

## picks of the week

**STARLAND VOCAL BAND** (Windsong 10855) (Dist: RCA)

**Hail! Hail! Rock And Roll!** (2:42) (Cherry Lane — ASCAP) (Danoff, Danoff)

A gentle acoustic guitar introduces authentically executed doo-wop harmonies; then the record picks up into Beach Boys shuffle. These masters of vocal arrangement once again display unlimited abilities brought out by Milton Okun and Phil Ramone's incisive production values. Many hooks make this a natural for AM playlists, MOR formats, and the **Cash Box** top 100 singles chart.

**HARRY CHAPIN** (Elektra 45368)

**Corey's Coming** (5:38) (Sandy Songs — ASCAP) (Chapin)

A pretty tune, the story of an old man who lives for a wife who apparently exists only in his imagination, until the narrator meets her at the man's funeral. Or does he? Perhaps he has chosen to live the fantasy world himself. This might be a bit of a tear-jerker, but Chapin's ability to tell such an involved tale within a short pop song is unbeatable.

**AL STEWART** (Janus 226)

**Year Of The Cat** (4:32) (Dejamus/Purple Pepper — ASCAP)

The title and most programmed cut on FM stations from Stewart's charting effort on the **Cash Box** top 100 albums. A catchy melody sung over a subtle chord progression, the record builds to a dramatic climax through its central guitar solo, backed by a huge orchestral arrangement. Production by the incomparable Alan Parsons.

**BOB SEGER** (Capitol 4369)

**Night Moves** (3:20) (Gear — ASCAP) (Seeger)

Title cut and first single from the bulleting LP, this offering from the midwest's up-and-coming rocker is based on standard, emotive rock 'n' roll chords played on acoustic guitar, dressed up with keyboards, a soulful backing chorus and of course Seeger's throaty voice. Can only expand on a solid FM base with strong AM possibilities. Debuts on the **Cash Box** top 100 singles chart at #80 with a bullet this week.

**JOHNNY RIVERS** (Soul City 007)

**Ashes And Sand** (4:05) (Rivers — ASCAP) (Rivers)

Johnny Rivers has gone independent, reviving his Soul City label as a conduit for his writing, performing and producing talents. Sung in a relaxed style, this song slowly builds to a peak, where Rivers brings out the chorus with overdubbed harmonies and accented rhythms. Impeccably produced by Rivers, this record is for AM and MOR programmers.

**DAVID LaFLAMME** (Amherst 1007)

**White Bird** (3:33) (Haiwill — ASCAP) (LaFlamme, LaFlamme)

Remade by its original writer/performer from the group "It's A Beautiful Day," the unedited album cut is already getting frequent play on many FM stations. The original version, in fact, never lost a certain degree of recurrent status on many FM formats. Sure to break AM-wise in this version.

**TOMMY WEST** (Lifesong 45017)

**I Know** (2:35) (ABC/Dunhill — BMI) (Dixon, Evans)

A beautiful old melody, performed with quiet instrumentation and a classic vocal arrangement by Tommy West. For this single he put his production talents to work, adding extra overdubbed fingersnaps, string effects and a bass line for a beefed-up sound appropriate to the AM waves.

**KANSAS** (Kirshner 4267) (Dist: Epic)

**Carry On Wayward, Son** (3:26) (Kirshner — BMI) (Livgren)

Taken from the bulleting **Cash Box** top 100 LP, "Leftovertures," this selection begins with the chorus introduced in rich a cappella harmonies, with solo verses, tightly arranged instrumental passages and repeated choruses powerfully backed by the instruments following in rapid succession. Already receiving steady FM play.

**WILLIE NELSON** (Columbia 10453)

**Uncloudy Day** (3:03) (Willie Nelson — BMI) (Nelson)

This single is extracted from Nelson's LP, "The Troublemaker," and he's living up to that reputation. He sings of a fantasy land where the sun always shines, but there's always that common-sense cynicism in his gruff voice. Nelson also has something of a reputation for crossing from country to top 40. Produced by Arif Mardin.



**ABBA** (Atlantic 3372)

**Dancing Queen** (3:50) (Countless Songs — BMI) (Andersson, Andersson, Ulvaeus)

Following a top ten success with "Fernando," the international scene's masters of pop music have come up with a song backed by a strong upbeat, in keeping with the title. The hooks brought by lush vocal harmonies, as well as the reverb-soaked wall of sound that distinguishes this group, are present. Major top 40 adds and the singles chart are imminent.

**JOHN DENVER** (RCA 10854)

**Baby, You Look Good To Me Tonight** (2:45) (Cherry Lane — BMI) (Danoff)

An up-tempo, country-style song from the "Spirit" album, written by the Starland Vocal Band's Bill Danoff. Lyrically, the song has a refreshing earthiness, and Denver gets to some spoken verses a la Johnny Cash. Denver remains a sure shot to top 40 and MOR formats, as well as the **Cash Box** top 100 singles charts.

**LYNYRD SKYNYRD** (MCA 1948)

**Free Bird** (4:55) (Duchess/Hustlers — BMI) (Collins, Van Zant)

At this point Lynyrd Skynyrd can claim a successful tour, as well as a certified platinum double LP, "One More From The Road." This is that album's most programmed FM selection in an edited version, and it's without doubt their best chance at breaking the AM boundaries in a big way once again. Debuts the **Cash Box** top 100 singles chart this week at #56 with a bullet.

**DONNA SUMMER** (Casablanca 872)

**Spring Affair** (3:39) (Rick's — BMI) (Summer, Moroder, Bellotte)

From the gold-certified, bulleting album, "Four Seasons Of Love," this is the latest from the lady whose original vocal style makes her something special among those working in the disco idiom. Decorated with floating synthesizer and electric piano effects, this record has a catchy bass line that brings to mind the finale of the "Theme From Mahogany." A strong track record on the pop and R&B charts.



**JAMES BROWN** (Polydor 14360)

**Bodyheat** (Part 1) (4:05) (Dynatone/Belinda/Unichappell — BMI) (Brown, Brown, Brown)

A further refinement of the "Have You Seen The Bridge" style which Brown created. The bass/bass drum bottom occupies such a low register that it's easier to feel in your stomach than hear with your ears, while clavinet and syncopated guitar chords ride the top. Mixed very dry and up front, the lead vocal has a three-dimensional presence. Instant R&B adds plus heavy disco play.

**J.J. CALE** (Shelter 62002) (Dist: ABC)

**Hey Baby** (3:16) (Audigram — BMI) (Cale)

An unusual single characterized by its deeply whispered, multi-tracked vocals. A sort of soft shuffle that uses all types of guitars for instrumentation, acoustic, electric and pedal steel, with some funky horn work as well. For AM and FM formats.

**PARKER McGEE** (Big Tree 10682) (Dist: Atlantic)

**I Just Can't Say No To You** (3:06) (Dawnbreaker — BMI) (McGee, Gibson)

McGee penned "I'd Really Love To See You Tonight" for England Dan & John Ford Coley, and this singer-songwriter's own record bears his distinctive stamp as a composer. This is a slower, more stately song, closely arranged around piano chords that are the central focus.

**SONS OF CHAMPLIN** (Ariola America 7653) (Dist: Capitol)

**Here Is Where Your Love Belongs** (3:05) (JSH — ASCAP) (Champlin)

A decidedly pop song, sung in a blues-influenced style and accentuated with a haunting string arrangement. From the album "Circle Filled With Love," this is aimed at top 40 formats, though the Sons have registered a degree of R&B crossover success in the past.

**LATIMORE** (Glades 1739) (Dist: TK)

**Somethin' 'Bout 'Cha** (3:42) (Sherlyn — BMI) (Latimore)

Latimore stays in the mainstream of black music by making modern records without leaning too strongly toward the fads. This single has a strong bluesy feel, both in the music and the lyrics, though strings, electric keyboards and brass figure in the craftsmanship of this Steve Alaimo production. Already getting heavy airplay, this record debuts on the **Cash Box** top 100 R&B singles chart this week at #84 with a bullet.

**ROGER TROY** (RCA 10851)

**Don't Put The Blame On Me Baby** (3:00) (Sorn/Jellyroll — BMI) (Troy)

By keeping the arrangement simple, this record's total production brings out Troy's natural talent as a singer. This is an upbeat song with a genuine R&B feeling, taken from the "Roger Troy" album. Has a great deal going for it that will attract both pop and R&B programmers.

**BRASS FEVER** (ABC/Impulse 31010)

**Time Is Running Out** (3:38) (Aandika — BMI) (Jackson, Jones)

From the "Time Is Running Out" LP, instrumental disco with a decidedly jazzy feel, no doubt due to the influence of producer Esmond Edwards. The long saxophone solo is expertly structured and executed, and the intro even adds a touch of the West Indian sound. Mainly geared toward R&B formats, including the album-oriented.

**TOM JONES** (Epic/MAM 50308)

**Say You'll Stay Until Tomorrow** (3:32) (Dick James — BMI) (Greenaway, Mason)

Capitalizing on the increasing easy-listening character of AM radio, this popular entertainer is taking a carefully timed stab at MOR and top 40 formats. A country ballad might seem an unusual choice for an unmistakable voice that first became popular for its R&B quality, but Jones has always been one to hitch with current trends.

**CLINT HOLMES** (Private Stock 126)

**I Can Count On You** (3:17) (Oceans Blue/Blackwood — BMI) (Addrisi, Addrisi)

A melodic ballad in the pop-easy listening vein from the man who brought you "Playground In My Mind." Holmes' vocal is sincerely plaintive; the sound is big, with orchestra arrangements by Charlie Calello, who joins Joel Diamond in the production. The Sgt. Pepper-baroque intro, employing recorders, harpsichord-like guitars and wispy vocals, is a brilliant touch that's very pleasant when it returns.

**MOTHER'S FINEST** (Epic 50310)

**Rain** (3:22) (Tisra-Til — ASCAP) (Daniel, Seay, Kennedy, Murdock, Moore, Keck)

The second single from the "Mother's Finest" LP, this record breaks out with actual thunder, exploding into a tricky riff that exemplifies this group's fusion of R&B and hard rock. The emphasis is on power-chords, screaming vocals and hooks carried by a very British-influenced lead guitar. Creative programming material for AOR, R&B and top 40 formats.

**JOE SIMON** (Spring 169) (Dist: Polydor)

**Easy To Love** (3:35) (Combine — BMI) (Fritts, White)

Joe Simon's music is always danceable, and this latest, combining his pure-toned voice with a love lyric, is no exception. Simon maintains his usual reserved intensity until he takes off over the backing vocals toward the close. He debuts on the **Cash Box** top 100 R&B singles chart this week with a strong track record for crossover behind him.

**MICHAEL HENDERSON** (Buddah 552)

**Be My Girl** (3:31) (Electrocord Publ. — ASCAP) (Henderson)

Taken from his "Solid" album, this single should dispel any remaining confusion about Henderson, who was the male lead vocalist on Norman Connors' last two charting singles, as well as contributing as a writer. This ballad, anchored by a lush-sounding grand piano, is totally his own creative effort, including production. For R&B and AM programming.

**BUMBLE BEE UNLIMITED** (Mercury 73864)

**Love Bug** (2:30) (Sug-Sug/Pap — ASCAP) (Adams)

This record combines the disco and novelty worlds, with a heavy downbeat and electronically filtered voices that sound like little insects threatening to "Sting you with my love." Coming in long and shortened versions, this record could break into varied radio formats in addition to guaranteed disco play.

**ENCHANTMENT** (UA XW 912)

**Gloria** (3:25) (Desert Moon/Willow Song — BMI) (Stokes, Johnson)

A slow ballad, beautifully sung by a lead vocalist with a powerful high range. The arrangement is in the class "jazzy" style, with brass and backing vocals that call the big band era to mind. An initial delivery stemming from UA's recent agreement with Roadshow Records, this is quality material for R&B formats.