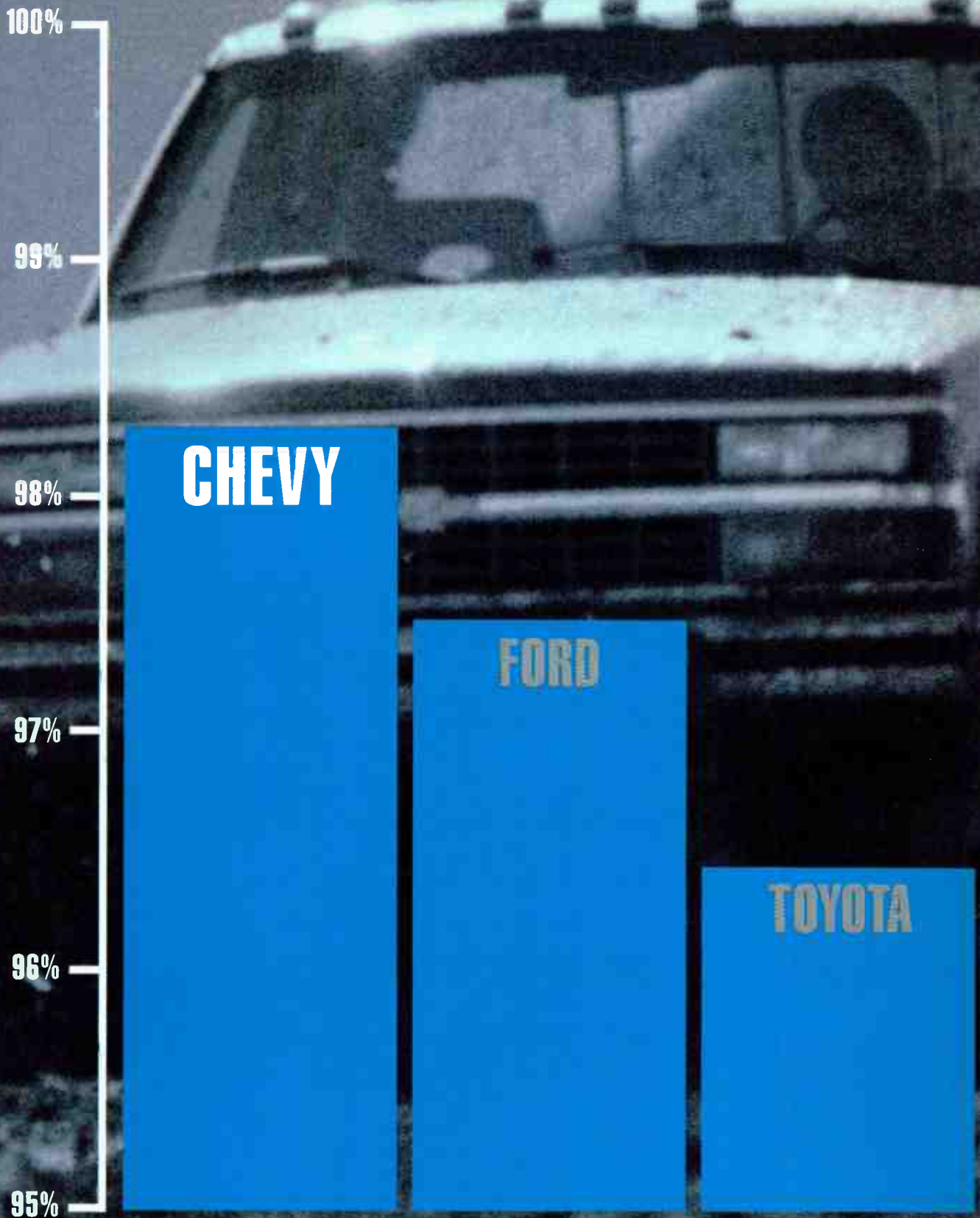


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COUNTRY MUSIC

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Readers, Writers and Pickers Revisited

It would be hard to do another Johnny Cash story. After all, he's been on our cover 10 times. He's been a star since 1955. We've covered him six ways from Sunday. We have to keep our eye on him. He's too big not to. It's like turning your back on a rhinoceros just because he looks kind of placid at the moment. *Don't do it!* We've done some strange things to keep Cash in line. We had him interview his old roommate, Waylon, for us. He asked Waylon what he used to keep his hair looking so greasy. We had him write an editorial on who was important in country music. He mentioned Marty Robbins 16 times in two pages. Yes, Cash has done a lot for country music and *Country Music*. For example, in 1980, celebrating his own 25th anniversary, he made one of his best moves...he hired Marty Stuart, adding a jolt of electricity to his band worthy of The Man in Black himself.

Shortly after, I was visiting Cash, and he had asked Marty over to meet me. Introducing us he said, "Marty's a big fan of your magazine." I didn't know that, but I knew who Marty Stuart was. He was the kid who, at age 13, left home to add another electric jolt to another powerhouse act, Lester Flatt's band. I knew because I read it in our February 1975 issue. And now to the point.

You wouldn't think it would be hard to do another Marty Stuart story. He's riding high. He's just a kid. The Glitterbilly Kid is what our own Patrick Carr calls him. But Patrick has done two definitive Marty Stuart profiles in *Country Music* (September/October 1986 and May/June 1991). Together they paint a complete picture of Marty Stuart: musician, country music fan and human being. If Patrick did another "Marty Stuart piece," he'd just have to repeat most of what we've already published.

So, just like we have to do with Johnny Cash, we have to find another angle for Marty. Even though he's a kid, this is his 20th anniversary as a professional musician, reader of and writer for this

magazine. In this sense, as reader, writer and picker, Marty Stuart stands out, like Cash and only a few others, as someone who must be on our cover, especially during our 20th Anniversary Celebration. But that's a historical connection. There's another, more forward-looking reason: *Our Readers Are Demanding It!* Our centerfold has featured George Strait,

Clint Black, Alan Jackson, Dolly, Garth Brooks and Dolly... but none approach the reader response we got from our recent Marty centerfold. He's hot!

But, we needed a different angle. And Marty himself provided it. He called and told me he'd finally written down the story of his leaving home at age 13 for life on the road with Lester Flatt. I asked him to send it to me. As soon as I read it, I said we're publishing this. It's a great human interest story about a piece of



Ace Photographer Kamsler, Ace Art Director Gray and Ace Reporter Stuart with me after a hard day working on this issue.

country music history set in the same time as the birth of this magazine. So, as a part of our ongoing 20th Anniversary Celebration, it fits like a glove. But an even better fit came to pass when we got Marty to meet us at the New York City studios of our ace photographer, Leonard Kamsler, to shoot the pictures. Kamsler, a Carolina farm boy, took many of the classic photos in our last issue, including the dynamic Johnny Cash shot on page 46. Bringing Kamsler back to the fray after too long an absence is another bonus. We re-created the look of that classic shot for our opening photo on page 36 of this issue.

To bring Marty's story up to date, but still keep it in his words, we asked him to pick photos from his personal collection and write captions.

Completing the circle, keeping our eye on J.R. Cash, we chose Patrick Carr's brilliant review of Cash's *Rockabilly Blues* album for our Classic Record Review on page 21. It shows not only what a great album it was, but what a great writer and critic Patrick is. The album features a cover photo by Kamsler, guitar and mandolin work by Marty (his first on a Cash album) and jacket design by Virginia Team and yours truly. —R.D.B.

Record Reviews

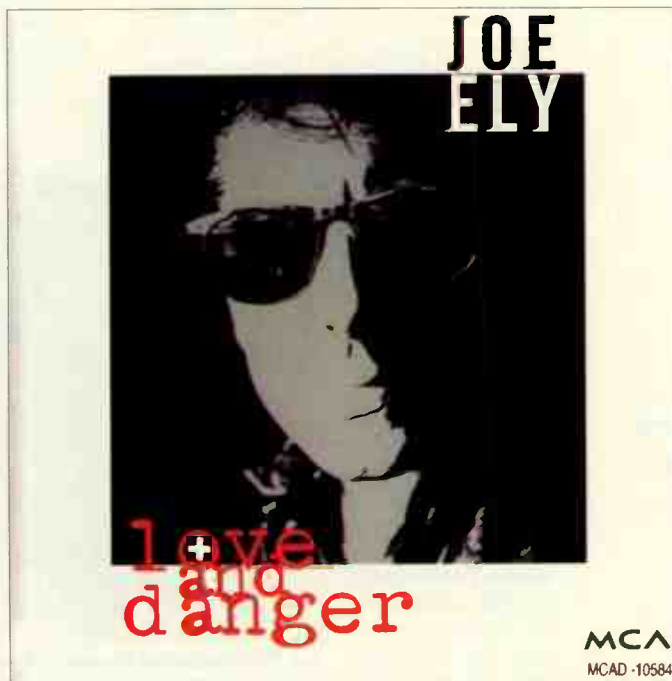
Joe Ely
Love & Danger
MCA 10584

Joe Ely has, in my estimation, long been Texas' real gift to popular music—a gift that the rest of the world has never known quite what to do with. Though he's revered like a god in his home state, Ely's usually relegated to playing small clubs when he ventures further afield, even though his fan club includes folks like Linda Ronstadt, the Irish rock band U2 and John Mellencamp (who recently included Ely and a handful of other favored musicians in his movie, *Falling From Grace*).

Part of the reason for this, I believe, is that Ely has always been too caught up in his art, too much the perfectionist, uncompromising musician, to sit still long enough for the L.A. or Nashville star-makers to figure out how to package him for the masses. Thus, for the past decade or so he's been largely sustaining himself and his music by touring and recording for the independent Hightone label, where he made some of his best music.

With the help of MCA producer/executive Tony Brown, Ely is once again recording for a major label, and once again exploring the possibility of widening his niche on country music's radical rock fringes.

On *Love & Danger*, Ely has not so much toned down the one-take, manic, rock 'n' roll intensity of his two superb Hightone LP's and his MCA live album (*Live at Liberty Lunch*) as he has refined his studio sound and slightly rechanneled it. With Brown's able assistance, he seems to be paying more attention to overdubbing and polishing his vo-



cal. The result is a vocal clarity and an enhancing, tapestry-like instrumental background that help us focus on Ely's powers as a vocalist and songwriter.

"Sleepless in Love," the breathless opening cut, is a dazzling, deftly tongue-in-cheek ballad that expands on the theme of *Love & Danger* reiterated throughout the album. It's one of five selections written or co-written by Ely; in it he spins a seemingly endless string of increasingly outrageous metaphors to capture the furious intensity of a young man and woman's frightening passion for each other: *They shivered, like the streamers on a gypsy car lot/They melted, like the rain on an Irish rooftop/They went crazy, crazy as a wild west wind/When it chases a tumbleweed with too much top-spin.*

To round out this fine package, Ely includes a worthy (if somewhat subdued) remake of

"Settle for Love," one of his own blasts from the past, and a sensual Dave Alvin ballad, "Every Night About This Time." He's also included a pair of originals from fellow Texan Robert Earl Keen: "The Road Goes on Forever," the low-rent saga of a small-time drug dealer and his faithless girlfriend, and "Whenever Kindness Fails," an outlandish tale of a crazed gunslinger who tries to kill people with kindness but always ends up using his gun instead. The latter song, with its evocative imagery and outlandish plot, sounds like the treatment for a Robert Altman western.

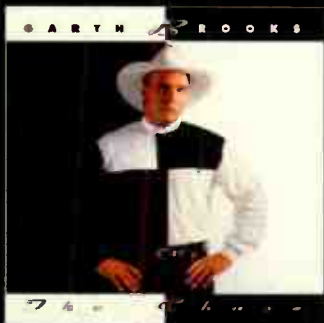
It's just this combination of dark humor, poetic irreverence and inspired musicianship that has always made Ely stand out in the crowd. With *Love & Danger*, he proves that he's still operating with as much intensity as ever, and with a renewed sense of wit, maturity and off-beat romanticism to boot. —BOB ALLEN

Waylon Jennings
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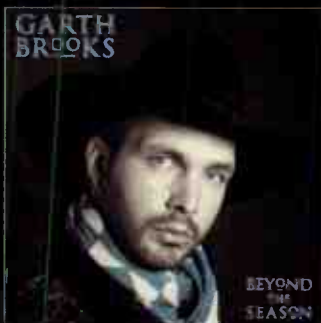
I'm sure it's partly that he's clean and sober and feeling like a fresh start, just as he claims. But maybe it's also the change in labels, and maybe, too, the sorry state of affairs in the nation has gotten him to thinking, gotten the creative juices flowing. Whatever the case, I can't remember the last time Waylon sounded so much like he meant it.

The elements are there for choice, vintage Waylon: that loping, West Texas beat, the sound that combines electric with muscular acoustic, the sure vocals, even a set of largely original songs. (Is it any wonder that Richie Albright is producing?) But the music is a little more focused, and more adventurous too, than it has been in quite a while, and Waylon himself epitomizes older-but-wiser assuredness. If much of his work for the last decade-plus has sounded like Waylon-doing-Waylon, and sleepwalking through it at that, this one sounds like Waylon moving on to a new phase—but still very much in touch with what made him great to begin with.

Certainly "Hank Williams Syndrome" has a lot to do with it. In this one, Waylon argues that it's possible to love Hank and to try to emulate the gutsiness of his music without living that kind of life. Waylon should know, and since he's often measured his life and career in relation to Williams in one way or another, it's no small thing for him to 'fess up to hard truths and still reach a conclusion he can live with. In "Just Talkin'" he takes societal



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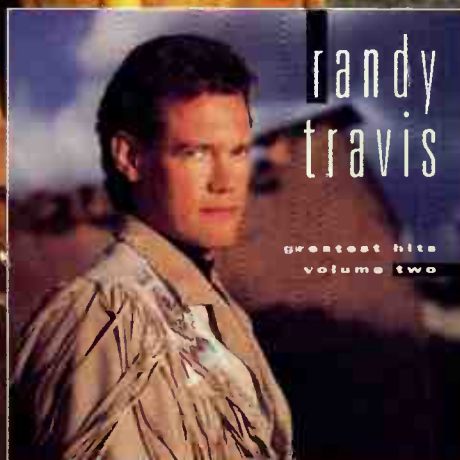
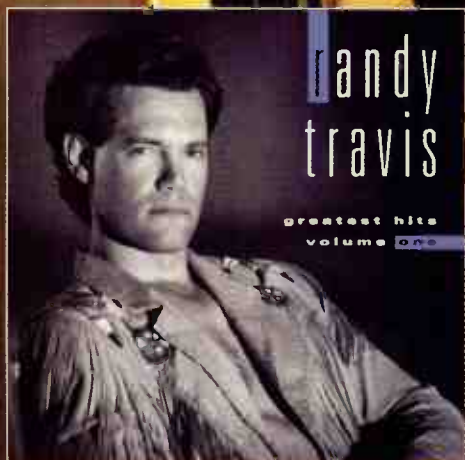
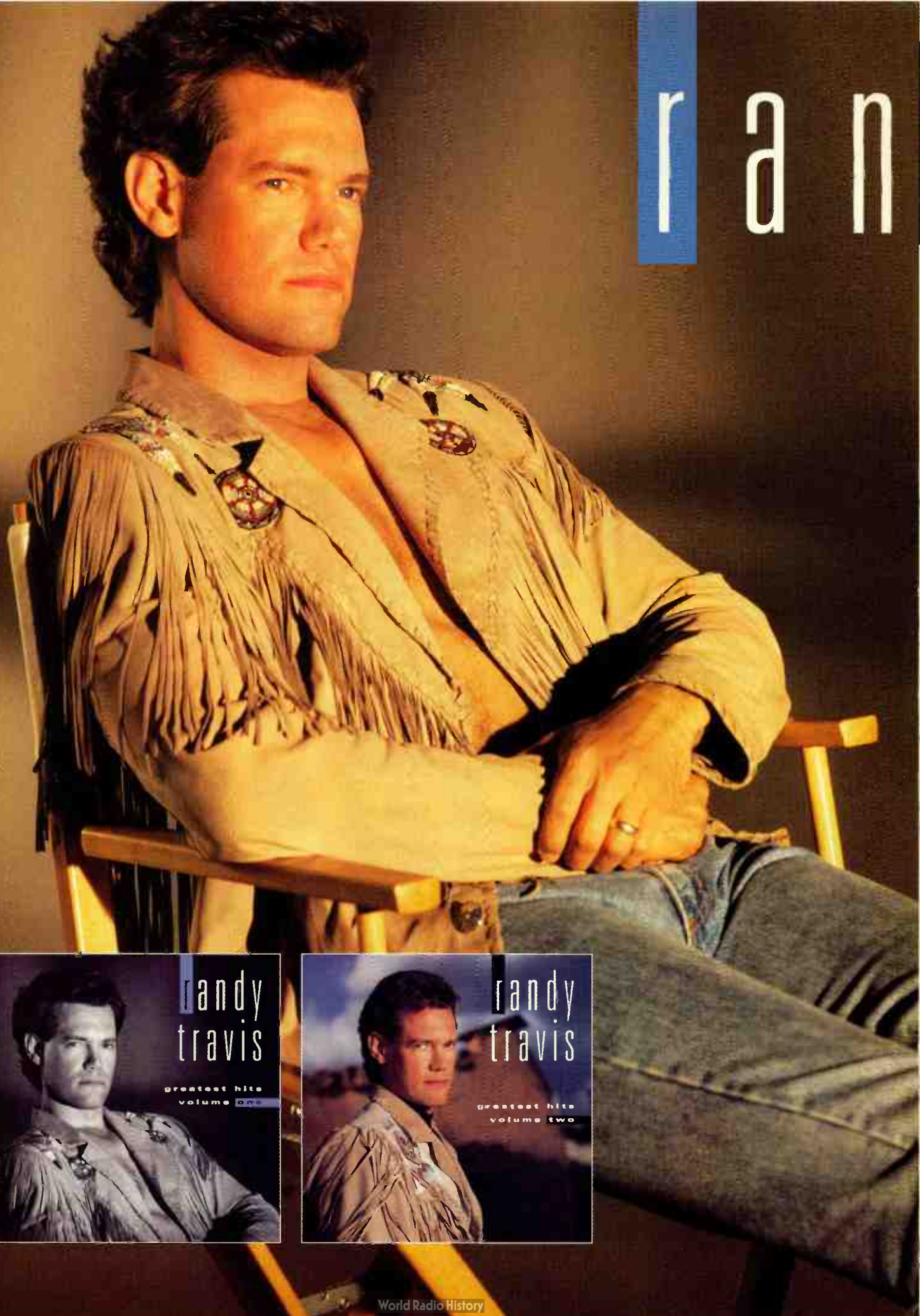
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Record Reviews

woes and shrinks them down to a personal level, speaking more in sorrow than in anger, with sharp interplay between his voice and the dobro. The title song adds social commentary of a different stripe, with Waylon confidently poking fun at the coastal megalopolises while pretending to do same to himself, all the while affirming, *From sea to shining sea and coast to coast/Somewhere in the middle is the land I love the most*. But it's also noteworthy how, on a barroom word-picture like Bobby Braddock's "Silent Partners," he's able to get down to the age-old fandango (*She would like to tell him/How she feels in her heart/He would like to bare his soul/But he don't know where to start*) without sinking into crying-in-your-beer mode. In "Didn't We Shine," Waylon looks back and skirts nostalgia while still talking about life as it was really lived, as strings swell unobtrusively in a deceptively powerful arrangement. "Heartaches Older Than You" restates the man's eternal dilemma freshly, with a poppish flavor but a steel guitar guaranteed to make you remember this is a country song. On "Armed and Dangerous" the band hits a groove that's almost as much funk as country, and Waylon has no trouble making it work. So who cares if he's still subject to the occasional piece of schlock ("A Lot

of Good") or even something as arch/archaic as "Smokey on Your Front Door"? This one catches Waylon's richness, wisdom and complexity as musically as it's ever been caught, and if you've been following since his peak way back when, then you know just how much that's saying.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Pam Tillis *Homeward Looking Angel* Arista 18649

On one listen, Pam Tillis' new album didn't knock me out the way her debut did last year. But I thought twice about writing it off as the product of a sophomore slump because I remembered that *Put Yourself in My Place* took a while to insinuate itself, too, before it became one of my favorite albums in recent memory. When Pam jumps out of your speakers, she's just all in your face so fast that it takes a while for her to sink in—at first she's this Presence that you don't know quite what to make of. I'd liken her to one of those people you meet at a party who initially simply grabs your attention, and then the more time you spend with her, the more you see what she's all about and how likable she is: In musical terms, the voice starts kicking

in, and then the songs and the ethos.

Paulette Carlson and Pam are often compared; the analogies are somewhat apt, but sell Pam short. I'm more impressed by how Tillis adapts her voice to specific pieces of material without losing her own identity. On "How Gone is Goodbye," she pinches her voice in and phrases delicately so that she sounds most like the young Dolly Parton, but with a little more punch. On "Do You Know Where Your Man Is," with its stand-by-your-man theme, she could be Nashville Everywoman, while on "Fine, Fine Very Fine Love" she uses a rocker's attack. Mostly, though, Pam Tillis comes off like a white soul singer. She always sounds confident, and the backing musicians always come up with a sympathetic sound to support her (such as the ominous guitar and fiddle interplay on "Rough and Tumble Heart").

The material is likewise varied while adding up to a singular personality and outlook. "How Gone Is Goodbye," "Do You Know Where Your Man Is" and the title song (with her voice throbbing tellingly on the word "homeward") are stone country. So is "Love Is Only Human," though her duet with Marty Roe turns it into one of those obligatory star-turns that makes it an instant throwaway. "Shake the

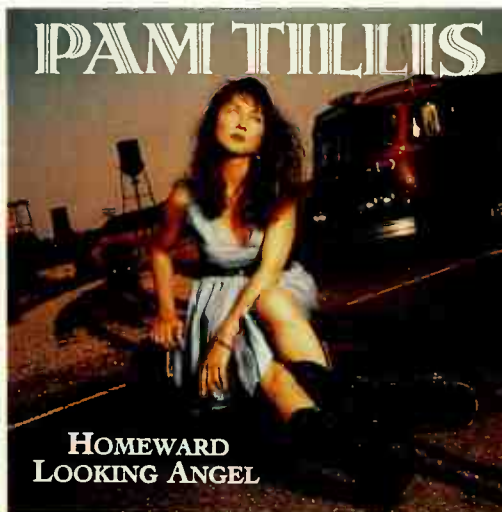
Sugar Tree" has the folkie feel she's so fond of, while "Let That Pony Run" is the finest K.T. Oslin song ever written by someone other than K.T. Oslin. Nothing wrong with turns of phrase like: *You hurt me/I hurt you/Don't make no difference/It's the same shade of blue*. "Rough and Tumble Heart" is written so it's as much a metaphor for her experiences in the music biz as in relationships.

Finally, you gotta love anyone who can be as simultaneously slapstick and dead-on-target serious as Pam is on "Cleopatra, Queen of Denial," which brings the grand country tradition of unlikely puns into the New Age. Pam Tillis is too smart, too soulful and too good to ever be doubted, and she makes fine, fine very fine music. —JOHN MORTHLAND

Radney Foster *Del Rio, TX 1959* Arista 18713

In 1959 in Radney Foster's hometown of Del Rio on the Texas border, country music ruled, but rock 'n' roll wasn't far behind. A few short years later, in 1962, a crazy Brooklyn transplant named Bob Smith would, under his stage name of Wolfman Jack, begin howling at the moon from pirate radio station XERF in Villa Acuna, once the home base of The Carter Family, and the transformation would be complete. That's the time and place Foster attempts to evoke in his debut solo album of country music with a rock sensibility, and more often than not he achieves it—due mainly, I hasten to add, to his good taste in influences and his undeniable skills as a songwriter. Without Bill Lloyd, the vocal sound is a little too thin and monochromatic.

Foster's got the Texas country part of the equation down cold. With its winding guitar and shuffling beat, "Just Call Me Lonesome" ef-



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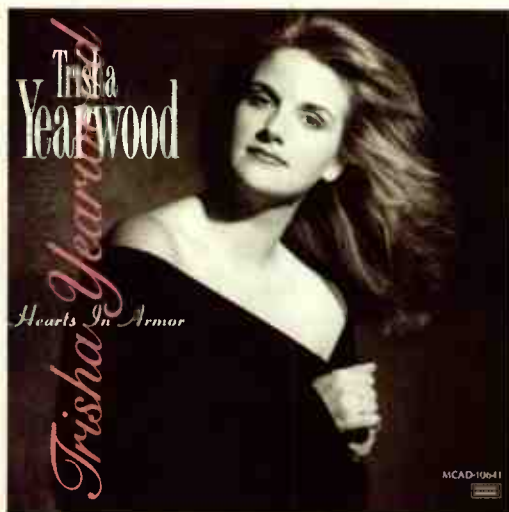
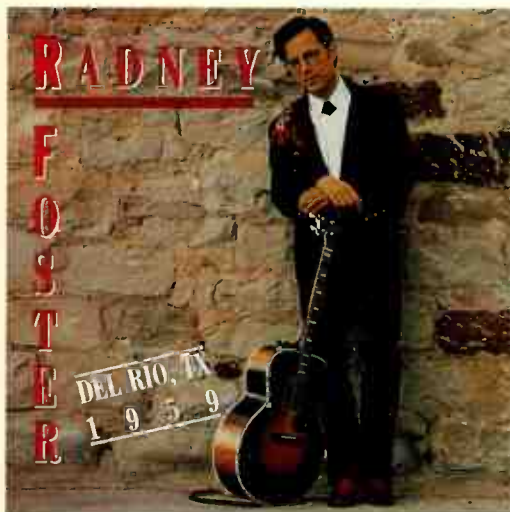
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Record Reviews



fortlessly evokes Ray Price at 2 A.M., while the jagged guitar and forthright lyric of "Don't Say Goodbye" is pure Waylon. Johnny Bush (or even Willie) would be right at home with the beer-joint ballad, "Closing Time," while "Louisiana Blue" is yet another dancehall natural. In a more modern vein, the somber, rolling sound of "Easier Said Than Done" suggests one side of Lyle Lovett. And speaking of Texas rock and country together, "A Fine Line" echoes the West Texas groove of Buddy Holly or the Bobby Fuller Four—though Buddy and Bobby, undeniably great as both were, didn't tell stories quite this acute. "Nobody Wins" is almost purely folk-rock (and, since that form derives partly from country, serves to bring things full circle), while "Hammer and Nails" pits a classic country metaphor against a meaty rock arrangement that bounces Duane Eddy off George Harrison.

Engaging stuff, then, most of the time, but over a whole album, Foster's superb songs have a lot more shadings than his voice. That voice has its share of character, but not a lot of finesse, and he tends to sing the songs so samey that eventually they blur together, thus losing their own individual character. Still, anyone who writes this well is always right on the verge of a break-

through, and the solo Radney Foster could well wind up with plenty to offer on his own. —JOHN MORTHLAND

Trisha Yearwood *Hearts in Armor* MCA 10297

You probably won't be surprised to know that I didn't like Trisha's first smash album. Hits aside, I thought it lacked character and was designed to be bland, colorless and perfect for the ears of most country radio music directors. Of course, that approach worked, and her success helped her pick up a heavy-hitting manager in Ken Kragen (who handles Lionel Richie and Kenny Rogers).

Today Yearwood is poised for greater stardom, and will even be featured in Revlon perfume ads. Her new fashion-magazine look shows up in the photography of *Hearts in Armor*. Heavy stuff. Usually when that happens, even if the music's good, the musical side of the artist goes down the tubes bigtime. Gotta grab that pop audience. Don't give 'em anything too way out.

Surprise. It was a pleasant, if stunning, revelation to find that *Hearts in Armor* is Trisha Yearwood's true debut. The album reveals a more formidable artist than did any of her previous work. The fo-

cus and individuality absent the first time around abound here, and the material is almost universally above average. Her performances, too, are outstanding. Facets of Yearwood's musical personality barely hinted at the first time out now jump out at the listener.

The grittiness of Matraca Berg and Gary Harrison's "Wrong Side of Memphis," accentuated by a smoky, foreboding Yearwood vocal, and Beth Nielsen Chapman and Verlon Thompson's muscular, smoldering "You Say You Will" reveal this side of her like no other songs have. Billy Joe Walker Jr. and Brent Mason's acoustic and electric guitar breaks on this number deserve mention as well.

Another darker, if more sensitive, exploration comes with "Walkaway Joe," the Greg Barnhill-Vince Melamed anatomy of a naive-girl/criminal boy relationship which she expertly handles. Beth Nielsen Chapman's "Down on My Knees" and Yearwood's powerful cover of Emmylou Harris' "Woman Walk the Line" are two more. Her zesty versions of The O'Kanes' "Oh Lonesome You" and the late Keith Whitley's gospel tune, "You Don't Have to Move That Mountain," reveal her throaty strength on uptempo tunes.

Only one thing fails to impress me: the much-hyped

star presence on the album. We get harmony vocals on almost every track from someone famous. On "Nearest Distant Shore," it's Garth; on "Oh Lonesome You" and "You Don't Have to Move That Mountain," it's Vince Gill. Emmylou shows up (for what else?) to sing high harmony on her "Woman Walk the Line," and The Mavericks' Raul Malo shows up on three of the songs. Don Henley, former member of The Eagles (a group I could never stand), appears on "Walkaway Joe" and "Hearts in Armor," (one of the more pop-oriented numbers here, but movingly handled by Yearwood). There's nothing innately wrong with these cameo shots, but they really don't add much one way or another since the harmonizing is so far in the background. Unless they're actual duet recordings, any good studio vocalist could be singing along and you wouldn't know the difference.

Yearwood doesn't need the validation of others. And I don't even mind Kenny Kragen handling her, so long as he stays out of the way of making a record as good as *Hearts in Armor*.

—RICH KIENZLE

Travis Tritt *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*

Warner Bros. 9-45048

Travis Tritt's third album, *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*, is going to force the issue: Just what is country music in the 90's? Is there any difference between modern country and Southern rock? Or has Southern rock become a subset of country? The question has been raised before by the likes of Steve Earle and Hank Jr., but Earle never had the commercial clout to make it a pressing issue and Bocephus has always resided in his own, ahem, peculiar category.

Tritt, however, is too popular, too mainstream and just too damn good for the ques-

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Record Reviews

tion to go away. His new album, which builds on the strengths of his first two, is sure to be a commercial smash. It uses mainstream Nashville songwriters and musicians to create such a tangled-up knot of honky tonk and rock 'n' roll that it's nearly impossible to tell where one stops and the other starts. Even when he sings a tear-in-your-beer ballad like "Can I Trust You With My Heart," for example, the drums explode like bombshells lobbed from the grave by The Who's Keith Moon.

The question boils down to this: Is country music defined by its tradition or by its audience? If it's tradition, Tritt may be in trouble. He can pull off an old-fashioned country song like "When I Touch You" or "Lord Have Mercy on the Working Man" on the new album, but most of his new songs boast the kind of buzzing guitars and reverb-heavy drums that Roy Acuff and Ernest Tubb never imagined in their darkest dreams. If, on the other hand, country music is defined by its audience—the army of displaced Confederates that has spread from Southern farms to the San Joaquin Valley, East Baltimore and the Chicago suburbs—then Tritt is the direct descendant of Acuff and Tubb, for the young star is playing for the grandchildren of the Grand Ole Opry's biggest fans.

Like those grandchildren, Tritt grew up on Lynyrd Skynyrd and Marshall Tucker as well as Waylon and Willie, and he knows that if country music is to remain relevant for his generation, it must find a way to integrate all those influences. That's just what he does so successfully on *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*. When he sings "A Hundred Years from Now" by his pal Marty Stuart, Tritt captures the song's honky tonk swing in his vocal, but he cranks up the drums and electric guitars to give it the oomph his younger audience demands. On "Looking Out for Number One," the rocking beat may recall Charlie Daniels, but the vocal lament is pure Waylon.



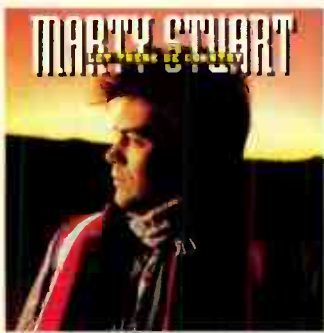
The album's title tune was a 1975 single for Elvis Presley; Tritt transforms it with boogie-woogie piano, slide guitar and a super-fast tempo into a bar-band romp reminiscent of Little Feat, his collaborators on last year's album, *It's All About to Change*. Presley, who dominated the country charts even when considered a rock star, is an obvious touchstone for Tritt.

It would be a mistake, though, to think of Tritt as the next Elvis—or as the next Ronnie Van Zant or Willie Nelson, for that matter. Tritt is a fine singer and an appealing performer, but as songwriter and vocal stylist, he lacks the stark originality of those three gentlemen. On the other hand, he doesn't carry Hank Jr.'s macho baggage nor Garth Brooks' play-it-safe tendencies, and he might be the right person at the right time to cement the integration of country and Southern rock.

Tritt told me he had recently visited Graceland in Memphis, Hank Williams' grave in Montgomery and Jimmie Rodgers' birthplace in Meridian. "When you think about it," he said, "the people who really had a big influence on country music all had that black influence. I think we got away from that, but now we're getting back to it." It's no coincidence, therefore, that *t-r-o-u-b-l-e* ends with a convincing version of "Leave My Girl Alone" by Chicago bluesman Buddy Guy. If, on top of everything else, Tritt can bring the blues back to country music, he may push Nashville into the future by reconnecting it to its past.

—GEOFFREY HIMES

Record Reviews



Marty Stuart

Let There Be Country
Columbia CK 40829

Now that he's hot, Marty, who welcomes reissues as much as I do, is the focus of several himself. Not only has CMH reissued some of his early work with Lester Flatt and The Nashville Grass, but here, Columbia has dug back in the vaults to reissue—for the first time—both of his LP's for them, his first major-label experience after leaving Johnny Cash's band in the mid-1980's. *Marty Stuart* was released. The second, *Let There Be Country*, was recorded in 1987 but never issued.

The first album, good in its own way, doesn't really reveal the Marty of today. The entire music business itself was in a transition phase between Urban Cowboy and the New Traditionalist movement. The point here was to emphasize the country rocker side of Marty, and this was obvious in the material.

Two of the songs were written by Marty and producer Curtis Allen, two more by acoustic rocker Steve Forbert. Another was a remake of The Band's "The Shape I'm In." Taken as a whole, they reveal a far younger performer whose traditional interests were tempered by the desire of his record company to cut hit records on him. The approach wasn't really that successful; only one single, "Arlene," charted.

Let There Be Country, re-

corded after New Traditionalism made its mark, is far more indicative of what Marty does now with his producer Richard Bennett at MCA. The title track, an autobiographical Stuart original, says it all, crediting early mentor Lester Flatt for his direction and explaining his pursuit of youth and tradition with wit and flair. The presence of Mark O'Connor and Emmylou Harris underscores that direction, and it's further reflected in songs like the witty "Matches," with its Johnny Cash feel, and Peter Rowan's bluegrass/blues, "Last Train Done Gone Down."

He blazes through Merle Haggard's "Mirrors Don't Lie," mixing new songs with older material like Bill Monroe's 1951 gospel number, "Get Down On Your Knees and Pray," and Johnny Horton's 1956 hit, "I'm a One Woman Man," also a hit for George Jones in 1988.

Even in 1987 he had ample authority to put across a blockbuster like Harlan Howard's "Be Careful Who You Love (Arthur's Song)," recorded a couple of years ago by Hank Jr. This is the true story of hard-drinking Knoxville songwriter Arthur Q. Smith, who wrote and sold the rights to some classic country songs to other artists for peanuts. The brief, bluesy instrumental track, "Old Hat," serves mainly as an opening for the last four songs. Max D. Barnes' ballad, "Stone Blind," and "I'll Love You Forever (If I Want To)," penned by Max D. Barnes and Harlan Howard, end things in a straightforward, New Traditionalist vein.

Five years after it was recorded, *Let There Be Country* stands so strongly today that it raises a valid question that demands an answer: Why didn't Columbia, with New Traditionalists all around them in 1987, release the album then and give Marty's career a jump start?

—RICH KIENZLE



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Record Reviews

Doug Stone
From the Heart
Epic EK 52436

You've gotta give the guy credit for his sense of humor. Naming the first album since his coronary bypass surgery *From the Heart* was certain to provoke giggles. And who can blame him since everything seems, happily, to have turned out well.

In the past, Stone hasn't struck me as the great singer his chart successes have painted him to be. I thought his last effort was his weakest ever, which is one reason that this one is such a pleasant surprise.

Novelties can get tiresome when an artist o.d.'s on them. Mark Chesnutt, a great ballad singer, wastes time on too many. That obscures his true potential with the slower, deeper material that his idol George Jones excels at. Conversely, Stone's stronger with novelties. Part of the reason is that these tunes are a cut above the norm, and he uses them to, at times, create a persona on records: the hapless soul done in by bad luck and gone women.

"Warning Labels" satirizes today's tendency to issue advisories on everything from cigarettes to booze, dirty records and whatever—everything but sad country ballads. The stomping, witty "Leave Me the Radio" works well as a novelty homage to honky tonk, and his perfectly stated vocal makes "Left, Leavin', Goin' or Gone" rise above the average novelty number.

I've never been impressed by Stone's ballads, yet some here are among the best he's ever done: "Ain't Your Memory Got No Pride at All," the proud rural testimonial, "The Workin' End of a Hoe" and the sly, acerbic "She's Got a Future in the Movies" all display the same wit as the novelties. "This Empty House" conveys genuine loss and devastation, and "Too Busy Being



in Love," while tackling the romantic affirmation, is ingratiating since it relies on wit instead of sugarcoated clichés. The downside comes with "Made for Loving You," a number too saccharin to make much of an impression.

I don't know what it was about Stone's first two albums that failed to impress me. This time, however, he's finally hit his stride, and I hope he maintains that momentum.

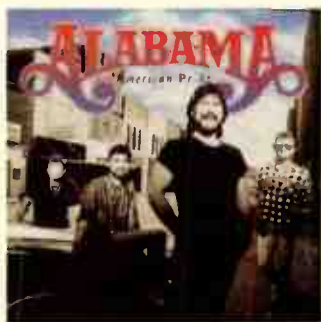
—RICH KIENZLE

Alabama
American Pride
RCA 66044

Alabama has long been a favorite punching bag for music critics, and I'll admit that over the years I've taken my share of shots at them. Yet I'll also admit I've always had a soft spot in my heart for them, too. Every time I've been ready to write them off completely, they've come back with a great song like "She and I" or "Pass It on Down" and made me eat the disparaging things I've said or written about them. And these past few years (when probably fewer people are actually buying their albums) Alabama has made some awfully good records.

Sure, these guys are savvy musical politicians who know how to pull their audience's heartstrings just right and pander to their working-class constituency. Yet deep down, I believe they always *try* to do the right thing. And the mere fact that they're still around, some 12 years after their de-

Record Reviews



but, still turning out albums as vital—if less than perfect—as *American Pride*, their latest, puts a lot of us critics who predicted less for them to shame.

American Pride is, as Alabama albums go, far, far better than some of those horrible records they cranked out back in their last days with producer Harold Shedd. In fact, this latest album has some glorious moments—just enough of them to raise listeners' expectations—only to miss the mark with some of the weaker material.

"Take a Little Trip," the lead-off song (written by frequent Alabama contributor Ronnie Rogers and Mark Wright), is a fluffy little number, but a hot cut. It's buoyed by some flashy vocal riffs, a driving beat and lyrics that are unusually provocative for this normally staid foursome from Fort Payne.

"Homesick Fever," on side two (written by Randy Owen and Ronnie Rogers), is another stand-out. It's propelled by some inspired singing from Owen and some great Marshall Tucker-style lead guitar lines from session men Dan Toler, John D. Willis and producer/guitarist Josh Leo. "I'm In a Hurry" (written by Roger Murrah and Randy VanWarmer), with its Caribbean flavor and its urgent message that we all need to slow down some, is also one of the most off-beat, winning selections on here.

There are a couple of decent ballads as well. Where would Alabama be without a few bona fide tear-jerkers and flag-wavers? "Between the Two of Them" (Mickey Cates) is a

touching number about an elderly couple's life-long devotion, which Owen delivers with gut-wrenching sentimentality. "Hometown Honeymoon" is—like "Take a Little Trip"—another heartfelt paean to blue collar dignity and contentment amidst hard times. It's truly amazing how a band of musical multi-millionaires can still sing with such utter conviction about folks who work two jobs to make ends meet yet still can't afford a honeymoon in Niagara Falls or a new muffler for their old Chevy pick-up. But, hey, you've got to appeal to those voters, I guess.

Naturally, Alabama could not be expected to make it through an 11-cut album without submitting to some of the usual unabashed maple syrup and hokum—all of it done with almost painful sincerity, mind you. "Richard Petty Fans" (Owen, Gentry, Greg Fowler and John Jarrard) is a guileless yet heartfelt tribute not only to racing legend, Richard Petty, but to the millions who've followed his career over the years—pretty much the same folks who buy Alabama's records.

"American Pride," the title song (written by Randy Owen), is the sort of artless, cliched anthem that might pass for the theme song of a bad tire commercial. It would lead me to conclude that patriotism really is the last refuge of scoundrels and the artistically lame if it weren't for some of the far better songs on here.

It also raises my antennae of skepticism to note that the only real unifying theme herein (besides the usual mom, flag and apple pie show-stoppers) lies not in the songs themselves but in their source. All but three of the 11 cuts come from Alabama-affiliated publishing companies.

Reading back over this, I feel I've been more cynical and carping than I intended to be. *American Pride* is, despite my grumpy misgivings, a highly enjoyable album—somewhere between a B-plus and an A-minus on Alabama's own slid-

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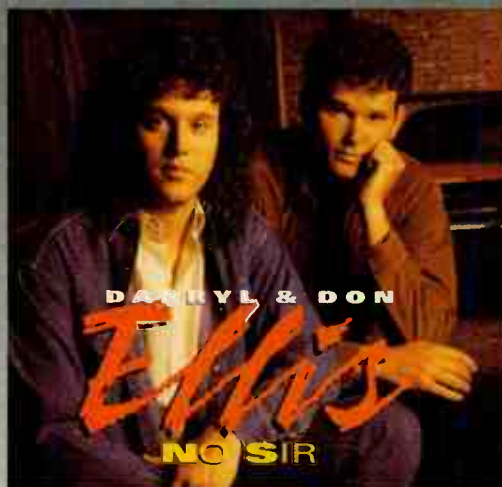
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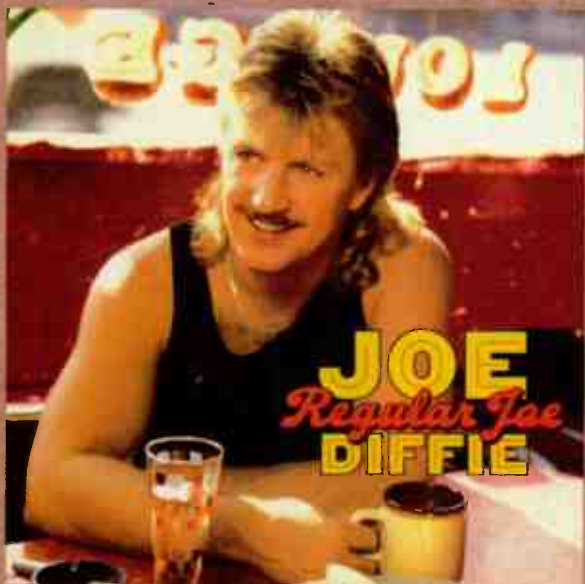
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Record Reviews

ing scale of artistic achievement. So what if there is a little bathos, Log Cabin syrup and jingoism? Where would Alabama be without it? And where would we be without Alabama? —BOB ALLEN

Flaco Jimenez

Partners

Warner/Reprise 9-26822



Though Texas conjunto accordionist Flaco Jimenez has been an all-star session man and celebrated band-leader in Tejano music for years, it was only recently that he gained real national visibility as one fourth of the Grammy-winning Texas Tornados, along with Freddy Fender, Doug Sahm and Augie Meyers.

Remember the great conjunto accordion on the Buck Owens/Dwight Yoakam duet hit of "Streets of Bakersfield"? That was Jimenez. Through the years, Bob Dylan, Ry Cooder, Peter Rowan and a host of other artists have turned to the acknowledged "king of conjunto" when they chose to add a little Tejano flash, flourish and soul to their sound.

Though Jimenez has recorded more than 60 all-or-mostly Spanish albums and played on countless sessions, *Partners* marks his first solo venture into the pop/country mainstream. On it, he's accompanied by "partners" like Linda Ronstadt, Ry Cooder, Dwight Yoakam, Emmylou Harris, Holly Dunn, Los Lobos and Stephen Stills, who kicks the proceedings off with a rousing version of his old standby, "Change Partners."

With most of these distinguished guests, Jimenez settles comfortably into the role of supporting actor and accompanist, even though his accordion is front and center in the mix and adds lively lead and rhythm foundations, fills, colorings and trills.

On four cuts—in my estimation some of the meatiest of

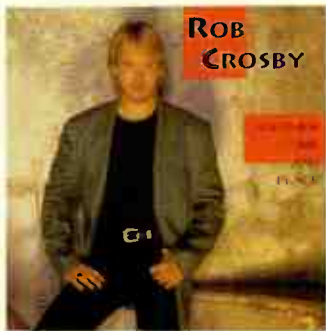
all—Jimenez heads his own conjunto band—consisting of Oscar Tellez, lead vocals, bajo sexto and percussion; David Jimenez, drums; Joe Morales, alto sax; Ruben Valle, bass—and gives us some of the *real* stuff, including "El Puente Roto" which features an evocative all-Spanish performance from Linda Ronstadt.

On the "star" tracks, Dwight Yoakam particularly shines on his and Jimenez' rendition of Warren Zevon's "Carmelita," a woeful tale of desperation and poverty on the wrong side of the tracks. John Hiatt also turns in a memorable performance on "Across the Borderline" (co-written by Hiatt, Ry Cooder and James Dickinson). This powerful song about the plight of the "illegals" was originally the title track to a Jack Nicholson movie of yesteryear, on which Freddy Fender sang the lead. Hiatt's rendition is no less memorable.

The versatile Ry Cooder handles the lead on "That's the Way the Girls Are in Texas," a tongue-in-cheek song on which Cooder manages to sound so much like Doug Sahm that I just assumed that's who it was until I checked the liner notes. Emmylou Harris sits in for a rambling version of Butch Hancock's "West Texas Waltz" (featuring Holly Dunn and Jimenez on harmony vocals). Los Lobos, the superstar L.A. Chicano rock band, offers up some rolling blues on the sardonic "Don't Worry Baby."

Somehow there's a sort of odd aesthetic gap here between these celebrity-studded

Record Reviews



renditions of familiar or semi-familiar pop and country tunes and the four unadulterated conjunto tracks. At times you feel as if you're listening to two halves of two different albums that have been clumsily fused together, as Jimenez shifts back and forth from pop/country sideman to Tejano band-leader.

But even that noticeable disparity doesn't keep this from being a satisfying and artistically solid mainstream debut from one of America's most distinguished musicians.

—BOB ALLEN

Rob Crosby
Another Time and Place
Arista 18710

Rob Crosby has one of the strongest voices of any of the younger singers around today. Its expressive, gravelly edge helps him put a lyric across, and this, his second effort, drives that point home and then some. Though *Another Time and Place* is flawed in some ways, Crosby and producer Scott Hendricks have established an impressive standard of musical excellence on it. It's safe to say that we won't see Crosby hiding behind crass butt-shaking to sustain his career.

Whether he's singing rockers like "You Can't Walk This Road Alone" or ballads, he avoids falling into the same ruts that claim so many other vocalists today. Even "String of Bad Love," one of those stu-

pid and grossly overdone "wordplay" numbers (based on the cliché "string of bad luck"—get it?) favored by so many Nashville composers, works because of Crosby's energetic performance.

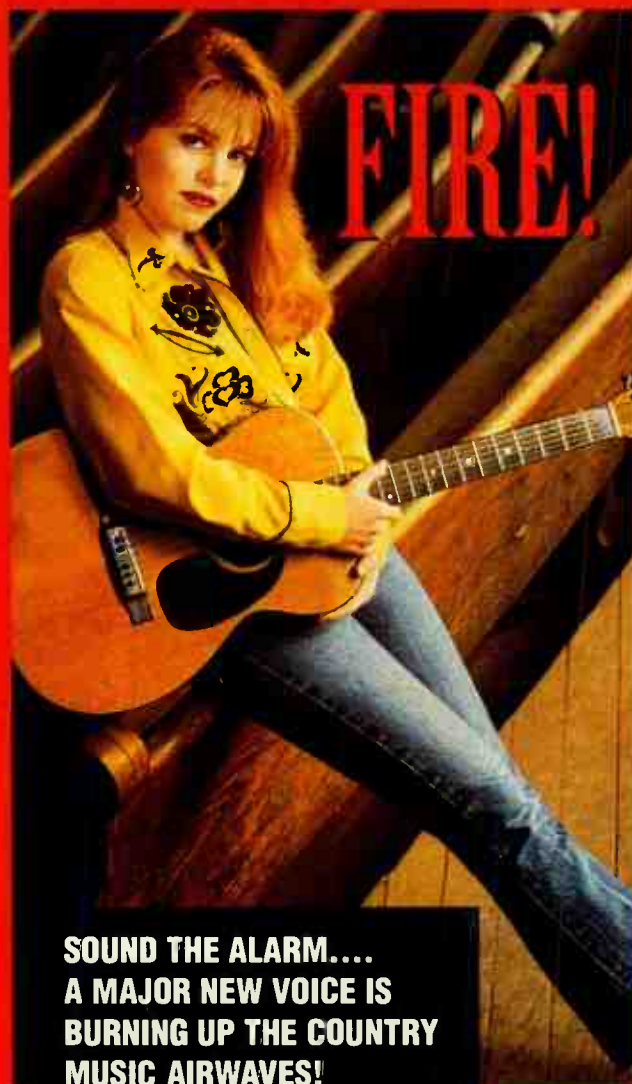
That's particularly helpful considering some of the mediocre material he deals with here, some of it of his own making. Three songs present optimism on the subject of love, pleasant in limited doses and tiresome when overdone. Numbers like "We'll Cross That Bridge," Crosby's "Tried and True" (co-written with Rick Bowles) and "Old News," written by Crosby, Mac McAnally and Bowles, all fit the same mold, and such fluff tunes are a dime a dozen. The only saving grace—again—is Crosby's voice, which packs sufficient wallop to make these songs work. A lesser vocalist would drown in the sugary lyrical syrup.

Luckily, that direction doesn't dominate the record, and the remainder of the tunes succeed in all ways. The dark, gray imagery of "Cold Day in Tennessee," a somber, contrite Crosby-Gary Burr number, captures a departing love in winter with style and perfectly crafted lyrics. "In the Blood," a pumping ode to the grittier side of rural Southern life, shines as Crosby snarls through the evocative lyrics.

Regret and loss are effectively captured in the melancholy title track, "Another Time and Place," while "I'm Down and She's Out" takes a more self-critical, witty view of the same subject.

That Crosby can provide such a consistently high quality throughout *Another Time and Place*, regardless of the merits of the songs, is a testimony to one of this era's most promising and formidable vocalists. A bit more attention to material would be welcome, but I think he could put across the phone book judging from what he does here.

—RICH KIENZLE



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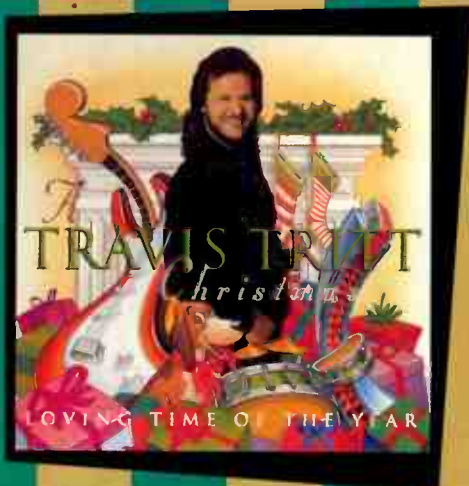
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THE VOICES OF CHRISTMAS

TRAVIS TRITT

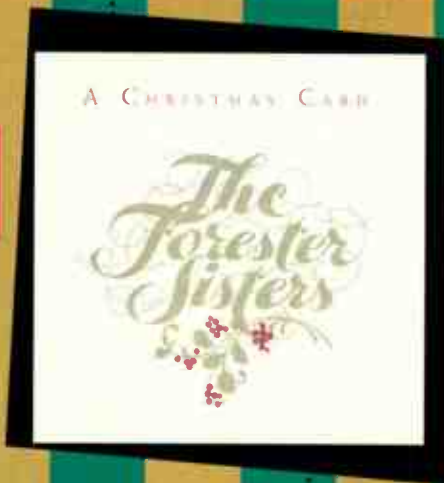
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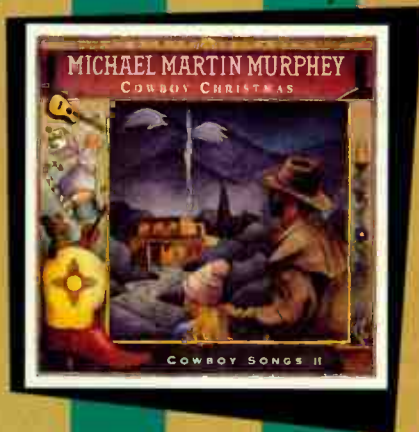
BRENDA LEE

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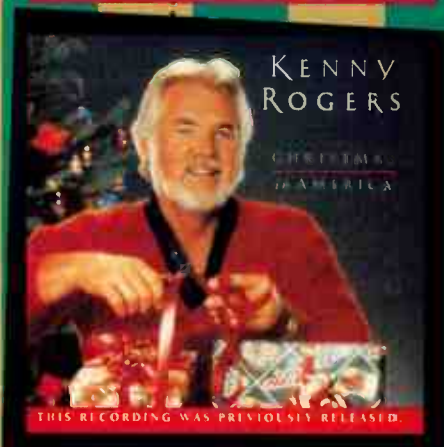
Cowboy Christmas-Cowboy Songs II



RANDY TRAVIS *An Old Time Christmas*



KENNY ROGERS *Christmas In America*



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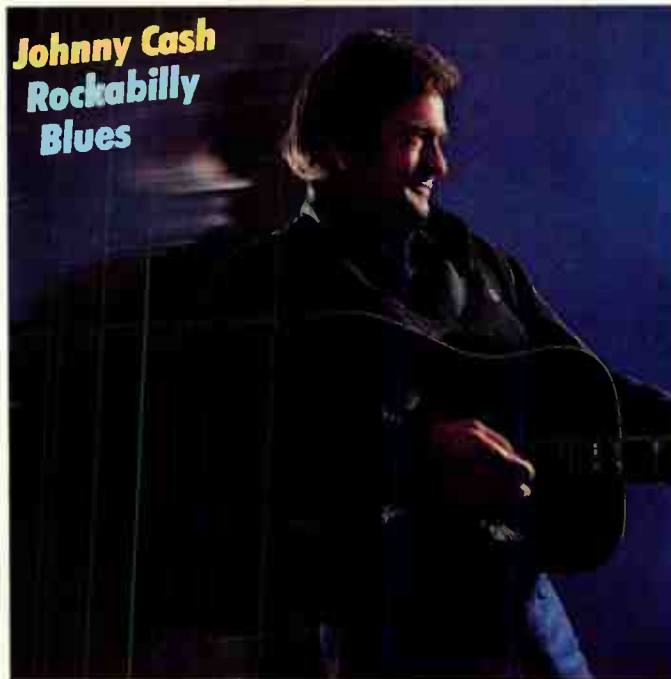
Classic Record Reviews

As part of our ongoing 20th Anniversary celebration, we are reprinting *Classic Record Reviews* of some of the albums making our editors' lists of the 20 Best Albums of the Past 20 Years. Last issue's *Classic Review* of Willie Nelson's *Phases and Stages* first appeared in March 1974. This issue's *Classic Review* is from the January/February 1981 issue. Both albums have stood the test of time, having been selected by several editors for their 20 Best lists.

Johnny Cash *Rockabilly Blues* Columbia JC-36779

Cash has been edging up to it these last few years, and now he's hit it. He's pulled the stops out, he's followed the purely personal dictates of his musical genie, and he's made the best album of his life. *Rockabilly Blues* is so great that it seems almost inane to call it the most inspiring country album of the last five, ten, or 20 years.

Given Cash's voice, his intelligence, and his musicality, the achievement should not come as a surprise, but it does, for despite his repeated statements to the effect that he's been wanting to make an album like *Rockabilly Blues* for some time now, it has sometimes seemed that the work might never surface, that somehow or other Cash would get distracted by the demands of one of his many other (non-musical) roles—a great moral force, a great statesman, a great patrician, a great family man—and would simply fail to apply himself to the task of being a great recording artist. This awkward possibility, of course, is now irrelevant—oh me of little faith!—and instead we are confronted with the fact that in his middle-middle age, with a quarter-century of recording behind him, Cash has come down from his mountain, gathered only the best of his buddies around



"His album restates and reworks the muscular heart of rockabilly music, reenergizes the fading intelligence of the modern country song, and scatters pretenders to the winds."

him, found himself a whole new fountain of youth, and busted loose with a vengeance. His album restates and reworks the muscular heart of rockabilly music, reenergizes the fading intelligence of the modern country song, and scatters pretenders to the winds.

The quality of each component of *Rockabilly Blues*, overall a triumph of strength, determination, confidence and taste, represents a quantum-leap over even the best of Cash's recent work. Earle Poole Ball and Jack Clement and Nick Lowe are all producers infinitely more in tune with the basic true-grit Johnny Cash style that Brian Ahern (*Silver*) or those who went before; Billy Joe Shaver and John Prine and Steve Goodman and Kris Kristofferson and Cash himself are all

songwriters worth twice as many Larry Gatlins as can dance on the tip of an ego; a few electric guitars in the right hands please the angels more than all The Jordanaires who ever got hooked on Geritol, all the banks of violins which were ever put out to pasture by a \$20,000 synthesizer; the studio and engineering values of *Rockabilly Blues* make John's House of Cash products sound like hush-puppies bounced on styrofoam. People worked on this album, and they knew what they were doing, and they had fun, and they were serious.

The surprises are everywhere. They're in the total absence of cuteness and sentimentality and corn. They're in the hard, sure, passionate Cash baritone which somehow seems to have lost its old, peculiar quiver, in the desper-

ately chilling edge to his vocal on "Cold Lonesome Morning" and in the authentically depressive theme of that self-written song. They're in the wondrous rockabilly Fender flow of Cash's "W-O-M-A-N," a cunning and curly-crafted song which kicks and kicks some more. The re-emergence of Billy Joe Shaver under Cash's wing is also a surprise—we've missed that messed-up son-of-our-times ever since, for whatever reasons, the ex-Outlaws stopped recording his songs a few years back—and both "The Cowboy Who Started the Fight" and "It Ain't Nothing New Babe" are as eerie and haunting and lyrically original as any song Billy Joe has ever written. "It Ain't Nothing New Babe," in fact, is just a pure masterpiece. Supported by an uncanny dobro in the hands of Jack Clement (!), the song smashes form, breaks ground, and twists the heart. Cash strokes it with masterly care. For this performance alone he is to be praised to the skies, but there's also the point that in recording Billy Joe's songs and one by John Prine and Steve Goodman ("The Twentieth Century Is Almost Over"), and—surprise again!—a brilliant new blues ("The Last Time") by the lately-soft Kris Kristofferson, Cash has picked up the traces of the early 70's quality song movement so shamefully abandoned by the Willie/Waylon axis in particular, and the mass of country entertainers in general. Good old Cash, still the father-figure but still the renegade, too; still the Indian in the white man's camp.

—PATRICK CARR

Though Rockabilly Blues is now out of print, three songs from the album—"Without Love," "Rockabilly Blues (Texas 1955)" and "The Last Time"—are included on the recently released Essential Johnny Cash boxed set from Columbia Country Classics. See Buried Treasures in the July/August issue for details.

IT'S YOUR CALL

The new album featuring the single

"TAKE IT BACK"



Available in record stores December 15



Available on MCA Records Compact Disc, HiQ Cassette and DCC

People

COUNTRY AID FOR DADE

News of Hurricane Andrew and the devastation it caused in Dade County, Florida, prompted a benefit concert by some of country music's most well-known performers. **Alabama**, **Randy Travis**, **Pam Tillis**, **Sawyer Brown** and **Mark Chesnutt** lent their voices, time and talent to aid the hurricane victims. The concert raised close to \$100,000 with the money going to The American Red Cross, which has been instrumental in getting help to the people. The performers played for free, sandwiching this concert into their road tours. And they were just part of the generosity that constituted the entire event.

Radio station 99.9 KISS-FM, Miami, in conjunction with Cellar Door Concerts, put together the event and donated production, time and facilities. The Miami Arena, where the concert took place, donated the building. *The Miami Herald* promoted the concert at no charge, and American Airlines donated part of the performers' fares.

Even though the concert was held at 2 P.M.—during the work day—the crowd showed up. Over 6500 people attended, and the promoters called it a success.

DEAN TO OPRYLAND MUSIC

Opryland Music Group not only boasts the **Hank Williams** catalog these days, it also boasts the songs of singer/songwriter **Dean Dillon**. Dean recalled that it was **Jerry Bradley**, general manager of Opryland Music, who signed him to his first recording deal at RCA Records many hit songs ago.

It was Dillon's songs, "Unwound" and "Marina Del Ray," that catapulted **George Strait** to superstardom, and "Miami My Amy" and "Homecoming 63" that made the late **Keith Whitley** a chart-topper. The prolific Dillon has cuts by **George Jones**, **Vern Gosdin**, **Waylon Jennings**, **Hank Williams Jr.** and **Steve Wariner**. He also has a successful career as a recording artist. Now signed to Atlantic Records, he's just completed his second album for the label.



Pam Tillis, Alabama, Randy Travis and Mark Chesnutt were among the stars lending their time and talents in Miami to benefit victims of Hurricane Andrew.

BRANSON HELPS JERRY'S KIDS

For the first time, Bransonites were included in the annual **Jerry Lewis** telethon for MDA (Muscular Dystrophy Association). National host **Jerry Lewis** and Branson host **Mel Tillis** made the original announcement together. Performers for the national telethon besides Tillis were **The Balknobbers**, who founded Branson's music industry, and **The Presley Family**, who were the first music show on the famed 76 Strip. Others

included were **Willie Nelson**, **Eddie Rabbitt**, **Moe Bandy**, **Roy Clark**, **Glen Campbell**, **Mickey Gilley**, **Loretta Lynn**, **Debbie Reynolds**, **Jim Stafford**, **Ray Stevens**, **Shoji Tabuchi**. **Andy Williams** and **Boxcar Willie**.

KATHY MENDED

Kathy Mattea's condition was diagnosed as "excellent" following laser surgery on her vocal cords at Nashville's Vanderbilt Hospital. After a month's rest, Mattea continued her road schedule.

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People

SCRUGGS FAMILY TRAGEDY

In late September, the Nashville press reported on a tragic murder/suicide that claimed the lives of **Steve Scruggs**—son of banjo legend **Earl Scruggs**—and his wife, **Elizabeth Kissling-Scruggs**. Police found the couple dead in their White House, Tennessee, home on September 23rd. Investigators say Scruggs shot his wife, then turned the gun on himself, adding that there was evidence of some discord between them. Dr. **Julia Goodin**, deputy chief medical examiner for the Nashville Metro Area, said in *The Tennessean* that there were no other injuries or signs of a struggle.

BILLY RAY DAY

Fans, it was hot that day. The BMI parking lot sizzled in the P.M. sun, but the star, **Billy Ray Cyrus**, was cool as a Kentucky mountain in his sleeveless shirt and tight-as-skin jeans. The occasional tree shaded people on Music Row readily recognized, like Opry star **Del Reeves**; managers **Jack McFadden** (Billy Ray) and **Merle Kilgore** (Hank, Jr.); publishers **Doug Howard** and **Bill Isaacs**; **John Carter Cash**; **Melanie** (the ex-Mrs. Lee) **Greenwood**, who invented the "Achy Breaky Dance" for the clubs along with **Pedro Tomas** (the cute guy who actually led the dance in the video); my pals, **Jim Cotton** and **Joe Scaife**, who produced the award-winning *Some Gave All* album for BRC; producer **Norro Wilson** and Mercury Records' fine Music City execs, **Harold Shedd**, **Paul Lucks**, **Steve Miller**, **Bobby Young**, **Sandy Neese**, **Buddy Cannon** and **Claudia Mize**. A couple of limos loaded with execs from Polygram/NYC showed up to celebrate, too. Receiving triple platinum (three million copies sold), double platinum, platinum & Gold awards for his debut album, plus awards for his single and video and a brand new Harley-Davidson presented by Shedd and Lucks, the star smiled a mile, humbly thanked everybody by name, then thanked his band, his mama and daddy and God. Fans leaning against the fence outside the parking lot craned their necks to get a better look at the singing sensation. And Billy Ray, country gentleman that he is, obliged each and every one with an autograph. Fans, that's what makes a superstar in country music. Like **Garth**, Billy Ray cares about the fans and goes out of his way to make them feel special. (At press time, the album was quadruple platinum and still going strong.)

JANE ROPES GARTH, SO DOES JAY

NBC's **Jane Pauley** and her team spent several months on the road with **Garth Brooks** in preparation for an interview for Pauley's magazine show, *Dateline NBC*. The segment aired in late September. That same night the *Dateline* interview ran, Brooks also appeared on *The Tonight Show* with new host **Jay Leno**.

MARK O'CONNOR GOES POP FOR A NIGHT

The great **Mark O'Connor**, virtuoso that he is, with his fiddle under his chin and his hat on his head, was the featured performer with the **Boston Pop**s along with Broadway star **John Raitt** and his blues singing daughter, **Bonnie Raitt**. "An incredible experience" is how O'Connor described the evening. Mark jazzed up "Sweet Georgia Brown," socked "Amazing Grace" full of soul and wowed them to their feet with his version of "Orange Blossom Special." Mark also recently completed recording with reknowned jazz violinist **Stephane Grappelli** in Paris, went on to Switzerland to perform at the Montreaux Jazz Festival, then headed for London, where he performed with **Emmylou Harris**. Back in the



Garth does Jane Pauley's *Dateline NBC*.

U.S.A., he shifted gears for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival before hitting the road again on the "No Hats Tour" with that hillbilly duo, **Travis Tritt** and **Marty Stuart**. Back in Nashville, Mark will continue filming *American Music Shop* for TNN and dine at the Slice of Life, where he talks with me.

1992 CMA AWARD WINNERS

Entertainer of the Year	Garth Brooks
Single of the Year	"Achy Breaky Heart"
Artist and record company	Billy Ray Cyrus/Mercury
Album of the Year	<i>Ropin' the Wind</i>
Artist and record company	Garth Brooks/Liberty
Song of the Year	"Look at Us"
Songwriter	Vince Gill/Max D. Barnes
Female Vocalist of the Year	Mary-Chapin Carpenter
Male Vocalist of the Year	Vince Gill
Vocal Group of the Year	Diamond Rio
Vocal Duo of the Year	Brooks & Dunn
Vocal Event of the Year	"The Whiskey Ain't Workin'" Travis Tritt and Marty Stuart
Musician of the Year	Mark O'Connor
Horizon Award	Suzy Bogguss
Hall of Fame	George Jones (performer) Frances Preston (non-performer)
Music Video of the Year	"Midnight in Montgomery"
Artist and director	Alan Jackson/Jim Shea

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Please allow 2 to 4 weeks after initial payment for shipment.

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People

WY AND THE GUYS



At Wynonna's sell-out performance at Universal Theater in Los Angeles, Curb/MCA execs gathered for the occasion. Left to right are: Mike Curb, Curb's president; Zach Horowitz, Executive VP/MCA; Tony (wow) Brown, Exec VP and Head of A&R/Nashville; the beautiful Wynonna; Al Teller CEO/MCA and Bruce Hinton, President MCA/Nashville. Not a bad way to spend an evening, I'd say.

WJ

With vocals cutting clear to the bleeding heart, **Waylon Jennings** had me teary and proud as I listened to his new Epic record, *Too Dumb for New York City, Too Ugly for L.A.* The title song is a tongue-in-cheek, self-penned ditty that tends to poke fun at the way those in high places think of our kind of people as well as our kind of music. "Just Talkin'" wasn't a radio hit, but it was a hit at my house. Matter of fact, there's no music out there better than this album. The song selection and songs are top of the list. I'd love to see Waylon have a Number One single again. Those of you who love this man's music as I do, please give a listen to this album, especially "Hank Williams Syndrome," which will kill you. An American original, Waylon is that. But he's more. WJ has a voice. He's a song stylist. And he's my friend.

MUSIC-MINDED HIGH SCHOOLERS, HEAR YE

Music-minded high schoolers should be aware of Belmont University. Conveniently located just off historic 16th Avenue South, the facility boasts famed alumni like singer **Trisha Yearwood**, General Manager Polygram-Island Publishing/Nashville **Doug Howard**, Travis

Tritt's record producer, **Greg Brown**, **Fletcher Foster**—who heads up Arista's Press and Artist Department on the West Coast—and numerous others. The students can not only participate in an internship a block away on Music Row, they also enjoy the benefit of industry leaders teaching their specialty in the classroom. Further, the University has a 24-track recording studio on campus.

Sony Music (formerly CBS Records), a 15-year Belmont supporter, recently donated \$10,000 to the University's Scholar-

CARL BUTLER: 1927-1992

Singer and Opry star Carl Butler, who, with his wife, Pearl, came to prominence as a hardcore honky tonk duet singer, was found dead in his Nashville home on September 4th. He was 65. Born in Knoxville in 1927, Butler began recording for Capitol but came into his own on Columbia Records, first with "Honky Tonkitis," then with "Don't Let Me Cross Over," which was Number One for 11 weeks in 1962. Following Pearl's death in 1980, he had been less musically active. He's survived by two daughters, two grandchildren and a brother. He was buried September 8th. Among the pallbearers were George Jones, Carl Smith, Jack Greene and Ricky Skaggs.

—RICH KIENZLE

ship Program for Music Business majors. Warner Bros. Music Group also presented a \$10,000 gift for the program, while Liberty Records presented a \$5,000 check for the fund. Benson Music, leading the way for gospel labels, presented a \$1,000 check as 19 of their employees, all Belmont University Music Business grads, looked on.

Music Row hunk, **Vince Gill**, one of the most talented, busiest and, yes, sexiest men in music, donned his basketball togs for a rousing game at the University Gym. Aiding and abetting Gill on court were the likes of **Garth Brooks**, **Travis Tritt**, **Billy Dean**, **Diamond Rio**, **Larry Stewart**, **Brooks & Dunn**, **Conway Twitty**, **Radney Foster** and a bevy of others.

Not to worry, guys, the girls took their turn at the court, too. Joining **Trisha Yearwood** were other local beauties like **The Forester Sisters**, **Linda Davis** and **Sweethearts of the Rodeo**.

If you want to be a part of our great industry, it behooves you to first get you a Music Biz education and then reach for whatever stars you want. Like the list from Belmont, you too can find your proper place in music.

ONE NEW FATHER WHO IS IN GOODLETTSVILLE

The happiest father on planet earth has to be **Garth Brooks**. The hottest person musically on planet earth has allowed his feelings to be heard more than once since **Taylor Mayne Pearl** made her entrance into the world in July. Taylor's arrival has changed the star's outlook on life, as it is supposed to. Let's not be surprised if Garth cuts back on touring to be with Taylor and wife **Sandy**. Garth is truly a "salt of the earth" person. Family, home and the Good Book rank right up there above fame. So I say, "This new father who is in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, will stay home and spend undivided time with his brand new family. Amen." By the time you read this, Garth is no doubt chart-topping again, with the recent release of two albums—his Christmas album, *Beyond the Season*, and his fourth regular album, *The Chase*. He's also been, not surprisingly, playing to sold-out arenas throughout the country.

BELLAMYS SUPPORT EUROPEAN ALBUM RELEASE

Howard and **David Bellamy** spent an entire month mid-summer in Europe in support of their *Beggars & Heroes* album, recorded on Jupiter/BMG. The duo performed on television and in concert.

Listen

to the

Voices

in the

Wind

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NEW KENTUCKY HEADHUNTERS

Following the departure of **Ricky Lee** and **Doug Phelps** from the group, **Richard** and **Fred Young** and **Greg Martin** announced the hiring of **Mark Orr** as lead vocalist/keyboard player and **Anthony Kenney** as bass player/harmony singer. Meanwhile, their label, Mercury/Nashville, welcomed a new president, **Luke Lewis**, and promoted **Harold Shedd** to Senior VP/Creative.

MDA DINNER NETS A BLUE MILL

The seventh annual **Mary and Harry Zimmerman** Dinner, held at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, raised \$1,102,503 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association according to **Raymond Zimmerman**, Chairman of the Board. This year's honorees were **Larry, Steve** and **Rudy Gatlin** for their many charitable endeavors. The Gatlins are the first country artists honored by the organization. Raymond Zimmerman, son of Mary and Harry, owns Service Merchandise, based in Nashville. The Zimmermans became active in MDA many years ago when a neighbor's child was stricken

with the disease. Over the years, they have contributed millions, and the dinner has become the country's single largest fundraiser for MDA outside of the **Jerry Lewis** annual Labor Day telethon.



The Kentucky HeadHunters welcome new members and a new label prez, Luke Lewis. They're with Harold Shedd and labelmates Sammy Kershaw and Jeff Knight.

OFF TO FRANCE

The architect of bluegrass, **Bill Monroe**, took to the air for performances in France. A little dubious about another long airplane ride, Bill allowed to me that he felt he was going to fall off the end of the earth. Bill turned 81 years old on September 13th. Long live the Bluegrass Founder.

DEATON FLANIGEN AWARDED

The great video company of Deaton Flanigen scored the Los Angeles local Emmy for Best Direction for their 60-second commercial, "Lakers on 9," to promote the Lakers' games on KCAL-TV. Plus, an Addie and a NAF Diamond Award were awarded to the company for "Clean Shirt," the much-discussed video by those musical outlaws, **Willie Nelson** and **Waylon Jennings**. Deaton Flanigen is located here on Music Row. **Robert Deaton** and **George Flanigen**, the co-owners, are two of my favorite people. Besides, they don't come no cuter than those two.

SONGWRITERS, HOLLYWOOD AND NASHVILLE

I received a press release that **Clint Eastwood** (who owns a small town in California) now boasts "composer" as one of his many credits, being that he composed the sound track for the movie *Unforgiven*. Eastwood also produced,

People

directed and starred in the film. If Hollywood wants Clint to wear all the hats on Hollywood & Vine, that's okay. But for me, I'd like to see songwriters and publishers benefit from writing songs. After all, it's their lives at stake. And I am friends with every songwriter and publisher in this town.

BLUEGRASSING

Leaders of the acoustic pack—and bluegrassers, too—gathered at the Bluegrass Inn in Nashville for the **Hubert Davis Memorial**. On hand to honor the deceased bluegrass mainstay banjoist were **Josh Graves, Kenny Baker, Del McCoury, Bill Monroe, Osborne Brothers** and **The Bluegrass Album Band** featuring **Jerry Douglas, Tony Rice, J.D. Crowe** and **Doyle Lawson**. Heaven on earth and beer on ice. Wish you were there.

MORE BLUEGRASS

Bluegrass faves **Jim & Jesse McReynolds** signed a three-album deal with CEO Records. Glad to know these guys are still making music. Can never have enough of the bluegrass stuff.

EYE SAW

Eye saw **Rosanne Cash** dining at the Slice of Life, virtually unnoticed.

Eye saw **Pam Tillis** dining at the Slice of Life, and she was very noticeable. Pam is such a sweetie.

CLINTON SHOULD MAINSTREAM

If I ran a major record label (Lord knows, they'll never allow a female that privilege), I'd sign **Clinton Gregory** within the twinkle of an eye. Recording on Step One, the independent label, Gregory received five nominations in the Country Music Association awards race. In the Book of Ms. Hazel, it's underlined in red, "Clinton Gregory Should Mainstream." I've been a Clinton fan since his hit single, "If It Weren't for Country Music I'd Go Crazy." After all, that's pretty much the story of my life.

ANOTHER SMART COMPANY

As mentioned last issue, Miller Lite became a sponsor for 175 performances of handsome **Alan Jackson**, and will continue to do so into 1993. The Miller Company has been associated with country music before. So, the way I figure is, one good product deserves another, and in



A guitar for George Bush.

the case of Jackson and Miller, it takes one to know one. Miller is a subsidiary of Philip Morris, parent company of Marlboro, who never forgets country music. Fans, remember who sponsors your faves. Besides, my brother **Daniel Boone**, as I've told you before, works for Miller in Eden, North Carolina. Keep it in the family.

GUITAR FOR THE PREZ

What do you give the President of the United States for taking time out of his schedule and coming to Nashville? Well, a guitar of course. Fender designed it and the stars signed it. The Fender Presidential telecaster is autographed by **Garth Brooks, George Jones, Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, Barbara Mandrell, Dolly Parton, Ricky Skaggs, Kathy Mattea, Reba McEntire** and more.

GEORGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN COOL

George Jones, the greatest singer ever to sing a song, has been named to the "Cool Hall of Fame" by *Entertainment Weekly*. Other music stars so honored with Jones were **Bonnie Raitt, Aretha Franklin, Keith Richards** and **Ella Fitzgerald**. George and friends received this honor because they have survived change, kept up with the times and remained unaffected. Know why George isn't affected? He doesn't have to be. When you're perfection, you don't have to be affected. And George Jones has always been cool.

GET THE PICTURE



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CELEBRATING THE RYMAN

In Part Two of the Ryman's centennial celebration, **Bill Monroe**, **Bill Anderson**, **Little Jimmy Dickens**, **Hobart Skaggs** (Ricky's dad), Ricky and Opry announcer, **Kyle Cantrell**, were on hand to perform on the Ryman stage. More than 100 media types from around the world attended the event.

THE QUONSET HUT

Almost 40 years ago, Country Music Hall of Famer **Owen Bradley** and his guitar playing brother, **Harold Bradley**, bought a house on 16th Avenue South and converted it into a studio. They later added a Quonset hut behind the house, which became the studio. At the time, little did they know they were starting a dynasty called country music.

Well, recently I got a call from Sony's marketing/computer wizard, **Doug Brusa**, to let me know that workmen, while renovating the building, had torn away the interior and exposed the old, original Quonset hut. I couldn't resist. I took my singing sons, **Billy** and **Terry Smith**, and the precious young ones,

Adam and **Jeremy Smith**, to have a look. "**Patsy Cline** recorded 'Crazy' and 'Sweet Dreams' in this room," I explained, feeling chills in 100-degree weather. "The Quonset hut was proclaimed an historic building, therefore,

the Sony Music folks, as before, simply built their offices around the original building," I explained to my boys. The grown-up singing boys were impressed, but the little ones kept drinking their Cokes. Hopefully they (the little ones) will remember seeing the interior when they are as "mature" as this writer, and just maybe they will tell their children how I cared enough for the history of country music and about them to explain why the Quonset hut was such an important part of our lives. Of course, I explained to them that **Owen Bradley** is one of my all-time heroes.

And fans, just so you will know, **Owen's** son, **Jerry Bradley**, heads up Opryland's Publishing Division on Music Row, his daughter-in-law (and Jerry's wife), the beautiful **Connie Bradley**, heads up ASCAP (also on Music Row) and his daughter, **Patsy Bradley**, and grandson, **Clay Bradley**, work at BMI. So the Bradley name continues to command respect on the streets where Owen gave birth to country music. And I thank my friend, **Doug Brusa**, for also caring enough about country music and its history to let me know what was happening.

THE POWERS THAT BE GOOFED?

For the 25th anniversary of *Hee Haw*, there will be a year-long encore series hosted by premier host **Roy Clark** and former regular **Cathy Baker**, who was fired last year when the powers-that-be decided to overhaul the show. It seems the ratings dropped so much with the '91 face-lift, what with no overalls and such,



Celebrating the Ryman's centennial were **Bill Monroe**, **Bill Anderson**, **Little Jimmy Dickens**, **Hobart Skaggs**, **Ricky Skaggs** and **Kyle Cantrell**.

People

that the quarter-century-old show will be doing repeats for the new season ('92 and '93). We'll wait to see what follows. We always said, if it ain't broke don't fix it. I just hope it stays on the air. *Hee Haw* is a landmark. Fans, write!

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW

Grand Old Opry star **Del Reeves** is not only one of the most entertaining artists in country music, he also has a non-failing eye/ear for talent. Bet you fans didn't know that **Lee Greenwood** used to play trumpet in Del's road band. And, fans, it was Del Reeves who produced sides on heartthrob **Billy Ray Cyrus**, took the tape to **Harold Shedd** at Polygram Records and, oh my achy breaky heart, the boy climbs on the charts and into the hearts of every red-blooded female fan of music from here to Holland and back. I want to thank Del for his talent as well as his know-how. So many stars wouldn't think of helping someone like Billy Ray. Del Reeves is truly taller than he seems.

CONGRATS TO MCBRIDE & THE RIDE

Their first Number One record, "Sacred Ground," was a real highlight for the trio, **McBride & The Ride**. The title cut of their MCA album, the song was penned by **Vernon Rust** and **Kix Brooks** of **Brooks & Dunn** fame. When lead singer **Terry McBride** and the guys ran into **Huey Lewis** at a local eatery, Lewis started singing "Sacred Ground"—to their amazement and amusement. Of course they were thrilled as well. Huey is a regular around town.

CASHES ON THE JORDAN RIVER

Johnny Cash, June Carter Cash and **John Carter Cash** were recently on the River Jordan. Reason? Well, they were filmed singing inspirational songs for a TV show to be shown at a future date.

NUMBER FIVE

RCA singer/songwriter **Paul Overstreet** and wife **Julie** are expecting their fifth child. **Nash**, their oldest, will be five in January.

BLESS THOSE SPONSORS

Once again the folks at Marlboro have come through for the country music stars and the country music fans. Going into the state fair arena, artists featured on the Marlboro bill for '92 were **Reba McEntire, Vince Gill, Rodney**



McBride & The Ride are all smiles for their first Number One.

Crowell, Joe Ely, Brooks & Dunn, Pam Tillis, McBride & The Ride, Ricky Van Shelton, Ricky Skaggs and **Michelle Wright**. On the Marlboro military tour, service people can enjoy the talents of **Lynyrd Skynyrd, Webb Wilder, Kentucky HeadHunters, Marshall Tucker** and others. Marlboro not only treats you fans and the entertainers right, we press people are treated with utmost respect. This year's press dinner was held at the prestigious Arthur's, located in the historic Nashville Union Station on Broad-

way. From the first sip to the last dab of the napkin, first class all the way. Food, service and company were just the best. Marlboro Music Manager, **Jose Fontanez, Billboard's Edward Morris** and yours truly had more fun than anybody in the room. Oh, well, Ed and I were just showing Jose how nice it is to be in Hillbillydom.

DOLLY DONATES

Dolly Parton's Dollywood Foundation is providing \$500,000 to benefit the Sevier County school system and its students. The money will provide, among other learning tools, salaries for teacher's assistants, computer training for students, scholarships for attending college, continuation of a "buddy program" that provides cash rewards for each pair of "buddies" completing high school, and funding for an alternative learning center. When the Dollywood Foundation began in 1988, chairperson of the board Dolly Parton stated its mission would be to improve education in Sevier County and lower the drop-out rate. The foundation's buddy program gets credit for helping to reduce the drop-out rate from 35% to 14.6%.

GET WITH THE PROGRAM



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Start Savin' Up Now

People

MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY'S WESTFEST

From Music City, stars like hunka **Vince Gill**, the ever popular **Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**, songwriters **John Ims** and **Red Stegall**, **Riders in the Sky**, **John McEuen**, **Texas Tornados**, **Brooks & Dunn** and **Suzy Bogguss** joined **Michael Martin Murphey** and a host of others for the sixth annual Westfest, held on Copper Mountain, Colorado. Music, arts and crafts and buffalo burgers were all hits.

WATERMELON DAIQUIRIS AND HILL-BILLY SONGS

Watermelon daiquiris, frozen, were the drink of the night, and **Hal Ketchum** was the feted star. The do—called the “Gold Party”—was held at the trendy Toucan on Music Row’s 16th Avenue, where the scene was body-to-body with squirming room only. **Mike Curb**, owner of Curb Records, jetted in from the West Coast for the event as did Prez **Dick Whitehouse**. *Past the Point of Rescue* is the title of the record, selling 500,000 copies, and the reason for the party. Spotted in the crowd sipping and schmoozing were co-producers **Allen Reynolds** and **Jim Rooney**, label mate **Ronnie McDowell**, songwriters **Sandy Mason**, **Hank DeVito** and the great

LOOK HERE



Collin Raye with **Kathie Lee Gifford** and **Robin Leach** on the set of *Live With Regis and Kathie Lee*. No, it wasn't *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*—**Robin Leach** was sitting in for **Regis Philbin**. To **Kathie Lee's** delight, **Collin** sang some of his song, “Love, Me.” I don't know how rich **Collin** is, but I know he is one more good-looking hillbilly to add to our ever-growing list.

songwriter/singer **Townes Van Zandt**. Also spotted: Curb Records Nashville VP **Mike Borchetta**, MCA Records' **Walt Wilson**, **Renee Bell**, **Scott Borchetta**, **Michelle Myers**, **Pat Payne**,

and **John Porter** with **Vector Management**, who manages the likes of **Lyle Lovett**, **Joe Ely** and **Nanci Griffith**. Drinking watermelon daiquiris while listening to hillbilly music is about as cool as a body can get. Congratulations to all those Curb folks including **Hal Ketchum**, **Jim Rooney**, **Allen Reynolds**, **Dick Whitehouse** and **Mike Borchetta**.

LORRIE & SAMMY

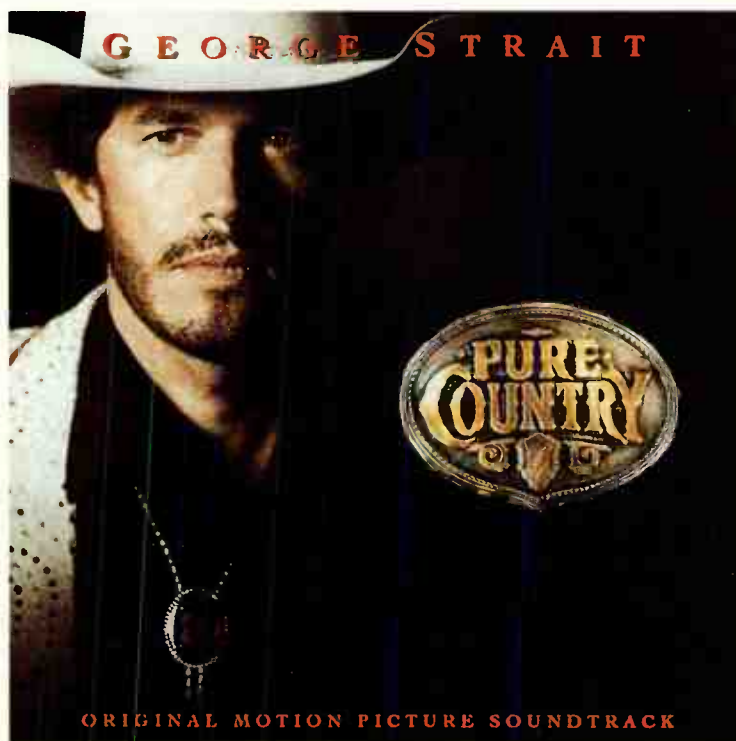


On the *Nashville Now* set, **Lorrie Morgan** and **Sammy Kershaw** kicked up their heels and had much fun. **Lorrie** was hosting for her friend (and father figure), **Ralph Emery**, who was vacationing, and invited pal **Kershaw** for a guest appearance. Seems **Lorrie** and **Sammy** became acquainted years ago when **Morgan** sang backup with **George Jones** and **Kershaw** opened for them in Louisiana. Both **Lorrie** and **Sammy** are stars on high these days and nights, and their duet on “Near You” was fantastic.

GOLD CAN BUY HAPPINESS!

Ask **Pam Tillis** and she will tell you, “Gold can buy happiness.” *Put Yourself in My Place* is the first Gold record for **Mel Tillis'** eldest child. Ex-wife **Doris Tillis** hosted a do honoring daughter **Pam's** Gold success at the Tillis family's palatial estate in Brentwood. Joining in the celebration was her publishing company **Sony/Tree**, **Mike Robertson Management**, **Arista Records**, **Triad Artists** (booking agency) and the folks at **BMI**. Hors d'oeuvres, boiled Cajun shrimp, pasta, roast beef, strawberries with chocolate for dipping, pastries and all the goodies in between, were served outside. The driveway lighted with luminaries led to the front, while the beautiful gardens were behind. Course **Tim DuBois**, **Arista's** proud, illustrious leader in Music City, and all his staff turned out in full force in support of their babe with a new Gold record. Gold on the wall, diamonds on the fingers is the only way to go.

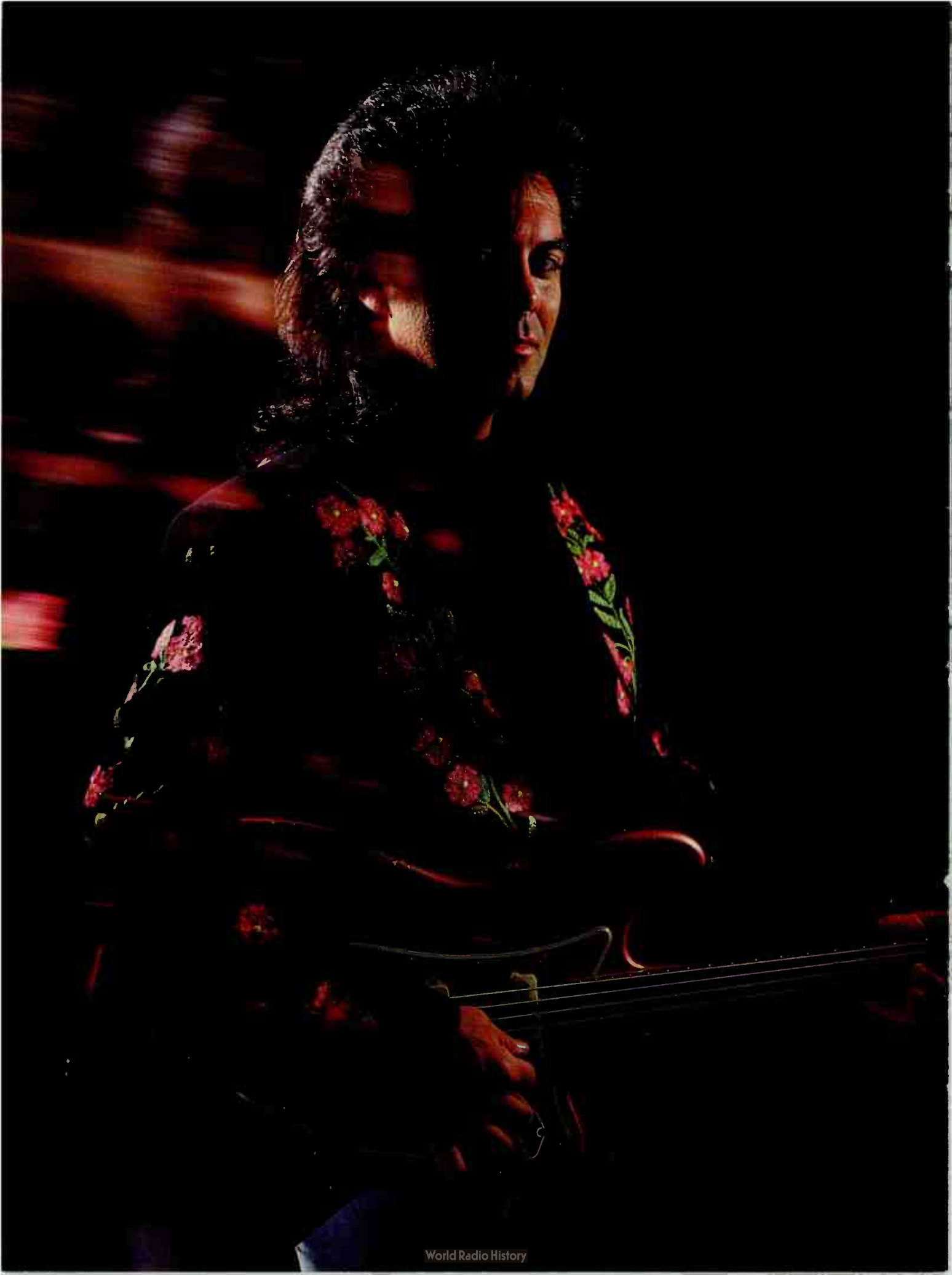
This is *Pure Country*
the original motion picture soundtrack
featuring 11 new songs by George Strait



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Available on MCA Records Compact Disc, HiQ Cassette and DCC



Marty Stuart: GLITTER TURNS TO GOLD

“I’m working with the greatest, and you can’t do any better. As far as going out on my own...I’ve got plenty of time to think about that. Besides, what do I want with a lot of 12-year-old girls hanging around? I’m staying in the background, watching people like Lester Flatt and Bill Monroe, the old pros, just picking up a few things that might be helpful in the years to come.” That’s what Marty Stuart said to *Country Music* in February 1975. At age 15, he’d been a full-time professional musician for two years.

Now, in his 20th year as a pro, after steadfastly hoeing the same row in the same focused way, building on his formidable natural talents through close connection with his musical heroes and their history, Marty Stuart’s vision remains its own reward.

On top of that, the more conventional, worldly rewards are piling up fast, too. He just hauled in his first CMA Award and three BMI songwriter awards. His No Hats Tour with Travis Tritt, with 30 shows still ahead, has been packing ‘em in country-wide during this decidedly recession-depressed year when no one but Garth Brooks was supposed to sell a ticket.

But the icing on Marty’s 20th anniversary cake is his current album, *This One’s Gonna Hurt You*, the fastest-selling album of his career. It will be turning Gold about the time you read this.

Marty has accomplished all this with the most unlikely of strategies: keep your roots firmly planted in tradition, fearlessly attack the musical status quo—laying waste to every song attempted, resist to the death the seemingly easy path of chasing a Nashville commercial trend. This is a dangerous course. And

for anyone less talented, less experienced and less well-prepared than Marty, probably a disastrous one.

Among his generation, no one else comes to mind with such a fierce combination of strengths. As our Editor-at-Large Patrick Carr says, “There are a few picker/singers with Marty’s raw talent, but there’s nobody with his depth in the most demanding areas

of popular music—bluegrass at its highest level, first-class Nashville session work, major league rock ‘n’ roll—and even more to the point, there’s nobody with his vision. Nobody else would have stood in the heart of modern Nashville and taken quite such an unfashionable position—country as music meant to blow you away—and then held it against all odds until it began to seem, well, almost profitable.”



As the following pages show both in pictures and in Marty’s own words, he seems to draw the strength necessary for his assault from his intimate association with those who pioneered before him. But he is equally eager to send the same commitment the other direction to those just stepping into the fray.

I was with him in Nashville the day before the CMA Awards when we ran into Billy Ray Cyrus. They hadn’t met before. “I’ve been trying to catch up with you for two days,” gushed Billy Ray. “I’m a real admirer of your talent, and I really want to thank you for those nice things you’ve said about me.”

“You deserve it,” Marty flashed his electric grin, “and I’m glad to know you!”
—R.D.B.

MARTY STUART

Heroes & History



CHIPS BADEN

▲ Hot Hillbilly Band, Memphis 1992. This band thinks it's a cross between The Buckaroos and The Rolling Stones. Don't tell 'em any different.

Uncle Gerald, Daddy Cat, J.R. and Roy, Memphis 1985. Producer Chips Moman put together this project called The Class of '55 Reunion Sessions, starring the four. I was in Cash's band, so I was recruited. ▼



George Jones, Nashville 1983. God put him on earth to sing country music. Every country singer owes George Jones something. I was there when he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. As it should be. ▼



▲ John R. Cash, his cabin 1980. I'd only been working for him a week or two. I called him and he said, "You might come over and meet Russ Barnard. He might be good for your career some day." I did, and Russ took this picture.



◀ Palomino Club, Hollywood 1991. Dee-wite, my first hero of the new honky tonkers, came by my favorite honky tonk to see our show and borrow one of my coats.



John R. and me, Montauk, N.Y. 1992. I played with him all over the world 1980-1986. I'd do it all again just because I love him. Still bigger than life. After Cash, they broke the mold. ▼



▲ One night after a show in Switzerland, some fans stopped Willie and asked, "Do you want to go play music?" He looked at me and said, "Let's go pick!" We did. He lives for it.

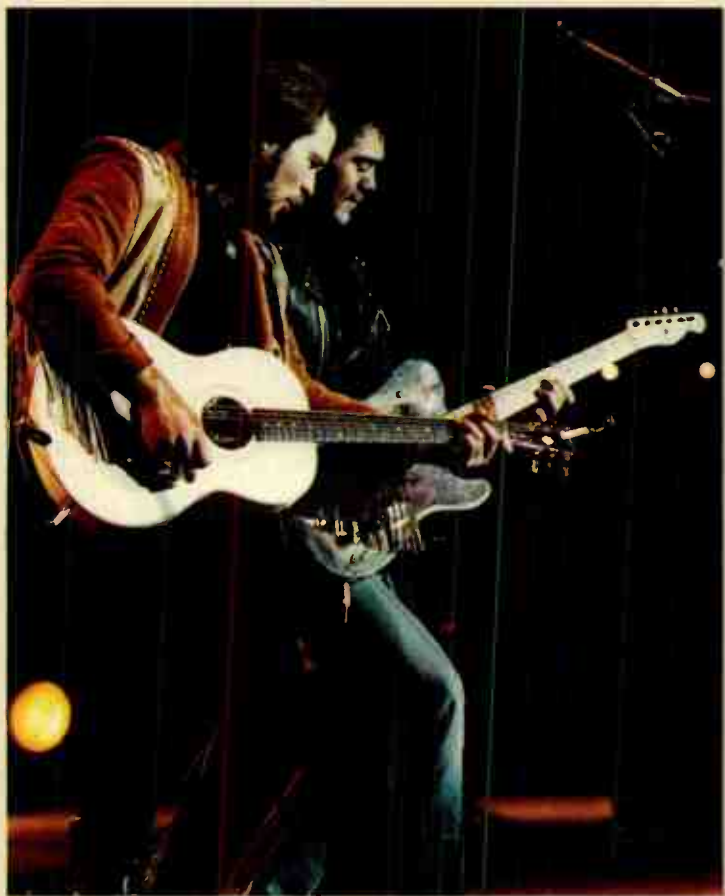


▲ Cowboy Jack Clement, 1985. My Lifetime Executive Producer. The Cowboy made all those records on Cash, Jerry Lee, Charley Pride and Waylon. Gave away two worlds of studio time to most every picker, singer, songwriter in Nashville. Wrote half the good songs himself. When I'm not on the road, I always wind up at Cowboy's office where there's a Coke, a phone, a couple of guitars, a mandolin, good advice and instructions for the future of my career.

Doc Watson and Cash 1982, recording *Busy Bee Cafe*. I had no band so I was looking for players, and these guys showed up. They were good together 'cause they love each other's music. They were too much trouble to take on the road, so I let them keep their own bands. ▶



Patrick Carr, Memphis 1990. The Cowboy calls Patrick "My Personal Scribe." I thought so, too. Long before anyone else cared, he was always around to write me up. A dear friend. He was one of the original *Country Music* writers to make a difference for Cash and The Outlaws Waylon and Willie. Currently, he's a rock star, writing a book on David Bowie. That's why I'm having to write my own story this issue. ▶



◀ Travis is my brother. I don't know if he's ever going to amount to anything. But I'll be there for him just in case he does. He's got the goods to be one of the biggest stars in a long, long time (excuse me), and he's got a heart to go with it. Out of all my new friends, my money's on him.



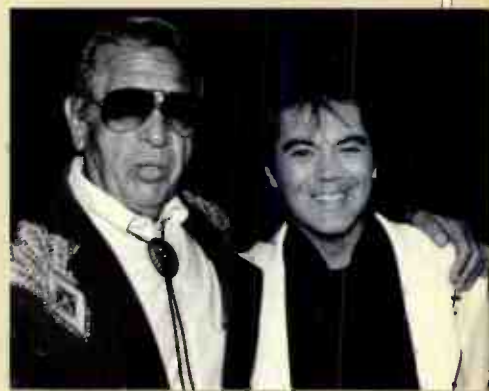
◀ CMA Awards, Nashville 1992. Travis and I won for Vocal Event of the Year. It was my birthday. A nice gift from the folks in our industry. Thanks CMA. I am proud of what our No Hats Tour accomplished for country music.

BETH GWINNIN

ACM Awards, L.A. 1992. One of my all-time heroes, a true visionary. When I grow up, I want to be Buck Owens. ▼



◀ Jerry and Tammy Sullivan, Nashville 1991. You should have seen what a mess I was when I pulled into their driveway in 1986. After a divorce and a record deal gone bad with no relief in sight, I was at that point a pretty useless creature. I spent the next six months travelling all over the backroads of the South with them, playing gospel meetings and discovering myself.



PHOTOS FROM MARTY STUART'S COLLECTION

In The Footsteps of a Good Man: Coming of Age With Lester Flatt

by Marty Stuart

The first time I ever saw Lester Flatt in person was at Bill Monroe's Bean Blossom, Indiana, festival, in 1971. I was 12 years old. I looked at the program and found out what time he was playing, and I stood by his bus to watch him come out.

That old bus was a sight. It looked like a rolling billboard. "Lester Flatt and The Nashville Grass Sponsored by Martha White Flour." It was a vision in diesel. I had no idea that within the next year I'd be on that bus. That's where I'd spend my teenage years. To this day when I'm asked, "Where were you raised?," I say, "In the back end of Flatt's bus."

When Lester finally came out of the bus, the speech I'd planned for about seven years kind of got lost inside of me. I did manage to get an autograph.

As I followed him on the long walk all the way to the stage, I noticed the hat and the trademark way he cocked it on his head. It was almost like his signature. Bob Dylan, in a song he wrote about Lenny Bruce, the controversial comedian, describes a short cab ride he took with Lenny—it seemed like two years because he was so in awe. When I heard that song, I thought about that walk that day behind Lester.

He moved in a classic way through the dust and the endless sea of campers. People sort of changed as he passed by...like the effect of a preacher walking through a poker game. And now, here was Lester right in my sights. I couldn't believe it. Here was the guy walking in front of me who wrote "Will You Be Loving Another Man." Skyrockets were going off in my head. For the moment I was walking in the footsteps of a good man. The only thing that could have possibly made it better was if Earl Scruggs had been there, too.

I don't remember much about the

show that day other than I finally got to see Paul Warren, Haskell McCormick, Uncle Josh, Johnny Johnson and the guy who later showed me the way—Roland White. I'd just started playing the mandolin and had been watching "Chee-Chee," as Lester called him, on TV.

Roland let me play his mandolin, showed me a couple of licks, and I'm sure I didn't ask him over a couple of hundred questions, but he took time to answer all of them. Roland made me feel like somebody. Now, after years of knowing him, I understand that that's just the way he is. He's always been faithful to bluegrass music, even when it wasn't faithful to him. He's always been an open door for young players, and he's always willing to share what lives inside him with anybody. More times than he knows, Roland's been a beacon for me.

As the festival drew to a close, I was completely star-struck and on fire with a wealth of new information and music. I went home and spent most of the rest of that summer around Carl Jackson. When Carl was on the road with Jim and Jesse, his daddy worked with me quite a bit on the mandolin. Carl was my first bluegrass partner.

When I went back to school that winter, I spent most of my time daydreaming, thinking about bluegrass music and marking the days until I could go to another festival. Jim and Jesse let me ride with Carl on the bus a couple of times that winter. That helped me out until summer rolled around.

When Carl left Jim and Jesse, he spent a season playing bluegrass gospel music with The Sullivan Family. They played a church near my home, and Enoch Sullivan let me get up and play a couple of songs. Afterwards I persuaded Carl to call Enoch and ask if I could go on the road with them during the summer.

Enoch agreed, and that's where my life began as I know it today.

We played mostly Pentecostal churches on the back roads of the deep South. I discovered that the Holy Spirit likes pickin' music, too. People would be shouting, clapping their hands and dancing in the aisles. Enoch's fiddle playing just kind of brought all that together. Sister Margie could really sing those holiness songs, and sometimes her "I'd Rather Be Saved and Have Salvation Tonight than Be Rockefeller's Daughter" testimony would just roll it on out into a deeper place. Carl, Unk Dickerson and I added a bit of fire and youth. And all of this was being driven by Emmett Sullivan's wonderful, wacky, cosmic banjo. It was great fun, good music and good times. And a good first experience on the road.

People loved The Sullivan Family and welcomed us everywhere we went. So I followed the Lord and the bluegrass trail with great expectations. Then we played a festival at Lavonia, Georgia, and I saw Roland White again with Lester's show. We hung out a bit more, and when the festival was over, he gave me his phone number and told me to give him a call some time if I could go out on the road with them for a weekend, if that was all right with my parents. I made it a point to remember his invitation because the season was ending, and after a summer like I was having, the thought of getting up at 7 o'clock to go to a school where no one had ever heard of "Salty Dog Blues" didn't inspire me at all.

The road is a powerful thing. It has a way of changing and claiming you. Some people just aren't cut out for it. But I love it. To this very minute I feel right at home out here. It's a hard thing to give up once you've known it. Mostly, the road means freedom, and that's what I had to give up when I went back to school.

I was really a poor excuse for a student. The only thing I had to keep me going was my records, Bill Monroe's autograph and a mandolin pick he'd given me...and Roland White's phone number. The final straw came one day when a teacher came up behind me when I was supposed to be reading history and I had a *Country Song Roundup* inside my history book. She busted me and informed me that I could make something out of myself if I would get my mind off music and get it on to history. I told her that I was more into making history than learning about it. On that, and something about my attitude and haircut, I was excused from school.

I went home and called Roland to see if his invitation was still open. He got an okay from Lester, and after an entire afternoon of crying, begging and pleading, my parents reluctantly agreed to let me

go to Nashville for the weekend.

It's around 400 miles from Philadelphia, Mississippi, to Nashville. I was so excited that I stood and talked to the bus driver almost the entire way.

The old bus station in Nashville was across the street from the Ryman Auditorium. When I got off the bus, I stopped for a second to remember where I came from and took a look at the Opry to see where I wanted to go because I had a feeling that I was going to stay for more than just a weekend. I didn't know how, but I had a feeling.

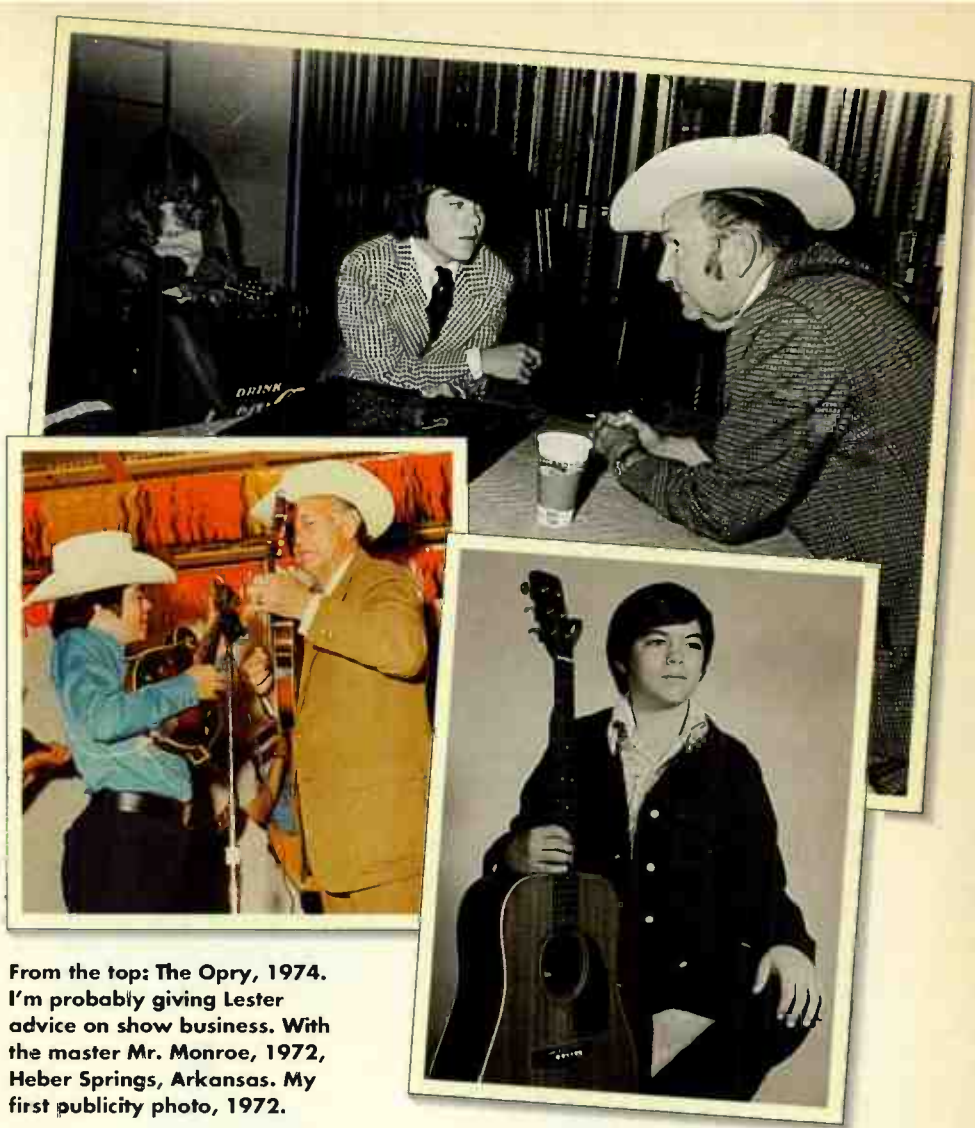
Roland picked me up and kind of filled me in as we went along. A day later I was at Higgins Gulf Station in Hendersonville standing by the Coke machine, waiting for Lester. I had met the guys in the band, and they were cordial. It was such a staunch old fraternity...very set in its ways. I don't know why anybody would let someone like me in their band; but thank God it happened.

Flatt came driving up in this green '72 Cadillac. He parked, got out with his bag and walked up real slow. I was still behind the Coke machine because I wanted to watch him to see what kind of mood he was in. But since he was wearing sunglasses, I really couldn't tell. Until, that is, this old black man named Tom who worked there asked Lester to loan him a little money so he could go fishing. Lester asked him how much. Tom said \$10,000. Lester asked him where in the hell did he plan on fishing for \$10,000. Tom said, "Hawaii." Lester just died laughing, knowing Tom had probably never been past the county line. And what I suspected all along was true: Lester Flatt did have a sense of humor.

Roland introduced us again. Lester said he was glad to have me along, and that was about it. We got on the bus and headed for a Labor Day weekend festival in Glasgow, Delaware. I just sat listening for a long time. I was loving it because the minute the door closed, the bus became a fun-loving club house. You could tell it was business, but these guys knew how to have fun along the way.

On the way out of town we stopped to get coffee. The waitress at the truckstop was all excited about seeing a star. She stepped on the bus to get an autograph and was talking 90 miles an hour about "So happy to have you, I can't believe this, oh, I watch you all the time." Then, "Have you seen Porter Wagoner lately? He's my favorite. What's he really like?"

With that remark, as far as Lester was concerned, she lost all her charm right then and there. When she finally stepped down, he said "what a terrible fog of perfume she left behind, I sure wish I knew what it was so I could get Gladys some." Out of nowhere I said, "I believe that it's Cat Shit-on-Avon." Well, for some rea-



From the top: The Opry, 1974. I'm probably giving Lester advice on show business. With the master Mr. Monroe, 1972, Heber Springs, Arkansas. My first publicity photo, 1972.

"I told my teacher I was more into making history than learning about it. On that, and something about my attitude and haircut, I was excused from school."

son that just floored him, and he busted out laughing and shook my hand. So, I had finally connected with Lester Flatt thanks to some loud, smelly Porter Wagoner fan in Gallatin, Tennessee.

But the thing that really got his attention later on was when I told him how much I loved his music, and how I had traced him and Earl back to when they were working with Bill Monroe in the 1940's. I rattled off some of my favorite songs he had written, like "I'm Working on a Road." I told him I thought I knew where the D-18 Martin guitar was that he had played on those sessions. Lester looked at me like he'd seen a Martian.

I was trying to ask him about Earl, but I knew that the time wasn't right. Before the weekend was over, he'd spew smoke and anger out one side of his mouth on

the subject of Earl. But underneath it all what glared like the sun was that he still loved Earl like a brother, no matter how mad he was. I saw that as a ray of hope. They meant so much to me and to everybody else. Because it was none of my business, and because I was young enough not to know better, I used every opportunity for the next seven years to try to promote something good between Lester and Earl. For example, knowing how much Lester claimed to hate the music Earl and his sons were playing, every time they released a new album, I made sure Flatt got a copy.

Later in the day Roland and I got out a mandolin and a guitar and started playing some tunes. Flatt came back to go to bed and stopped for a minute to listen. He kind of laughed and said, "Why don't

you all do a couple of songs on the show tomorrow." That pretty much made my year, and I was thinking that this was turning into a pretty good trip. I was hoping it would turn into something more than a weekend. I'd still have to sell my mom and daddy, and I didn't have a clue how to go about that.

Lester seemed to be enjoying his success during this period. One achievement that he seemed especially proud of was his renewed friendship with Bill Monroe. He told me how he and Bill hadn't spoken in over 20 years, and how Monroe walked up to him at Bean Blossom and welcomed him and how they sang together just like old times. I loved hearing every word of this kind of stuff. He must have loved telling it because he told it to me twice, word-for-word, during the weekend.

Lester let me play on all four shows the band did over the two days. I picked, Roland and I would sing "Love Please Come Home." Of course Lester, the consummate entertainer and greatest emcee I've ever known, believed in giving people what they wanted. So, in a way only he could do, Lester built me up and promoted me, so before the weekend was over, everybody knew me.

On Sunday, while the band was packing, I thanked Lester for letting me play with them. I could see the wheels turning in his head: old act, new blood, this might work. Plus, by that time we had a routine of gags between us. Our friendship grew fast. He suggested that if we could work out something about school, he would talk to my parents about me working with them. Now the weekend was really looking good. I think I used most of the pay phones between Delaware and Tennessee begging my parents for a little more time.

I really had a lot to tell them: Lester had invited me to stay on to play the Martha White radio show on Tuesday; he wanted me to play the Friday night Opry; Roland had a hat he said I could use; I had money left over; Lester had offered me a job.

It was perfect. I know it must have been a lot coming down on my family. We're really close with a lot of love between us. I'd pulled some really good ones before, but this one must have floored them. I convinced them, though, that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. They said I could stay until the end of the week. Then I'd have to come home.

Tuesday at WSM was just business for Lester and the guys after so many years. But for me, going to WSM Radio as a part of this was great. Lester and Mac Wiseman had a new album out that was doing good, so they were promoting it heavily. During the theme, announcer Grant Turner read his Martha White script and added "along with special guests, Mac Wiseman and Marty Stuart." Oh, was I proud. I was hoping my history teacher was listening. I called home with every new detail that week. But it was the Opry that blew my mind. My god, there was Roy Acuff, Tex Ritter, Brother Oswald and on and on. I couldn't believe that I was on the inside.

Lester put Roland and me on to do our by-



Top: One of my most prized possessions is my Hank Williams suit made by Nudie in 1950. Don Helms, one of Hank's Drifting Cowboys gave it to me. The guitar, another prize, was Lester's.

Middle: I asked Manuel to make me a Johnny Cash suit, just in case I want to be The Boy in Black for an evening.

Bottom: I got this Hank Thompson suit, also by Nudie, from Donna Kolby Jackson. Her husband, Keith, played in Hank's Brazos Valley Boys.

this-time-big-hit, "Love Please Come Home." I remember only how much fun it was and how I had to stand on my toes to reach the mandolin mike. But we must have nailed it, because we got an encore. By this time people were jamming backstage to see what was going on. When the song ended, there were reporters and pickers coming up to us. But what meant the most was that Roy Acuff and Tex Ritter gave me a compliment and a welcome. Lester was watching it all go down and getting a big kick out of it. The only thing I hoped was that my family was listening and that I'd made them proud.

I remember praying a lot right after that. There was some down time during the next week, and I spent a good deal of it in Roland's back yard just thinking. I was kind of happy, kind of lonesome and kind of amazed at how fast all this had happened. I loved it, but it was a lot to take in. I felt safe and secure, but I remember asking God to comfort my mother, to let her know I was alright. I felt really at home in Nashville, and I prayed that God would give her the wisdom to deal with this decision I had put before her.

Now, letting your 13-year-old kid go out into the world must have been a heavy decision. I don't think my folks would have let me do it with anybody but Lester. There was no family business to go home to, and I didn't think I had a future as a cotton farmer. I couldn't see myself at a factory. I knew that I was in my world.

Mom and Dad got plenty of free advice. So, at the end of the week when they came to Chatom, Alabama, to either let me go or take me home, I'm sure they must have been confused. I knew they would do what was right. And I knew that Lester would shoot straight with them. He assured them I'd be seen after, that I'd keep a little money and send the rest to the bank. He'd have our manager, Lance Leroy, work out the details of how to finish my education. And he would assume responsibility for it all.

With that and their love and faith in me, they let me go after my dream. It was a great act of love. I know that there have been times since that I have let myself down as well as my family. But the weight and responsibility of that moment keeps me going. Some important people in my life believed in me, and I've never taken it lightly. I wish every young person could have that kind of support.

After my parents agreed, I asked Lester if I could go home and get my things. He said, "Well, we've got radio shows on Tuesday; you might ought to have them sent to you." I've always thought that he didn't want to chance a reverse decision. There wouldn't have been one, but that was Flatt's way of doing business, so I accepted that.

I told my mom and dad and sister goodbye and got on the bus. As their cars faded from sight in the Alabama dust, I had to fight back tears, but I knew that beyond that cloud of dust there was a big world waiting, and I wanted to see it...every bit.

PHOTOS: LEONARD KAMLER; FENDER GUITARS COURTESY DANNY SHEA MUSICAL SERVICES, N.Y.C.

CMSA NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1992

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Submissions and Returns

Apparently, we've hit on some subjects that you like lately, because we've been swamped with material! Last summer's concert season certainly brought out your talents, as we have a bulging folder for Concert Comments with more than 60 entries! Member Record Reviews are almost as abundant, and various other Reviews and Features subjects fill several more folders. Plus, Readers Create and Collections, as always, keep the mailman working. We've got enough material on hand to

fill, say, 30 *Newsletters*. And new entries come in every day.

My point is this: if you've sent material, and haven't seen it in print, don't be discouraged. It could be used in the near future, and if we don't use it, it will eventually be returned. (I just hate to send something back if there's a shot at using it soon!) But if you've sent something in and want it back right away, just write me, and I'll get it in the mail to you. And *thanks* for giving us so much great material to choose from!

Responses to Reviews & Features

Follow-ups on stories appearing in Newsletters past.

LONG LOST ESSAY FOUND

Dennis Devine's article about the Rock Island Railroad in Council Bluffs, Iowa, sparked some memories in member Lola Smith of Orange, California.

You can't imagine the exciting idea I had after reading the article in the March/April issue about Council Bluffs, Iowa, and its railroads. Because of this article, I found an essay I had written in 1940. When I was 13, I lived in Council Bluffs and wrote an essay on the value of the railroads to the town. To my amazement, my essay was chosen first place in the public grade school I attended. I was awarded a plaque and photographs were taken. Well, when I was around 20-ish, I lost everything. And for 40 years, I've wished and wished I could find it.

Your article did it. I wrote the historical society, and within days, I had copies of it all—except the plaque. I received my essay, the rules of the contest, newspaper clippings, and a letter from Frances Cary, who works at the depot. This wonderful person was able to put her fingers right on what I wanted. Thanks to Dennis Devine, Frances Cary and the CMSA. You brought us all together.

Lola Smith
Orange, California

CONNECTICUT BAND CONNECTS

Once again, thank you for featuring Ray T and Triple T in the March/April issue. The band received a great deal of publicity as a result of the article—the local



The Ray T and The Triple T Band's new CD on Barn Burner Records.

Wallingford, Connecticut, newspaper interviewed them, the promotion director of one of our largest local fairs in Durham booked them, and other doors were opened. Thanks to the *CMSA Newsletter*, they achieved their goal...a record contract.

Barn Burner, an independent label out of New Jersey, read the article, heard

that Triple T was playing at a New Jersey nightclub (The Yellow Rose in Manville), and went out to hear them. Two weeks later, Ray T received a call, and then was signed to a contract. The CD was released in July. Thanks for taking the time to listen to local fans like me.

Donna Iannotti
Wallingford, Connecticut

Recognition for Vern Gosdin

Wanda Rodriguez writes in from the picturesque-sounding town of Pine Mountain Valley, Georgia, with thoughts on Vern Gosdin.

I see that you are asking for reader input on records, artists or whatever. So here are my thoughts as an alternative to TV reruns! There is one country artist who has paid his dues and received very little recognition. A year or so ago, he had heart surgery, and since you never know what can happen in the future. I really feel he should be nominated for the Country Music Hall of Fame, or receive some kind of acceptance while he can still enjoy it and know that someone cares.

His name is Vern Gosdin, and his album, *Chiseled in Stone*, is a masterpiece of real country music at its best. If anyone can listen to this album and not be moved, then their heart must be made of stone.

How can we change this and give him some proper recognition while we still can? I believe he really does deserve it. Thanks for hearing me out, and making us country music fans so happy. You keep up the good work, and I'll keep reading *Country Music Magazine*.

Wanda Rodriguez
Pine Mountain Valley, Georgia

In This Issue

- Warner Mack at the Red Barn
- Concert Comments
- Responses to Newsletters Past
- Moon Mullican in Legends

Editor: George Fletcher
Executive Editor: Helen Barnard
Art Director: Katheryn Gray



Warner Mack performs (right); visits with "future star," Kent Thomas (lower left); and meets Dennis Devine's aunt and uncle, Gerald and Peggy Phillips (top left).

Warner Mack Performs

"Whatever Happened to..." has become a popular part of the Letters section of Country Music Magazine, and several people have asked about Warner Mack. Dennis Devine has the answer. Our correspondent from Council Bluffs, Iowa, caught up with Warner at the Red Barn Opry in Omaha, Nebraska.

We all went to the Red Barn Opry on June 15th to see Ferlin Husky, but as we went in the door, we found out Ferlin was in the hospital, and his friend and neighbor, Warner Mack, was to take his place. Warner is a very good country singer, and plays and tells jokes very well, too. His hits include "The Bridge Washed Out," "Is It Wrong for Lovin' You" and "Talking to the Walls," among others.

Seeing him at the Red Barn, I became a Warner Mack fan. He's from the old school—an artist who has time for the fans. And the 400 or 500 true country music fans who were there saw a very good show.

Opening up the show was Kent Thompson, who's going to be a star someday. After hearing him sing, Warner said from the stage, "You have what it takes to be in this business." We have been watching Kent for four or five years at the Red Barn. He won the last talent contest they had, and appeared on Justin Tubb's show from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry. Kent is a D.J. in Texas, and sings at night clubs.

Dennis Devine
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Concert Comments

From our overflowing folders come these concert reviews from members: Ricky Van Shelton, Jim Ed Brown and Emmylou Harris. We've got lots of them for next issue, too....

RICKY VAN SHELTON

In May, I had the opportunity to see Ricky Van Shelton twice. The first time was in Chicago, and it was one concert I will never forget. On May 2nd, the day before my birthday, I was lucky enough to win front row tickets and backstage passes from US\$99, a Chicago country radio station. Dubbed the 66th Anniversary of Route 66 Tour, the show opened with newcomer Stacy Dean Campbell.



Kathy Wheeler met RVS in Chicago (right). In Danville, she saw his show with her CMSA pen pal, Dolores Shalek, (middle) and LaVonne Shalek (right).

At the time, I'd never heard of Stacy Dean, but I was immediately impressed with his talent. Out of all the songs he sang, there wasn't one I didn't like. Next came Asleep at the Wheel, who delighted us with their wonderful brand of Western swing. Finally, Ricky took the stage. His shows keep getting better and better. He has the most beautiful voice in country music today and puts his heart into every song. Of course, the highlight of the evening was the chance to go backstage and meet Ricky. He is as nice as he is talented, and took the time to sign autographs, pose for pictures and talk with each fan personally.

On May 22nd, I once again attended one of RVS' shows, this time in Danville, Illinois. This concert was special because, along with my mom, I attended it with my pen pal, Dolores Shalek, who I met through your Pen Pal column, and her sister LaVonne. Since they live along the route to Danville, we all met and attended the concert together. You can imagine our excitement on the drive down! Lorrie Morgan opened the show, and I especially enjoyed her performance of "Something in Red," and the use of the lighting during that song. Once again Ricky put on an excellent show. We left the civic center excited and happy and looking forward to the next show.

Kathy Wheeler
Kenosha, Wisconsin

JIM ED BROWN

After a three-year absence from traveling the Midwest in search of Jim Ed Brown concerts, I was thrilled to learn that this Grand Ole Opry star would be performing in my city, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on June 26, 1992.





Grand Ole Opry legend Hank Snow with singer/songwriter Mark Brine (in hat) and The Rainbow Ranch Boys. Snow invited Brine to the Opry after hearing his "New Blue Yodel," a Jimmie Rodgers tribute.

Jimmie Rodgers Tribute Tune Catches Hank Snow's Ear

Diesel Only Records, a vinyl-only jukebox label, recently released a single by Baltimore singer/songwriter Mark Brine entitled "New Blue Yodel (Blue Yodel #14)." The song, an update on the Jimmie Rodgers "Blue Yodel" series, was heard by Hank Snow, who invited Brine to the Opry to perform on his segment of the show. Hank and his Rainbow Ranch Boys posed with Brine (in hat) after the show. Ruth

Bauer, a friend of Snow's, took the photo. "New Blue Yodel" has been included on Diesel Only's new singles compilation, *Big Rock Jukebox*, which features 16 original tunes by 10 "big rockers"—kind of trucker-style, high-powered honky tonk. The compilation, on cassette or CD, is available in record stores. For a catalog of Diesel Only's 7-inch vinyl singles, write them at 100 N. 6th St., Brooklyn, New York 11211.

The setting was the gorgeous, totally renovated Paramount Theater, built in 1928 as an opulent movie theater. Jim Ed heartily received the less-than-capacity audience during the second concert of the evening, the first concert having sold out. Jim Ed's warmth and graciousness quickly won over the audience, and the small but mighty group began clapping enthusiastically to the music.

As Jim Ed took us through 30 years of hit recordings ranging from "Looking Back to See" to "Lying in Love with You," he not once failed to show his appreciation for the success of so many songs like "Pop-a-Top," "Scarlet Ribbons," "Old Lamplighter," "Send Me the Pillow That You Dream On," "I Don't Want to Have to Marry You," and many more.

The five-piece band backing Jim Ed was tight and well-rehearsed. His back-up/duet singer, Christy Russell, was outstanding. Her strong voice and vibrant personality make it easy to see why she's been working with Jim Ed for 12 years.

As the 75-minute performance came to a close, the audience was treated to the uncut version of what is perhaps Jim Ed's most popular song, "The Three

Fells." With the time rapidly approaching 11 o'clock, Jim Ed was still signing autographs and chatting with friends and fans. I did not want the night to end. Hearing Jim Ed's fabulous voice made three years of waiting to see him again well worth it.

Darla Golden
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

SEPTEMBER 1992 POLL Album of the Month

Alan Jackson *Don't Rock the Jukebox*

We're running out of witty things to say regarding Jackson's dominance of the top spot (some might say we ran out a long time ago...). At any rate, it's now eight in a row for *Don't Rock the Jukebox*, and nine in a row for Alan. Grabbing the Number Two spot in last issue's cover boy, George Strait, with *Holding My Own*. Making its first appearance on the album chart is Billy Ray Cyrus' phenomenally successful debut album, *Some Gave All*. Fourth is held by Travis Tritt's *It's All About to Change*, and popping into the top five at Number Five is Brand New Man from Brooks & Dunn. The next few polls should be interesting, with new releases due out from Randy Travis, Alan Jackson, Garth Brooks, Travis Tritt, George Strait and other chart-toppers.

EMMYLOU HARRIS

I recently had the opportunity to attend an Emmylou Harris concert at The Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center in York, Pennsylvania. I was highly impressed with the quality and talent at this concert. The acoustic sound of The Nash Ramblers was superb. The band puts heart, soul and talent into every song. Emmylou sang hits of the past—"Making Believe," "Blue Kentucky Girl," "One of These Days" (my favorite) and many others—plus songs from her *Live at The Ryman* album. I have always loved the bluegrass side of Emmylou. It's great to see *Live at The Ryman* climbing to the top of the National Bluegrass Survey.

Also appearing with Emmylou was California, a bluegrass group with immense talent. I especially enjoyed the guitar work of Dan Crary. One of the songs they performed, "A Farmer's Son," was very emotional. The highlight of the evening was "Jambalaya," performed by both bands jamming together. Thanks, Emmylou, The Nash Ramblers and California for a wonderful concert.

Sharon Stoneberger
Lewisberry, Pennsylvania



BILLY RAY CYRUS

COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1992

PULL-OUT
CENTERFOLD
OF THE MONTH

BILLY RAY CYRUS

Musical Triple Crown Winner Grabs CMA Single of the Year.

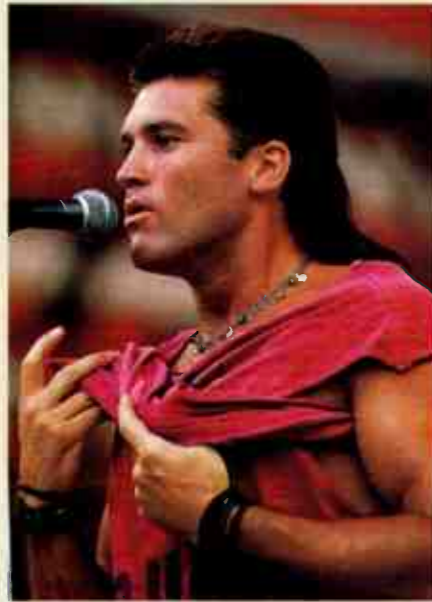
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by Marjie McGraw

In the fall of 1991, Billy Ray Cyrus was like a caged Kentucky thoroughbred—frustrated, pacing, anxious for the race to begin. By fall of 1992, he has not only bolted from the starting gate, he's won a musical Triple Crown. His debut Mercury album, *Some Gave All*, hit the *Billboard* charts the moment it was released, shipped Gold, was platinum after two weeks—quadruple platinum now. His single, "Achy Breaky Heart," started a new national dance craze and crossed to the pop charts, the first country single to do so since Alabama's "Deep River Woman" done with Lionel Richie in 1986. It hit Number One country and Top 10 pop, while the album rocketed to Number One in both pop and country and the video went double platinum. "Achy Breaky Heart" has the highest cassette single sales in the history of country music, and—as we go to press—has won the CMA Single of the Year.

Not bad for a man who didn't even pick up a guitar until he was 20 years old. In fact, music was the least of Billy Ray's concerns; he wanted to play baseball and be "the next Johnny Bench." It wasn't until an "inner voice" told him to get a guitar that he even considered music as a career. "I thought I was going crazy for a long time," he shyly admits. "But after many months of listening to the voice and ignoring it, I finally went and got a guitar and started a band called Sly Dog. I mean, as soon as I got the guitar, the next day we had a band."

His brother and a couple of friends played guitar and bass; the drummer was a guy he'd worked with at a cigarette warehouse. The fledgling band practiced in his mom's garage, warmed by a fireplace and a potbellied stove.

"I set a goal that by August 25, which is my birthday," he remembers, "I'd be playing at a bar." It wasn't just idle talk. "I'd write down my goals and visualize them; that was going to be my first experiment to see if I could make that goal happen." On August 17th of the following year—one week shy of his goal—Sly Dog got its first gig at the Sand Bar. "We were very bad musically," he admits, "but we were such a high energy thing that people



Billy Ray listens to an inner voice.

would come. We'd pack every place we played at." His performances were a far cry from his childhood singing experiences at his "Papaw's" Pentacostal church, where, at his "Mamaw's" request, he sometimes sang with his father's gospel group.

Maybe it's Pentacostal religion juxtaposed with rock 'n' roll sensuality that makes Cyrus so hard to define. Off stage, he's quiet, shy, tentative. He sir's and ma'am's you and is still awe-struck by the amount of attention he's generated. On stage, his hip-throbbing performances make women weak-kneed and men wish they wore his tight jeans. In fact, his two personalities are so dissimilar that Cyrus refers to his on-stage alter ego as "him," peppering his conversations with frequent references to "when 'he' shows up" to perform.

When a 1984 fire destroyed the band's equipment, he took it as a sign to move on. Cyrus chose L.A. because, he says, "I just wanted to be on the beach and combine chasing my dream with the glamour of Los Angeles." The glitz of the big city rapidly faded, however, when he found himself more successful at selling cars

than making music. "I had to sell cars for a living when I can't even change the oil in my own car. I became very depressed," he says. "There I was living in Woodland Hills, making lots of money, but I wasn't having time to do what I'd come out there to do."

A well-timed letter from his father gave him the courage to return to Kentucky. "He said, 'Always know where you are and always know where you're going, but don't ever forget where you came from.' I felt at that time, it was important to get back to my roots." Billy Ray moved back to Flatwoods, resumed his club dates and began making weekly treks to Nashville. "I'd play five nights a week at the RagTime Lounge in Huntington, West Virginia," he recalls, "then I'd drive to Nashville and get in the phone book and call; I'd go see anybody that would let me play 'em my tape."

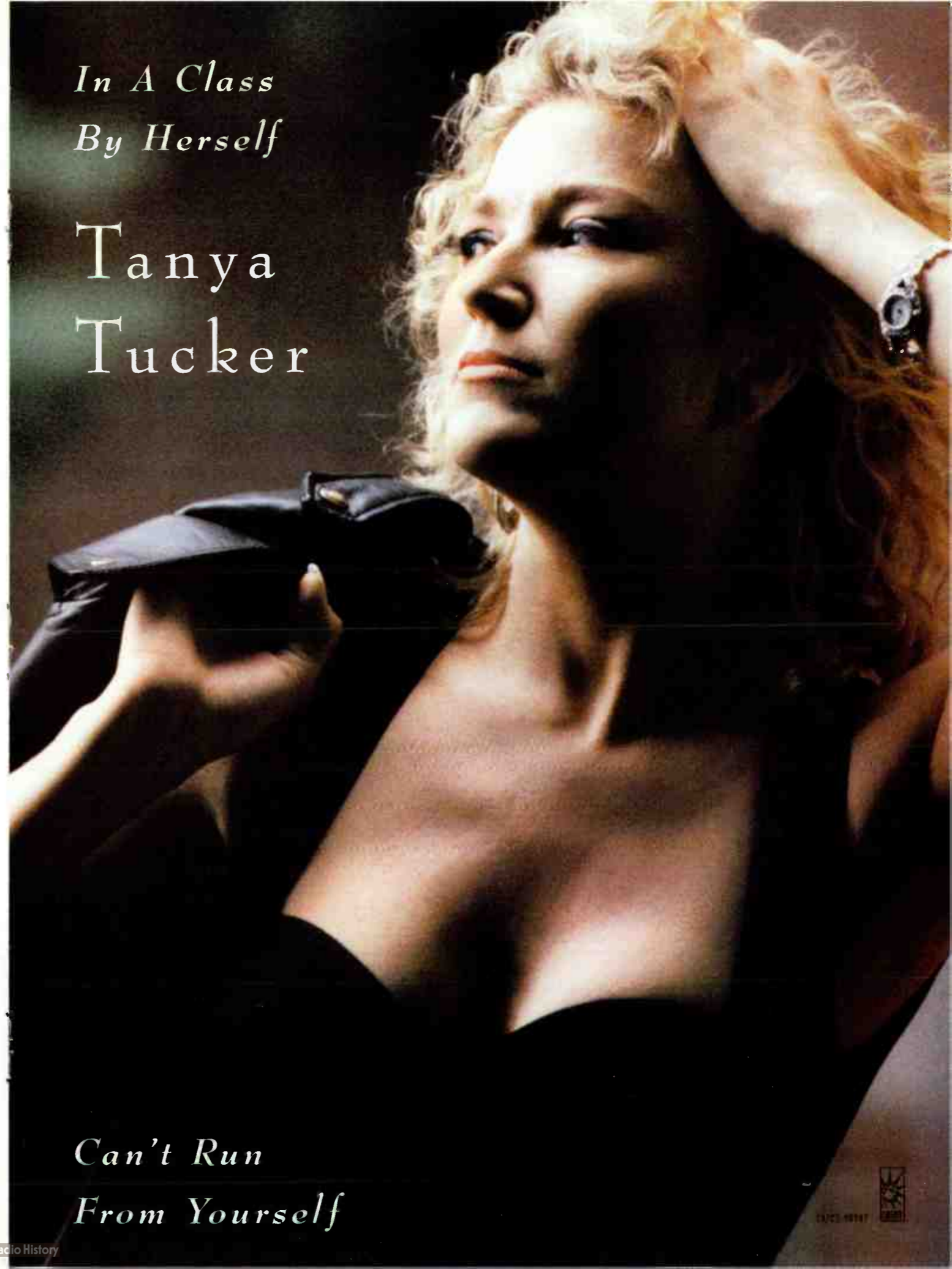
In 1988, he met Opry star Del Reeves, who not only cut his song, "It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over," he introduced him to his manager, Jack McFadden, the driving force behind the careers of Buck Owens, Keith Whitley and Lorrie Morgan. In 1989, McFadden agreed to add Cyrus to his roster. A year later, in the summer of 1990, Mercury-Nashville's Manager of A&R, Buddy Cannon, caught Billy Ray at Louisville's Freedom Hall, where he opened for Highway 101 and Reba McEntire. Within a few weeks, label chief Harold Shedd witnessed the hypnotic effect Cyrus had on the crowd in Huntington, West Virginia, and offered him a recording contract.

The response to Billy Ray and his music has been greater than he ever visualized, and instant fame hasn't been easy. First Travis Tritt took very public potshots at Cyrus, saying his music didn't have much of a message; then news of a child of his, Christopher Cody, surfaced, while his high school flame sought fame on *A Current Affair*. But Billy Ray has remained centered. Remembering those early days of frustration when the two of us first met over lunch to discuss the launching of his recording career, he grins, "I'm just as hungry as when we first sat across the table." ■

In A Class
By Herself

Tanya
Tucker

Can't Run
From Yourself



music and country life. Please, no inmates. **Jenny Peloquin, 206 Wisconsin St. N #307, Hudson, WI 54016-1060.**

*My name is Charles Bowen. I'm a 30-year-old, single male. My interests are country music (Reba, Dolly, George Jones, Randy Travis), baseball cards, walking and fishing. Would like to hear from women, 20-50. **Charles O. Bowen, RR #4, Box 1960, Louisa, KY 41230.**

*I'm a 21-year-old college student who would like to hear from country music fans from around the world. I would especially enjoy hearing from men, 22-39. Military personnel are very interesting and important to me. Will answer as many letters as I can. Please send photo. **Zellda Mann, 338 W. Astor, Colville, WA 99114.**

*Hi, my name is Heather Davis. I'm 14 and love country music. Favorites are Garth and Reba, and more. I'd like to hear from cowboys and cowgirls, 14-18. **Heather Davis, 1089 Lamb Ct., Los Lunas, NM 87031.**

Warning

We received word from a prison official that George Tate, whose pen pal entry appeared in the July/August 1992 issue, has misrepresented himself. He claimed to be a 14-year-old boy, looking for female pen pals around his age. Tate is actually an adult prisoner at the McNeil Island Correctional Center. He did have a valid CMSA membership number, as do all entries appearing in the section. Parents, please be aware of your children's correspondence.

*Hi! Looking for male and female pen pals for my daughter. She's 19, enjoys singing, playing volleyball and listening to country music. Her favorites include Mark Chesnutt, Sammy Kershaw, Doug Stone and Patty Loveless. No inmates, please. **Carol Baker, 302A Surlis Dr., Four Oaks, NC 27524.**

*Hi, my name is Tjm. I love country music. Favorites are Crystal Gayle, Holly Dunn, Reba, Garth, Tanya, George Strait and Pam Tillis. Hobbies are listening to country and going to concerts. **Tim Vanca, 2155 Taylor Ave., Corona, CA 91720.**

*All you real cowboys, read on! I'm a 19-year-old, single, rodeo gal. I enjoy Garth, George, Joe, Lorrie, Reba, Tanya and many others. I'd love to hear from you. Send me a picture, and I'll send you one. I'll be waiting to hear from you. **Alicia Johnson, Rt. 2, Box 196A, Blue Hill, NE 68930.**

*Hi, my name is Peggy. I'm 20, and I love country music. Favorites are Sawyer Brown, Marty Stuart, Marty Brown, Tanya, T. Graham Brown, Alan Jackson and George Strait, to name a few. I love collecting postcards, going to concerts and riding horses. Would love to hear from anyone who enjoys country music and writing. **Peggy Mattingly, 2940 Plymouth Pl., Owensboro, KY 42303.**

*Hi there, my name is Ray. Would love to hear from pen pals, preferably gals age 35-45. I live in the Sierra Nevadas where country living is wild and country music is my thing. **Ray J. Perron, 22285 Allan Rd., Volcano, CA 95689.**

*Hello. I'm a 68-year-old widow. I would love to have a pen pal around my age. I like all country music. My first memory of coun-

try music was a 15-minute radio show out of Atlanta. It featured Jimmie Rodgers. I've attended Bill Monroe's bluegrass festival in Bean Blossom, Indiana. We would stay the whole weekend. There would be a sunrise service on Sunday. It was a privilege to hear Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs sing hymns. **Kathryn McKinney, 5324 Pace Dr., Paducah, KY 42001.**

*I'm a 59-year-old, married female, looking for a female friend in my area, around my age, who loves country music, attending concerts, and would like to go to Fan Fair in Nashville. My favorites are Billy "Crash" Craddock, Marty Stuart, T.G. Sheppard, Alan Jackson, Doug Stone and Joe Barnhill, just to name a few. **Mary H. Keiger, Rt. 9, Box 243, Winston-Salem, NC 27107.**

*Single guy seeks female pen pals, 18-25. Like Garth, Alan Jackson and Randy Travis. I travel the country fair circuit. **Jerry Minnick, P.O. Box 1946, Hiram, OH 44234.**

*Hi! my name is Tanya, and I'm 20. I love country music. Favorites are Garth, Reba, Trisha, Lorrie and more. Hobbies include dancing, roller skating, long walks and more. Would love to hear from guys, 20-30. I will answer all. Send photo, I'll do same. **Tanya Pali, 4215 Bethel St., Houston, TX 77092.**

*Hi, I'm a 15-year-old country girl who loves country music. Also love animals, especially horses. Love to hear from country boys who share same interests, age 15-18. Send picture. No inmates. **Jennifer Fortner, 7695 Aumsville Hwy. SE, Salem, OR 97301.**

*Hello! My name is Becky. I am a 16-year-old, major fan of country music. Some faves are Garth, George Strait, Patty Loveless, Alan Jackson, Tracy Lawrence, Shane Barmby and many more. I enjoy reading books and writing poems and short stories. Also love to write and receive letters. Drop me a line! Can't wait to hear from you. Will answer all. No inmates, please. **Becky Staggs, 443 N. Orange, Exeter, CA 93221.**

*I'm a single male, age 33. I love country music, all types, all artists. I love to write letters and enjoy making new friends. I'm sincere, honest and caring. I like to dance and sing along with the radio. Would love to hear from anyone with similar interests. Any age, male or female, will answer all. **Robert Hill, Rt. 1, Box 201B, Almyra, AR 72003-9737.**

*Hi. My name is Kristin, and I'm 24. I'm single, born in Alabama, and raised on country music. Favorites are Alabama, Reba, RVS, Restless Heart, Kenny Rogers, Garth, The Judds and The Gatlin's. I also love sports, especially basketball and NASCAR. Would like to meet people from all over and make new friends. **Kristin Farris, 9649 Lutheran Way, Santee, CA 92071.**

*Hi. My name is Jennifer, and I'm 17. I love all country singers. Favorites are Mark Chesnutt, Aaron Tippin, Hal Ketchum and Clint Black. **Jennifer Miller, Rt. 1, Box 133A, Rochelle, TX 76872.**

*Howdy! My name is Denise. I'm 23 years old and married to an Army soldier. I'm in the Army, too. I'm looking for some country-music-lovin' pen pals to fill my mailbox. I have too many favorites to list. Other interests are biking, canoeing, reading and watching movies. Write soon! No inmates, please. **Denise M. Sartin, Rt. 3, Box 102, Lot #28, Hinesville, GA 31313.**

*Hi! My name is Joyce. I'm 31 and single. I love country music. Some favorites are Alabama, Travis Tritt and Clint Black. Interests are writing letters, listening to music, movies, baseball, NFL football and more. Love to hear from male or female country music lovers, ages 20-30. **Joyce Raddatz, P.O. Box 297, Big Stone City, SD 57216.**

*Hi! My name is Rhonda. I'm 16 and absolutely love country music. Faves include Randy Traivs, Garth, Aaron Tippin, Doug Stone, Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, Mark Chesnutt, Billy Ray Cyrus, Billy Joe Royal and Jo-El Sonnier, more. Other interests are going to concerts, movies, skiing, horseback riding, fishing and animals. Looking to hear from anyone with similar interests, age not important—but especially Southern country guys, ages 14-20. **Rhonda Andrews, RD #3, Box 3502, Palmerton, PA 18071.**

*Hi! My name is Roni. I'm a country girl who loves country music and dancing the two-step. I'm 47, and would love to hear from country boys, 45-52. Favorites are Randy Travis, Conway Twitty, Reba and Loretta Lynn. Military always welcome! No inmates. Send photo. **Roni O. Lucero, 2950 N. 46th St. #223, Phoenix, AZ 85018.**

*Hello. My name is Angie. I'm 28, single and looking for a few good pen pals. I enjoy country music, but listen to all. Love sports, outdoors, movies, etc. Will answer all. Photo appreciated, not necessary. **Angie Tucker, 11106 Benson Ln., Louisville, KY 40272.**

*Hi, my name is Ashley. I'm 15, and have always loved country music. A few favorites are Reba, George Strait, Tracey Lawrence, Alan Jackson and more. I would like to hear from both guys and girls, ages 14-19. **Ashley Jo Jackson, Box 101, Parowan, UT 84761.**

*Hi. My name is Susan, and I'm 24 years old. I love country music and sing with a bluegrass band. Favorites are Marty Stuart, Travis Tritt, Marie Osmond, The Judds, Marty Robbins, Ricky Skaggs and Reba. I love camping, writing poetry and crafts. Would love to hear from country boys, 25-30. Include photo, if possible. **Susan Perkins, Rt. 1, Box 309, Vernon Hill, VA 24597.**

*Hi! My name is Cindy. I'm 26 years old and single. I'm a big fan of T. Graham Brown. He's my absolute favorite, and I think he puts all others to shame. Though he's going unnoticed lately, I know there are other T. fans out there. Fill up my mailbox! If you're a T. fan, I want to hear from you. Also like Billy Ray Cyrus and McBride and The Ride. Will answer all. **Cindy Adkins, Rt. 1, Box 372, West Hamlin, WV 25571-9734.**

*Hi. I am a 53-year-old female, and I live in a small town. I love country music, especially the golden oldies of the 50's. Also like Vince Gill, RVS and others. I would like to hear from guys of a similar age. **Jo Broughman, 403 W. 2nd, Medicine Lodge, KS 67104.**

*Howdy! My name is Sandra. I'm 27 years old, single and a big fan of country music. I'm looking for fellow fans, male and female, to talk music with. Favorites are George Strait, Reba, Garth and Wynonna, among others. I love rodeos, dancing, traveling and meeting new friends, so drop me a line. No inmates, please. **Sandra Martinez, P.O. Box 80753, San Marino, CA 91108.**

*Hi. My name is Jim. I'm 34 years old and love listening to all country music. My favorite is Reba. Hobbies are fishing, jogging, walking and other sports. Avid NASCAR and Bill Elliot fan. Looking to correspond with females between 25 and 40. No prison-

ers, please. **Jim Stouffer, P.O. Box 575, Bell Arthur, NC 27811.**

*Hi! My name is Beverly. I'm a 24-year-old, single country gal. Love country music and going to concerts. Favorites include Randy Travis, Clint, Reba, Alan Jackson, Kathy Mattea, George Strait and others. I enjoy reading, square dancing and cross-stitch. Would like to hear from country boys, 21-30. No inmates, please. Photo gets mine. **Beverly Campbell, 226 Beaver Ave. NE, Apt. #A, New Philadelphia, OH 44663.**

*Single, 31-year-old country boy at heart would like to hear from other country music fans, especially ladies. I'm a certified Reba fanatic. Other favorites include Kathy Mattea, Skip Ewing and Paul Overstreet, to name a few. Hobbies include playing guitar, reading, songwriting and the outdoors. Let me hear from you. **Rich Preto, 1104 Village of Timber Creek, Lindenwold, NJ 08021.**

*Hi! I'm Cheryl, age 36, from Southern California. I love country music, especially Reba, Garth and Travis Tritt. I have a dream of moving to the country, having pets and enjoying the country lifestyle. Would like to hear from males and females (especially in Tennessee) who are already living in the country. **Cheryl Savard, P.O. Box 2893, Garden Grove, CA 92642.**

*Calling all country boys! I love to listen to Alan Jackson, Aaron Tippin, Dolly Parton and many more. I'm a misplaced Southern belle and would love to find someone to write to. I'm 24 and would like to hear from country boys, 23-34. If you like country music and muscle cars, give my mailbox something to do. **Karen Nowak, 366 Elm St., Stirling, NJ 07980.**

*Hi, my name is Wendy. I'm 27 years old and single. I love country music. Favorites are The Gatlin's, Reba, Tanya, Trisha Yearwood, Kathy Mattea, Garth, Steve Wariner, The Judds, Clint and many others. I'm an actress from California. Interests are show business, reading and writing to people. Would love to hear from males and females, 18 and up. No inmates, please. **Wendy Schroeder, 2111 W. Sunset, Anaheim, CA 92801.**

*Hello. My name is Richard. I'm a songwriter/lyricist. I'm 40 years old. Favorites are Alan Jackson, Reba, Randy, Clint Black, Dolly Parton and many others. Would love to hear from anyone who loves country. No inmates, please. **Richard Allen Tant, 2135 Frink St., Lot #47, Cayce, SC 29033.**

*Hello from Michigan! I'm a 36-year-old female who loves country music. Favorites are Judds, Garth, Randy, Tanya, K.T. Oslin and Kathy Mattea. Would like to hear from guys, 31-40. Please, no inmates. **Lisa Heyob, 9880 Coman Rd., Hudson, MI 49247.**

*Hi. My name is Cody, and I'm a displaced Southern Californian temporarily incarcerated in Oklahoma. I would like to hear from females who enjoy country music and making new friends. Favorites are George Jones, Alan Jackson, Mark Chesnutt, Clint, K.T. Oslin, Holly Dunn, Reba and others. **Cody Partain #192355, JHCC/P.O. Box 548, Lexington, OK 73051-0548.**

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Moon Mullican

King of country boogie piano players, Moon Mullican brought a different kind of stringed instrument to the peak of its form and the top of the charts.

.....
by Rich Kienzle

Moon Mullican wasn't the first country pianist. And despite his Texas roots, he wasn't the first pianist in Western swing. A fellow Texan, Fred "Papa" Calhoun of Milton Brown's Musical Brownies, holds that distinction.

Moon was, however, the first successful country singer to accompany himself on piano, incorporating blues, barrelhouse and boogie woogie (piano-playing) into his music. By the early 1940's there were other white boogie woogie pianists on the scene, most notably bandleader Freddie Slack. But in the country field, nobody came close to Moon during that period.

He was also the first country pianist to rack up hit recordings, recordings that paved the way for the brilliant (if less well-known) California-based country boogie pianist, Merrill Moore, and most importantly, for Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley, who as kids listened not only to black pianists they heard playing at Haney's Big House in Ferriday, Louisiana, but also to Moon and Merrill Moore. Every country singer-pianist today can trace his or her roots to the big man from East Texas.

Born March 29, 1909, in the hamlet of Corrigan, Texas, about 60 miles north of both Houston and Beaumont, Aubrey Mullican grew up in a respectable (and religious) farm home in East Texas' piney woods country, the same area that nurtured George Jones. The locale was loaded with lumber camps manned by black laborers, camps that typically included raucous, sometimes violent "juke joints"—or bars—where the music of choice was blues and barrelhouse piano.

Blacks in the area knew that music well, including Joe Jones, a sharecropper on the Mullican farm. In 1917, when Aubrey was eight, Jones taught him to play blues guitar. Then Aubrey's father



COURTESY DOUGLAS B. GREEN COLLECTION

Calhoun, pianists became an integral part of Western swing bands.

After Brown died in 1936, the original Brownies disbanded. Two Brownie sidemen, pioneer electric steel guitarist Bob Dunn and fiddler Cliff Bruner, each started their own groups. Moon caught on with The Blue Ridge Playboys as a singing pianist, then joined Bruner's Texas Wanderers. Though Bruner could have hired a better pianist, Moon's personality onstage won out.

Over the next few years, he worked with Bruner and recorded with various Texas and Louisiana artists, ranging from The Sunshine Boys, The Modern Mountaineers and Bob Dunn's Vagabonds to vocalist Buddy Jones and Moon's close friend, the legendary Jimmie Davis. On a 1939 Bruner recording, Moon sang the first country trucker song ever recorded, Ted Daffan's "Truck Driver's Blues." But his repertoire also included everything from blues to pop numbers like "Blue Skies," engagingly sung and featuring formidable, driving piano work.

He led a touring band for Jimmie Davis during Davis' successful 1943 campaign for Louisiana governor. Through World War II, Moon and Cliff Bruner also led a band called The Showboys that played around Beaumont, Texas, at clubs and dancehalls. Then in 1946, Moon signed with King Records. His first session that year yielded 16 songs, including a satirical version of fiddler-singer Harry Choates' "Jole Blon," the first Cajun song to be a hit nationwide. Early in 1947, Moon's version, "New Jole Blon," became his first national hit, as did the follow-up, "Jole Blon's Sister."

In 1948, the sentimental "Sweeter Than the Flowers" went to Number Three nationwide and stayed on the charts 26 weeks. Other recordings he made for King ranged from blues tunes

bought a \$20 pump organ so his daughters could learn to play for the church services the family attended three times a week. When the boy appropriated the organ to teach himself the kind of blues the piney woods piano players created, his father was not amused.

By age 14 he was good enough to walk into a Lufkin, Texas, cafe and two hours later walk out of the place with \$40 in tips. The son's vision of a better way to live than farming brought him into open conflict with his father, and following a blowup at age 16, the boy left the farm for Houston. He played in cafes, dives and wherever he could find work. During that time he picked up the name Moon, either because of his night working hours or as a shortened version of the nickname "Moonshine." By the mid-1930's Milton Brown and The Musical Brownies were Texas' premier Western swing band (Bob Wills was in Tulsa by then). When The Brownies featured pianist Papa

to hot boogie woogie instrumentals that followed Moon's professed philosophy—"You got to make those bottles bounce on the table." While touring in Florida in 1949 he became friendly with Hank Williams, then the Opry's hottest commodity. Hank talked Opry management into adding Moon to the cast.

With the lack of foresight that often plagued Opry management in those days, WSM was reluctant to hire a piano player because, in their parochial view, Opry artists played stringed instruments, not pianos. Someone must have pointed out that pianos were stringed instruments, and Moon joined, billed as "King of The Hillbilly Piano Players," in 1949. That year, on a trip to California, he played piano on Tennessee Ernie Ford's Capitol recording of "Country Junction."

Even more productive were the years 1950 and 1951. "I'll Sail My Ship Alone" was Number One for four weeks in 1950. His longtime affinity for pop favorites kicked in with his Number Four hit version of the Nat King Cole pop hit, "Mona Lisa," that same year, followed by a Number Five version of "Goodnight Irene." In 1951, his hot "Cherokee Boogie" came at the peak of the country boogie craze that predated rock 'n' roll. It

was his final hit at King, but hardly his last good record.

Moon often toured with Hank Williams. According to various accounts, in 1952 the two were in back of a plane piloted by Minnie Pearl's husband, Henry Cannon, who frequently flew Opry stars to shows. Moon created a set of Cajun lyrics, and the pair combined it with the melody of the old tune, "Big Texas," to create "Jambalaya," though Hank got sole composer credit.

Moon finally left the Opry in 1955, feeling he could make more money on the road and be free of having to be back at the Ryman on Saturday nights. His records weren't selling, so on his final King session in early 1956, he was backed by a Bill Haley-styled rock 'n' roll band, Boyd Bennett and The Rockets. The records failed and Moon left King. He spent two years touring and playing in Texas before signing with Coral Records in 1958.

The 21 songs he cut for Coral were a mixed bag, some good, some bad, most in the middle. None sold, and Owen Bradley, who produced them, admitted in 1991 that "We loved makin' records with him....We did everything we knew how to do and it just didn't work." Moon, over-

weight and nearly 50, couldn't have made the transition to rock star, either.

In the early 60's Moon, like former King artists Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins, moved to Starday Records. He had his final hit on Starday, "Ragged But Right," in 1961. While playing a 1962 show in Kansas City, he suffered a heart attack onstage. A year later, he returned to the same stage and, as the show was recorded for a Starday LP, performed a rip-roaring boogie version of "Pipeliner Blues," a song he first recorded with Cliff Bruner in 1940 and had recorded again for King.

Moon continued recording in the early 60's for small labels, but declining health and awful musical arrangements made these recordings sound less modern than his earlier work. After a final Nashville session in the mid-60's, he returned to Beaumont. Shortly after midnight on New Year's Day, 1967, he suffered another heart attack and died two hours later. The funeral took place on January 3, and Moon was eulogized by another legend: his old friend Jimmie Davis.

Albums Available

See For CMSA Members Only page.



Moon Mullican and other Opry artists helped celebrate National Life's Golden Jubilee in 1951.

Readers Create

Is It True?

What we have here is "The Unfaithfulness Trilogy." Brenda McGinnis, a member in Florida, gets the ball rolling with "Am I the One to Blame." Brenda is from Bonita Springs.

Am I the One to Blame

Should I believe the rumors
Or should I believe you
I've got my doubts
But I keep shutting them out
Hoping they're not true
But it's all over town
How you keep putting me down

Are they only rumors
Or is it really true

You've been running around
You've been untrue
What did you need
That I failed to give
Am I the one to blame

People turn and stare
They whisper when I walk by
They're calling me a fool
They say you're leaving me
But face to face
You say it isn't true
But I can tell you've changed

Are they only rumors
Or is it really true
You've been running around
You've been untrue
What did you need
That I failed to give
Am I the one to blame

Are they only rumors
Or is it really true —Brenda McGinnis

Yes, It Is

Roger Farren is a member in Bradford, Pennsylvania, who says he's a struggling songwriter. In part two of our trilogy, Roger takes it a step further.

My Heart's Telling My Head Rumors

My heart's telling my head rumors
That I can't believe are true,
Somewhere in the past
I thought I lost my love for you.

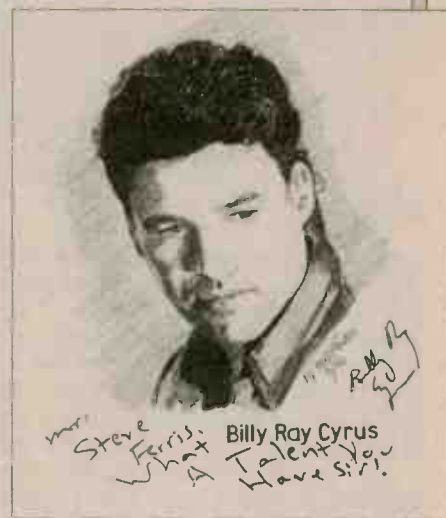
When I saw him walking out
I thought that I was through.
Even though I can't forgive you,
My heart's telling me the truth.
Why did you have to do it to me,
You were so untrue.

My head was so foolish
for ever trusting you.
When the past comes to haunt me,
I know that you'll be there.
My heart's telling my head rumors
That I can't believe are true.
My heart's telling my head rumors
That I can't believe are true.

Can't shake this feeling
My heart's telling me the truth.
Even though I can't forgive you,
What was the reason—I wish I really knew.
When the past comes to haunt me,
I know that you'll be there.

My heart's telling my head rumors
That I can't believe are true.
My heart's telling my head rumors
That I can't believe are true.
Can't shake this feeling
My heart's telling me the truth.

—Roger Farren



Billy Ray Cyrus Captured

Stephen R. Ferris of Beaumont, Texas, sends along his sketch of Billy Ray Cyrus. Says Stephen, "I enjoy being able to meet the stars and see their reaction to my work." Billy Ray signed the drawing for Stephen.

Well, Goodbye to You!

And Connie Benson of Trout Creek, Montana, comes in with part three. She's solving the problem once and for all.

Love on the Lam

"Quick, gimme a bus ticket, fast as you can;
I'm running out on my cheating man.
He's been paintin' the town, sleepin' around;
Struttin' his stuff—well, I've had enough!

Ain't gonna be hurt no more by that jerk.
Can't take it no more; don't need no encore.
Had enough of him and his wanton ways,
To last, at least, the rest of my days."

"What destination—a ticket to where?"
"No inclination—I really don't care.
Make it the first bus out, on any old route.
As fast and as far as his guitar will take me.
Away from his lies to never forsake me.

He always enjoys taking me for a ride.
And I always wind up paying with my pride.
I'm turning the tables—taking him for a ride.
This trip's on him—take it out of his hide.

Don't want nothin' more to do with the brute.
But he's right on my heels in hot pursuit.
Ain't me he's after—it's his guitar and waffer.
Stole his most prized possession,
That'll teach him a lesson.

It'll be my ticket right out of his life.
I'm tired of being a two-timer's wife.
Hey, hold that bus—gotta get aboard fast.
Lover boy's car just roared in full blast.

Hey, Lover Boy, since you love to kiss,
Here's a chance you won't want to miss.
Go in the depot and kiss your guitar goodbye;
It now belongs to the Greyhound guy."

—Connie Benson



A Tippin Fan in Spain

Jordi Guasch is a 27-year-old cartoonist from Barcelona, Spain. Jordi writes, "There are a few country music fans in Spain, but the music is not promoted there, and many people don't know what it means...I fell in love with country music when I was 16. Last summer I went to the U.S.A. I found *Country Music Magazine* in Nashville and subscribed. Your magazine is the best. I wait for it in my box, and can't wait to take another trip to 'hillbilly land'." Jordi's cartoon was inspired by Tippin's recent single, "Ain't Nothin' Wrong with the Radio."



kids up on stage and sings to them, which he follows with a passionate plea for everyone in the audience to jump up, race to the concession stands and buy Jim Stafford souvenirs. He gets a standing ovation, and everyone does.

Just the Facts Please:

Branson, Missouri, sits in the foothills of the Ozarks like a happy tick on a big, ole dog. Along the fragile ribbon of Highway 76, which bisects the town, and the pitifully few back roads, there are 26 indoor music theaters and three outdoor amphitheaters, which clocks out to seating for some 56,000 people. The theaters are owned (or leased, or, at the very least, inhabited) by some of the most recognizable names in country music: Roy Clark, Mel Tillis, Jim Stafford, Willie Nelson, Ray Stevens, Mickey Gilley, Moe Bandy. In addition to the name theaters, there's also the Grand Palace, with either Glen

Campbell or Louise Mandrell in residence, along with a touring country act (it was Reba McEntire the week I was there), the Lowes Theater, with Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn, Andy Williams' Moon River Theater, Shoji Tabuchi's place, some lesser lights like Boxcar Willie, The Baldknobbers, The Foggy River Boys, Christy Lane, The Braschlers and probably a batch of others that slipped through while I wasn't looking. That doesn't count Silver Dollar City, a turn-of-the-century theme park, which has its own amphitheater and house act, The Branson Brothers, recently signed to a Nashville deal. And, of course, that's not including the Elvis-A-Rama, the Bonnie and Clyde Death Car or the aforementioned Rhino, about which, more later.

And the artists are actually in-residence. They usually play two shows a day—just like Vegas—except at decidedly un-Vegas hours, 2 P.M. and 8 P.M. Also at

decidedly un-Vegas prices—the average whack for a show is under \$20. Combine that with cheap motel rooms and unlimited biscuits and gravy, and you're looking at four million tourists a year.

What does that mean for the artists involved?

Numbers are hard to come by, but there's an intriguing rumor floating around, something about Mel Tillis taking \$7 million out of his theater in 18 months.

In fact, Branson may be the most awesome money-making device ever conceived for an artist. All those T-shirts Jim Stafford was hawking add up to big dollars, and they're dollars that go directly into the artists' pocket—which, to tell the truth, I kind of like.

A Secret History of Branson

It's all the bastard offspring of a banjo picker and hole in the ground. This is true. The banjo picker is Roy Clark. The hole in

the ground is Marvel Cave. Marvel Cave lies underneath what is now the Silver Dollar City theme park. For what it's worth, back in the late 1800's, America went bonkers for caves. Visiting caves became big business, and Marvel Cave began taking tourists in 1894. The tourists would ride up to the cave entrance by mule, climb down the first ledge on a ladder, then slide into the cave proper carrying lanterns. In 1946 Hugo and Mary Herschend came for a visit and decided to stay for the rest of their lives. They also leased Marvel Cave for 99 years and began holding square dances in the cave's Cathedral Room, which was a cool pre-air-conditioned 58-degrees. The Ozark Jubilee, a musical group, soon set up business in the Cathedral Room, and music was in Branson to stay. The theme park grew up over the foundations of an 1880 town that once stood in front of the cave, and eventually attracted artisans, craftspeople and

the biggest cut, plus the additional sales of T-shirts, souvenirs, tapes, frisbees, hats, whatever?

"And suppose you could do that without being on the road, without the expenses of being on the road all the time," he says. "You're on the road. You know what the road takes out of you. Suppose you could live like a more-or-less normal person, get the money and still make the fans happy?"

I nod sagely again, although I'm still not sure Roy is firing on all eight cylinders. What he's talking about is a truly bizarre scheme to build a Middle American Las Vegas, only without the gambling, boozing and cheap women. A place where a formerly traveling musician could play golf in the morning, have a leisurely lunch on the lake and do a show in the afternoon. A place where everyone could be in bed before midnight, roughly the same time Las Vegas is really heating up. Other country singers, he is saying, will be com-



"All those T-shirts Jim Stafford was hawking add up to big dollars, and they're dollars that go directly into the artists' pocket—which, to tell the truth, I kind of like."

even more musicians to its 1880's theme.

A quick cut to the future, Chicago five or six years ago, where Roy Clark and I are hanging around backstage between shows.

"You ever heard of Branson, Missouri?" asks Roy. I admit that, to the best of my knowledge, I've never even heard the name. "Well," he says, "you're going to."

He then explains how he's moving to Branson and building a theater there, because the fishing's really good and there are great golf courses nearby. I am clearly puzzled. Fishing and great golf courses are, I suppose, a valid reason for moving someplace, but building a theater there?

"Look at it this way, Michael," he says. "People love the idea of Vegas, but they don't necessarily want to go to Vegas to gamble. A lot of people want to go to the shows, and I'll give them a Vegas show without Vegas."

I nod my head sagely, but, on the whole, I think Roy has been up a little too high in his Steerman stunt plane. Roy is clearly enthused, and he methodically lays out the economics of the road for me—a touring musician has to carry a band, a bus, sound, lights, entourage and dozens of other money-sappers. There's also the fact that musicians are only paid a cut of the gate, or a fee that represents a cut of the gate. Even in Vegas, he goes on, musicians are working for the House, who gets the biggest cut. But suppose musicians owned the House? Suppose musicians got

ing, because they can't afford not to come. Mel Tillis is already on the way. *Everybody* will follow.

I, of course, am not so sure, which is why Roy Clark is rich and I am not.

Meanwhile, Back at the Camel

Want to know the best song in the best show in Branson? Ray Stevens doing "I Saw Elvis in a UFO," which features a UFO, every bit as cool as Jim Stafford's blimp, some hot aliens in pink body-stockings and the King Himself, who would surely be in Branson if he was currently inhabiting this Plane of Existence.

Ray Stevens has Branson wired. He walks into town and immediately figures out that Branson isn't about *country music*. It's about *entertainment*, that semi-mythical category created by none other than the Country Music Association. The biggest winner of the annual CMA Awards isn't the *Singer* of the Year, or the *Performer* of the Year—it's the *Entertainer* of the Year. For about five years in a row, I asked every winner of the Entertainer of the Year just exactly what an entertainer, versus a singer or performer, was. I got some interesting answers, the best of which was, "You know, Michael, a little singing, a little dancing, some costume changes, tell some jokes, like a Vegas act. That's entertainment."

That's Ray Stevens. His showhouse is Vegas-slick, and his show is a well-oiled,



Michael Bane at Shoji's.



Shoji Tabuchi.



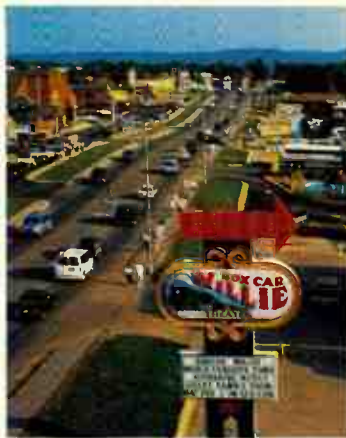
Danny Davis' Nashville Brass in Branson.

well-honed Vegas machine. It's also constantly sold out, the hottest ticket in Branson. It's that concept of entertainment that brought Andy Moon River Williams, who is hardly a country music singer, to Branson. It's also what has attracted... (long pause for dramatic effect)... Wayne Newton, The King of Las Vegas, to rural Missouri.

Interestingly enough, the entertainment concept has been a stumbling block for some of the more dyed-in-the-wool country artists. Willie Nelson, who is probably the entertainer of our generation, initially stumbled in Branson. He don't dance. He don't joke. He don't make



The World's Largest Ladies' Room, an attraction at Shoji's.



The strip.



Branson pioneer Roy Clark.



Old stand-bys on the strip.



Mel Tillis.



Moe Bandy's home base.



The new Grand Palace.



Shoppers' delight.



Andy Williams' Moon River Theater.

patter with two girl singers. He don't come on stage until late, when most of the folks who visit Branson are thinking motel thoughts. Mickey Gilley is still having trouble honing his drop-dead honky tonk act into the Branson format. Jokes about hard-drinking and sleazy women fall dead-flat on Branson audiences, many of whom come in organized church groups. Free advice, Mickey? Create an ersatz Gilley's, complete with some genuine mechanical bulls wound down so normal people could ride 'em. Heck, I'd like to see one of those mechanical *Urban Cowboy* bulls again, kind of an artifact from the 1970's. Mickey does, however, have the

two best-looking girl singers in Branson. I don't understand why everyone has to have two girl singers. Maybe it's a Branson thing.

The Biggest Surprise in Branson

Moe Bandy has gone from being a rodeo clown to a complete entertainment machine and bosom buddy of George Bush, who actually comes to Branson and hangs out with Moe. Moe flat cranks, working the stage like a dervish. His brochure (everybody in Branson has, along with two girl singers, a brochure, by the way) says that ole Moe feels as though his fans are like guests sitting in his living room, and,

by golly, that's the way he acts. He's slick, funny and sings his hits with a commitment that belies two shows a day for the better part of nine months. I personally think Moe is angling for a spot as Secretary of State, but no one will confirm it.

The Secret Branson Anthem

I'm going to let you in on a big secret about Branson now. A famous songwriter—so famous that if I named just one of his megahits, you'd recognize it in a flash—visited Branson and was so blown away he wrote a song about it, something songwriters are wont to do. Then he read the lyrics, came to his senses and realized

if the song ever got out, he was in a heap of trouble.

Here, for the first time anywhere, folks, a few lines from "Hillbilly Purgatory":

There were miles and miles of hillbilly theaters

*One for every fallen country star
A million blue-hairs wearing Elvis
shirts and bumper stickers*

*That said 'Honk If You Remember
Where You Are'*

Don't tell anybody where you heard these lines.

Dark Visions, Elvis-A-Rama and The Last Rhinestone Cowboy

I'm sorry I tried to climb the granite facade at the Andy Williams Moon River Theater. It was either that or bungee-jump at Branson Bungee, next door to the Outback Cafe, the only place in Branson that doesn't serve biscuits and gravy. I'd had alligator tail sandwiches there every day, and I'd had some horrible vision of hitting the end of the bungee cord and disgorging the University of Florida mascot. All my dreams are troubled, seeing, as I am, three shows in the afternoon and three at night. I become convinced someone will try and steal my Shoji Tabuchi T-shirt. I drink watered-down margaritas. It's time for the Elvis-A-Rama.

My friend and I sneak in the back way. Not only will we not have to pay, but hopefully no one will see us—incognito at the Elvis-A-Rama. It is a small, closed room, surrounded by huge murals which depict *The Life of Elvis*, including various icons, mystical elements and *The Dove of Peace*, which looks like a pigeon to my un-enlightened eyes. A solemn narration tells us about *The Life*, while the only other people in the room, another couple, point and occasionally applaud. I am hyperventilating until we get to *The Ghost of Elvis, Leaving the Building for the Last Time*, where I am deeply moved and wishing seriously for popcorn. We escape with our lives, and there is nothing left to do but head downtown, to the lair of the Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy, David Allan Coe, well off Branson's beaten path. Sadly, David is out of town, but we talk to a Coe daughter who's manning the museum-cum-shrine-cum-truly crazy place David has assembled. It is as if he has gathered up all the weirdness, missing from the rest of Branson, and stuffed it into a single storefront, along with cowboy artifacts, movie posters, autographed romance novels, Willie Nelson memorabilia and some really whacked stuff. I think of the Native American concept of *Sin-Eater*, who sucks out people's sins and leaves them clean for the Afterworld. *Weird-Eater*—I like that. I leave a note for David, and run away, to the smooth sand-

stone cliffs south of Branson, where I spend the day climbing, and the only music is the sound of wind rustling the trees, the occasional buzz of a mosquito and the metallic clatter of my equipment.

The Biggest Body-Count in Branson

Okay, so she's not a regular, but Reba McEntire wins hands-down. Her full-blown Vegas show at the Grand Palace, the 4,000 seat mega-theater owned by the Herschend family, features clips from her movies. Amazingly, the clips are of *La Reba* blasting away at evil dudes, the entire Mexican army and giant

practiced, refined. You will see a little stage patter, some jokes about the traffic (Andy Williams' are the best), joshing with the band and cute asides.

You will see good shows, but you will not see great music. If I have any objection to Planet Branson at all, aside from the traffic, the funnel cake parlors and the absence of a truly great Putt-Putt golf course, although there are pretenders, it is the equal absence of great music. Great music is built on risk; great shows are built on the avoidance of risk. I am watching a sad Merle Haggard covering for Willie Nelson, trying desperately to fit one of the finest shows in country music into a totally alien format, and I think of another show. In my mind, I am in Montana a few years back, watching Michael Martin Murphey perform off the back of a flatbed truck parked in a gravel quarry. I am sitting on the roof of a rusted-out Chevy pickup drinking warm Pabst Blue Ribbon with a cowgirl from outside Missoula. The sun is starting to set, and Murphey launches into "Wildfire," a song I never particularly cared for. But something happens. *By the dark of the moon*, he sings, *I planted...* The Big Sky turns red as the sun drops below the mountains, shading to violet to black with a wash of stars. As Murphey sings *She's coming for me, I know*, the wind comes out of the mountains, cold, with the promise of winter snow and summer dreams. The small hairs on the back of my neck rise. I look over at

the cowgirl and see two tears roll down her cheeks. She takes my hand in both of hers, calloused from the ropes and the saddles, and listens to the wind and the music and the magic that, sometimes, comes.

The magic will not come, I suspect, to Branson, and, for that, I'm sad.

The Last Word on The Rhino

I'm ready, I tell my friend. Bring on the *World's Largest Rhino*! I imagine him (or her, as the case may be), pawing the Missouri dirt, its huge horn ready to take a chunk out of the next RV that crosses its path. I see it shake the RV savagely, Tupperware and Spam flying out of shattered windows. It is raw and elemental, pure animal force, hoss, and is *that* country.

But when we get to the Wilderness Safari Drive-Thru Park, we discover the worst. Despite the pictures, which show a genuine, accept-no-substitutes-rhino, *The World's Largest Rhino!* is to be made of poured concrete, and it's only half-finished. ■



After documenting the awful truth about The World's Largest Rhino, our own Michael Bane saw the importance of riding The Plastic Gorilla.



flesh-eating worms, machine guns, pistols, rifles—it's pretty cool. The crowd goes crazy. I applaud wildly.

The Bottom Line on Branson

Here it is—you can see more country stars in two days in Branson than in six months in Nashville. They are in residence. They will sing their hits. They will sign autographs and let you be photographed with your arm around their necks. Moe Bandy might kiss you—yeech!

What you will see, however, are Vegas-styled shows. They are good, but they are scripted. Even those cute little spontaneous comments are written, rehearsed,

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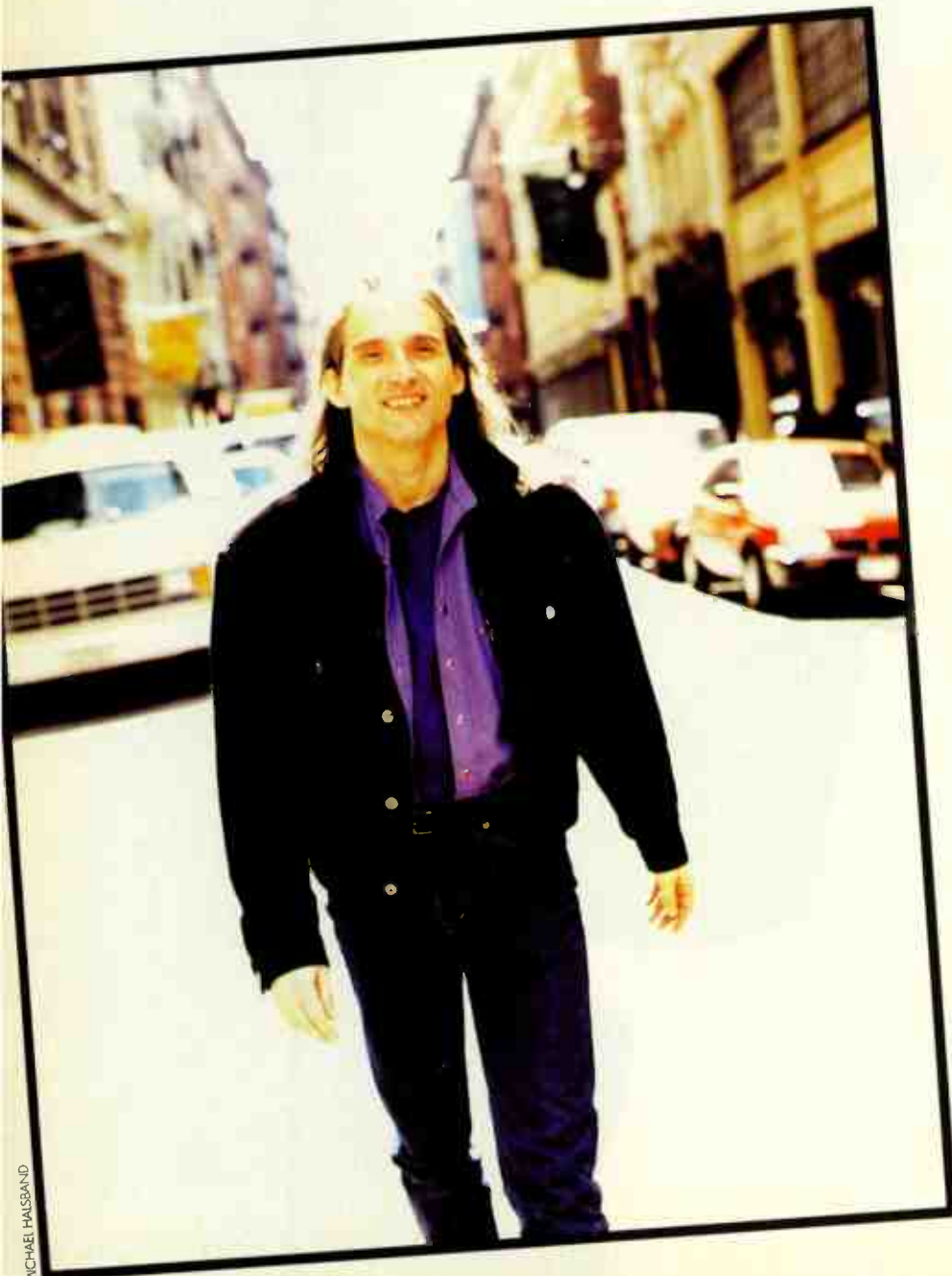
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JIMMIE DALE GILMORE

And The Beat Goes On



Jimmie Dale's been singing country music tied together with blues, pop and folk for decades. His melodies and lyrics have always appealed to a wide-ranging, if somewhat limited, audience. Now, he's ready for the mainstream to catch on. By John Morthland



Western Beat, they called it, and the first time Austin singer-songwriter Jimmie Dale Gilmore heard the term, he lit right up. And why not? It seemed to speak directly to what he and his running buddies—Joe Ely, Butch Hancock, Kevin Welch, Jim Lauderdale—were all about, what with the literary allusions to the Beat Generation doubling up with the more obvious musical references. So what if it also smacked of one of those marketing terms they dream up on the 52nd floor of a Manhattan glass and steel tower—this time it really did illuminate the music, and so Western Beat it was.

Jimmie, a classic late-bloomer whose major-label debut came in 1991 after a checkered two-plus decades as a legend on the folk circuit, was at the '91 Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland not long after the release of *After Awhile*, his debut Elektra/Nonesuch album. The evening's bill included Brenda Lee and The Texas Tornados as well as Gilmore, Ely, Hancock, Welch and Lauderdale. In addition to their individual sets, the first three were to perform as a reunion of The Flatlanders, a legendary Lubbock, Texas, country-folk collaboration of the early 70's that recorded one album for Shelby Singleton's Plantation label released only on eight-track.

The festival promoters came up with Western Beat as a rubric under which these performances would take place and, as Jimmie recalls, "We were all sitting around a table, and we went, wow, we liked that, it had this funny, twisted sense of humor to it that is what binds us all together, because our styles are all so utterly different. And that term's got to do not so much with a style as with a whole perspective; we're the people who are like the hybrids of country with 50's and 60's urban music, folk and rock 'n' roll. That's what it boils down to, a solid bedrock country thing but much more of an influence of

MICHAEL HALSBAND

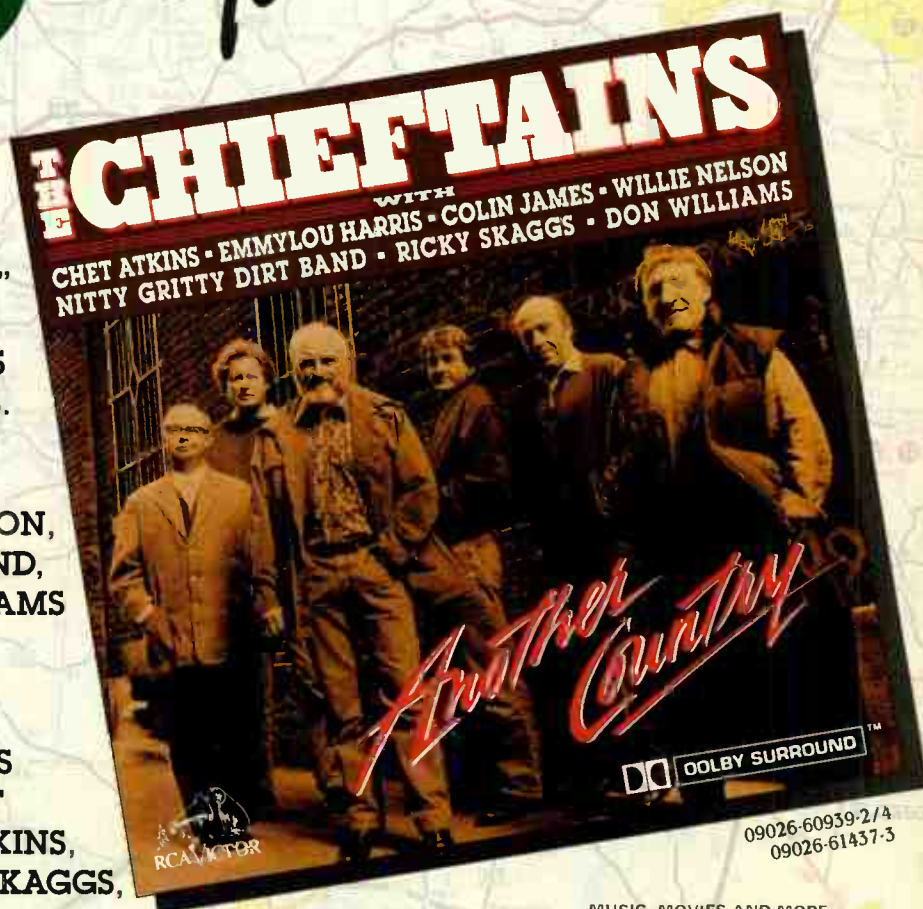
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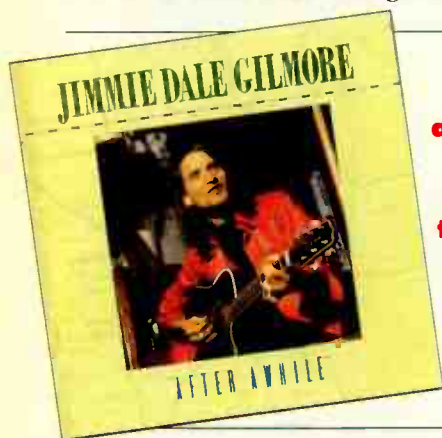


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rock 'n' roll and folk than the real straight Nashville has. The whole idea was that it referred to Western music and Western swing but also to the Beat Generation; that double meaning is the thing, because that's what we are, too, the country music people who are also influenced by the literary movement of the beats."

Thus, when Jimmie Dale starts listing his influences, he comes up with Jack Kerouac as well as Ernest Tubb, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, George Jones, Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams. He'll also mention English writers like Aldous Huxley and W. Somerset Maugham alongside Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly. Then he'll get you started on Bob Dylan and Lightnin' Hopkins and Vedantic teachings, the Hindu wing of Eastern religion...

Now all this combined might seem like a mindful coming from a country singer, but one of Jimmie Dale's real gifts is his



"It referred to Western music and Western swing but also to the Beat Generation; that double meaning is the thing, because that's what we are, too, the country music people who are also influenced by the literary movement of the beats."

ability to unobtrusively incorporate it all into his songs. You don't think of classic English literature when you hear him singing in a grainy, weather-beaten voice that instantly recalls Jimmie Rodgers' era without sounding at all like Rodgers; you don't think of Vedantic teachings. If anything you think of...Western Beat. It's there in the elusiveness of "Tonight I Think I'm Gonna Go Downtown," which sounds like the theme song to a disillusioned modern Western movie that Sam Peckinpah never got around to making. It's in the bluegrass whimsy and jumpiness of "My Mind's Got a Mind of Its Own," the odd imagery of "Treat Me Like a Saturday Night," the hard-learned lessons of "Go to Sleep Alone," the recovery-movement Everyman declaration of "These Blues," and the simultaneous doom and redemption of "Midnight Train," the train song to end all train songs, with a spacious, loping beat that identifies it immediately as West Texas music. All of Jimmie's music is similarly grounded, if only because the melodies, neither purely folk nor purist country, have a timeless quality to them that suggests the richness and mystery of life.

Around Austin, Jimmie has always

been recognized as an artist who could do no wrong, no matter how self-destructive his tendencies used to be. Jimmie played the opening night of the fabled Armadillo World Headquarters, that National Guard Armory where hippie and redneck first discovered they had something in common, and he played the last night, too. Though he had two spotty releases on indie label Hightone in the mid-80's, there's a palpable feeling around town that with the success of his *After While* in Elektra/Nonesuch's American Explorer Series (he's since been promoted to the parent label) his time has finally come.

"Things are really happening alright," he affirms between bites of mid-afternoon vegetarian enchiladas at La Zona Rosa, a delightfully garish mock-border-cantina where arty Austin types hang out, and where Jimmie often plays. He's just returned from five days on the West Coast, the highlight of which was an outdoor gala

come back to the music later. He just kept taking it all in as he matured, so that after Hank and Jimmie and Ernest and Lefty came Flatt and Scruggs, and then Baez and Dylan, and then The Beatles. If one of his urban folkie friends put down Hank as being too cornball, if one of his Dylan friends put Flatt and Scruggs down as being sentimental, if one of his Nashville friends put Dylan down for not being able to sing, well, Jimmie Dale was always right there to set them straight.

"Because of my singing style there's never really been any question about me being country," he admits. "Automatically, I knew I'd be considered country no matter what. I never really said I wanted to be a country singer, I've just always done whatever I liked, and it's pretty far-ranging although to me there's also a tie between them all. It's a certain sensibility in the lyric and melodic content. Like, I like rhythm and blues, I have a great love for that singing, but the real love that I have for music comes down to the emotional content of the melody and lyrics. That's what ties together the best blues, pop, country. That's what Hank Williams had—melody and intense, heartfelt lyrics."

Jimmie was born in 1945 into a family in which, he says, "Country music was almost like a religion. My dad played electric guitar and I loved it, but somehow, I never had the feel, I never understood it. When I first discovered a good acoustic guitar, I fell in love. That hadn't been what we had around the house, but I think if we'd had one around, I'd have started playing earlier."

At the time Jimmie started school, the family moved from the tiny town of Tulia to Buddy Holly's nearby hometown of Lubbock, and his dad quit picking to enroll in college to study bacteriology. He remembers his dad taking him to see Elvis there when Johnny Cash was the headliner, but he didn't get the bug himself until the early 60's, when folk music was the rage. "Flatt and Scruggs were really my favorites, because their bluegrass combined my two things of country and folk." Like Ely and Hancock, his fellow Lubbock natives, he was also influenced by such local eccentric songwriters as Terry Allen, who still picks a little today though his chief notoriety comes in the art world, and Al Strehli, who never pursued music, though his sister Angela is perhaps the best-loved singer in the sizeable Austin blues scene.

Jimmie began performing solo in the mid-60's, when he also bummed around the country a lot, but by the early 70's he'd returned to Lubbock and teamed up with Hancock and Ely and others in The Flatlanders. They forged a Lubbock-to-Austin link that continues to flourish to-

in Sunnyvale, near San Jose, that also featured Ricky Van Shelton (who made a convert of Jimmie) and Emmylou Harris (one of his perennial favorites). In a couple of days, he leaves again for Seattle and another swing down the coast. He's sifting through material now for his next album, targeted for early 1993 release; this one will come out on Elektra itself; unlike its predecessor, which was aimed squarely at the rootsy pop audience, it will be jointly promoted and marketed by Kyle Lehnig's Asylum label outfit in Nashville. "That means I'm gonna be in the position of getting the best of both labels. This is my first real exposure to the mainstream country crowd," he says.

And that's the way it should be, because there's a crucial difference between Jimmie Dale, whose father played guitar in an E.T.-inspired West Texas honky tonk band, and all those folkies and pop singer-songwriters who discovered country music via Bob Dylan's *Nashville Skyline*, The Byrds' *Sweethearts of the Rodeo*, or the collected works of Gram Parsons. Jimmie never left his country roots, not even for a while; he didn't throw out the Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams records when he got into The Beatles, and then

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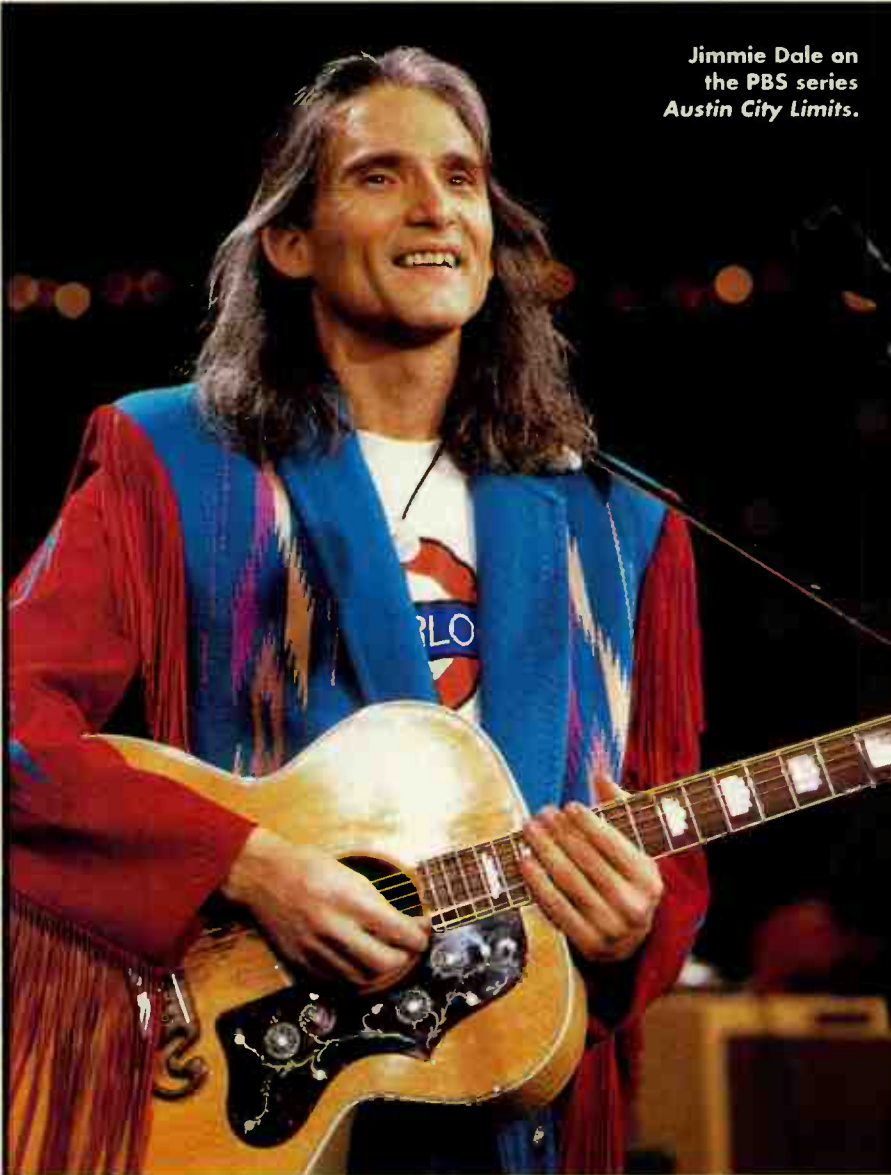
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Jimmie Dale on
the PBS series
Austin City Limits.

day, but were hugely misunderstood when they went to Nashville and thus never got a fair shot. One promo single (Jimmie's lovely "Dallas") was released, plus the eight-track, which died immediately. The group flew apart, though many of the songs from their 1972 Nashville sessions (finally released in album/cassette/CD form in 1990 by Rounder) appeared on subsequent albums by the three frontmen. Ely resurfaced as Texas' favorite kick-ass country-rocker; his career has threatened to take off nationally several times without ever quite doing so, though his new *Love and Danger* (released through MCA's Nashville division) shows he's as deserving as ever. Butch has become one of the true self-sufficient legends of the international folk circuit, with nearly two dozen releases on his own labels, and is probably best known to mainstream country fans via Emmylou's version of his "If I Were a Bluebird." Both remember The Flatlanders' Nashville experience in disparaging terms, but

Jimmie, well, Jimmie believes in forgive and forget.

"See, the other side of that coin is that Nashville is where we recorded it, Nashville made that possible. A lot my friends said I was crazy to go to Nashville at all, you know that big rivalry between Nashville and Texas, but nobody else was interested in even recording us," he points out. "I don't think there's ever been that much enmity between Nashville and Austin, that's something that just looks good in print; I see them like two legs walking together except they're different, utterly different. And like I said earlier, I could just never perceive Nashville as this big ogre, this big enemy, cuz I was always aware that a big portion of my favorite music had come from there."

By the time The Flatlanders split, Jimmie was deeply into his spiritual studies, and he spent 1974 through 1980 living in Denver in a spiritual community that followed teenage guru Maharaj Ji. He continued making music, but not pursuing

a career, until he left Denver. "I got to the point where I thought I'd gotten what I need out of it," he explains. "I came to the conclusion that music was my calling, and that not only was there not any contradiction between that stuff and playing music, but also that it really all went together. I've had my bouts with drugs and alcohol, and of course that plays into it, too. But I came to believe I could integrate my life in music with my spiritual life.

"Then I came back to the old routine in Austin, and I quickly degenerated back into the same old patterns. And what was happening through the 80's was integrating those two things—to keep what was good about that life, the musical life and world, and get rid of what's unhealthy about it in my own life. That's the way I perceived it, and I don't know how this translates to the public or whatever, but I honestly believe that my so-called success musically and career-wise has been due to my coming to some integrating of those contradictory parts of myself."

Which is to say he's progressed steadily since putting the drink and drugs behind him. The two Hightone albums proved stepping-stones to the major-label debut with Elektra/Nonesuch, and Jimmie is writing more than ever, singing better than ever, and taking it all in stride. He still listens with big ears, too.

"You know, I was out on this trip recently, driving by myself and for the first time in a long time really listening to things on the radio, and every time they played a Garth Brooks song, I started noticing, man, there's a lot going on here. Which is kinda funny because I had gone a long time without paying any attention to him. I had kinda dismissed it, like a prejudice kind of thing. I played a show with Garth in New York City before he got to be so gigantic, and I liked him fine, but...I never did see him as being the next superstar," Jimmie notes. "But once I started listening to him, I thought there was stuff going on musically here that's really interesting—it's not normal, the textures, the layerings of the notes, strange minor chords passing through almost subliminally, little things the piano's doing. It's very complex music, not just a bunch of studio musicians playing charts. You're never gonna hear a copy band get the sense of a Garth Brooks song. I mean, they could play it so people can dance to it and all, but...there's things going on there that's invisible to the surface listener, but I think it's real deliberate, and I think there's a lot of intelligence behind Garth's stuff."

When was the last time you heard a folkie singing the praises of Nashville's most commercial concoction ever? You see, Jimmie Dale Gilmore's just a little bit different than the rest of the pack. And ready, finally, to make it work for him. ■

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Sometimes, one supposes, it's hard to be Tammy Wynette, but now, clearly, isn't one of those times. The one-time Virginia Wynette Pugh, an Alabama girl who started out in a beauty parlor, has weathered the storms of the country music business and emerged with her life—and her magnificent voice—intact. “Justified and Ancient,” her surprise international hit with the English dance duo, KLF, launched her back into the spotlight. This year is her 25th with the former CBS Records (now Sony Music), their longest continuous act. She's working on two new records, has a boxed set of her work on the way and still speaks fondly of Hall of Famer George Jones. The crack 20 Questions team caught up with her in Vegas, where she's still packing them in. This is the second in our 20th Anniversary Celebration series of 20 Questions with some of the legends making CMM's 20 Who Mattered list. Tammy and CMM have been going steady for almost 20 years.

1 Tammy, I haven't seen you in at least 100 years...

Oh, my God, has it been that long? You're dating both of us, you know.

2 It seems like things are going really well for you right now.

You know, everything is wonderful. I couldn't ask for things to be any better—I really couldn't. I'm just really happy now where I am in my career and really happy where I am in my life. It's just really nice.

3 So tell us about this 25th Anniversary collection boxed set.

I was listening to some of it yesterday, and I almost died. They found an old tape of me in Birmingham, Alabama, before I ever came to Nashville, songs that I had written then. And I thought I would have killed to keep that off there.

4 Do you cringe when you listen to it?

Well, I do and I don't. It's not



Tammy, first time on our cover, April 1973.

—by Michael Bane—

20 Questions with TAMMY WYNETTE

real bad, but it's not real good, either. It's listenable, and that's about all.

5 The set is titled *Tears of Fire—why?*

Well, we went through a lot of different names. *Timeless* was one of them. A lot of names, since I've been there almost 26 years. All of a sudden, somebody said that name, and it kind of just stuck with us. Of course, I've been known to do

so many ballads. But I'm not a sad person, and we want to get that across in the set. I don't always do the sad, crying songs.

6 So I see that you and Hillary Clinton are pals again, courtesy of Barbra Streisand.

The only thing I did was I was out in L.A., and they had a fundraiser for Clinton, and I went. You know me, I'm apo-

litical. I've worked for Democratic presidents, and I've worked for Republican presidents. If it's something I want to do, I do it. It was a lot of fun, though, and I enjoyed it. I met a lot of people I wanted to see—just had a real fun night in L.A.

7 When you first heard of La Clinton's comment on you, didn't that really just hack you off?

Well, it really did upset me when I first heard her comment. The thing that upset me the most about it was that she was putting down something I had created so many years ago. And, you know, I had just gotten my two millionth play award for “Stand By Your Man.” It's been played on the radio over two million times. I was really feeling proud of it and thinking that this song had really been good to me, and she comes up with a statement like that. It just really hurt my feelings is all. I'll get over it.

8 So tell me again how you got to be famous in Europe all over again as a dance diva...

I don't know how I got to be famous in Europe! You remember I started working Europe years ago. CBS sent me over there in 1966, and they wanted me to stay 10 days in England, 10 days in Germany, just go around to the small clubs and sing a couple of songs and try to get my name established over there. And I did that for about three years...I've been going over there ever since. I have a great fan club over there and a lot of fans. There's just a lot of people who love country music over there. So these two guys, Billy and Jimmy, in KLF, the English dance group, had grown up on my music. And they called our office and wanted to know if I would be interested in doing this song with them.

9 Had you ever heard their music?

I'd never heard of them. My husband George Richey had, but not me. George called from

the office and said there was a British group wanting me to do something. So I said bring the song home, let me hear it, and I'll decide. Well, he brought it home, and my kids and grandkids were there—it was a special thing going on. And *they* fell in love with the song. And I thought right then and there, the heck with it, I'm gonna do it.

10 *Isn't that the best way to do something like that?*
Yes, because it has to be fun. And I'm still getting Gold records from all over the world for that thing. It's been wonderful.

11 *How many countries did it end up going Number One in?*
Eighteen. I was so amazed. I woke up one morning and the phone was ringing—it usually doesn't ring in my bedroom, I usually turn it off when I go to bed. But the housekeeper was out, and it kept ringing, so I picked it up. "Radio Israel calling," this man said, and I thought, "Israel? What's going on in Israel?" The record had been Number One there for five weeks, and they were calling to talk to me. I could only understand about every third or fourth word, but I tried.

12 *It charted higher on the U.S. pop charts than "Stand By Your Man"?*
Yes, it did. It's been incredible. I was really proud for the reasons I did the song. I did it for all the right reasons. I wanted to do something different, and these guys had grown up on my music and they were so nice to me. And when they asked me to do it, I thought, "What's wrong with doing it? If it comes off terrible, people will laugh at me." And it's not the first time people laughed at me.

13 *That's the truth, isn't it? You have seen your name at the top of the page...*
Yep. Everything that could be written about me has already been written. I can't really tell anymore, you know? Good, bad, it doesn't matter anymore.

14 *Doesn't that give you an enviable level of freedom?*
It really does. It's like in my recording. CBS—I mean Sony; I'll never get used to that—has been so good to me because I've been there 26 years. I don't know of a lot of other artists who've stayed with the same label that long. But they have given me all kinds of

take him is five minutes to put the music to it. We're getting there. I met with Tom Petty in L.A., and he has a song written. I asked him if he wanted me to take it home and listen to it, and he said, "Well, I'd really like to work on it a little bit longer, if you don't mind. If I gave it to you and you didn't like it, I'd be so embarrassed."



Tammy interviews George Jones for CMM, June 1980.

freedom. When I told them about the dance record, they said, "Go for it. Do anything you think you want to do this year." So when Dolly called me and started talking about this next album we're going to do, I didn't even ask Sony. I just said, "Hey, let's do it!"

15 *Is that what you said about the duet album you're doing with Tom Petty, Elton John and Bonnie Raitt?*
Yep. If people say Tammy Wynette is "suddenly" trying to go pop, well, let them say whatever they want. I'm not, of course. But these people are heroes of mine, I love their music. And, you know, a song is not any kind of song until the artist gets a hold of it. If I sing it, it's country, because I sing country. If Elton John sings it, it's a beautiful pop song, because he sings pop.

16 *How is the duet album going?*
Well, Bonnie's already written a song she wants to do. Melissa Etheridge has written two. I met with Elton the other night in Minneapolis, and he said Bernie had already written a song, and all it would

17 *Tell me about the Honky Tonk Angels album with Dolly and Loretta.*
Dolly said we've got to get together and get this thing finished before we got too damned old to sing! We hope it'll be finished in December, because that's about the only time we have to record it. We've already written a few of the songs for it, but Dolly's working on another special, and Loretta's in Branson, Missouri, an awful lot, so it's hard. With me doing this other album, I'm trying to collect songs for both. Heck, I thought it was hard before with just one album!

18 *You're writing with Dolly?*
Well, we went out to her cabin on the lake the other day, so we've been writing a little together. We've been writing some over the telephone, and that's a hoot. You come up with one line, and then you don't like it. Try this one. Try that one. I wrote a thing that Dolly's putting a melody to, a ballad called "Keep It, You Can Call It a Memory." I didn't like my own melody. I wrote a little song about all the hunks

in country music, how I feel about competing with Billy Ray Cyrus and Yoakam and Clint Black. Dolly wanted to put some of the girls in, but I didn't like that. I start out with, "We ain't got the eyes Garth Brooks has/We ain't got the legs of Billy Dean/We ain't got the guts of Hank Williams Junior/And we ain't got the tush of Clint Black...But for over 25 years we've sung a lot/And we keep on doing the best with what we've got..."


19 *So you and George have moved into Hank Senior's old house. I've got to ask you—is there a ghost?*
No, no, no, it's not haunted. I feel real good there now, but when I first went in the house, there were so many things of Hank's. I'd walk through the house, and there were so many of his things still lying around. There was the bar, which had his name on it and a heart, and all I could think of was "Cold, Cold Heart," or "Your Cheatin' Heart." Then there was the big, beautiful heart over the bed that lit up at night. It was made out of some kind of soft cloth. We have given that thing to friends of ours. Randy and Lib came and, gosh, they must have carried off a truckload of stuff. Randy's father just had to have something that belonged to Hank Senior. We've been finding original doors and windows and things like that behind walls we've been knocking out. One friend of ours is taking one of the doors to Montana to put in a log cabin there. There's little bits of that house everywhere...I'm putting in a hot pink beauty shop. All my appliances from the beauty shop are hot pink.

20 *Remember that interview you did for Country Music Magazine in June 1980 with George Jones? You know, that was pretty good. You should have stuck with interviewing and given up this silly dream of singing...*
Yep, missed my calling, I guess. But, you know Michael, I keep telling people, I'm not the best. I'm just the loudest. That's the truth.


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Michael Bolton—Time, Love & Tenderness (Columbia) 415-711

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Anne Murray—Grt. Hits (Capitol) 305-672

Sammy Kershaw—Don't Go Near The Water (Mercury) 431-437

George Michael—Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 1 (Columbia) 411-181

AC/DC—The Razors' Edge (ATCO) 410-662

Wilson Phillips (SBK) 406-793

Eddie Money—Grt. Hits: Sound Of Money (Columbia) 403-428

Travis Tritt—It's All About To Change (Wamer Bros.) 422-113

Barbra Streisand—A Collection: Grt. Hits (Columbia) 401-141

Collin Raye—All I Can Be (Epic) 431-445

Best Of T. Graham (Liberty) 439-570

Best Of T. Graham (Liberty) 439-570

Contains explicit lyrics which may be objectionable to some members.



Letters

More 20th Anniversary celebration letters from the great, the near-great and the fans. Plus selections from the mailbag on our last two issues. For more 20th Anniversary and regular mail, stay tuned throughout the year. As usual, every letter is read. And even the great are fans.

New Traditionalist

Country Music Magazine has been there for me right from the start of my career, and I really appreciate it. I remember the first interview I did for the magazine with Michael Bane which was at a little club that had chicken wire in front of the stage to protect the performer from flying objects. Michael and I have gone through a lot of changes since then, and I am now convinced that he is absolutely crazy! He has interviewed me for most of my Country Music Magazine stories, and we've rendezvoused everywhere from Cuba to Maui to Santa Fe, and we've always had a great time.

I was particularly happy when I learned that all of the writers at Country Music Magazine voted my first album, *Storms of Life*, as the Number One album of the last 20 years (they assured me that Michael only had one vote!). Being such a fan of country music myself and knowing the great albums that have been released during that 20 years, I was very surprised and very happy.

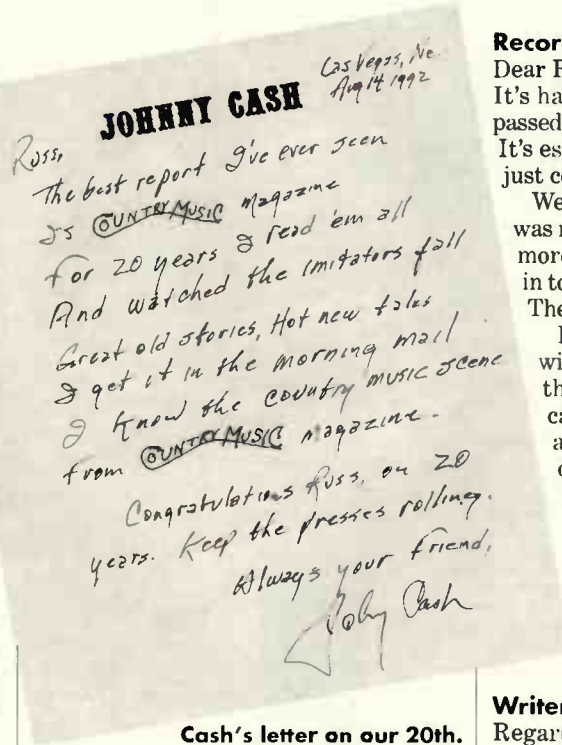
Thank you, Country Music Magazine, for being there for me right from the start and staying with me throughout my career. Congratulations on a great history and good luck for the next 20!

Randy Travis
Nashville, Tennessee

Bright College Years

Dear Russell,
Congratulations for the many accomplishments that combine to create a 20th anniversary. I hope you will have many more successful years for several reasons, one of which is that you have not returned my Delmore Brothers album which I lent to you Memorial Day, 1991. I would appreciate your sending it unless you would like to trade it for your little Martin.

Noticed the letter of congratulations from Hank Williams Jr., and couldn't help but feel a swelling of pride that I had been

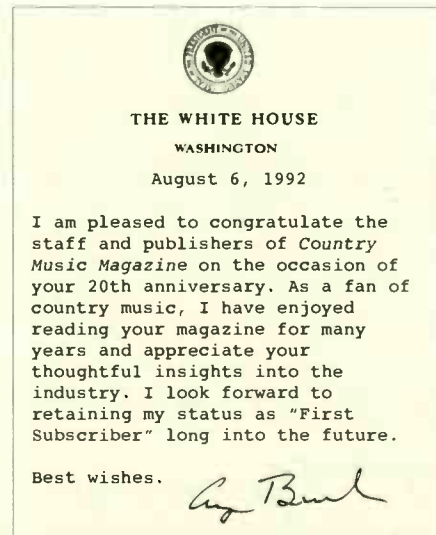


Cash's letter on our 20th.

your roommate. You certainly have arrived. I am not a Bocephus fan, though I think his "Ain't Misbehavin'" is about the best that old Fats Waller song has ever been done.

Nicholas B. Moehlmann
Richland, Pennsylvania

Bright college roommate and hootenany companion, Nick Moehlmann. Nick's Delmores album graced the pages of *The Journal* in October 1991.—Ed.



Record Exec Tells All

Dear Russ,
It's hard to believe that 20 years have passed since we started working together. It's especially hard to believe because I just celebrated my 26th birthday!!!

Well, I won't go into detail here, but I was recently thinking about some of the more humorous situations we've been in together. Remember our lunch with The Whites and Patrick Carr?

I've been proud to be associated with Country Music Magazine over the years. It's been a classy showcase for country music and has really contributed to country's growth during its tenure. Happy 20th and here's to 20 more!

Best regards,

Janice Azrak
Senior Vice President
Press & Artist Development
Warner Bros. Records
Nashville, Tennessee

Writer From the First Decade

Regarding the 20th Anniversary Issue—and, like the man says: funny how time slips away—I'll just let stand what I wrote 10 summers ago. I even remember writing it—a weekend afternoon at my girlfriend's apartment on Irving Place—thinking then that 10 years had passed so quickly. Now, 10 years later, that girlfriend is long gone, I write on a computer (still working with only one finger, however) and Jerry Lee Lewis doesn't make records anymore.

Please give my best to all, Russ. And may your next decade in publishing be all that you want it to be.

Nick Tosches
New York, New York
Nick Tosches was a CMM Contributing Editor for many years.—Ed.

Country Through the Years

Early America had sing-a-longs beside a log fire (early American History). Anybody who knows where he/she came from knows about country music! We all came from that type background, be it Scotch, German, Swedish or what. Before radio, before electronic instruments, there was country music.

My brother found an old radio and battery in a dump and fixed them up and late, late at night we separated the head phones, each of us using one, and listen to

The United States Historical Society Announces

The Official **Richard Petty** .45 Revolver



Etched in Pure Silver

The barrel is inscribed on one side with Petty's name and the most famous stock car number in racing history. The other side bears his title "King Richard," with a decorative flourish. The dates and symbols of the seven Winston Cups won by him are etched in fine silver on the cylinder. The frame of the gun features the Petty profile portrait with his trademark hat and sunglasses. His signature is inscribed into the grips.

Specifications

Richard Petty Single-Action Army .45
Blued Steel with Silver Decoration
Barrel length: 5 1/2"

Now You Can Own The Official Richard Petty .45 Revolver

Tribute to King Richard's Career

A man of action in many arenas, Richard Petty has been a lifelong collector of fine firearms. Now, as "King Richard" completes the final laps of his racing career, the United States Historical Society has authorized this tribute, a handsome Richard Petty Single-Action .45 Revolver, issued in an edition limited to only 1,000.

Petty himself participated in the gun's design. By his choice, the blued steel is decorated in silver, giving an overall effect of a finely tuned machine.

Long-Term Value

It is, in fact, a working .45 Single-Action Firearm—a real "shooter," not just a display model toy. As an authorized issue gun in this rare, limited edition, it's sure to be sought after by serious collectors and enjoy potential long-term value on the secondary market. The only other Richard Petty gun issued has increased in value 6 times in two years, according to *Collectors World*.

An Official Portrait Signed by King Richard

To add to the collectors' value of the Richard Petty .45, each will be issued with a portrait personally signed by Richard Petty and commissioned exclusively for this collectors set. The original painting is by Jack Woodson. He was one of America's greatest artists, he painted for two Presidents, the Smithsonian Institution and the National Rifle Association and numerous museums and private collections.

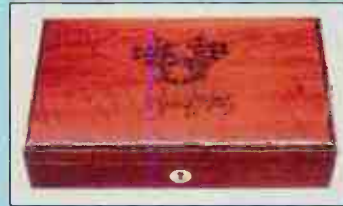
Richard Petty will sign and number each lithograph, matching the number etched on the gun and shown on the accompanying Certificate of Authenticity (the signed portrait alone could be worth several hundred dollars).

Only By Direct Order

Richard Petty has never hidden his joy in racing or his love for his fans. Now, his fans are invited to join in this tribute to his career by reserving this fine gun and signed portrait, available only from the United States Historical Society. To order, write or call toll free: 1-800-788-4478.



The Official Richard Petty lithograph portrait is 16"x20", produced on the finest 100% acid-free pH-neutral paper. Each will be numbered to match your gun and individually signed by Richard Petty himself.



The optional presentation case is hand-crafted cherry with blue velvet lining and Petty's signature incised in the lid.

The Official Richard Petty .45 Revolver

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The United States Historical Society is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to historical research and the sponsorship of projects and issuance of objects which are artistically and historically significant.

The Kansas City Night Hawks, The Cumberland Ridge Runners, Bradley Kincaid, Lulubelle and Skyland Scotty. Country music was the in thing. Country music has always been around.

Mildred M. Roberts
Harmony, Indiana

Boomer for Country

Honestly, I don't know the difference between Texas swing, traditional or contemporary. But this 42-year-old "aging baby boomer" (and I'm not a yuppie as *Time Magazine* said most of us are) knows what she likes. Country music has been a listening pleasure to me for a couple of decades now—it just took a healthy dose of George Strait and Randy Travis to fuel the already flickering spark of interest to make a full-blown flame. I'm so hooked on country music now, I'll never switch back again.

Debra A. Krantz

(Letter enclosed with May 1992 Poll)

One Man's Opinion

First of all, I appreciate the journalism and integrity of *Country Music Magazine*. Yours is a publication for the true music fan.

Country music is so important in my life because it gives me what I can't find in any other musical form. That is pure emotion, honesty and truth in a song. People who like to deride country music for being shallow haven't "seen the light" (Thanks, Hank!) that its beauty is in its simplicity.

Country is Marty and Marty—Stuart who is proud of country music's grand traditions and is making some of his own, and Brown who is the closest thing to Hillbilly Heaven this side of Hank Williams and isn't slick enough for country radio.

Country is true originals like Randy Travis and Dwight Yoakam, who write and sing from the heart, not from what some marketing survey tells them.

Country is a young Dolly Parton, whose "Coat of Many Colors" makes you think of something your mother did to make you feel good.

Carter J. Betz
Watkinsville, Georgia

Healing Power of Country

Yes, I am a new convert, but please don't let that prejudice your opinion of me or others like me, we've just seen the light!

I would venture so far as to say that country music may be an influence on today's society as a whole, that it may actually be a healing force for the country. Regardless of the entertainment aspects, the majority of country music seems to stand for family, love, faith, friendship, loyalty, tradition and other intangible things that really do matter. If it has become popular with the ex-yuppies, then great! How wonderful that it is able to conquer over the love of money and ob-



session with status. If country music has the ability to reach the young people today, hallelujah! How wonderful that it is able to conquer over the message of hate, rebellion, drugs, etc. inherent in (dare I speak the truth?) a lot of today's rock and rap music.

Linda Lake
Hendersonville, Tennessee

Country Bandwagon

My opinion is that some of the performers these days are taking advantage of the rise in popularity of country music and jumping on the bandwagon when they are not really country people.

If people like pop and rock music, that's fine, but I think country music is unique and should be kept that way. Sometimes it is tempting to go along with what is popular with a certain segment of people in order to get publicity, etc. However, I don't believe it will be in the best interest of country music, fans or performers in the long run.

Frankie Price
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Words We Love to Hear

The greatest magazine I've had. A lot better than *Country America* ever thought of being. Thanks,

George Couper
South Portland, Maine

Straight to Strait

Thank you, thank you, thank you! I just received my September/October issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I usually read each issue cover-to-cover, but this time I went "Strait" to page 38. I thoroughly enjoyed Michael McCall's article about George Strait and *Pure Country*. It was thoughtful, well-written and evoked many happy memories for me of a weekend I shall never forget. Now I know where George was when we all wondered

why he was so late coming onto the set; it was Michael's fault.

After seeing him in concert so many times, it was a unique thrill to see George at work in this way. I came away with even more respect for the man than I had previously. I can't wait to see the movie and add the album to my collection.

Patricia Geria
Harbor City, California
Pat was one of the fan club members invited to be extras in the movie.—Ed.

A Strait Delight

What a Strait delight to open the September/October issue of *Country Music Magazine* and find George on the cover. Being a fan club member, I was aware a few months back of the movie. But, I am anxious for it to be released. I enjoyed the article very much as I do the features in all the issues. I have been a country fan for over 15 years, and have seen many come and go, but from the first time I heard "Unwound" to "You Look So Good in Love," I knew George was one to keep your eye on. Good luck to George and all the cast in *Pure Country*. Thanks for 20 years of good country reading.

Sheila Baker
Franklin, Ohio

Remember the Screenwriter

I really enjoyed the article about George Strait's new movie, *Pure Country*, in the September/October issue. However, with all due respect and applause for the efforts of Weintraub, Strait, Cain, Warren, Glasser, Calhoun, Doe and the rest of the cast and crew, they would have had nothing to do if I hadn't written the script last fall in the lonely little town of Cleburne, Texas. Screenplays don't just erupt full blown from the fevered brows of producers and directors. There is always a man or woman alone in a room faced with filling a blank piece of paper.

Rex McGee
Cleburne, Texas

Mr. Strait and 20 Who Mattered

Thank you, thank you, for the beautiful cover and great article on George Strait. Strait fans are eagerly awaiting *Pure Country*, and we appreciate *Country Music Magazine's* cover story.

I must take issue, however, with your features "Twenty Who Mattered" and "20 Best Albums." While I realize album music is a matter of personal taste, I don't understand how only two of your 11 Editors mentioned a George Strait album on their lists. However, the fact that Michael Bane and Bob Allen failed to include Mr. Strait in their 20 Who Mattered lists is not only incomprehensible but downright inexcusable.

Back in the 1980's country music was in a slump. Thanks to George Strait's success, the industry was able to pull itself up

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QUIZ

Answers to these questions can be found by reading this issue of *Country Music Magazine*. Answers will be published in the January/February 1993 issue.

1. Marty Stuart's music career began when he hit the road with what bluegrass legend?
2. What's the name given to Jimmie Dale Gilmore's music?
3. Centerfold star Billy Ray Cyrus hails from what state?
4. What's the most surprising fact about Branson's famed attraction, "The World's Largest Rhino"?
5. Name the new Tammy Wynette boxed set released in honor of her 25 years with Epic Records.
6. To which record label is Texas favorite Joe Ely signed?
7. The percentage of Chevy trucks still on the road after 10 years is higher than any other brand. What percentage are still on the road?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ:

1. *Pure Country*
2. "Achy Breaky Heart"
3. Lyle Lovett
4. "I Feel Lucky"
5. 20th Anniversary
6. Jessi Colter
7. More than 10,000



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by the bootstraps, and he's generally credited with being the father of the "New Traditionalist" movement.

Country music fans in general and George Strait fans in particular know for a fact—He Mattered!

Sylvia Council
Miami, Florida

Travis Tops in 20th

I would like to thank the Editors of *Country Music Magazine* for doing something in the September/October issue that should have been done a long time ago by a lot of people—giving Randy Travis the credit that is due to him. He was listed eight times on the lists of 20 Who Mattered, and eight times on the 20 Favorite Albums lists (even one of the albums was when he was starting out, using the name Randy Ray, at the Nashville Palace).

Randy was the sole reason I started listening to country music when I was 16 (I am now 21). I just hope that with this exposure from *Country Music Magazine* and hearing from his fans, Randy will realize he still is and always will be appreciated and loved.

Dawn Freeman
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Glen Campbell Gets Nod

It was only one line, but it was important to this long-time fanatic of country music (and, of course, *Country Music Magazine*). What was it? Helen Barnard mentioned Glen Campbell in her recent list of Twenty Who Mattered in the September/October issue. I've never understood why he doesn't get the serious critical appraisal he is certainly due.

Robert Dicks Jr.
San Francisco, California

Hobbs Makes Cut

I read the Editors' lists on their 20 Favorite Albums and 20 Who Mattered in the September/October issue. First off, we are all different and have different opinions. But, I do want to thank George Fletcher for including Becky Hobbs' *All Keyed Up* in his 20 Favorite Albums list. I'm sorry no one mentioned Becky in the 20 Who Mattered lists.

Jimmy Spencer
Kings Mills, Ohio

Marty Stuart Across the Board

Congratulations on your 20th Anniversary! One of the highlights of your special issue was to see all three of Marty Stuart's MCA releases appear on a 20 Favorite Albums list. Richard Bennett, Tony Brown and The Hillbilly Rocker himself should be very, very proud of this unique and gratifying accomplishment.

Michael Mill
Santa Fe, New Mexico

For more on Marty Stuart, see cover story in this issue.—Ed.

Waylon Her Hero

I received my copy of the 20th Anniversary issue of *Country Music Magazine*, and I want to say just how happy I was to see that you focused your first 20th Anniversary issue 20 Questions on my favorite singer, Waylon Jennings. Wow! What I would give just to own something as precious and priceless as the poster of his concert—Waylon at Max's Kansas City in New York.

Lotus Roberts
Harrison, Arkansas

Travis Tops, Period

The July/August issue's cover photo of Randy Travis is awesome. Congratulations to the photographer, the subject and *Country Music Magazine* for recognizing its potential. Michael Bane's article was very good. Many of us wonder about the disappearance of Randy in Nashville. He not only has great talent, but he recognizes and speaks out about the talents of his fellow entertainers. Randy was truly denied the Entertainer of the Year award when he most deserved it.

Kathryn R. Siden
New Port Richey, Florida

All Eyes on Randy

I thoroughly enjoyed Michael Bane's article on Randy Travis, "Blue Hawaii," in the July/August issue. I can't wait to see the special they were filming because it involves three of my favorite things, Randy Travis, horses and Hawaii. I was, however, upset by his questions to Randy about whether he thought he was "disappearing" or being "whited out" by the "white hats." Sure, there is a lot of great new talent in country music, and they deserve to have their turn in the spotlight and win awards, but let's not forget who started the revitalization of real country music.

Anyone who thinks Randy is disappearing should listen to *High Lonesome*, which is a fantastic collection of songs. Long after some of the newcomers have come and gone and been forgotten, Randy will still be producing quality music and drawing crowds at his concerts.

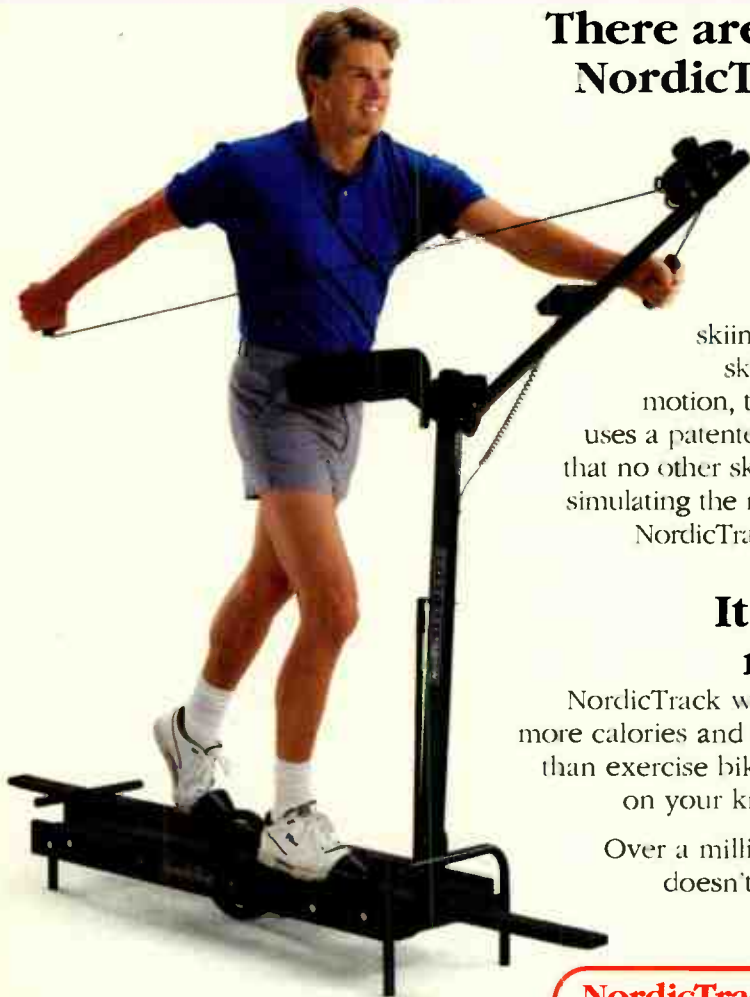
Mary DiBlasi
Silver Spring, Maryland

Randy Deserves More

Thanks for the article on Randy Travis in the July/August issue. I'm glad to learn that someone else is displeased with the treatment that Randy has been getting from some people these days. I am also bothered by the very little promotion that I have seen or heard for Randy's latest album, *High Lonesome*, which has one of the most unflattering photographs of Randy I have ever seen on the cover, and some very good music inside. Could any of this be related to Kyle Lehning's departure to another label?

M.J. Rozier
Dillon, South Carolina

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Stuart Centerfold Hits Home

Yesterday I received a phone call at work from my 14-year-old daughter who scared me when she said, "Mom, come home, come home quick!" Was she sick? Was the house on fire? Was she about to be murdered? No, she had just been to the mailbox and opened the July/August issue of *Country Music Magazine* to the centerfold of Marty Stuart. Wow—what a picture! The centerfold is now hanging in my office at the nursing home where I work. Our ladies may be old, but they still enjoy looking at a good-lookin' man.

Anita Altom
Cave City, Arkansas

See what the ladies think of Billy Ray Cyrus in this issue.—Ed.

Vince Gill Gets Her Vote

In regard to Bob Allen's article on Vince Gill, "First at Last," in the July/August issue, I think that Vince had platinum quality from the very beginning. I recorded "Give Me Half a Chance" from radio in 1984 or 1985, and wore the tape out—it was that good. I still love it just as much as his new songs.

Bernice Yust Dack
Joplin, Missouri

Chesnutt Ranks High

Thank you so very much for the Mark Chesnutt article, "Child of the Honky Tonks," in the July/August issue. Bob Millard deserves a big round of applause for such a great write-up. There are so many new artists that have suddenly blossomed into country music, but Mark ranks right up there with the best of them.

Lori Swanson
Frankfort, Kansas

Lawrence for the 1990's

Thank you for the great story on Tracy Lawrence in the July/August issue. I'm glad his music is finally getting the recognition it deserves. If Merle Haggard dominated in the 1970's and George Strait in the 1980's, it's no doubt that Tracy Lawrence will be right up there in the 1990's. Can't wait until his next CD.

Ken Richey
Portland, Oregon

Remembering Hank Penny

Thank you for Rich Kienzle's tribute to Hank Penny in the People section in the July/August issue. I think Mr. Penny's great contribution to Western music has been overlooked. In Northern Nevada in the 1950's, Hank Penny was well-known and appreciated. I will never forget my mother's reaction every time his song, "Get Yourself a Red Head," was played! You see, Mom was a beautiful red-head and that was one of her special songs. Thanks for the memories...

Jana Pendragon
Long Beach, California

News on Norma Jean?

I was 11 years old when I started singing country music. I fronted for people like Buck Owens, Jerry Lee Lewis, Melba Montgomery, Merle Haggard and Billy Walker. I never got to meet or see the lady whom I tried to copy my singing from, and that was Norma Jean. She was with Porter Wagoner at that time, and I dearly loved her voice.

I've wondered so many times whatever became of her. My husband and I have tried to guess what her age would be now, so is there anyway you could tell us what she's doing and what her birthdate is?

Nancy Kresyman
Purdy, Missouri

Norma Jean Beasler was born in Wellston, Oklahoma in 1938. Norma Jean fans, give us an update, please.—Ed.

Garth Makes His Mark

Once and for all—Garth Brooks is country! Those of you thinking otherwise should open your eyes and listen with your heart. I never dreamed a performer could have such an impact on my life, but that is exactly what Garth has done. From the hauntingly beautiful song, "The Dance," to the powerful song, "Shameless," he has made his mark in my life. And if that is not enough, Garth, the man, is even more impressive. No matter what direction Garth may take in his life, I will always support and believe in him.

Joanne Roberts
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Take a Ticket to Garth

When I want to be entertained, I stand in line for days for tickets to see the Entertainer of the Year—Garth Brooks—a man who cares about his fans and wants to see them get their money's worth! If anyone would like to argue the point that Garth Brooks is country, take a listen to his three CD's—true country, nothing else. As far as the way he entertains, I'm sorry that some don't like it, but don't worry, there are thousands standing in line to take your place. In the words of Garth: "Nothing ventured/nothing gained, sometimes you've got to go AGAINST THE GRAIN"!

Holly McLellan
Mobile, Alabama

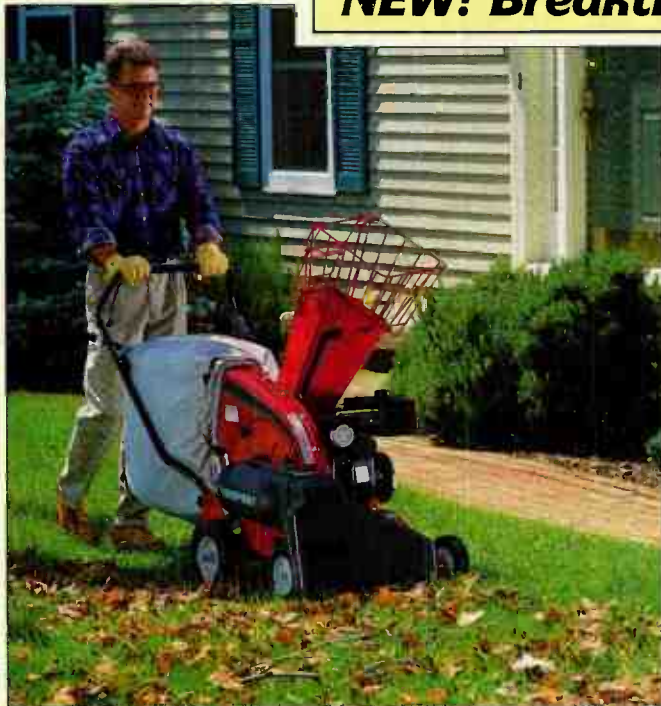
Entertainer of the Year one more time. See People section in this issue.—Ed.

Hear Those Mighty Oaks

Three cheers to Bob Allen for his eloquent review of *The Long Haul* by the Oak Ridge Boys in the September/October issue. Being a longtime Oaks fan, I couldn't have written it better myself. Each and every cut on this CD is worthy of airplay. I hope that after reading Mr. Allen's review, radio will wake up and reacquaint themselves with The Mighty Oaks!

Cindy Pfalzgraf
Burlington, Kentucky

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285	John Anderson	150	Joe Diffie
222	Chet Atkins	845	Dean Dillon
185	Baillie & the Boys	238	Holly Dunn
247	Bellamy Brothers	146	Exile
288	Clint Black	260	Forester Sisters
109	Suzy Bogguss	272	Fox Brothers
257	Garth Brooks	250	Vinco Gill
407	Brooks & Dunn	289	Great Plains
267	Marty Brown	290	Lee Greenwood
245	Glen Campbell	311	Merle Haggard
241	Carlene Carter	239	Emmylou Harris
279	Lionel Cartwright	143	Highway 101
232	Johnny Cash	821	Becky Hobbs
141	Rosanne Cash	248	Alon Jackson
822	Mary C. Carpenter	174	Waylon Jennings
246	Charlie Daniels Band	113	George Jones
243	Mark Chesnut	317	Wynonna Judd
273	Jerry Clower	299	Roy Kennedy
278	Mark Collie	253	KY Headhunters
318	Confederate Railroad	777	Sammy Kershaw
296	Earl Thomas Conley	118	Hal Ketchum
292	Rodney Crowell	234	k. d. lang
297	Billy Ray Cyrus	841	Tracy Lawrence
310	Davis Dantel	166	Robin Lee
304	Billy Dean	842	Little Texas
		194	Patty Loveless

FOR OTHER ARTISTS USE ID# 999

252	Barbara Mandrell
824	Louise Mandrell
301	Kathy Mattea
319	Mathews, Wright & King
320	Martina McBride
300	McBride & the Ride
201	Delbert McClinton
302	Neal McCoy
254	Reba McEntire
204	Roger Miller
314	Ronnie Milsap
170	Lorrie Morgan
251	Anne Murray
126	Willie Nelson
249	Wayne Newton
189	Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
231	Mark O'Connor
389	Oak Ridge Boys
115	KT Oslin
315	Lee Roy Parnell
261	Dolly Parton
309	Sandi Patti
195	Pirates of the Miss.
826	Collin Raye
255	Jerry Reed
308	Ronna Reeves
199	Restless Heart
555	Johnny Rodriguez
244	Kenny Rogers
111	Roy Rogers
281	Billy Joe Royal
242	Sawyer Brown
307	Dan Seals
206	Shenandoah
237	Ricky Skaggs
846	Stallar Brothers
216	Gary Stewart
324	Doug Stone
258	George Strait
147	Marty Stuart
825	Sweethearts of Rodeo
843	Texas Tornados
844	Pam Tillis
282	Aaron Tippin
240	Randy Travis
226	Travis Tritt

283	Tanya Tucker
138	Conway Twitty
256	Ricky Van Shelton
219	Steve Wariner
190	Gene Watson
112	Kevin Welch
132	Don Williams
356	Hank Williams Jr.
306	Michele Wright
259	Tammy Wynette
294	Trisha Yearwood
153	Dwight Yoakam

Concerts by Area

ID#	Area
801	Tennessee/KY
802	Illinois/Indiana
804	Texas
805	Colorado
806	Pennsylvania
807	New York
808	New England
280	Maryland/VA/WV
298	Ohio
417	North Carolina
323	Florida
198	Alabama/Miss.
305	SC/Georgia
130	Missouri
284	Michigan
286	Wisconsin/Minn.
316	Washington/OR
291	Arkansas/LA
312	Iowa/Nebraska
325	Arizona/NM
400	Oklahoma/Kansas
221	N Dakota/S Dakota
233	Wyoming/ID/MT
228	Nevada/Utah
230	No. California
803	So. California
131	New Jersey/DE
140	Hawaii/Alaska

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Keep it Arty, Mary-Chapin

I respect Geoffrey Himes as a Record Reviews critic, but his review of Mary-Chapin Carpenter's album, *Come On Come On*, in the September/October issue was unsettling. I truly enjoy her "arty" and "literary" songs. It would be disappointing if she learned to make her lyrics and vocals a little less sensitive and a little more blunt, just so that she could make a country music breakthrough. I hope that she continues to write songs to please herself and then lets us decide.

Bill Caldwell
Springfield, Illinois

Heymakers Review Right On

I wish to share my comments on the review by George Fletcher on Molly and The Heymakers' debut release in the July/August issue. I live in the hometown of this wonderfully talented band and have followed their career for some time. It's simply a matter of time before the whole of country music becomes aware of their talents. Your review hit it right on the nose. Congratulations on finding what we here in Hayward have been enjoying for years. This is the group to watch!

Stacy Hoff
Hayward, Wisconsin

Keep Crankin', Shenandoah

What a great review on Shenandoah's new album, *Long Time Comin'*, in the July/August issue. I've been listening to country music just about all my life, and Marty Raybon has got the best vocals I've heard in a long time. The whole band is great. Please put Marty as your centerfold so I can add him to my wall full of pictures of country music stars. Shenandoah, keep crankin' out those great albums.

Glenn Weaver
Hyannis, Massachusetts

Sweepstakes Winner Writes

Thanks so much for the \$1,000.00 check I received in the mail for being the February/March 1992 Renewal Sweepstakes winner. I haven't really decided what I'm going to use it for, but I assure you it will be put to good use. Probably things I need as the need comes along, such as repairs to our dairy farm, etc. It was a great surprise and is really appreciated. Thanks so much!

John W. Moser
Keymar, Maryland

Correction

Thanks to the fan who tipped us off to the correct spelling of the Hawaiian volcano referred to in the Randy Travis article in the July/August issue—Haleakala.

Send Letters to the Editor to Country Music Magazine, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Mark your envelope Attention: Letters. We reserve the right to edit for space and style.

CMSA MEMBERS CAST YOUR

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SEE PAGE 79

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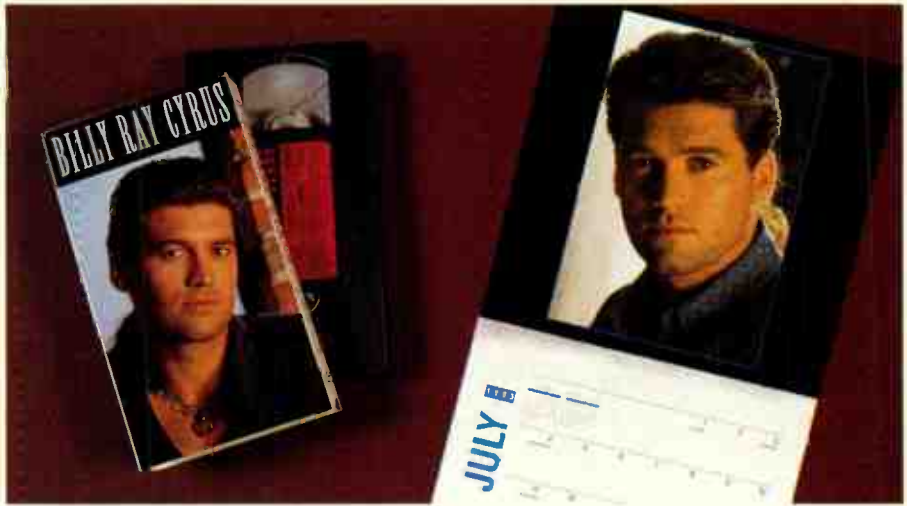
EDITOR'S CHOICE

GARTH BROOKS VIDEO AND BIOGRAPHY

Everything you've ever loved about Garth is included in this 90-minute video, *This Is Garth Brooks*. Many of you have probably seen his NBC-TV special. That's great! This video captures that super-rated special plus much more! The tape includes a live performance of Garth in Texas, plus plenty of interview and backstage footage. You'll listen to Garth talk about his songs, concerts, fans and family, and you get inside opinions from the people who know him best: Sandy (his wife), Betsy (his sister), Pat Alger (his songwriter), his band members, record producer and others. *This Is Garth Brooks* includes his best-ever songs: "Not Counting You," "Rodeo," "Two of a Kind," "We Bury the Hatchet," "The Thunder Rolls," "The River," "Much Too Young (To Feel this Damn Old)," "What She's Doing Now," "Papa Loved Mama," "If Tomorrow Never Comes," "Shameless," "Friends in Low Places," "The Dance," "You May be Right" and "Keep Your Hands to Yourself." For only \$29.95, #V3H, this is one video you can't afford to miss!



And if you're looking for something to read on Garth, here's the biography, *Garth Brooks*. It's an interesting and lively portrayal of all that has happened to Garth since childhood. You'll read about the positive influence his parents had on his life and career; his very close relationship with his siblings and how they've helped his music career; how he met Sandy, his wife, in a nightclub, after she punched her fist through a wall; his athletic days in college and his high-spirited antics in high school; the good times with his first band back in Oklahoma; his struggles trying to make it in the music industry; and finally, his success as we see it today. *Garth Brooks* is 186 pages long, includes 16 pages of photos and a discography and sells for only \$4.99, #B8K (paperback only). These Garth Brooks treasures make great Christmas gifts!



BILLY RAY CYRUS VIDEO AND CALENDAR

With the success of his debut single, "Achy Breaky Heart," Billy Ray Cyrus' career has taken off like a rocket. Playing to sold-out crowds across the country and enjoying a long run at the top of the charts, Billy Ray is a true phenomenon. In his video, *Billy Ray Cyrus*, you not only get to hear him sing, but see this hunk in real action! You don't want to miss the hip-thrusts so many women have been screaming about (a little Elvis-maneuvering)! You also watch interview footage where Billy Ray talks about how he got started in the music business, the meanings behind his songs and the development of the "Achy Breaky Dance." *Billy Ray Cyrus* naturally includes the Number One song,

"Achy Breaky Heart," in addition to "Could've Been Me" and "Some Gave All." For only \$19.95, #V9H, you get 25 minutes of enjoyment with Billy Ray.

I decided a video of Billy Ray just isn't enough! You'll definitely want him "hanging around" the office or in your home. The *Billy Ray Cyrus 1993 Calendar* is hot off the press! Think of how wonderful it will be to have a different 12" x 12" photo of Billy Ray for every month of the year. This calendar opens up to 12" x 24" and has plenty of space for jotting down notes. The *Billy Ray Cyrus 1993 Calendar* costs only \$9.98, #G3G. Both the video and calendar are great Christmas gifts for Billy Ray fans!

GENUINE PEWTER BOLOS

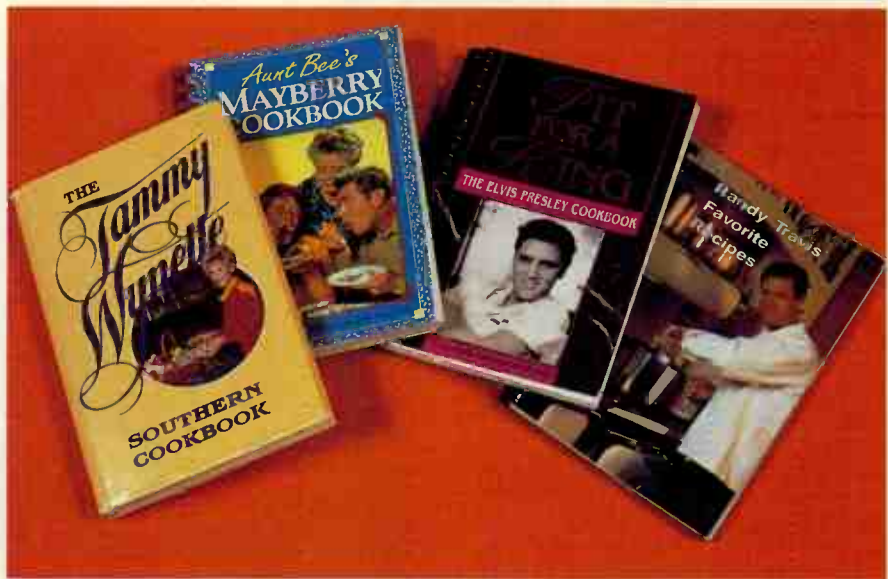
I just love these new bolos in genuine pewter with glossy enamel colors! The pewter horse (#G5J) happens to be my favorite, with its intricate detailing of the mane and bronze face. Then there are those classy looking cowboy boots (#G5L)—the vamp is painted in a lustrous black enamel. It's amazing to see the detail that went into sculpting the boot shaft and straps. And you definitely cannot go without a cowboy hat bolo (#G5N). This bolo is truly unique—there's a red band around the black enameled hat, and the rim curls up. Even a pair of boot spurs leans on the rim for an extra touch. And for those of you who prefer the plain pewter look, these bolos are also available without the enameled colors: the all-pewter horse is (#G4C); cowboy boots (#G4H); cowboy hat (#G4R). Each bolo costs only \$9.95, or save money and buy any three for just \$25.95—a savings of \$4.00! What great stocking stuffers!



Nashville Warehouse: Country Christmas

COUNTRY MUSIC BELT BUCKLES

Look at these gorgeous belt buckles made out of genuine pewter, with vibrant enamel colors highlighting the words "Country Music." These buckles will wear handsomely on your belt—the publisher of *Country Music Magazine* loves his! The "I Love Country Music" buckle is nicely accented with a bronze fiddle and guitar; the "Country Music" buckle shows off a banjo and fiddle. Each belt buckle costs only \$9.95, or save money and buy two for \$17.95. "I Love Country Music" belt buckle, #G6J; "Country Music" belt buckle, #G7L; both belt buckles, #G6J/G7L.



SOUTHERN STYLE COOKBOOKS

Yum, yum! Just looking at these recipes makes my mouth water. And what better way to have a Southern-style Christmas than to share some of the stars' favorite recipes with you! First we have *Randy Travis' Favorite Recipes* cookbook filled with all his choices, from Mama's Rice Pudding to Pappy's Beef Stew. Randy's cookbook combines 283 home-style recipes with pictures of Randy in the kitchen, kitchen hints and Randy's discography. *Randy Travis' Fa-*

vorite Recipes costs \$12.00, #B5B. Next, the Elvis Presley cookbook, *Fit for a King*, is just that. Elvis liked traditional Southern cooking, and in *Fit for a King*, there are more than 300 recipes of dishes Elvis enjoyed, including many from his longtime cook, Alvena Roy. Also included are menus for meals served at Graceland, for Elvis and Priscilla's wedding reception, for The Beatles' visit and for Christmas in Memphis. For \$12.95, #B8E, *Fit for a King* also includes 70 photographs of Elvis, many published here for the first time. Third, we have *The Tammy Wynette Southern Cookbook* in which Tammy shares her cooking secrets. Tammy's Southern heritage is an essential part of her character, and she will never forget her roots. Most of the recipes in this book are family favorites, and to Tammy, they bring certain images and recollections to mind. Through her brief anecdotes and histories of various recipes, she shares some of the memories that make her cooking so special. This 224-page cookbook includes everything from Chicken Pot Pie to Okra and Tomatoes. For \$16.95, #B6C, you also get color photographs of Tammy in the kitchen and on stage. Last, but certainly not least, is everyone's favorite lady, *Aunt Bee's Mayberry Cookbook*. Aunt Bee and her friends have stirred up a cookbook that brings home all the flavor of *The Andy Griffith Show*. You'll enjoy all 300 mouth-watering recipes served by Aunt Bee and members of the original cast of Mayberry—these recipes are favorites of the stars and crew. *Aunt Bee's Mayberry Cookbook* is also full of wonderful rare photographs from *The Andy Griffith Show* and offers entertaining glimpses into the friendly town. For only \$12.95, #B7F, you get an array of recipes, from Aunt Bee's Kerosene Cucumbers to Thelma Lou's Cashew Fudge. These top-rated cookbooks are definitely great Christmas gifts for any cooking buff and for any big fan of Elvis, Tammy, Randy and Bee!

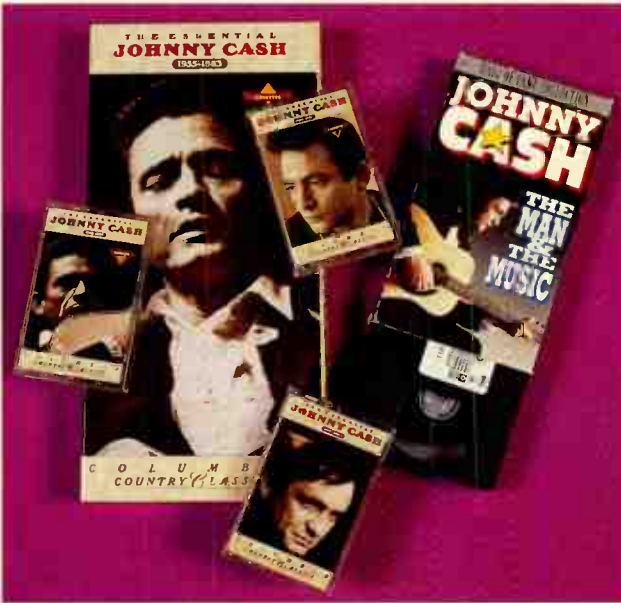
ELVIS 1993 WALL CALENDAR

This calendar is hot off the press! Just look at dreamy-eyed Elvis Presley captured on 12 months of the *1993 Elvis Wall Calendar*. All 12 glossy, close-up pictures capture Elvis' younger days, when he still seemed naive but oh-so-attractive. The pictures are 12" x 12" and the entire calendar opens up to 12" x 24"—plenty of room to jot down notes!

And, scattered throughout the calendar are facts about Elvis' life and career. For example, do you know the day Elvis recorded *Heartbreak Hotel* or what date it was when he purchased Graceland for \$100,000? Buy this, and you will! The *1993 Elvis Calendar* sells for \$10.95 (#G6F). Don't miss out on all these great collector's photos!



Nashville Warehouse: Country Christmas



JOHNNY CASH AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDINGS

Johnny Cash—The Man in Black! Whether singing slow ballads or rockabilly, Johnny Cash has touched us all with his music. Raised in Arkansas during the Great Depression, Johnny never lost that down-home touch. Now, in this new, exclusive Hall of Fame video collection, *Johnny Cash: The Man & The Music*, you'll witness "a long-overdue reissue of one of the best documen-

taries ever made on a country singer"—see Rich Kienzle's review, Essential Collector, July/August 1992 issue, *Country Music*. You'll see him on the road with his wife/singer, June Carter Cash; in the recording studio (including one session with Bob Dylan); traveling back to his roots; mingling with friends and fans; performing to incredible audiences—among them are prisoners and Native Americans; and entertaining us with songs such as: "Flesh and Blood," "Ring of Fire," "The Ballad of Ira Hayes," "Orange Blossom Special" and more! For only \$19.95, #V9D, you get a 90-minute trib-

ute to a living legend. And if that ain't enough, also available is *The Essential Johnny Cash* (#CK47991), a three-cassette or three-CD boxed set which includes all of Johnny's recordings from 1955-1983. In addition to the songs mentioned above, included are: "Folsom Prison Blues," "Cisco Clifton's Fillin' Station," "Dark as a Dungeon," "No Expectations," "Rockabilly Blues" and 60 more! The cassette set costs \$34.98 and the CD set costs \$45.98.

EXPRESS TRAX SING-A-LONG TAPES

Now you can step into the country spotlight with the *Express Trax* Sing-a-Long tapes. These high quality, chrome tapes are recorded by top studio musicians in the songs' original keys. The back-up band plays real instruments, such as the fiddle and steel guitar—no synthesizers! One side of the tape is all instrumental so that you can be the lead singer; the other side includes both instruments and vocals. These tapes are great for parties, talent competitions, night club performances or just having fun—each song is a big hit in country music. Package #17 includes: "Here's a Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)"/Travis Tritt, "Shameless"/Garth Brooks, "Dallas"/Alan Jackson, "Born Country"/Alabama, "Love Me"/Collin Raye. "Forever Together"/Randy Travis, "Lovin' Blind"/Clint Black, "Look at Us"/Vince Gill, "Anymore"/Travis Tritt, "What She's Doin' Now"/Garth Brooks, "Keep It Between the Lines"/Ricky Van Shelton and "Somewhere in My Broken Heart"/Billy Dean. Package #29 includes: "Maybe It Was Memphis"/Pam Tillis, "Except for Monday"/Lorrie



COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE LOGO T-SHIRTS

You're familiar with our *Country Music Magazine* trademark. Now you can get this famous logo on a comfortable, 100% cotton T-shirt. Made for us by Champion, these T-shirts are the same top quality they provide to most professional sports teams. The classy *Country Music* logo is printed in white across your favorite color: red or navy blue. Melissa models our red T-shirt, and that's me, Robin, wearing our best-selling "I Love Country Music" T-shirt. It comes in navy blue only. We are offering these T-



shirts at the low price of \$10.00 each. *Country Music* logo T-shirt, #G2P-navy blue. #G2Q-red; "I Love Country Music" T-shirt. #G2O-navy blue—choice of S, M, L or XL sizes. Also, on sale are our new, 100% cotton, heather grey T-shirts with our *Country Music* logo nicely displayed in turquoise and purple. These shirts have those sporty roll-up sleeves which are so popular now. The sleeves are available in either purple or turquoise—they both contrast nicely with the logo. The purple sleeve T-shirt is #G7A and the turquoise sleeve T-shirt is #G7C—choice of M, L and XL sizes only. Reduced in time for Christmas, these T-shirts now cost \$19.95—they were \$24.95. What a great buy!

Nashville Warehouse: Country Christmas



FREE ALBUM!

DOLLY PARTON DOLL

Look what's new! What a great Christmas gift! This gorgeous replica of Dolly Parton stands one-and-one-half feet high and displays Dolly's beautiful figure and elegant costume. Dolly's wearing a red-leatherette dress adorned with gold and white lace, and her gold belt is accented with a red ruby—she even has on a gold necklace! In addition, her fabulous blonde hair is decorated with a red lace bow. The Dolly Parton Doll is a great gift for both young and old—plus an invaluable collector's item! And if you order right now, we're giving away FREE an old collector's album of Dolly's earlier recordings. The Dolly Parton Doll Costs only \$49.95, #D1A, and includes a stand. The FREE album is #R4A. When ordering, include both codes. We have been selling a phenomenal number of dolls, so get yours while they last!

COUNTRY FASHION JEWELRY

Can't you just see yourself or your friends in these beautiful earrings and brooch! When I was in Nashville in June, I bought myself a pair of the guitar earrings—they look great with my new boots! The fiddle brooch (#J1X) is gold with rhinestone clusters—it's a class act. The guitar-shaped earrings (#J2A) are also gold with rhinestones and with emeralds, too—they look great with the brooch. And how about those adorable, gold cowboy-hat-shaped earrings (#J3M) with rhinestone posts? To "boot," you don't want to be without a pair of gold cowboy boot earrings, also adorned with rhinestone posts (#J5F). Each item of



jewelry sells for only \$7.98. Or save money, make a set and buy two pieces for only \$13.98—\$2.00 off! Please note these earrings are for pierced ears only.



DIAMOND CHIP WATCH

Move over, Gucci! Here is a gorgeous, 24-karat, gold-layered watch with a *real diamond!* We have proudly displayed our *Country Music Magazine* logo in gold, contrasting nicely with the black face and pebble-grain, genuine leather strap. The diamond and gold-color hour, minute and second hands add a handsome touch to the highly accurate, quartz electronic analog movement. This watch is so handsome that Tony Bunting, a Vice President of *Country Music Magazine*, wears it daily, and I must say it looks sharp! The *Country Music* diamond watch is for both men and women and only costs \$19.95, #G4L. I have given this watch to family and friends for Christmas and they just love it—it looks more expensive than it is.

NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE EDITOR'S CHOICE

111292-1

Mail to: Nashville Warehouse, P.O. Box 292553, Nashville, TN 37229

NAME	ITEM NO.	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION/COLOR/SIZE	ITEM PRICE	SHPG./HNDLG	TOTAL
ADDRESS						
CITY		STATE	ZIP			
ENCLOSED IS A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR \$ PAYABLE TO NASHVILLE WAREHOUSE						
<input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> VISA		EXP. DATE:				
ACCOUNT #						
SIGNATURE						
Add \$3.00 postage and handling for first item and \$.95 for each additional item.					TOTAL AMOUNT:	
TN Residents add 7.75% Sales Tax/Canadian orders add \$3.00 Extra						
Customer service call (615) 868-6866				Enclosed is my payment of \$		

FOR **CMSA** MEMBERS ONLY



Moon Mullican Special

Though some of Moon Mullican's late 30's and early 40's recordings as a vocalist with various Texas acts were reissued in the late 70's and early 80's on LP, none are now available. Some of his best known King material, however, can be had. The first King reissue, *Moon Mullican Sings His All Time Greatest Hits* (King 555), available on LP, cassette or CD, includes most of the chart hits: "Jole Blon," "Mona Lisa," "Goodnight Irene," "Sweeter Than the Flowers," "I'll Sail My Ship Alone" and "Cherokee Boogie." Also here are "Honolulu Rock-A-Roll-A" with Boyd Bennett, "I Was Sorta Wondering," "Pipeliners Blues," "Sugar Beet," "The Leaves Mustn't Fall," "You Don't Have to Be a Baby to Cry" and "Foggy River." Cassette or LP: regular price \$10.95, members' price \$8.95. CD: regular price \$12.95, members' price \$10.95.

King's other Moon reissue, *Moon Mullican Plays 16 of his Favorite Tunes (The Old Texan)* (King 628), is available on cassette or LP and includes "A Thousand and One Sleepless Nights," "Well Oh Well," "So Long," "Keep a Light in the Window for Me," "Jambalaya" (with different lyrics than the Hank Williams original), "A Mighty Pretty Waltz," "Short But Sweet," "Southern Hospitality," "Heartless Lover," "The Lamp of Life Is Burning Low," "Where Beautiful Flowers Grow," "Love Is the Light That Leads Me Home," "Leaving You With a Worried Mind," "Seven Nights to Rock" and "I'm Mad With You." Moon is featured with the rock group Boyd Bennett and The Rockets. Regular price \$10.95, members' price \$8.95.

Another package, *22 Greatest Hits* (DLX-7813), includes Starday material mixed with some of the hits from King (with a bit of duplication with the above albums). Most importantly it reissues some of the wild boogie and blues numbers from his early

King recording sessions (that aren't on any other reissues). Among these are "Grandpa Stole My Baby," "What Have I Done That Made You Go Away," "Shoot the Moon," "Good Deal Lucille" and "Don't Ever Take My Picture Down." From Starday comes "Ragged But Right" and the instrumentals "Louisian," "Bottom of the Glass," "Farewell," "Magnolia Rag" and the vocal, "Good Times Gonna Roll Again," plus a later remake of "I'll Sail My Ship Alone." Cassette only. Regular price \$9.95, members' price \$7.95.

Bear Family's reissue, *Moon's Rock* (BCD 15607), features 32 recordings, all the 1958-1959 Coral recordings produced in Nashville by Owen Bradley (few of them particularly noteworthy), and all of the relatively weak Hall-Way material he recorded in Texas in the early 60's (later reissued on a Starday and a Kapp LP), with notes by Rich Kienzle. CD only. Regular price \$24.95, members' price \$19.95. Be sure to include your membership number with your order. See instructions below for ordering.

Buried Treasures Special

A number of new boxed sets have been released from various labels, and CMSA members can take advantage of discount prices. For the Elvis box on RCA, members pay just \$84.98 for cassettes (a savings of \$15), \$99.98 for CD's (you save \$30). On the Buck Owens set, you may deduct \$10 off either the cassette or CD prices (cassettes just \$29.95, CD's \$39.95). And on the Bear Family sets (Johnnie & Jack, The Louvin Brothers and Flatt & Scruggs), members save a whopping \$50 each! (Pay \$198.98 for Johnnie & Jack or Flatt & Scruggs, \$199.98 for The Louvins.) On the *Roots and Blues Retrospective* box from Columbia, deduct \$10 from either the cassette or CD prices (you pay \$39.98 for cassettes, \$69.98 for CD's). Rhino's *Country Gospel* volume is yours for \$9.98 cassette, \$14.98 CD. Same prices on Atlantic's Doug Sahn reissue.

Essential Collector Special

CMSA members are also entitled to a discount on items listed in Essential Collector. You may deduct \$2.00 off the price of each item covered in this section.

How to Order

To order items listed on this page, send your check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 111292N, 329 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. Include \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional.

VOTE

MEMBERS POLL/NOVEMBER 1992

Your opinions can help influence record companies, radio stations, record stores, concert promoters, managers and performers. As a CMSA member, you have an organized way of making your opinion known, by filling out the Poll. We'll publish the results, and forward them to those involved in the business of country music who are interested in what fans are thinking and doing.

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

- Did you buy any albums (records, cassettes or compact discs) in the last month? Yes No
How many records? _____ cassettes? _____ CD's? _____
- In the boxes below, write the numbers of any of the albums on the Top 25 list on pages 88 of this issue which you bought in the last month.
- For any albums you bought in the last month not on the Top 25 list, write performer's name and album titles in the space below. (Attach a separate sheet if you need more room.)

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

- List the numbers of your top five favorites from the Top 25 in this issue.

Singles (list 5 numbers)

Albums (list 5 numbers)

Tell Us About Yourself

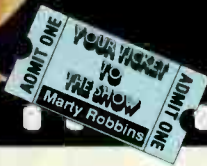
- How old are you? 45-49
 Under 18 30-34 50-54
 18-24 35-39 55-59
 25-29 40-44 60 or over
- Are you male or female? Male Female
- Check the amount of the combined annual income of everyone in your household. Be sure to include all salaries, wages, interest, rent and profits from business or farming.
 Under \$15,000 \$30,000 to \$34,999
 \$15,000 to \$19,999 \$35,000 to \$39,999
 \$20,000 to \$24,999 \$40,000 to \$45,999
 \$25,000 to \$29,999 \$46,000 to \$49,999
 \$50,000 or more

Who Can Vote

Only CMSA members are eligible to vote. If you are a member, write your membership number here _____
If you are not a CMSA member but would like to join and vote immediately, enclose your check for \$16 for a one-year CMSA membership (you get an extra year of *Country Music Magazine*, too).

Fill out poll and mail to: November Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 329 Riverside Avenue, Suite 1, Westport, Connecticut 06880.

Country Music VIDEOS



HALL OF FAME COLLECTION 4 Full Tapes - 120 mins. - Special Reduced Price - SAVE \$5.00!

Here is a real treat. Four complete shows from the early days of the Opry, each one hosted by one of country music's biggest names. There's Ernest Tubb with guests Webb Pierce, George Morgan and Marty Robbins, just to mention a few. Carl Smith with Jim Reeves, The Carter Family and others. Faron Young with June Carter, Ernest Tubb and Marty Robbins again. And Little Jimmy Dickens with Cowboy Copas and a whole bunch of other great stars. The best part is, you see them in their prime doing such fabulous songs as: Ernest Tubb - *Two Glasses, Joe*; *Dear Judge/Marty Robbins - Poor Unlucky Me*; *Pretty Mama*; *Tennessee Toddy*/Faron Young - *If That's The Fashion*; *A Place For Girls Like You*/Jim Reeves - *My Lips Are Sealed*; *Bimbo*; *Down In The Caribbean*/Carl Smith - *Satisfaction Guaranteed*; *Darling, Am I The One*, AND MUCH MORE! Item No. V5W-If Ordered Separately - \$39.96 - NOW \$34.95 For All Four!

HANK WILLIAMS JR. Full Access - 80 mins.

In Montana, you'll get an insider's view of Hank's private refuge and see the side that only a privileged few have seen before. In Tennessee, you'll join Hank as he relaxes with friends at his home, and meet some of the people closest to him. In concert, you see, hear and feel Hank's hits as only he can perform them: *Born To Boogie/Family Tradition*/If The South Woulda Won/A Country Boy Can Survive/My Name Is Bocephus, AND MORE! Item No. V7A-\$19.95

HANK WILLIAMS JR. NEW! Greatest Video Hits - 40 mins.

If you're a Hank Jr. fan, you don't want to miss this brand new release either. It includes exclusive, behind-the-scenes footage plus the Grammy-winning duet and ACM and CMA Video of the Year *There's A Tear In My Beer* (with Hank Williams.) Also featured are: *All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight*/Young Country/My Name Is Bocephus/If It Will It Will. That's 3 CMA and 3 ACM Video of the Year Award Winners. Item No. V8I - \$29.95

ERNEST TUBB Thanks Troubadour Thanks - 62 mins.

Here is the complete, true story of "America's Troubadour." From his birth in depression-era Texas, the early influence of Jimmie Rodgers, the first recording sessions, early radio shows and Hollywood movies, to the Grand Ole Opry, over 40 years on the road, and sales of over 20 million records. This fascinating video biography features classic performances and Ernest's top hits. It's a must for serious country music fans. Item No. V2N - \$19.95

WILLIE NELSON NEW! On The Road Again - 45 mins.

This great new Willie Nelson video, drawn from old and new footage and including songs from I.R.S. tapes, showcases the broad panorama of his musical genius. Whether it's an old standard like *Blue Skies* or a saloon stomper like *Whiskey River*, Willie gives them all his special touch. Included here are: *On The Road Again/Crazy/Who'll Buy My Memories/Touch Me/Night Life/Angel Flying Too Close To The Ground*, AND MORE! Item No. V1G - \$24.95

WILLIE NELSON NEW! My Life - 60 mins.

Here is another in the growing list of excellent home video produced by Hallway Productions in Nashville. You should not miss this riveting, close-up portrait of Willie's days as a starving songwriter through his struggle to superstardom. It's a story of hardship, courage, love, friendship and music as told by Willie himself, with 20 great hits, and some help from friends like Johnny Cash, Waylon and Kris Kristofferson. Item No. V5L - \$29.95

GARTH BROOKS Garth Brooks - 30 mins.

He just might be the biggest success story in country music in recent years. At the very least, it would be hard to find another headliner who has ascended to country music's front stage in as short a period of time as Garth. Winner of four 1991 CMA Awards and two in 1990, now you can enjoy Garth on this acclaimed best-selling video which includes: *If Tomorrow Never Comes/The Thunder Rolls/The Dance*, AND MORE! Item No. V2D-\$19.95

KENNY ROGERS NEW! Great Video Hits - 16:30 mins.

Few would dispute the popularity of this outstanding and lasting showman. He has become known the world over as a successful star of record, concert, movies, even photography. Now you can enjoy this master on this entertaining video which features *Crazy/This Woman/Morning Desire* and *Twenty Years Ago*. If you're a true country music fan at heart, you absolutely won't want to miss it. Item No. V3I - \$14.95

COUNTRY VIDEO HITS OF THE 90'S 15 Great Performances - 56 mins.

Here are the best of the best, including: *A Better Man* by Clint Black// *Watched It All* by Lionel Cartwright/*Simple Man* by The Charlie Daniels Band/*Give A Little Love* by The Judds/*Out Of Your Shoes* by Lorie Morgan/*Crazy For Love* by Conway Twitty// *Ain't Nothin'* by Keith Whitley/*Don't Toss Us Away* by Patty Loveless/*Cry, Cry, Cry* by Marty Stuart/*When I Call Your Name* by Vince Gill, AND MANY MORE! Item No. V6E - \$19.95

WAYLON JENNINGS NEW! Lost Outlaw Performance - 60 mins.

The master recording of this memorable concert was never released and had been locked in the vaults of RCA Records, long forgotten since 1978. Now we bring it to you for the first time, in its entirety, exactly as it was recorded on August 12, 1978. Here is the "Outlaw" period in all its glory, with eight #1 singles including: *Good Hearted Woman/Luckenbach, Texas/Amanda/This Time/If We Always Been Crazy*, AND MORE! Item No. V4D - \$19.95

RICKY VAN SHELTON To Be Continued... - 35 mins.

Ricky has topped the charts in three out of three tries and he's scored seven #1 singles -- so far. *To Be Continued...* features every one of his videos plus two live performances and a fascinating interview. Included are: *Crime Of Passion/Someone Lied/Life Turned Her That Way/I'll Leave This World Loving You/Hole In My Pocket (Live)/Living Proof(Live)/Statue Of A Fool/It Meant Every Word He Said*. Item No. G5W - \$24.95

THE JUDDS NEW! Their Final Concert - 90 mins.

This spectacular finale features all their greatest hits as mother and daughter raise their voices together for one last memorable event. You'll hear them sing all your favorites: *Born To Be Blue/Give A Little Love/Mama, He's Crazy/Don't Be Cruel/Grandpa/Guardian Angel/Why Not Me/ Love Is Alive/Love Can Build A Bridge*, and 10 MORE! You also hear them reminisce about those memorable moments in their past. Item No. V7H - \$29.95

COUNTRY MUSIC ON BROADWAY Filmed 1964, N.Y. City - 96 mins.

Here is the first full length country music movie ever filmed. See Hank Williams in his only filmed appearance, uncut and crystal clear. Enjoy 30 full musical numbers by Hank and headliners like George Jones, Porter Wagoner, Hank Snow, Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper. Including: *Hank Sr. - Hey Good Lookin'/George Jones - White Lightning/Hank Snow - Moving On/Porter Wagoner - Satisfied Mind*, AND MORE! Item No. G8F - \$49.95

TANYA TUCKER Tanya Tucker - 22:07 mins.

Talented...spunky...a young country music superstar who has retained her superstar status even as country music has grown to become the number one music of the 90's. No video collection is complete without Tanya Tucker. Included are: *Walking Shoes/Love Me Like You Used To/ Strong Enough To Bend/Daddy And Home/Don't Go Out/ Just Another Love*, plus live interview footage taped by Dick Heard T.V. Productions. Item No. V7T - \$19.95

ELVIS PRESLEY Elvis: '68 Comeback Special - 76 mins

December 3rd, 1968. The day the "King" returned for the first time after eight years with perhaps his greatest performance. Included are: *Hound Dog/Guitar Man/Lady, Miss Claway/Hearbreak Hotel/All Shook Up/Can't Help Falling In Love/Jailhouse Rock/Don't Be Cruel/Love Me Tender/ Are You Lonesome Tonight/That's Alright Little Mama/ Baby, What Do You Want Me To Do*, AND A LOT MORE! Item No. G2J - \$39.95

LEGENDS OF COUNTRY MUSIC 28 Live Performances - 60 mins.

Here is a grand celebration featuring all the great legends. Ernest Tubb - *Tomorrow Never Comes*/Ray Price - *Crazy Arms*/Marty Robbins - *Mabeline*/The Carter Family - *That Ain't The Way I Heard It*/Webb Pierce - *I'm Walking The Dog*/Jim Reeves - *Down In The Caribbean*/Carl Smith - *If You Feel Like You're In Love*/Bill Monroe - *I Hear A Voice Calling*/Stringbean - *Little Lisa Jane*/Chet Atkins - *Arkansas Traveler*, AND MORE! Item No. V1W-\$49.95

MARTY ROBBINS The Best Of His TV Show - 55 mins.

Take a return visit to Marty's first syndicated TV show, (1968-1969.) Thirty-nine shows have been edited into this classic collection of back-to-back performances. There are 21 songs along with a bunch of humorous excerpts: *I Can't Help It (If I'm Still In Love With You)*/Take These Chains/Lovesick Blues/Low And Lonely/Are You Sincere/Long Gone Lonesome Blues/Tumbling Tumbleweeds/EI Paso/ Running Gun, AND MORE! Item No. V8E - \$29.95

MARTY ROBBINS Super Legend - 120 mins.

This memorable video features 18 performances: *EI Paso/ White Sports Coat/Devil Woman/Ribbon Of Darkness/Singing The Blues/I Can't Keep From Cryin'/Don't Worry Bout Me/This Time You Gave Me A Mountain*, and many more, including Marty's Grammy winning song, *My Woman, My Woman, My Wife*. It also includes rare appearances from early television shows and the big screen. PLUS A LOT MORE! Item No. G2A - \$39.95

MARTY ROBBINS A Man And His Music - 55mins.

This additional Marty Robbins video was recorded live at the Opry in 1980. "Funnin' around" was what he called it. And that's precisely what this video is all about. It includes his version of Elvis' *That's All Right (Mama)*, plus these other great selections: *Ribbon Of Darkness/Devil Woman/ Big Iron/Among My Souvenirs/Don't Worry/A White Sports Coat/My Woman, My Woman, My Wife/EI Paso*. AND MUCH MORE! Item No. G1G - \$39.95

DWIGHT YOAKAM Just Lookin' For A Hit - 30 mins.

Few can dispute the impact that this young star has had on the country music scene. And what better way to enjoy Yoakam Country than with his first Warner video featuring: *Honky Tonk Man/Guitars, Cadillac/Little Sister/Always Late With Your Kisses/Streets Of Bakersfield/Long White Cadillac*. There's even a Yoakam interview as well as performance footage from the I.R.S. label hit *The Cutting Edge*. Item No. G1E - \$19.95

Country Music VIDEOS



ALAN JACKSON

Here In The Real World - 25 mins.

Here are Alan's three #1 smash hits, *Wanted/Here In The Real World/Chasin' That Neon Rainbow*. Plus, a pair of live performances: *Dog River Blues* and *Home*. There's also his first big song *Blue Blooded Woman*. *Here In The Real World* clearly reveals Alan's humble, unpretentious manner combined with genuine talent and striking good looks—all the elements that have made him one of country music's hottest stars. Item No. V3L-\$19.95.

GRAND OLE OPRY GREATS **NEW!** Loading Ladies - 50 mins.

Reba McEntire, one of country's most luminous stars, hosts this video celebration of famous women who preceded her and ushered in a new era on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry during the '50s and '60s. Photographs, archive performance clips and narrative stories recall the Original Carter Family, Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, Tammy Wynette, Dolly Parton, Dottie West, Skeeter Davis, Jean Shepard and others. Item No. V3A - \$39.95

LORRIE MORGAN

Something In Red - 18:27 mins.

RCA proudly presents perhaps their fastest rising female star on one of their hottest selling new musical videos. Featuring on this great new video are all of Lorrie's biggest hits. Including: *Trainwreck Of Emotion/Dear Me/Out Of Your Shoes/We Both Walk A Closing Of Me (Without You)* ...plus the opening and closing music, *Something In Red*. We strongly suggest you do not miss this rapidly rising star. Item No. V1J-\$14.95

GEORGE JONES

Same Ole Me - 60 mins.

They call him "Possum." They also call him "Country Music's Living Legend." *Same Ole Me* is the story of George Jones, finally told his way with the help of such great stars as Roy Acuff, Loretta Lynn and Johnny Cash. It includes hits like: *He Stopped Loving Her Today/Bartender's Blues/The Race Is On/She Thinks I Still Care/White Lightning/Why Baby Why?/Some Day My Day Will Come*, AND MORE! Item No. G4Z-\$29.95

CONWAY TWITTY

King Of Hits - 45 mins. **NEW!**

This new video celebrates the basis for Conway's claim to titles of greatness by taking a long look at his illustrious career. We see him as he performs early hits like *To See My Angel Cry* and *She Started To Stop Loving You*. We hear classic Conway hits like *Linda On My Mind* and *The Games Daddies Play* and come full circle with his more recent ballads like *Somebody's Needin' Somebody*. It's a fitting tribute to a legendary star. Item No. V2C - \$24.95

SAWYER BROWN

Greatest Hits - 40 mins.

They are a testament to the philosophy that hard work is rewarded. After more than ten years together, they have become one of the top concert draws in the country. This *Greatest Hits* video will give you an idea of why. Featured hits include: *Betty's Bein' Bad/Shakin' My Baby's Gone! Somewhere In The Night/When Love Comes Callin'/Out Goin' Cattin'/Step That Step/Heart Don't Fall Now/Did It For Love/The Race Is On*. Item No. V4G-\$19.95

TRAVIS TRITT:

It's All About To Change - 55 mins.

Here is one of country music's hottest young stars, second only to Garth Brooks for albums sold in 1991. Here's your chance to watch Travis perform all his hit videos. Included are: *Country Club/Help Me Hold On/Put Some Drive In Your Country/Drift Off To Dream/Here's A Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares)*. There's also exclusive interview footage and musical excerpts from: *I'm Gonna Be Someone/All I'll Ever Be/Bible Belt*. Item No. V1V - \$24.95

REBA

In Concert - 71 mins.

Now enjoy all the excitement and charisma of perhaps today's number one country music lady. Included are: *Love Will Find It's Way To You/Can't Even Get The Blues/Somebody Should Leave/One Promise Too Late/Let The Music Lift You Up/Whoever's In New England/Sweet Dreams/You Lie/Cathy's Clown/Oklahoma Swing/Rumor Has It/What Am I Gonna Do About You/I Know How He Feels*, AND MORE! Item No. V3E-\$19.95

REBA

For My Broken Heart - 22:41 mins.

Reba fans, this is your lucky day. We also have her much anticipated brand new video ready to send out to you by return mail. You'll be among the first to bring country music's current reigning queen home for a private screening. Featured on this potential chartbuster are: *Rumor Has It/You Lie/Fancy/For My Broken Heart/Is Their Life Out There*. Whether or not you have ordered either of Reba's past videos, you don't want to miss this one. Item No. V5M - \$19.95

ROY ORBISON & FRIENDS

A Black & White Night - 56 mins.

Recorded live at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles, the great Roy Orbison is joined by legendary line-up that includes the likes of Elvis Costello, Bruce Springsteen and K.D. Lang. Included on this great video are: *Only The Lonely/Dream Baby/Running Scared/Ooby Dooby/It's Over/Pretty Woman/(All I Can Do Is) Dream You Candy Man/Down The Line/Uptown/Crying*, AND MORE! Item No. V1P - \$29.95

BRENDA LEE

An Evening With - 45 mins. **NEW!**

One of the most enduring and enchanting performers ever, Brenda has sold over 85 million records and was honored as The World's Top Female Singer three years in a row. Her acclaimed Edmonton concert video features: *Coming On Strong/Silver Threads/Johnny One Time/You're The One That I Want/How Much Love?/That's All You Gotta Do/I'm Sorry/Momma Don't Dance*, AND MUCH MORE! Item No. V4Q - \$19.95

CHARLEY PRIDE

An Evening With... - 48 mins.

Listen to the rich baritone sounds of Charley Pride, the Country Music Association's 1971 Performer of the Year. Included in this noteworthy live performance are: *Kiss An Angel Good Morning/Kawliga/So Afraid Of Losing You/Oklahoma Morning/It's Going To Take A Little Longer/Crystal Chandelier/My Eyes Can Only See As Far As You/Me And Bobby McGehee/Louisiana Man/Cottonfields Back Home*, AND MORE! Item No. V1C - \$19.95

HIGHWAYMEN LIVE

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Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

Elvis Presley: For years, even before Elvis died, RCA mishandled his recorded legacy with notoriously awful packaging and dreadful sound. Former RCA Vice President Gregg Geller did far better, packaging the material with respect, remastering the early albums for CD and creating a classy album box filled with early rarities. Geller is now gone from RCA, but on *Elvis: The Complete 50's Masters* (RCA 66050), RCA finally gets it right. This five-CD (or cassette) box features 139 tracks (and some unreleased interview material), comprising everything released during that time, including both sides of the 1953 custom recording Elvis made at Sun Records for his mother; all the known Sun recordings, and RCA recordings through his final session of the decade in 1958.

The material speaks for itself, and the improved audio restores the sound to its original form without the vast globs of echo, phony stereo and other "enhancements" which were, for years, dumped on these records. The result is more musical punch, clearer vocals and previously inaudible instruments now heard loud and clear.

Disc (or cassette) five, *Rare and Rockin'*, contains 26 rarities, such as two searing 1955 Sun-era demos cut in Texas, *Louisiana Hayride* appearances, Sun outtakes and four selections from his disastrous 1956 Vegas stage show with pop bandleader Freddy Martin (also found on the *Elvis Aaron Presley* album box). Among the few RCA alternate takes are a hot "Shake, Rattle and Roll" with the original raunchy lyrics.

The 92-page booklet, crammed with rare (and in some cases unpublished) photos, is built around Peter Guralnick's incisive essay and includes complete recording information. I do wish RCA



had sequenced everything chronologically, placing both sides of the 1953 disc together and all the Sun and RCA outtakes with the issued material. In fact, a box dedicated strictly to live 1950's recordings and Elvis' TV appearances from that period would be welcome. Nonetheless, RCA's finally redeemed themselves by this elegant packaging of Presley's most important musical legacy. More sets are forthcoming.

Buck Owens: I'm not going to comment on *The Buck Owens Collection: 1959-1990* (Rhino R 71016). The reason? I spent three months writing and researching the biography and song notes for the booklet, so a full review wouldn't be appropriate. In short, it's three CD's or cassettes and a glossy, 80-page booklet. Among the 62 numbers chosen by Buck, who owns his Capitol recordings, are: "Second Fiddle," "Under Your Spell Again," "Above and Beyond," "Excuse Me (I Think I've Got a Heartache)," "Foolin' Around," "Under the Influence of Love," "Kickin' Our Hearts Around," "You're For Me," "Act Naturally," "Love's Gonna Live Here," "Close Up the Honky Tonks," "Hello Trouble," "A-11," "I Don't Care" "I've Got a Tiger By the Tail," "Crying Time," "Before You Go" and "Only You (Can Break My Heart)." Also included are "Gonna Have Love," "Buckaroo," "Memphis," "Waitin' in Your Welfare Line," "Think of Me," "Open up Your Heart,"

"Sam's Place," "Your Tender Loving Care," "It Takes People Like You (To Make People Like Me)," "How Long Will My Baby Be Gone," "Tall Dark Stranger," "I've Got You on My Mind Again," "Johnny B. Goode," "The Kansas City Song," "I Wouldn't Live in New York City," "Bridge over Troubled Water," "Ruby," "Rollin' in My Sweet Baby's Arms," "Made in Japan," the original 1972 recording of "Streets of Bakersfield," "On the Cover of the Music City News," "Monster's Holiday," the 1988 version of "Streets of Bakersfield" with Dwight Yoakam, "Hot Dog" and the "Act Naturally" duet with Ringo Starr.

Johnnie and Jack: *Johnnie and Jack & The Tennessee Mountain Boys* (BCD 15553), a six-CD, 181-song set, chronicles the brother-in-law vocal duo of Johnnie Wright and Jack Anglin, who like The Louvins and The Delmores, long ago passed into legend. It begins with their first four 1947 singles, recorded for the rhythm and blues-oriented Apollo label. Also included are the six King recordings they did with Ray Atkins and singer Clyde Moody under the name of King's Sacred Quartet.

Their RCA period yielded all their best-known records, from "Oh Baby Mine," "Ashes of Love" and "Poison Love" to "Cryin' Heart Blues," "Heart Trouble" and "Slow Poison" (their sole chart hit for Decca). Though the early RCA tracks

featured accompaniment from their band, which included fiddlers Paul Warren and Benny Martin and dobroist Shot Jackson, over time they relied more on Nashville studio pickers when they recorded. The set concludes with their 1961-1962 Decca recordings. The act ended with Anglin's 1963 death in a car crash the day of the funeral services for Patsy Cline.

The booklet features the usual rare photos. In addition to Walt Trott's factual biography, country researcher Eddie Stubbs (fiddler for The Johnnie Mountain Boys) provides exhaustive session-by-session song notes and individual profiles of Johnnie and Jack band members and their regular Nashville studio backup musicians.

The Louvin Brothers: *Close Harmony* (BCD 15561) makes past reissues of The Louvins' studio sides irrelevant. There are a total of 219 songs on eight CD's, starting (like the Johnnie and Jack) with The Louvins' first recording, done in 1947 during an Eddie Hill session for Apollo Records, along with their sole 1949 Decca single and the dozen 1951-52 MGM recordings including "Weapon of Prayer," "The Get Acquainted Waltz" and "The Great Atomic Power."

The 204 Capitol recordings, spanning 1952 to 1963, are here in all their crystalline beauty, further enhanced by typically faultless Bear Family remastering. All of their classic Capitol albums such as *My Baby's Gone*, *Tragic Songs of Life*, *Satan Is Real* and their Roy Acuff and Delmore Brothers tributes are here in their entirety, as are hits like "My Baby's Gone," "Cash on the Barrelhead," "When I Stop Dreaming," "You're Running Wild" and "Knoxville Girl." Virtually everything they recorded was issued, a tribute to the quality of The Louvins' output.

The booklet by Charles Wolfe is based on new interviews with Charlie Louvin and others. As with other Bear sets, it combines rare photos, a complete discography and anecdotes about the recordings. The stories about The Louvins' high and low times and Ira's carrying on could become a movie. Ira, a heavy drinker, not only occasionally smashed his mandolins onstage, but was shot five times by one of his wives. On tour with The Louvins in the 1950's, fan Elvis Presley nearly duked it out with Ira after Ira criticized "the trash" the King sang onstage.

This is a major reissue from Bear Family, equal to their recent Lefty Frizzell box.

Flatt and Scruggs: Bear Family's *Flatt and Scruggs: 1959-1963* (BCD 15559) picks up where the first volume (1948-1959) left off, with their complete recordings during that period. In 1959, Lester and Earl were just beginning to gain a strong following beyond the bluegrass audience. Thanks to the folk music revival, their audience was fast becoming worldwide. Nonetheless, their music really didn't change much (though it later did, as will be documented in the next volume).

From Earl's showcase "Polka on a Banjo" (a Number 12 record in 1961) and Lester and Earl's Carter Family tribute album to their little-known 1961 recordings as the backup band for fiddler Gordon Terry (playing unidentified due to their Columbia contract) on Terry's 1961 RCA Victor album, *Square Dance Party*, their entire studio output through the period is thoroughly documented. Other chart hits from this period that show up on the set are "Go Home," "Just Ain't," "The Legend of the Johnson Boys" and their hit recordings of TV's *Beverly Hillbillies* theme, "The Ballad of Jed Clampett," and "Pearl Pearl Pearl," which they sang on the show. Disc five releases, for the first time ever, the complete Carnegie Hall concert (December 8, 1962) with 19 additional numbers including

an encore with Merle Travis (who opened for Lester and Earl). The set ends with their 1963 live concert at Vanderbilt University. The booklet by Neil Rosenberg features notes and discography as well as some amazing 1961 photos of the boys on the road.

Roots 'N Blues: Columbia Records' new *Roots 'N Blues Retrospective 1925-1950* (CK 47911) from their Legacy series is not strictly a country compilation, for the 107 chronologically arranged songs on four CD's (or cassettes) mix some of the greatest black and white artists of that 25-year period with little-known artists whose work is just as great. There's black and white blues, stringband and gospel music mixed with Cajun, cowboy and Western swing acts. Much of the material has never been released. The set opens with Charlie Poole's North Carolina Ramblers' classic 1926 "Whitehouse Blues" and the obscure Aiken County (North Carolina) String Band's 1927 instrumental, "High Sheriff," featuring hot mandolin and harmonica. Among the unissued numbers are Fiddlin' John Carson's 1928 "I'm Going to Take the Train to Charlotte" and an untitled instrumental by Ernest V. Stoneman's Trio. Cajun great Joe Falcon's 1929 "Osson" and Gid Tanner's 1929 "Soldier's Joy" are no less compelling now than 63 years ago.

The roots of much of the music of the past 60 years become obvious. The Pelican

Wildcats' version of the traditional fiddle tune, "Walkin' Georgia Rose," reveals it as the melody from which Bob Wills created "Take Me Back to Tulsa." Among the three unissued 1930's Light Crust Doughboys tracks is the "Doughboy Theme" from their radio show. Both The Blue Ridge Ramblers and Eldon Baker's Brown County Ramblers reveal that hot swing music was made in Kentucky as well as in Texas. Gene Autry's 1946 "Dixie Cannonball" with Merle Travis on guitar is a treasure.

Don't pass up the blues numbers, which influenced plenty of white country singers. For example, the music of the black blues and boogie woogie pianists heard here later came out in the playing of country greats Moon Mullican and Jerry Lee Lewis. Other blues musicians were influencing country singers' repertoires long before rock 'n' roll. All told, the set's a terrific comment on the interchangeability of American music.

Gospel: Rhino Records' *Jubilation: Great Gospel Performances* consists of two volumes of outstanding black gospel music and a third volume titled *Country Gospel* (R 70298), consisting of gospel songs performed by country singers. It captures a variety of country gospel tunes recorded by well-known artists in 18 songs (14 on cassette).

Some of these tunes are now standards, such as Roy Acuff's original "Great Speck-

led Bird," Hank Williams' "I Saw the Light," Flatt and Scruggs' "Preachin' Prayin' Singin'," Ernest Tubb's "When Jesus Calls" and Martha Carson's "Satisfied."

Along with The Carter Family's 1929 "God Gave Noah the Rainbow Sign" is "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord" by Johnny Cash and The Carters, Bill Monroe's "A Voice From On High" and Merle Haggard and The Carters' "Precious Memories" from Hag's out-of-print *Land of Many Churches* album. Among the later sides is Ricky Skaggs and Tony Rice's 1981 "Talk About Suffering." Black gospel music authority Ray Funk's liner notes aren't terribly authoritative. Though he compiled all three volumes, he simply doesn't know country music as well as black gospel, and it shows.

Doug Sahn and Friends: After Atlantic Records signed Willie Nelson, Atlantic executive President Jerry Wexler caught the country bug and went looking for other eclectic Texas talent. *The Best of the Atlantic Sessions* (Rhino R 71032) is a 19-song (14 on cassette) compilation of issued and unissued tracks from Sahn's two 1973 Atlantic albums. Like the music of his current group, The Texas Tornados, these cuts mixed Tex-Mex, rhythm & blues and country and used Texas musicians including a then-obscure Flaco Jimenez.

Forget the inconsequential cameo by Bob Dylan on his composition "Wallflower." Far better is the fact that both albums mixed Sahn originals like "I Get Off," the moody "Blue Horizon" (which gets a full-blown big band arrangement), "Box Car Hobo" and the rhythm and blues stomper, "Dealer's Blues," with a number of Texas blues tunes, plus Charley Pride's "(Is Anybody Going to) San Antone," Johnnie and Jack's "Poison Love" and Conway Twitty's "The Image of Me." The notes by Chet Flippo, who covered Sahn extensively for *Rolling Stone* in the 1970's, are authoritative and atmospheric.

How to Get These Treasures

Available in formats shown at prices shown: *Elvis: The Complete 50's Masters* (RCA 66050) 5-cassette or 5-CD boxed set \$99.98 cassettes, \$129.98 CD's/*The Buck Owens Collection: 1959-1990* (R 71016) 3-cassette or 3-CD set \$39.95 cassettes, \$49.95 CD's/*Johnnie and Jack & The Tennessee Mountain Boys* (BCD 15553) 6-CD boxed set \$198.98/*The Louvin Brothers, Close Harmony* (BCD 15561) 8-CD boxed set \$249.00/*Flatt and Scruggs, 1959-1963* (BCD 15559) 6-CD boxed set \$169.00/*Various Artists, Roots 'N Blues Retrospective, 1925-1950* (CK 47911) 4-cassette or 4-CD boxed set \$49.98 cassettes, \$79.98 CD's/*Various Artists, Country Gospel* (R 70298) \$12.98 cassette, \$19.98 CD.

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Essential Collector

by Rich Kienzle

• Videos •

Various Artists: From 1954 through 1956, filmmaker Al Gannaway produced a series of color films in Nashville featuring Grand Ole Opry stars, dressed in their flashiest show outfits, singing one hit song after another (not lip-synching their records). Many of the artists featured in these films—Webb Pierce, Carl Smith, Little Jimmy Dickens and Marty Robbins among them—were enjoying some of their biggest successes during that time. Most of the performances were filmed at either Vanderbilt University or the new Bradley Studios, where Owen and Harold Bradley had added a metal quonset hut for movie shoots. In fact, the wooden sets for these films so altered and improved the studio's acoustics that they were retained intact. That studio became Bradley's (and later Columbia's) legendary "Studio B," birthplace of dozens of hit recordings.

Shanachie, a record and video company concentrating on blues and ethnic music, have compiled three videos, each with 24 to 27 performances from the Gannaway material. Flawlessly reproducing color and sound, the producers arranged two- or three-artist packages, alternating between artists. The background sets may be hokey and the bystanders either bored or clapping out of rhythm with the music, but the music's what matters, and it's a joy.

Webb Pierce/Chet Atkins: If you saw the Webb Pierce video reviewed in July/August and were disappointed that those performances were from his later years, this one compensates, having been filmed when Webb was at his hottest. Clad in some truly amazing Nudie costumes (one with applied Decca 45 rpm discs), he throws off 17 energetic performances of many of his big-

gest hits, "Slowly," "More and More," "In the Jailhouse Now," "There Stands the Glass" and "Love, Love, Love" among them. The video closes with Webb, Carl Smith and Marty Robbins doing a rousing version of "Why Baby Why," then a hit for George Jones as well as for Sovine and Pierce (as a duet).

Chet, rarely seen in vintage video, is also at his best, picking nine songs, among them "Tennessee Polka," "Pickin' the Blues," "Mr. Sandman," "Frankie and Johnny," "Wildwood Flower" and the pop standard, "Dark Eyes." This video's also a treat for guitar collectors as Chet plays his original Chet Atkins 6120 Gretsch hollowbody and, occasionally, the ultra-rare solidbody Atkins model. Pierce's steel guitarists, Bud Isaacs and Sonny Burnette, are seen playing the legend-



ary Bigsby models favored by early pedal steelers.

Ray Price/Jim Reeves/Ernest Tubb: These three Texans, today perceived as having very different musical styles, may surprise viewers when seen together. Price, then creating his greatest honky tonk music, does nine numbers, most among his big-

gest, kicking off with "Crazy Arms," and rolling on with, among others, "Don't Let the Stars Get in Your Eyes," "Run Boy," "I Saw My Castles Fall Today," "I'll Be There," "Sweet Little Miss Blue Eyes" and "You Done Me Wrong," co-written with George Jones.

Reeves, newly signed to RCA, had yet to graduate to the more neutral pop sound that Chet Atkins would build for him with "Four Walls." Back then Reeves was a driving, hard-country singer who often wore flashy outfits and sang in a style close to Ray Price. You won't hear the deep, velvety voice that later made him famous on these early hits like "Bimbo," "Mexican Joe," "My Lips Are Sealed," "Yonder Comes a Sucker," a cover of Mitchell Torok's "Caribbean" and "I'm Hurtin' Inside." E.T.'s seven numbers include "Throw Your Love My Way," "I'm in a Crowd," "That Wild and Wicked Look in Your Eye," "Dear Judge" and "If I Never Have Anything Else." Texas Troubadour Billy Byrd picks both his original Gibson Byrdland and a rare Bigsby solidbody.

Marty Robbins/Ernest Tubb combines more E.T. with some of Marty's biggest hits. Tubb sings 14 numbers, among them "Walkin' the Floor Over You," Johnny Cash's "So Doggone Lonesome," "You Nearly Lose Your Mind" (incorrectly titled "They'll Do it Every Time"), "I'll Step Aside," "Two Glasses, Joe," "Try Me One More Time," "Remember Me," "Answer the Phone" and "Tomorrow Never Comes." Among Marty's dozen numbers are "Singin' the Blues," "Gossip," "I Couldn't Keep From Crying," "Time Goes By," "Pretty Words," "Call Me Up" and "My Castle in the Sky."

I understand Shanachie plans to release more from the

Gannaway archives, and hopefully, future work will reflect the quality that these first three have in spades.

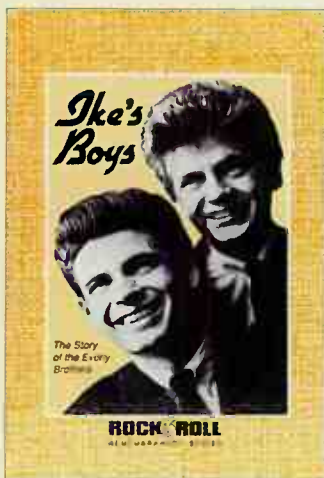
Second Fiddle to a Steel Guitar, the 1965 "comedy" from the producer of *Country Music on Broadway*, is as bad as the awful Faron Young-Ferlin Husky disaster, *Country Music Holiday*. The "plot" involves an cancelled opera presentation, forcing the substitution of a country show (figure that out!). The actors, including ex-Chunky candy bar pitchman Arnold Stang and former Bowery Boys Leo Gorcey and Huntz Hall, are simply embarrassing. The show's musical host, Merle Kilgore, was photographed in such a way that he had to turn sideways to read cue cards (and it's painfully obvious he's reading them).

The music is better. Some was recorded live for the show, other numbers were lip-synched. You get an energetic "Sleepin' at the Foot of the Bed" from Little Jimmy Dickens. Lefty appears singing "If You've Got the Money" and "Saginaw, Michigan." Del Reeves does "Girl on the Billboard," plus imitations of both Johnny Cash and actor Walter Brennan (memorable as "Grandpappy Amos" on the *Real McCoy* TV show). George Hamilton IV mimes his hit recording of "Abilene," while Connie Smith is outstanding on "Once a Day." Homer & Jethro, seldom seen in such films, do a swinging parody of "Jambalaya" (with a hot jazz instrumental break) and their "Battle of New Orleans" parody, "The Battle of Kookamonga." Fast-forward to the music and forget the "comedy."

• Books •

The Everly Brothers: Two recent volumes on the lives of The Everly Brothers reveal the different approaches that authors can take to the subject. (The best Everly book of

all, a lavishly-illustrated photo and text from England, is long out of print and was never available in the U.S.) Of the two, Phyllis Karpp's *Ike's Boys* is excellent—a straightforward, competent history of The Everly Brothers based on research and interviews with family members.



Beginning with their father Ike's days as a coal miner and guitar fingerpicker (who taught Merle Travis) turned radio personality, the book continues through Don and Phil's early days working on radio with their parents. Karpp takes the reader through their early attempts to get noticed in Nashville, their success with Cadence Records in the mid-50's, the mega-hits through the early 70's, their 1973 split and 1983 reconciliation. Many rare photos and a reasonably complete discography are also included. Karpp is not a particularly flashy writer, but gets the job done quite nicely.

One needn't read many pages to see why Consuelo Dodge published *The Everly Brothers: Ladies Love Outlaws* herself. This rambling, ill-written tribute to Don and Phil is laden with such embarrassing "insights" as, "Many fans give the Everlys flowers when they perform. Flowers are lovely. I adore flowers, but after 30 years of flowers night after night, I would think one might get sick of them" (page 238). On page 246 she quips, "I think the Everly Brothers are very proud of their accomplishments however, and they

should be." You get the idea. Dodge describes herself as a former actress and legal secretary pursuing "her new love, writing." She could've fooled me.

Porter Wagoner: Amid all the biographies of Dolly Parton that have circulated over the past decade, the life of Porter Wagoner, who virtually launched Dolly as a star, has gotten short shrift. Steve Eng's hefty, 464-page book, *A Satisfied Mind*, attempts to rectify that problem. With meticulous research, Eng traces the rural Missouri background of the Wagoner family back to pioneer days, and chronicles Porter's impoverished early life. He captures how that life influenced his music, through his early days working part-time on rural radio and his first taste of stardom at legendary KWTO Radio in Springfield. He continues through Porter's early days of uncertainty, when he recorded his first big hit, "A Satisfied Mind," at a point when his future with RCA Victor was anything but certain. The moves to Nashville, to the Opry, the TV show and everything up to the present are chronicled down to the last detail, with rare photo after rare photo.

Unfortunately, all that research, and Eng's self-indulgence, sabotages the book's focus and readability. It's not that Eng blows an occasional fact (Rachel Veach of Roy Acuff's band wasn't dobroist Oswald Kirby's sister). Eng's desire to throw everything but the kitchen sink into the narrative so badly clutters it that it becomes hard to read.

He correctly lists articles, books and other source material in the back, but digresses from Porter's story to quote these same writings. Also, while it's important to provide background on the lives of those important to Porter's career, we don't need their *entire stories* in a Porter bio. A competent editor could have excised 100 pages of trivia, kept the focus on Porter and made this a far more useful work than it is.

Reba McEntire: Two recent unauthorized Reba McEntire bios have also surfaced, and quality is elusive. Carol Leggett's *Reba McEntire: The Queen of Country*, gushes incessantly about McEntire, quoting both well-known facts and Reba's remarks from published interviews with others. Leggett fawns over her subject's life, punctuating the story with plenty of publicity photos. Her total ignorance of country music proves what happens when unqualified authors try to write about country singers. On page 22, she proclaims that "Country and western...was born as bluegrass in the hills of Virginia and Kentucky." Since bluegrass didn't begin until the late 1930's, where does that leave The Carter Family and Riley Puckett, not to mention Bill Monroe? Two pages later, she says, "Until the 70's, Nashville was hardly a major force in the music business." That's amusing, since WSM deejay David Cobb coined the term "Music City U.S.A." in 1950, and major pop and rock artists recorded there from the 1940's on.

Don Cusic's *Reba: Queen of*

Country (clever titles, eh?) is as bad or worse than his previous hack job "biographies" of Sandy Patti and Randy Travis. There's not much detail, but plenty of Cusic's clumsy writing, clumsier insights and factual ignorance. It's telling that many of the music people he credits in his acknowledgments are journalists and publicists. As with Leggett's book, we run through Reba's life, her rodeo background, her early days as a performer, her various recordings, her stardom, marriages and the plane crash that killed her band.

Like Leggett, Cusic knows little of history. In discussing



cowboy music, he states that Capitol Records began in "late 1941" (it was 1942) and that its first cowboy hits were Tex Williams' "Smoke! Smoke! Smoke!" (a 1947 Western swing record) and Tex Ritter's "Jingle, Jangle Jingle" (never a chart hit record for Ritter on Capitol). He does no better discussing Reba herself. Listen to this brilliant insight from page 114: "Reba chose to be a celebrity—craved it, really—because she wanted to be a success, wanted people to know the name Reba McEntire, wanted to go into a town and sell out huge concert halls, wanted to sell millions of albums, be seen on the little screen in homes all across America and be seen on the silver screen in movie theaters coast to coast."

That's what readers get when book publishers simply want a book on a hot artist with no regard for quality.

How to Get These Collectibles

Videos: *Webb Pierce and Chet Atkins* (V2I) \$39.95/*Ray Price, Jim Reeves and Ernest Tubb* (V1S) \$39.95/*Marty Robbins and Ernest Tubb* (V2G) \$39.95/*Second Fiddle to a Steel Guitar* (V9Q) \$39.95.

Books: Steve Eng, *Porter Wagoner: A Satisfied Mind* (B1K) \$19.95/Phyllis Karpp, *Ike's Boys: The Story of The Everly Brothers* (B1Q) \$26.50/Consuelo Dodge, *The Everly Brothers: Ladies Love Outlaws* (B3H) \$14.95/Carol Leggett, *Reba McEntire: The Queen of Country* (B2T) \$10.99/Don Cusic, *Reba McEntire: Queen of Country* (B6G) \$10.95. Send check or money order to Nashville Warehouse, Dept. 111292EC, P.O. Box 290216, Nashville, TN 37229. Add \$2.00 postage and handling for first item, \$.95 each additional. Canadian orders add \$3.00 extra postage. **CMSA Members, see For Members Only page for discounts.**

TOP 25

Albums

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2. Billy Ray Cyrus *Some Gave All*
3. Garth Brooks *Beyond the Season*
4. Garth Brooks *No Fences*
5. Garth Brooks *Ropin' the Wind*
6. Brooks & Dunn *Brand New Man*
7. Wynonna *Wynonna*
8. Vince Gill *I Still Believe in You*
9. George Strait *Pure Country*
10. Various Artists *Honeymoon in Vegas*
11. Travis Tritt *t-r-o-u-b-l-e*
12. Garth Brooks *Garth Brooks*
13. John Anderson *Seminole Wind*
14. Randy Travis *Greatest Hits, Volume 1*
15. Collin Raye *In This Life*
16. Trisha Yearwood *Hearts in Armor*
17. Clint Black *The Hard Way*
18. Mary-Chapin Carpenter *Come On Come On*
19. Ricky Van Shelton *Greatest Hits Plus*
20. Randy Travis *Greatest Hits, Volume 2*
21. Alabama *American Pride*
22. Reba McEntire *For My Broken Heart*
23. Alan Jackson *Don't Rock the Jukebox*
24. Chris LeDoux *Whatcha Gonna Do With a Cowboy*
25. Suzy Bogguss *Aces*

Singles

1. Collin Raye *In This Life*
2. Randy Travis *If I Didn't Have You*
3. Wynonna *No One Else on Earth*
4. Confederate Railroad *Jesus and Mama*
5. Trisha Yearwood *Wrong Side of Memphis*
6. McBride & The Ride *Going Out of My Mind*
7. Alan Jackson *Love's Got a Hold on You*
8. John Anderson *Seminole Wind*
9. Diamond Rio *Nowhere Bound*
10. Sawyer Brown *Cafe on the Corner*
11. Reba McEntire *The Greatest Man I Never Knew*
12. George Strait *So Much Like My Dad*
13. Garth Brooks *We Shall Be Free*
14. Travis Tritt *Lord Have Mercy on the Working Man*
15. Doug Stone *Warning Labels*
16. Pam Tillis *Shake the Sugar Tree*
17. Joe Diffie *Next Thing Smokin'*
18. Suzy Bogguss *Letting Go*
19. Lorrie Morgan *Watch Me*
20. Chris LeDoux *Whatcha Gonna Do With a Cowboy*
21. Billy Dean *If There Hadn't Been You*
22. Mark Chesnutt *Bubba Shot the Jukebox*
23. Billy Ray Cyrus *Could've Been Me*
24. Vince Gill *I Still Believe in You*
25. Little Texas *You and Me Forever*

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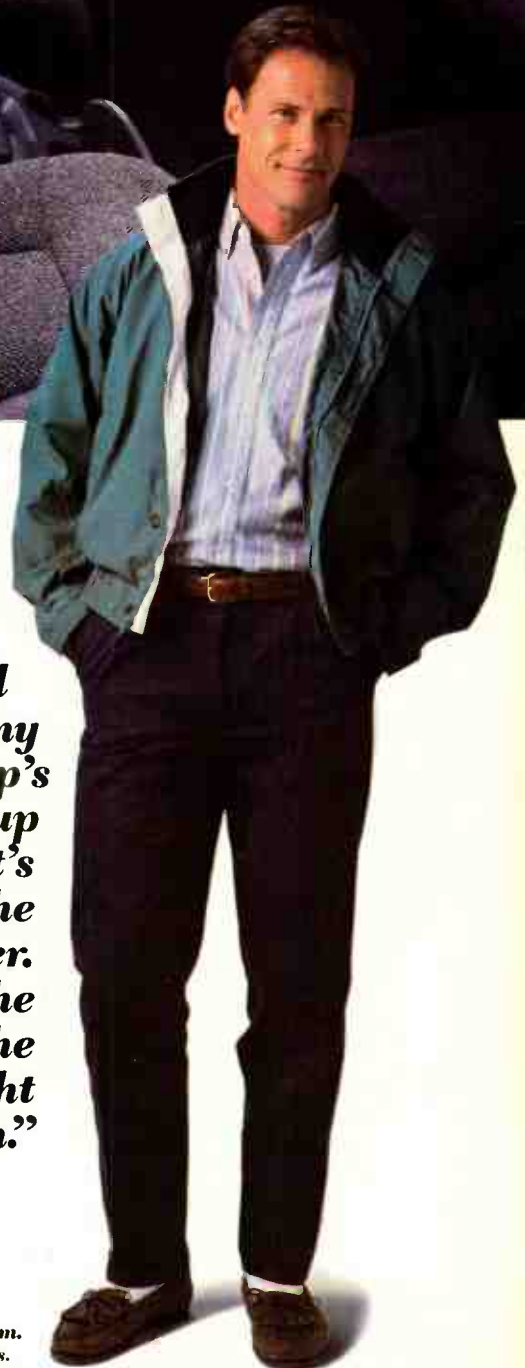
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