

Country Single Picks

COUNTRY SONG OF THE WEEK

CONWAY TWITTY—MCA 41271

I'VE NEVER SEEN THE LIKES OF YOU (prod.: Conway Twitty & David Barnes) (writers: B. McDill, W. Holyfield) (Hall-Clement/Maplehill/Vogue, BMI) (2:50)

Twitty's intimate vocal is backed by a mellow electric piano and a tight rhythm section on this ballad that compliments a one-of-a-kind woman.

JERRY REED—RCA JH-12034

THE FRIENDLY FAMILY INN (prod.: Jerry Reed) (writers: L. G. Likes, B. G. Marsh) (Guitar Man, BMI) (2:38)

You'll find a lot more than just black and white TV at this out-of-the-way motel. Reed has fun with this saucy, uptempo song about a low-rent rendezvous. It features great fiddle and guitar breaks.

ANNE MURRAY—Capitol P-4878

I'M HAPPY JUST TO DANCE WITH YOU (prod.: Jim Ed Norman) (writers: J. Lennon, P. McCartney) (Maclen, BMI) (3:51)

Anne once again draws on the Beatles for a crisp remake that should be a strong chart mover. Norman's production highlights an easy, lush orchestral sound.

WAYNE KEMP—Mercury 1-55479

LOVE GOES TO HELL WHEN IT DIES (prod.: Danny Walls & Wayne Kemp) (writers: W. Kemp, S. Lyons) (Tree, BMI) (2:02)

This veteran singer/writer gives us a well-crafted song with a foot-stompin', singalong feeling. Kemp's gritty vocal and some fine steel guitar work are high points here.

STEVE WARINER—RCA JH-12029

THE EASY PART'S OVER (prod.: Tom Collins) (writers: J. Foster, B. Rice) (Jack and Bill, ASCAP) (3:03)

The easy part's over, now it's time to cry, we're told in this slow, sad ballad by a pair of proven writers. Wariner continues to show a whole lotta vocal talent.

LOUISE MANDRELL—Epic 9-50896

BEGGIN' FOR MERCY (prod.: Buddy Killen) (writers: C. Putman, M. Kossler) (Tree, BMI/Cross Keys, ASCAP) (2:56)

Louise is beggin' for mercy, beggin' for more in the dynamite chorus of this lively song, which is reminiscent of "Knee Deep in Lovin' You" in its spirit. One of this performer's better cuts.

ED BRUCE—MCA 41273

THE LAST COWBOY SONG (prod.: Tommy West) (writers: E. Bruce, R. Peterson) (Tree/Gingham, BMI) (4:47)

Bruce is effective in singing and recitation in this touching story-song about a "piece of America lost."

HANK COCHRAN—Elektra 46596

MAKE THE WORLD GO AWAY (prod.: Hank Cochran, Chuck Howard & Rock Killough) (writer: H. Cochran) (Tree, BMI) (3:23)

Cochran has penned some country classics, and here he presents a cut of one of his finest works. This has a special appeal that only a writer's version of his own song can have.

NANCY SINATRA—Elektra 46659

LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY (prod.: Jimmy Bowen & Billy Strange) (writers: C. Putman, R. VanHoy) (Tree, BMI) (3:12)

Nancy has picked a great tune in her bid to return to the charts. This song has been recorded a number of times, but has yet to realize its chart potential.

MEL McDANIEL—Capitol P-4886

HELLO DADDY, GOOD MORNING DARLING (prod.: Larry Rogers) (writers: Anders, Dunn, Linard, Murrah, Stegall) (Blackwood/Magic Castle/Con Brio/Wiljex, BMI & ASCAP) (3:25)

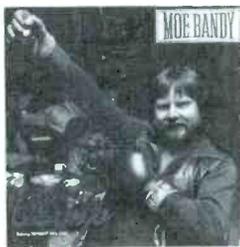
The singer regrets the happy domestic scene he left behind in this slow-paced number.

MAC WISEMAN & OSBORNE BROTHERS—CMH 1528

MOTHER MAYBELLE (prod.: Sonny Osborne) (writers: J. Maphis, R. L. Maphis) (Silverhill, BMI) (2:55)

These pros unite for a musical tribute to one of the most respected influences from country music's formative days.

Country Album Picks



THE CHAMP

MOE BANDY—Columbia JC 36487

Bandy's attachment to pure country music is once again evident, as he stays "close to the source" with such smoothly done tracks as "Wild Side of Life," "Yesterday Once More," "I Just Can't Leave Those Honky Tonks Alone," and the title track.



FRIDAY NIGHT BLUES

JOHN CONLEE—MCA 3246

This is Conlee's "blue" album, a collection of laid-back tunes that bring his commanding vocal to the fore. Conlee taps some of Nashville's finest tunesmiths for such selections as "What I Had With You," "Let's Get Married Again," "Old Fashioned Love," and the title cut.



YOURS FOR THE TAKING

JACK GREENE—Firstline 7012

This master balladeer is in fine voice on his first new album in four years. Most of the tunes are slow; highlights include "I Still Own the Garden," "It's Not the End of the World," "The Rock I'm Leaning On," and the classy title song.

Attendance Up at Country Events

(Continued from page 62)

in January or February.

"The people who come to the Opry come from an average distance of 1,000 miles round-trip, whereas with Opryland, they're coming from a closer distance," Strobel explained. "Right now, the trend for us is up a little bit, and the signs for the summer are positive."

Ed Stone, Opryland's director of marketing and public relations, said, "What we are looking at is a good year so far. Back in April and May, which we consider our spring season, we had about four rain days that really hurt. They cost us about 22,000 to 23,000 people. But in spite of this our attendance has been pretty much the same as last year. This is about what we expected, as last year we had to contend with the gas shortage and gas scare, and this year we have the cost of gas and the cost of living.

"We're excited about this year. Our gospel music show has done about 30 percent better in drawing crowds than our dixieland show of last year, which it replaced. And Country Music U.S.A., one of our strongest shows, has done so well that we've moved it into our Acuff Theater."

Stone noted that Memorial Day weekend, which included special events such as a gospel jubilee, drew "almost 19 percent better

than the same weekend last year."

A Grand Ole Opry employee who helped handle registration for this year's Fan Fair (June 9-14) said attendance at this year's event is "at an all-time high," despite no special additional promotion. "In the past, with limited Nashville hotel space, people were staying as far away as Lebanon, Clarksville, and other towns," said Lynn Davis. "But we have a few more downtown hotels this year.

"A lot of Fan Fair attendants are repeats, but we've got a lot of new people this year, too. We've got a steady flow, and it keeps growing."

Blue Island Label Formed by Owens

■ NASHVILLE — John Owens, founder and general manager of the Blue Island Music Group, has announced the formation of the Blue Island record label. The label's first release is "You Still Know the Way to My Heart," by Isaac Payton Sweat.

Blue Island is headquartered in Nashville, with offices on Galveston. Artists include Sweat and the Silent Thunder Band. Promotion director is Brenda Ray, and finance director is Robert Yeargin.