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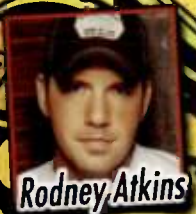
Vince Gill



Tim McGraw



Taylor Swift



Rodney Atkins



Lady Antebellum



Miranda Lambert



Sarah Buxton



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Martina McBride



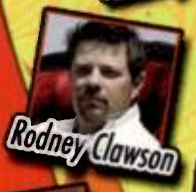
Pascal Flatts



Diamond Rio



Halfway to Hazard



Rodney Clawson



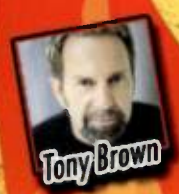
Steve Dean



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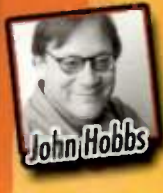
Scott Borchetta



Casey Beathard



Kristian Bush



John Hobbs



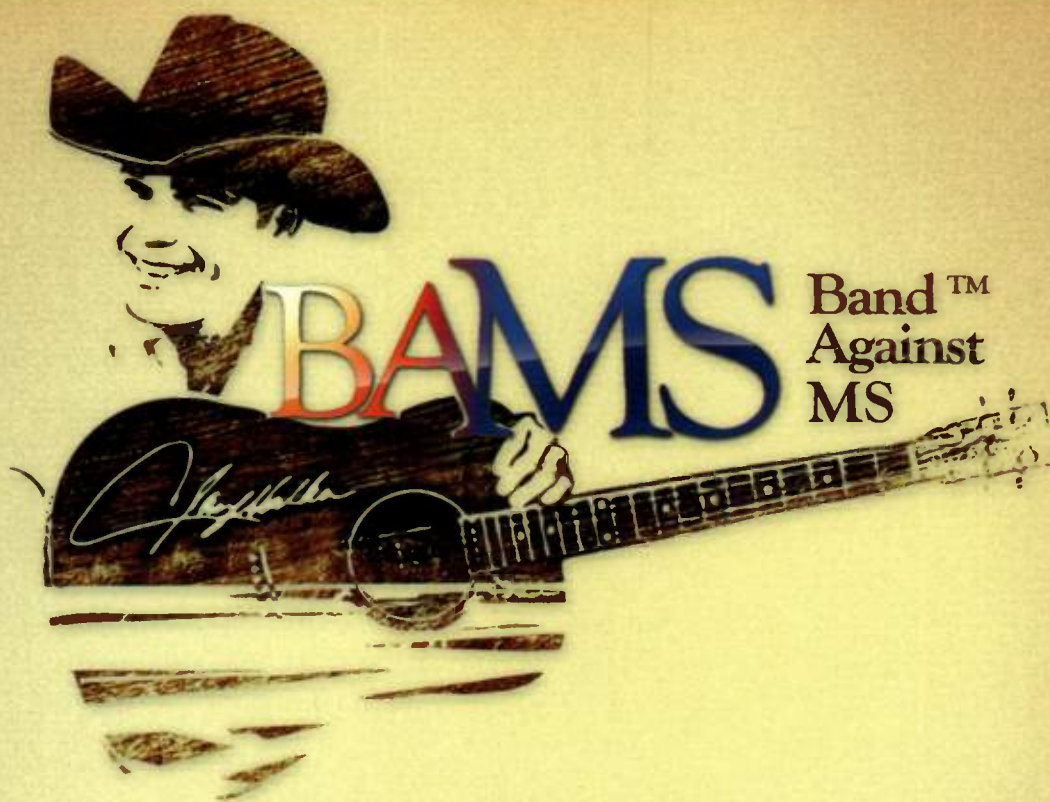
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A MESSAGE FROM
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC®

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WELCOME TO THE 43RD ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS. IN ADDITION TO THE MORE THAN 11,000 GUESTS IN THE AUDIENCE HERE TONIGHT, OUR SHOW IS AIRING IN CANADA AND ACROSS THE WORLD VIA THE ARMED FORCES NETWORK DEFENSE MEDIA CENTER! WE ARE ALSO BROADCASTING IN HIGH DEFINITION FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER. WE HAVE A SOLD OUT SHOW TONIGHT AND MANY BRILLIANT ARTISTS TO RECOGNIZE.

As chairman of the Academy of Country Music Board of Directors, I have the great honor of working with the most talented people in the business. Our board members are involved with every aspect of this show and the surrounding events, and I am proud of the dedication and hard work of all of them. Our former chair, Gayle Holcomb, set the bar quite high, and I knew I had my work cut out for me. I am honored to continue her vision and efforts to elevate country music to its highest potential. I would like to personally commend my fellow officers, Rod Essig, John Grady, John Dorris, Bill Mayne, Tiffany Moon and our entire staff for their continued commitment to the Academy. The partnership we have all created as we work together toward our common goals has been unbelievable.

We can be very proud of the fact that a significant portion of funds from all of our events benefit the Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund, whose central mission is to support programs that enhance learning and healing through music. We work year-round to keep these programs in the forefront of the minds of our industry and all country music fans. ACMCF Chairman Dennis Lord has done a terrific job pulling together a first-class board of directors who work tirelessly to raise funds and select the most worthy grant recipients.

The Academy is grateful to our new partnership with Dick Clark Productions, Inc. Thanks goes to the entire DCP family, especially president Orly Adelson, whose guidance this year has been invaluable. Also, our deepest appreciation goes to Jack Sussman and CBS Television Network for their support. And, to the indispensable support of country music radio who continues to be the heart of this business. Thank you for continuing to promote our artists and play our music. We look forward to a long, ever-expanding and mutually beneficial relationship with all of you.

I would like to acknowledge the Academy's executive director, Bob Romeo, and his outstanding staff - Matt Brantley, Nikki Discola, Teresa George, Michelle Goble, Bonnie Hodge, Lisa Lee, Brooke Primero, Tiffany Moon, Katie Rohrbaugh and David Young. Under Bob's superior guidance, they have shown extraordinary teamwork and tenacity.

Lastly, I would like to express what an honor it is to serve this board. In an age of rampant piracy, digital downloads, online webcasts and ever evolving technology, country music has proven to be extraordinarily resilient. New technologies have afforded unfettered interactivity between artists and fans creating a new breed of consumer. The continuing strength of concert ticket sales demonstrates that the relationships and loyalties between artists and fans have endured and deepened. I look forward to continuing our efforts to promote country music in all manners currently known and those yet to be discovered. The language of music will always be universal, and there will always be a demand for art that connects with people on a visceral level. Our challenge today is to continue to solidify and expand that connection.

Have a great evening, enjoy the show and after parties!

Sincerely,
Mark Hartley
Chairman





Reba McEntire



George Strait



Big & Rich



Rascal Flatts



Brad Paisley



Kenny Chesney



Tracy Lawrence



LeAnn Rimes



Emerson Drive



Kellie Pickler



Sugarland



Jon Bon Jovi



Carolina Rain



Diamond Rio



Kelly Clarkson



Kelly Clarkson

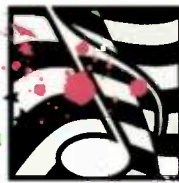


Kelly Clarkson



Kelly Clarkson

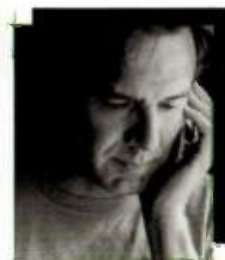
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Keith Anderson



Frank Liddell



Jason Alexander



Frank Rogers



Mark Bright

Musician of the Year Nominees

Jimmie Lee Sloas - Paul Leim - Chris McHugh - Lonnie Wilson - Joe Spivey

Tom Bukovac - Tony Harrell - John Jarvis - Steve Nathan - Paul Franklin



Kelly Clarkson



Kelly Clarkson



Kelly Clarkson



Kelly Clarkson

A MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT OF THE
ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC

WELCOME! WE ARE THRILLED TO HAVE YOU WITH US FOR THIS VERY EXCITING EVENING IN COUNTRY MUSIC. THIS IS OUR 43RD YEAR OF CELEBRATING SOME OF THE GREATEST ARTISTS IN THE WORLD, AND WE ARE HAPPY TO BE BACK IN OUR HOME-AWAY-FROM-HOME, LAS VEGAS! REBA MCENTIRE IS HOSTING FOR THE 10TH TIME. WHAT AN AMAZING TALENT AND AN EVEN MORE EXTRAORDINARY PERSON. SHE DEVOTES SO MUCH OF HER TIME AND ENERGY TO HELPING OTHERS, WE ARE TRULY HONORED SHE IS SPENDING SOME OF THAT WITH US TONIGHT.

What a great time to be a country music fan. Country artists, songwriters, musicians and many other exceptional craftsmen gather every day to write lyrics, notes and beats that go on to entertain millions around the world. Without the support of the fans, these people wouldn't be able to do what they do best. By believing in them, you are also helping to give back to the charities they lend a hand to, and we all appreciate it. This is the first year where the fan vote shapes the winner of the prestigious Entertainer of the Year Award. It should be an exciting and historical night.

I've always been proud to be a part of this organization, currently as president of the Academy's board of directors, and as an officer for the past five years. There is an incredible group of people behind the scenes that make us all look good. Our board is a part of every decision made and they have no problem jumping in and helping out, from planning the after party to helping gather auction items for the Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund. We have great partnerships with Dick Clark Productions and CBS. Our professional and associate memberships are the heart of our existence. And our industry is strong and continues to produce phenomenal music. We could not be in a better place.

I would like to thank our dedicated staff and Bob Romeo, executive director, for continuing to make us proud. My thanks also go out to our brave, tireless volunteers who work with our staff, all for the love of country music. Without these people, this ceremony would not be possible. I would also like to thank our hosts at the MGM Grand Garden Arena for their continued hospitality. We "move in" for two weeks every year and they couldn't be more welcoming. Mark Prows and his staff are truly fantastic to work with and make us feel at home. To our sponsors, we are lucky to be in such good company. And a very special thank you to our Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund donors who help us give back to our communities.

Please enjoy tonight's show and once again, we thank you for joining us. Have fun!

Sincerely,
Rod Essig
President





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COUNTRY MUSIC



we join the artists and fans to celebrate a shared passion...

EVERY YEAR, AFTER THE LIGHTS AND MUSIC GO DOWN AND EVERYBODY ROLLS OUT OF VEGAS — SOME WITH A NEW TROPHY, SOME WITH A NEW SONG, ALL WITH NEW MEMORIES — I SIT BACK AND THINK, “IT CAN’T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THIS.”

Of course, it doesn’t take long for those wheels to start turning again and we begin brainstorming ideas of how we can make the next show even bigger and better than the last. Some years mark particular milestones in the Academy’s history. During my time as Executive Director, I recall such momentous events as relocating the show from Los Angeles to Las Vegas in 2003, becoming the first televised awards show to implement online voting in 2004 and achieving the largest show attendance to date in 2006.

I am thrilled that the Academy is adding yet another historical accomplishment to its roster this year with our first-ever fan vote for Entertainer of the Year. The ACM board met in February and approved a motion to allow fans to vote online for one of the five Entertainer nominees selected by professional members. Not only does this engage our fans and foster a more interactive show experience for both participants and viewers, but it also shows the Academy’s efforts to embrace the digital age and continue to support the expansion of the country music industry.

I am also especially looking forward to this year’s show as the Academy partners with Dick Clark Productions to produce the *43rd Annual Academy of Country Music Awards*. I would like to thank DCP Executive Producer R.A. Clark and Producer Barry Adelman for rounding up another outstanding line-up of talent to entertain us this year. I also want to welcome CEO Mark Shapiro and President Orly Adelson to the team. I look forward to working with everyone at DCP on this and many shows to come.

Finally, I want to thank all of the artists and other professionals who are contributing their time and talent during The Week Vegas Goes Country® - Randy Owen and Sugarland for headlining the Fremont Street Experience, Montgomery Gentry for leading the 5th Annual Charity Motorcycle Ride, Rascal Flatts for hosting the 5th Annual Celebrity Golf Classic, John Rich for spearheading the All-Star Jam and, of course, Reba McEntire for hosting the ceremony for the 10th year. These and so many others make Country Music’s Party of the Year™ an occasion truly to celebrate the very best our country music community has to offer.

Here’s to having the greatest show yet - until next year!

Sincerely,
Bob Romeo
Executive Director





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A MESSAGE FROM
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® CHARITABLE FUND

WELL, WE ALL KNOW THAT THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS SHOW IS ABOUT A FOUR-DAY LONG TORNADO STRIKING LAS VEGAS; FULL OF GREAT MUSIC, LOTS OF FUN, OLD FRIENDS AND NEW ONES. AND, EACH YEAR, THE WEEK BECOMES MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC CHARITABLE FUND AND ITS CHARTER OF GIVING.

This year is no different. The Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund made grants to Bridges Academy, the W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School, Musicians on Call and the Holston United Methodist Church Home for Children, Inc. We are very pleased that we were able to help these four deserving organizations.

The ACMCF has not only given over the course of the last year, we have also been the recipient of some wonderful gifts. We owe our heartfelt thanks to Allen Cox and to Walter Brown, Jr., who set a gold-standard of giving at last year's New Artists' Party for a Cause™ Auction. We also owe very special thanks to Gayle Holcomb who helped the ACMCF create the Diane Holcomb Emergency Relief Fund this year; and, also to Wal-Mart (through ACMCF Board Member Dennis Alpert) for going out of their way to commit donations to the ACMCF.

We also owe tremendous thanks to the artists, country radio and all the country music industry folks who continue to talk up our Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund, lend their time, their support and their hearts through this process of building.

Finally, I need for you all to know that the ACMCF has just implemented a new three year development plan. We will have many opportunities to get our industry on board and share in this effort to truly create a better world through our mission to support the use of music in healing and education.

Kind regards to you all. Have a great time here at the Academy of Country Music Awards and let's Party for a Cause!

Sincerely,
Dennis Lord
ACMCF Chairman





BEST DUET



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of the 43rd Academy of Country Music® Awards.**

A MESSAGE FROM
THE PRODUCERS OF THE
ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS



dick clark productions, inc.

WELCOME TO THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS. ALTHOUGH WE ARE CELEBRATING OUR 43RD YEAR, THIS EVENING WILL BE A NIGHT OF "FIRSTS!" FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OUR HISTORY, A STAR HAS REACHED THE RECORD NUMBER OF 10 APPEARANCES AS OUR HOST. CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GREAT REBA MCENTIRE! AND IN ANOTHER LIVE TELEVISION FIRST, WE'LL SEE A DUET FEATURING SUPERSTARS GEORGE STRAIT AND KENNY CHESNEY! PLUS, IN HIS FIRST RETURN TO AN AWARD CEREMONY, GARTH BROOKS WILL TREAT US TO A MEDLEY OF SOME OF HIS GREATEST HITS. BUT ONE OF TONIGHT'S BIGGEST FIRSTS IS THAT THE ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR AWARD IS BEING VOTED ON BY THE VIEWERS AT HOME...THAT'S AN INNOVATION THAT'S ALREADY GENERATED THE MOST FAN INTEREST IN OUR SHOW, EVER!

Speaking of our show, it just can't happen without the tireless staff of the Academy of Country Music, our wonderful corporate partners, and our friends at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino.

And, of course, a big thank you to our great line-up of stars, our own dick clark productions' staff and crew, and most of all, the fans. It's going to be one terrific night, so enjoy the show!

Sincerely,
Orly Adelson
President



R.A. Clark
Executive Producer



Barry Adelman
Producer





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REBA MCENTIRE

When it comes to the *Academy of Country Music Awards*, Reba McEntire is a team player in every sense. This year will be the versatile star's 10th time to host the show, a run that started when she first co-hosted with John Schneider and Mac Davis back in 1986. She followed that with co-hosting turns beside Hank Williams, Jr., Randy Owen, George Strait and Alan Jackson. She stepped onto the stage solo for the first time in 2002, and she's been hosting the event ever since.

"She's the James Brown of country music, the hardest working woman in show business," said Jack Sussman, executive vice president of specials, music & live events for CBS. "She relates to everybody, from my daughter to my dad. She's one of the best performers in music—not country music—in *all* music."

Reba has hosted the show more times in ACM history than anyone else (George Strait is behind her with five times). She says it's the "wonderful people" at the Academy and Dick Clark Productions that keep her coming back year after year, but the frenetic pace of live TV is a big draw as well.

"It's the excitement—are we going to be long or short coming out of commercial. Do we have to stretch? Do we have to make time? It's that instant playing it by ear; just get it done real quick that I love," Reba says. "After you host an award show and then you go out and sit in the audience it's kinda boring! And not because the entertainment isn't good, it's just the fast pace and the excitement you know is involved backstage. I love the excitement of it."

ACM Awards producer Barry Adelman, who is executive vice president of television at Dick Clark Productions, says Reba's hard won experience as an entertainer onstage brings an air of calm to what can oftentimes be a chaotic scene.

"Our audience both in the theatre and at home knows they're in good hands with Reba in charge," Adelman explains.

Rac Clark, the show's executive producer added, "She always brings something new to the show and we are all really excited to see what new twists she adds to this year's show. We've been very fortunate to have her as host."

In addition to her longtime hosting gig, Reba is also fond of the ACM Awards for another reason. She has taken home 11 trophies, including Entertainer of the Year in 1994 and 7 wins in the Female Vocalist category. She also was honored with The Home Depot Humanitarian Award in 2001.

Tonight she is nominated once again in the Vocal Event category with Kelly Clarkson for the single, "Because of You."





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PRESS CONFERENCE

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

MARCH 4, 2008 COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME — NASHVILLE



Brad Paisley and Carrie Underwood had barely wiped the sleep from their eyes before they were on national television March 4th reading the nominees for the 43rd Annual Academy of Country Music Awards. The press conference at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville was carried live on CBS' *The Early Show*.

Rodney Atkins and Miranda Lambert also took part in the early morning festivities, playing a set at Nashville's Wildhorse Saloon that was broadcast live on *The Early Show*. Rodney, Miranda, Brad and Carrie all heard their names called as the nominations were announced.

The name heard most often on the list of nominees was Kenny Chesney, who earned an impressive 11 nominations total. He's nominated in nearly every category except the new artist, female and group categories. Chesney's up for Entertainer, Male Vocalist, Single, Song, Album, Video and

Vocal Event (where he received two nominations). He stands to take home double trophies in some categories as both artist and producer.

Sitting in his manager's Music Row office two days after the nominees were announced, Chesney said he's humbled by the deluge of nominations this year.

"It's great to be nominated for something you love to do and something you would have done anyway," Chesney said. "I guess it just reassures me that whatever we're doing, we're doing something right and the industry recognizes how hard we worked and how passionate we are about what we're doing and how much it means us. We might not win any of them, but to know that people are recognizing the fact that we are out there trying really hard to represent county music in the best way possible means a lot."



The Academy-CBS-Dick Clark team gathers after the press conference in Nashville. Pictured left to right are Bob Romeo, ACM Executive Director; Jack Sussman, CBS Executive Vice President; Brad Paisley, Carrie Underwood, Orly Adelson, Dick Clark Productions President; R.A. Clark, ACM Awards Executive Producer. Photo credit: Kay Williams

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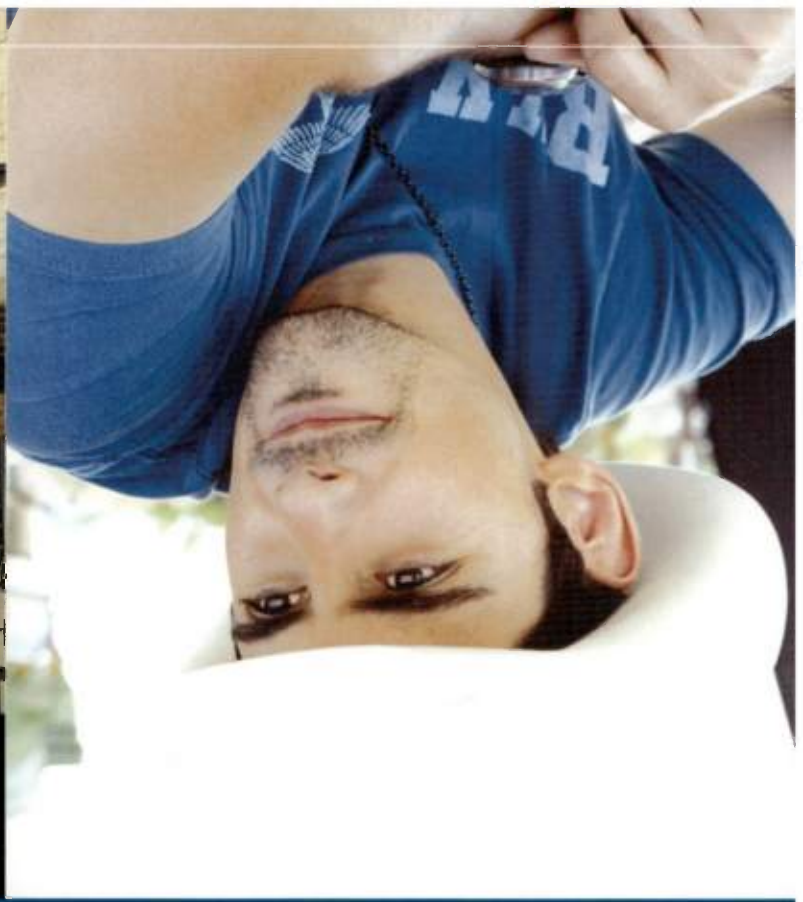
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▲ TRACE ADKINS

▼ KEITH URBAN

▲ LEANN RIMES





▲ BRAD PAISLEY



▼ KENNY CHESNEY



▲ MONTGOMERY GENTRY



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43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS



▼ RODNEY ATKINS

▲ TOBY KEITH



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PRESENTERS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS



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▲ CLAY WALKER ▼ DWIGHT YOAKAM

▲ KALEY CUOCO



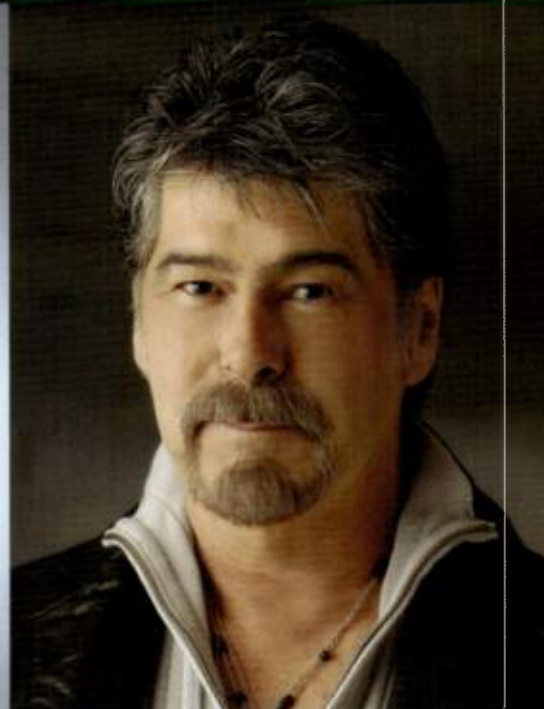


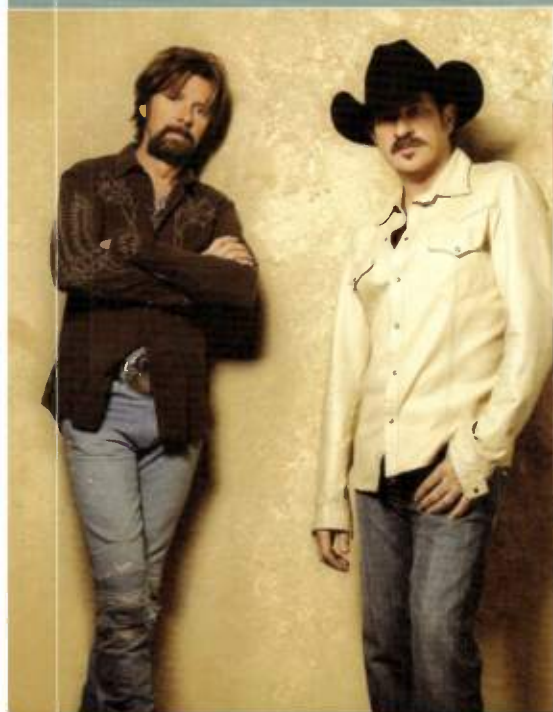
CARRIE UNDERWOOD

▲ JOHN RICH ▼ CRISS ANGEL

▲ SARA EVANS ▼ RANDY OWEN

▲ BRAD MATES (EMERSON DRIVE)





▼ LADY ANTEBELLUM

▲ BROOKS & DUNN



▲ LITTLE BIG TOWN



▲ DR. PHIL & ROBIN MCGRAW



NOMINATIONS

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS



NOMINATIONS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

KENNY CHESNEY
BRAD PAISLEY
RASCAL FLATTS
GEORGE STRAIT
KEITH URBAN

TOP MALE VOCALIST

RODNEY ATKINS
KENNY CHESNEY
BRAD PAISLEY
GEORGE STRAIT
KEITH URBAN

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

MIRANDA LAMBERT
MARTINA MCBRIDE
LEANN RIMES
TAYLOR SWIFT
CARRIE UNDERWOOD

TOP VOCAL GROUP

DIAMOND R O
EAGLES
EMERSON DRIVE
LITTLE BIG TOWN
RASCAL FLATTS

TOP VOCAL DUO

BIG & RICH
BROOKS & DUNN
HALFWAY TO HAZARD
MONTGOMERY GENTRY
SUGARLAND

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

LUKE BRYAN
JACK INGRAM
JAKE OWEN

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

SARAH BUXTON
KELLIE PICKLER
TAYLOR SWIFT

TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

CAROLINA RAIN
LADY ANTEBELLUM
THE WRECKERS

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Awarded to
Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record
Company

5TH GEAR

BRAD PAISLEY
(Arista Nashville)
Produced by Chris DuBois,
Frank Rogers

CRAZY EX-GIRLFRIEND

MIRANDA LAMBERT (Columbia)
Produced by Frank Liddell,
Mike Wrucke

JUST WHO I AM: POETS & PIRATES

KENNY CHESNEY
(BNA)
Produced by Buddy Cannon,
Kenny Chesney

IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL

RODNEY ATKINS
(Curb)
Produced by Rodney Atkins,
Ted Hewitt

TAYLOR SWIFT

TAYLOR SWIFT
(Big Machine)
Produced by Scott Borchetta,
Nathan Chapman# 6 Produced
by Robert Ellis Orrall

SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

Awarded to
Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record
Company

DON'T BLINK

KENNY CHESNEY
Produced by Buddy Cannon,
Kenny Chesney
BNA

FAMOUS IN A SMALL TOWN

MIRANDA LAMBERT
Produced by Frank Liddell,
Mike Wrucke
Columbia

LOST IN THIS MOMENT

BIG & RICH
Produced by Big Kenny,
John Rich
Warner Bros/WRN

STAY

SUGARLAND
Produced by Kristian Bush,
Byron Gallimore,
Jennifer Nettles
Mercury

WATCHING AIRPLANES

GARY ALLAN
Produced by Gary Allan,
Mark Wright
MCA Nashville

SONG OF THE YEAR

Awarded to

Artist(s)/Composer(s)/Publisher(s)

DON'T BLINK

KENNY CHESNEY

Writers: Casey Beathard,
Chris Wallin

Publishers: Lavender Zoo Music
(BMI), Mama's Dream Music
(ASCAP), Sony/ATV Acuff Rose
(BMI), WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

LOST IN THIS MOMENT

BIG & RICH

Writers: Keith Anderson, Rodney
Clawson, John Rich

Publishers: EMI April Music, Inc.
(ASCAP), Rich Texan Music
(ASCAP) Romeo Cowboy Music
(ASCAP), WB Music Corp.
(ASCAP), Warner-Tamerlane
Publishing Corp. (BMI), Writer's
Extreme Music (BMI)

MOMENTS

EMERSON DRIVE

Writers: Dave Berg, Annie Tate,
Sam Tate

Publishers: Gravitron (SESAC),
WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

WATCHING YOU

RODNEY ATKINS

Writers: Rodney Atkins, Steve
Dean, Brian White

Publishers: Bethar Music (BMI),
Mike Curb Music (BMI),
Multisongs (SESAC), Songs From
The White House (SESAC)

STAY

SUGARLAND

Writer: Jennifer Nettles

Publisher: Jennifer Nettles
Publishing (ASCAP)

VIDEO OF THE YEAR

Awarded to

Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Director(s)

DON'T BLINK

KENNY CHESNEY

Producer: Tacklebox Films

Director: Shaun Silva

LOST IN THIS MOMENT

BIG & RICH

Producer: Big Kenny, Steve

Lamar, Marc Oswald

Directors: Robert Deaton and
George Flanigen

ONLINE

BRAD PAISLEY

Producers: Mark Kalbfeld and
Peter Tilden

Director: Jason Alexander

STAY

SUGARLAND

Producer: Kristian Bush, Byron
Gallimore, Jennifer Nettles

Director: Shaun Silva

WATCHING YOU

RODNEY ATKINS

Producer: Trent Hardville

Director: Eric Welch

VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Awarded to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/

Record Company

BECAUSE OF YOU

REBA MCENTIRE DUET WITH
KELLY CLARKSON

Produced by Tony Brown,

Reba McEntire

MCA Nashville

FIND OUT WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE

TRACY LAWRENCE FEATURING

TIM MCGRAW AND

KENNY CHESNEY

Produced by Julian King, Tracy

Lawrence

Rocky Comfort/CO5

SHIFTWORK

KENNY CHESNEY DUET WITH

GEORGE STRAIT

Produced by Buddy Cannon,

Kenny Chesney

BNA

TILL WE AIN'T STRANGERS ANYMORE

BON JOVI FEATURING

LEANN RIMES

Produced by Dann Huff

Mercury

WHAT YOU GIVE AWAY

VINCE GILL WITH

SHERYL CROW

Produced by Vince Gill, John

Hobbs, Justin Niebank

MCA Nashville

NOMINATIONS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

NIGHTCLUB OF THE YEAR

BILLY BOB'S,
Ft. Worth, TX
COWBOY'S,
Colorado Springs, CO
WILD BILL'S,
Duluth, GA
JOE'S,
Chicago, IL
COYOTE JOE'S,
Charlotte, NC

CASINO OF THE YEAR

MOHEGAN SUN ARENA,
Uncasville, CT
SOARING EAGLE CASINO & RESORT, Mt. Pleasant, MI
TURNING STONE CASINO,
Verona, NY
STAR OF THE DESERT ARENA,
Primm, NV
CASINO RAMA, Orillia, ONT

DON ROMEO TALENT BUYER OF THE YEAR

TODD BOLTIN
Variety Attractions
GARY OSIER
Gary Osier Presents
GIL CUNNINGHAM
Neste Event Marketing
FRAN ROMEO
Romeo Entertainment Group
RANDY WRIGHT
Integrity Events

PROMOTER OF THE YEAR

DARIN LASHINSKY
Outback Concerts
BRAD GARRETT
Police Productions
BRIAN O'CONNELL
LiveNation
DON KRONBERG
Nitelite Promotions
GLENN SMITH
Glenn Smith Presents

VENUE OF THE YEAR

CRYSTAL GRAND
MUSIC, THEATRE
Lake Delton, WI
DTE ENERGY MUSIC CENTER,
Detroit, MI
NISSAN PAVILION,
Bristow, VA
RIALTOSQUARE THEATRE,
Joliet, IL
STAR PLAZA THEATRE,
Merrville, IN

TOP GUITARIST OF THE YEAR

TOM BUKOVAC
J.T. CORENFLOS
KENNY GREENBERG
DANN HUFF
BRYAN SUTTON

TOP PIANO/KEYBOARD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

TONY HARRELL
JOHN JARVIS
STEVE NATHAN
MICHAEL ROJAS
MATT ROLLINGS

TOP BASS PLAYER OF THE YEAR

MIKE BRIGNARDELLO
DENNIS CROUCH
ALISON PRESTWOOD
MICHAEL RHODES
JIMMIE LEE SLOAS

TOP PERCUSSIONIST/ DRUMMER OF THE YEAR

PAUL LEW
CHRIS MCHUGH
GREG MORROW
LOWNIE WILSON

TOP STEEL GUITAR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

DAN DUGMORE
PAUL FRANKLIN
LLOYD GREEN
GARY MORSE
RUSS PAHL

TOP FIDDLE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

GLEN DUNCAN
STUART DUNCAN
LARRY FRANKLIN
JOE SPIVEY
JONATHAN YUDKIN

TOP SPECIALTY INSTRUMENT(S) PLAYER OF THE YEAR

ERIC ARLEN
JERRY DOUGLAS
DAN DUGMORE
AUBREY HAYNIE
JIM HORN

**AUDIO ENGINEER OF
THE YEAR**

CHUCK AINLAY
JEFF BALDING
JULIAN KING
KYLE LEHNING
JUSTIN NIEBANK

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

MARK BRUCHT
TONY BROWN
BYRON GALLIMORE
FRANK GERS
MARK WRIGHT

**NATIONAL ON-AIR
PERSONALITY**

**THE BIG D AND
BUBBA SHOW**
BILL CODY'S CLASSIC COUNTRY
WEEKEND
BLAIR GARNER AFTER MIDNITE
DANNY WRIGHT ALL NIGHT
THE LIA SHOW

**ON-AIR PERSONALITY -
MAJOR MARKET**

KERRY (Minneapolis, MN)
Chris Carr
KSON (San Diego, CA)
Cliff and Company: Cliff, Morgan,
Tanner and Tori
WMIL (Greenfield, WI)
Karen, Scott and Radar
WSIX (Nashville, TN)
Gerry House & The House
Foundation: Mike Bohan, Al
Voecks, Duncan Stewart and
Richard Falken
WUSN (Chicago, IL)
Trish Biondo

**ON-AIR PERSONALITY -
MEDIUM MARKET**

WBBS (Syracuse, NY)
Ron Bee and Becky Palmer
WOKQ (Dover, NH)
Mark Ericson and
Danielle Carrier
WWGR (Bonita Springs, FL)
Valleri St. John
WYCT (Pensacola, FL)
Brent Lane, Dana Cervantes and
Jim Sanborn
WYNK (Baton Rouge, LA)
Scott Innes

**ON-AIR PERSONALITY -
SMALL MARKET**

KCLR (Columbia, MO)
Carrie Bremer & Scotty Cox
WBKR (Owensboro, KY)
Moon, Chad and Kelly
WGSQ (Cookeville, TN)
Gator & The StyckMan
WGSQ (Cookeville, TN)
McFly and The Ride Home:
Marty McFly and
Stewart James
WKDQ (Evansville, IN)
The Donut Holes: Jon Prell, Lori
Mae, Gene Stewart and Kim
Kavanaw

**RADIO STATION -
MAJOR MARKET**

KYGO (Denver, CO)
WMIL (Milwaukee, WI)
WQYK (ST. PETERSBERG, FL)
WUBE (Cincinnati, OH)
WXTU (Philadelphia, PA)

**RADIO STATION -
MEDIUM MARKET**

KSSN (Little Rock, AR)
KUAD (Windsor, CO)
WGNA (Schenectady, NY)
WUSY-FM (Chattanooga, TN)
WYRQ (Buffalo, NY)

**RADIO STATION -
SMALL MARKET**

WFRY (Watertown, NY)
WGSQ (Cookeville, TN)
WJCL (Savannah, GA)
WTCR (Huntington, WV)
WWJO (St. Cloud, MN)

*** BOLD TEXT IN THIS COLOR
DENOTES WINNER**

NOMINEES

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

The Entertainers

What is the mark of a great Entertainer? Is it more than No. 1 songs and sold-out tours? Is it something you can't quite describe, but you know it when you see it? Well, whatever it is, this year's Entertainer of the Year nominees have it. Each of the five acts is very different from the other in various ways, but they share one particular trait. Whether it's the guitar-driven frenzy of a Keith Urban show or the cowboy cool of George Strait, each nominee knows exactly who they are when they hit that stage. They're comfortable in their own skin, and they know exactly what they want to sing. That confidence is irresistible when you're in the audience. It draws you in and makes you pay attention. It forces you to sing along. It's the reason we put our money down for a ticket. It's the reason we love them.

This year for the first time ever, the fans helped picked the winner of the Academy's most coveted award. In an historic move Feb. 7th in Las Vegas, the ACM Board approved a measure to allow fans to vote online, choosing their favorite from the five Entertainer nominees chosen by the Academy's professional membership.

Country artist and ACM Board Member John Rich supported the interactive vote, saying the fans actually have the power from the start.

"To me, having the Entertainer of the Year award be decided by the fans—the people who actually went to the concerts and bought the records—gives it a lot more weight and makes it more special to the artist who wins," Rich says. "After all, if it weren't for the fans, we wouldn't even be having this conversation."

Top Female Vocalist nominee Carrie Underwood also says letting fans have a vote makes perfect sense.

"I think it's great," she says. "Without the fans there would be no awards show, so I think that it's only natural that they get to pick who they want to see more of and who should win the coveted Entertainer of the Year [award]."

Shortly after the nominations were announced March 4th in a press conference at the Country Music Hall of Fame® in Nashville, the Academy's Lisa Lee sat down with all five

KENNY CHESNEY

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS ENTERTAINER NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR. TOP MALE VOCALIST.
ALBUM OF THE YEAR. SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR. SONG OF THE YEAR.
VIDEO OF THE YEAR. VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

OUT OF ALL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH ONE ARE YOU PROUDEST OF AND WHY?

KC: I would say that there were certain moments on stage last year where I just didn't feel like the connection with the fans could get any better. Of course, every night is different, but there were certain nights up there last year where I really had felt like it was almost like an out of body experience. That's what's great about playing live—to share a moment that will never happen again with the people that are there. That was probably what made me feel the best last year—to know that I was reaching them on that level.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY HAS BEEN THE KEY FACTOR IN MAKING THAT CONNECTION WITH YOUR FANS?

KC: Even early on in my career—if we were doing a club show or free radio show or state fair or whatever we were doing—I had the mindset way back then that I wanted to touch somebody in that audience and for them to go tell somebody. That's how we kinda built what's happened to us over the years, and I think with that kind of mentality we have been lucky and blessed enough to get our hands on some songs that really touched people where it hits them the hardest. I hear that all the time in meet and greets before a show, what a certain song has meant to their life, how it touched them or how it has maybe changed their life. I think our format and the songs that we sing are all about that, and I'm proud of that.

BIG SELLING TOURS AND NO. 1 RECORDS ARE JUST PART OF WHAT MAKES SOMEONE ELIGIBLE TO BE ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, BUT THERE'S ALSO AN INTANGIBLE ASPECT OR A MAGIC TO SOMEONE WHO IS GOOD ONSTAGE. WHAT IS THE MARK OF A GREAT ENTERTAINER TO YOU?

KC: Yes, it is selling tickets and it is having success at radio and selling albums, but I think the most important thing, for me anyway, is



having the ability to draw an audience in that maybe wouldn't necessarily draw in from the beginning. We're playing a lot of these stadium shows, and there are a lot of people who don't listen to country music that are coming to see those stadium shows. If they like what I'm doing they might go see someone else [in country music]. I think there's a certain connection that you have to make with the fans that carries on to something bigger than that. It's like a great running back—there are a lot of running backs in the NFL, but there are only a few who have what you can't teach. You can teach somebody to get up onstage and look pretty, and you can teach them to sing a song, but you can't teach somebody to connect with a large group of people. That's something that is unique.

YOU WON THE ACM'S TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST AWARD IN 1998. LOOKING BACK, WHAT DID THAT MEAN TO YOU AND WHAT DID IT DO FOR YOUR CAREER?

KC: Winning Top New Male Vocalist back then

was huge for me. The Academy of Country Music gave me my first award ever. I'd never won anything. I was in a pit with a lot of guys that were kinda singing the same kinda music. Everybody was trying to be George Strait at the time, dressing like him, and I was no different. I think winning that award just gave me that little extra push that I was needing. It refocused me a little bit, and it wasn't long after that I quit trying to be George, as much as I love him, and that's when my life changed.

YOU AND GEORGE ARE NOMINATED IN THE VOCAL EVENT CATEGORY THIS YEAR FOR "SHIFTWORK." WHAT'S THAT LIKE TO BE COLLABORATING WITH SOMEONE YOU ADMIRE SO MUCH?

KC: Well I've collaborated with him more than he knows! I mean I've sung with his songs in the car for a long time. He has no idea how many times I've sung with him. I mean I was the guy in college sitting on a stool with a tip jar, and I was singing a lot of George Strait songs. To be able to call him a friend and a peer in this business and for him to think enough of my career to want to be a part of it—even for a small second—was really thrilling for me. It is something I will always have recorded, and I'll be doing "Shiftwork" in the show for a long time because of it.

AFTER WINNING TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST, YOU WENT ON TO WIN BOTH TOP MALE VOCALIST AND ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR—WHICH MAKES YOU ONE OF ONLY A FEW ARTISTS WHO'VE WON 'THE TRIPLE CROWN.' WAS THAT A VALIDATION OF SORTS FOR YOU?

KC: Yeah, there are like five or six people who have been able to win all three of those major awards, and it was very satisfying to say that I've done that. Some people say that awards aren't important, but I think it's important for history sake. You know, 20, 30, 40 years from now, people can say, 'Ok who has done this? Who achieved this?' It's very cool to be able to have my name in ink on that list.

BRAD PAISLEY

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS ENTERTAINER NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, TOP MALE VOCALIST, ALBUM OF THE YEAR, VIDEO OF THE YEAR

OUT OF ALL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH ONE ARE YOU PROUDEST OF AND WHY?

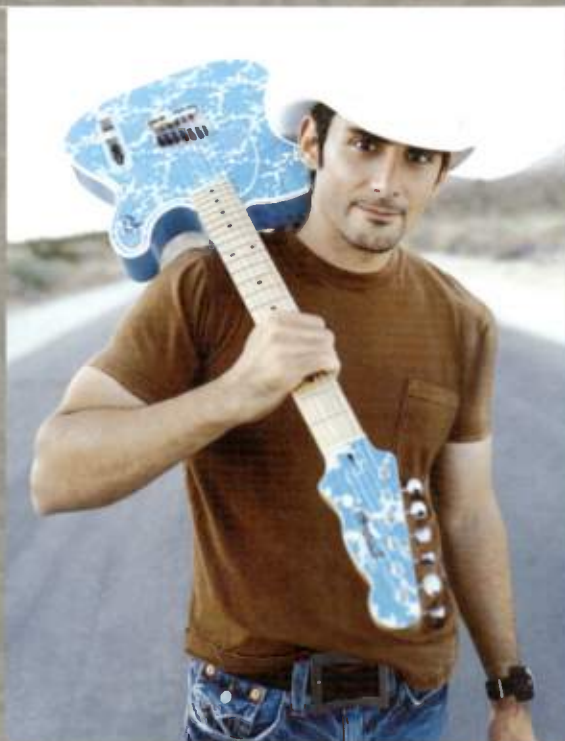
BP: I'm really proud of the tour we had and the fact that the people that work for me are doing such a great job on putting on the show. There's so much more than just the guy that sings. I go out there every night and do what I do, and that is certainly not to be discredited, but it's impossible to be an Entertainer of the Year nominee by yourself. You don't get there playing solo acoustic shows all year. In this format, you're trying to reach a lot of people. You're playing big, big venues and you're trying to put on a show that is representative of that. I'm really proud of the fact that I've got such a great crew.

BIG SELLING TOURS AND NO. 1 RECORDS ARE JUST PART OF WHAT MAKES SOMEONE ELIGIBLE TO BE ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, BUT THERE'S ALSO AN INTANGIBLE ASPECT OR A MAGIC TO SOMEONE WHO IS GOOD ONSTAGE. WHAT IS THE MARK OF A GREAT ENTERTAINER TO YOU?

BP: The mark of a great entertainer is the element of surprise I think. The fact that you go see a show and something happens that you didn't expect—whether that's as simple as a song you didn't expect to hear or a moment in the show that's just more memorable than you ever thought it could be. You shouldn't necessarily show up at a concert for an Entertainer of the Year nominee and be disappointed. There should always be a little bit of a surprise, and I think all these great nominees have that in them. I'm proud to be in their company.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY HAS BEEN THE KEY FACTOR IN MAKING THAT CONNECTION WITH YOUR FANS?

BP: I think songs are the key factor. It's always about that. The songs are the way that you reach them. They're the message, and they're who you are as an artist too. I think the lyrics you sing really become your persona to some



degree. That's the case with me. I'm lucky [the fans] let me do these songs that really exhibit a lot of my personality.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FANS?

BP: My fans are just so absolutely supportive. I hear the comments "I can't wait to see what you do on the next tour." Well, that right there says that they're coming back, and that means more to me than they know. I just really feel like that's the best job in the world when you're an entertainer who doesn't have to beg people to come out to your shows! I've always wanted to get to that point. I didn't know if I ever would, but I always wanted to get to that level where they just show up in droves. So now with that responsibility and knowing that people are coming when you put a show on sale, you basically have to deliver more. Just because you know they're coming doesn't mean you take it easy. You give 110% and really do it the best you can.

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE AND CAREER, WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPIEST?

BP: Oh, my happiest days in my life are with my family at this point. I mean, that is without a doubt the craziest, most exhilarating experience I've ever had—the new experiences with a son. It's a great age—about a year old. It's the best part of a lot of good things.

DO YOU THINK BECOMING A DAD HAS CHANGED YOU AS A PERFORMER?

BP: Being a dad has changed me as a performer maybe in one way. I used to always find a little girl or little boy in the audience to stick my hat on their head at the end of the show and let them have it to take home. And now I see myself looking for younger and younger kids. It seems that at the end of the encore a lot of them have gone home by then. There might be a little girl or a little boy the whole time sitting on the front row waiting on the show to end, and I'm think I'm gonna give it to him, and then by the end of the show they're gone. They're parents have taken them home. It's a different thing than when I used to just stick it on the kids head before. I understand that as a parent now a little bit more, as what it'll mean to that kid.

YOU'VE DONE A LOT OF THINGS IN YOUR LIFE, BUT WHAT'S ONE THING YOU HAVEN'T TACKLED YET THAT YOU'D LIKE TO DO?

BP: I want to learn to drive a race car a little bit. Maybe take some racing school stuff, just for fun. I wouldn't do it competitively. I don't think it's really probably the safest thing in the world, you know especially with a wife and kid and a family and career. But it would be fun to maybe do a few laps around the track and not feel like I'm scared out of my mind. I want to know how to out run these cops!

BRAD PAISLEY

The
Paisley Party
TOUR 2008

**HERE IS TO 10 MILLION MORE!
WE ARE PROUD TO BE PART OF YOUR TEAM!
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NOMINATIONS
AND GOOD LUCK TONIGHT!**

BOC AND YOUR FRIENDS

AT **LIVE NATION**

GAC
GREAT AMERICAN COUNTRY
GACTV.COM

RASCAL FLATTS

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS ENTERTAINER NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, TOP VOCAL GROUP

YOU SOLD A LOT OF RECORDS LAST YEAR, HAD A BIG TOUR AND WON YOUR FIFTH ACM VOCAL GROUP TROPHY—AMONG OTHER ACCOLADES. LOOKING BACK AT 2007, WHAT ARE YOU PROUDEST OF?

JAY DEMARCUS: It's hard to pick one because I would have to say that I think the greatest accomplishment we've achieved in the last year is continuing to have longevity. I think it's really, really hard when you get to a place where we are, with five albums, to keep putting out the quality of music that we expect from ourselves every time we release an album. I think we've been able to surround ourselves with really great people from our producer, Dan Huff, to the musicians that contribute so much to the record to the songwriters themselves. So, that's the thing that I'm most proud of is that we continue to push ourselves, and we haven't gotten complacent and our work ethic has never changed.

FOR YOU GUYS, WHAT IS THAT ONE THING THAT MAKES SOMEONE A GREAT ENTERTAINER?

GARY LEVOX: I think being an actual entertainer, not just someone who stands there and sings. Garth Brooks is the demo of Entertainer of the Year. You came to the show and you left just blown away. I think that's how you win Entertainer of the Year.

WELL, OBVIOUSLY A CONNECTION TO THE FANS IS VERY IMPORTANT AND YOU GUYS CERTAINLY HAVE DEVELOPED THAT OVER THE YEARS. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY HAS BEEN THE KEY TO HAVING THAT CONNECTION TO YOUR FANS?

JOE DON ROONEY: I think the connection to our fans started from day one. We've been very active in talking to them. You know, getting out there and busting the pavement and walking around and shaking hands with them and meeting them and letting them know that we see everything they do for our career.



THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE OTHER THAN JUST COUNTRY FANS COMING TO YOUR SHOWS. HOW MUCH PRESSURE DO YOU GUYS FEEL TO REPRESENT COUNTRY MUSIC TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE OUR COUNTRY WORLD?

JAY: It's great that our music has found a home in other genres of music, but it's not something that we calculated or set out to do intentionally. I don't think we necessarily feel pressure. I mean, we welcome [other fans] into the realm of country music, and we're so glad that some fans that weren't fans of country music before have found another kind of music that they dig. There are some misconceptions that a lot of the world has about country music, and we've been proud to sort of carry that banner of, "Hey, you know, country's cool, too. Come learn and have a listen."

PEOPLE ALWAYS SAY IT'S AN HONOR TO BE NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR. OBVIOUSLY IT IS, BUT THIS TIME IT'S DIFFERENT BECAUSE THE FANS HAVE A SAY IN IT. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FANS GETTING TO VOTE ON THE WINNER THIS YEAR?

GARY: They should vote on every award show.

JAY: They're the ones who control all of this.

JOE DON: Yeah, they control who sells the most records in a given year, who sells the most concert tickets in a given year, who buys the most albums. They hold all of that in their hands, so why not give them the power to choose who they think deserves the Entertainer of the Year? I mean, to me and I think to these guys too, it just feels right, and I think whoever they choose is deserving of it because it takes a lot of work, a lot of dedication, and a lot of tenacity.

WHAT DO YOU GUYS STILL ENJOY MOST ABOUT PLAYING MUSIC NOW, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS OF DOING IT?

GARY: Just people singing the songs that we've created, singing every word back to us. That's what you dream of as a kid and when you start selling out arenas and stadiums and that kind of thing and you've got 15,000 to 50,000 or whatever singing every word to every song— not just songs that were singles, but every song of every album.

JAY: It's funny what the energy of the fans can do for you when you're having a bad day and maybe you don't feel like going out on stage that night, and you get out there and feel that electricity and the feedback from the fans. All of a sudden it's like a shot of B12. I mean, it's just unbelievable what they're capable of.

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU GUYS HAVEN'T TACKLED YET THAT YOU REALLY WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

JAY: Knitting. I've always wanted to knit or to fashion my own mittens. I used to watch my mom do that and that is something I have not had the time or the patience to learn how to do yet.

JOE DON: Like dual knitting, like two people at the same time kind of thing?

JAY: No. that could be too confusing. I need to start out with one-single knitting first.

JOE DON: Or maybe a knitting group or duo!

JAY: We could win that award.

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GEORGE STRAIT

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS ENTERTAINER NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR. TOP MALE VOCALIST. VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

OUT OF ALL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH ONE ARE YOU PROUDEST OF AND WHY?

GS: Wow, last year was a great year. One thing that sticks out in my mind though is the medallion ceremony for the Hall of Fame that we did [Strait was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2007]. It was really an emotional night for me—a lot more emotional than I thought I would be. And yes, I cried. There were just so many people to thank.

OBVIOUSLY ALBUM SALES AND BIG TOURS ALL GO INTO THE CRITERIA FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING INTANGIBLE THAT MAKES SOMEONE A GOOD ENTERTAINER. FOR YOU, WHAT MAKES SOMEONE A GREAT ENTERTAINER?

GS: If you can see that the entertainer's having fun up there then it gets pretty contagious. When somebody's having fun you wanna have fun, and I think that's the most important thing—to go up on stage and have fun and really enjoy what you're doing. The crowd feeds off of that and when the crowd is feeding off it then in turn you feed off the crowd, and it just works both ways.

YOU HAVE A KNACK FOR PICKING GREAT SONGS, AND YOU HAVE MORE THAN 50 NO. 1 HITS TO PROVE IT. HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN A SONG IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

GS: I just know. I mean, there's been a few times where I've gone in the studio I've cut something and it just hadn't worked out, but not very many times. It's something that I hear in the melody or the message in the song or the two together that makes the whole package work. It's hard to put my finger on anything in particular, but I do think I know a good song when I hear it.

YOU'VE WON 18 ACM AWARDS AND YOU'VE BEEN NOMINATED I THINK OVER 70 TIMES. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU AT THIS POINT TO BE NOMINATED?



GS: It's quite an honor. It means a lot. After you work so hard in the studio and on the road and then you get recognized at the award shows, it's quite an accomplishment because there are a lot of people out there that aren't. It's still very exciting for me to go to the show and right down to when they open the envelope and read the winner, it's very exciting.

EVEN AFTER ALL THOSE TIMES, THE WHOLE GETTING DOWN TO THE ENVELOPE MOMENT STILL MAKES YOU NERVOUS?

GS: Oh yeah, yeah. Don't let anybody tell you that they don't get nervous when that happens because I'd have to call him a liar!

YOU'RE NOMINATED IN CATEGORIES THIS YEAR WITH ACTS WHO HAVE OPENLY CITED YOU AS A MUSICAL INFLUENCE. AFTER WINNING SO MANY AWARDS, ARE YOU STILL COMPETITIVE? I MEAN, DO YOU STILL WANT TO KICK THEIR BUTTS?

GS: Yeah, I'm very competitive still. The day that this is over for me, it's gonna be a very sad day in my life because I love it so much. I mean, I watch the charts. I can't lie to you and

say I don't pay any attention because I do. There is competitiveness in me. I don't let it consume me or anything, but I do like to win.

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE, WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPIEST?

GS: A lot of things make me happy. We're playing tonight in front of a sold-out crowd, that makes me very happy. A tee time at a great golf course, that makes me happy. Hooking-up to a big blue marlin makes me very happy; riding a good horse makes me happy.

WHAT'S ONE THING THAT YOU HAVEN'T TACKLED YET THAT YOU'D LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH?

GS: I was talking the other night about making a swing record—a big band record. I've talked about that for years, just like I've talked about doing another movie forever. I don't know if I'll ever do it, but I think I would really enjoy doing a big band Sinatra type album, but it's hard to find the material that hasn't been done over and over and over again.

SPEAKING OF THE MOVIE, I'M SURE YOU'VE GOTTEN LOTS OF SCRIPTS YOUR WAY SINCE *PURE COUNTRY*. HAVE YOU JUST NOT FOUND A GOOD ONE?

GS: I really had a good time doing *Pure Country*, and it was a big boost for my career. I get people all the time asking me "When are you gonna do another movie? When are you going to do another *Pure Country*?" and I say, "Dusty died." (laughs)

WHAT ABOUT PLAYING ANOTHER KIND OF ROLE?

GS: It's in the back of my mind. It's something that I enjoy doing, and I'd like to go try it again and do something that's more of a stretch instead of somebody similar to myself in the movie.

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KEITH URBAN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS ENTERTAINER NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR, TOP MALE VOCALIST

OUT OF ALL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR, WHICH ONE ARE YOU PROUDEST OF AND WHY?

KU: That's hard to narrow down to one, really. Musically, this tour has really been the most rewarding tour we've ever done because it felt so different from every tour we've done in the past. Everything feels new, and I'm so grateful for the songs we have and to see everybody singing along with not only the singles but all the album tracks as well is amazing.

THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY THINGS LIKE NOT SONGS AND BIG SELLING ALBUMS THAT GO INTO AN ENTERTAINER NOMINATION. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING INTANGIBLE ABOUT A GREAT ENTERTAINER THAT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERYBODY. FOR YOU, WHAT IS THE MARK OF A GREAT ENTERTAINER?

KU: I try and do all the things that I'd like to see if I went to a concert. And for me, I think it's just being able to bring everybody into the moment. I like to play with an audience. I don't want to play at them. I want to play with them; I want to be a part of them. I want the person in the farthest seat and the closest seat to feel that they're exactly in the same place. And I think this particular tour has allowed us to do that because of the way the staging has been done and the size of the screen behind us has been able to make a large place feel pretty intimate.

YOU HAVE AN ACTIVE FAN CLUB AND YOU'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH THEM. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FANS?

KU: Passionate. They're very passionate, and I think they're looking for the same thing—that sense of really experiencing life to its fullest and not just cruising through a day. Because time goes by so fast, and I think the only way to live is to try and really feel each day and that's all about being mindful.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE KEY TO MAKING THAT CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR FANS?

KU: I think it's just being honest. I mean, just



coming on stage and being really present; that's the way to do it. Every concert I've ever been to where I've been really drawn into the artist, I can tell that they're present or they're not. [It's] the difference between doing things out of habit and being mindful of what we do. And I think touring is one of those areas where it's easy to get into habit and just run through the songs, but it's so important to be mindful. Even though I'm singing the song for the umpteenth time, there are plenty of people who never heard it before live, and it's the first time for them.

YOU HAVE OBVIOUSLY TOURED QUITE A BIT OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES AND MIGHT BE IN THE MAINSTREAM SPOTLIGHT A LITTLE MORE THAN OTHER COUNTRY ARTISTS. KNOWING THAT, DO YOU FEEL ANY KIND OF PRESSURE THAT YOU'RE REPRESENTING COUNTRY MUSIC TO PEOPLE WHO MIGHT NOT HAVE HEARD IT BEFORE?

KU: Yeah—particularly touring overseas as much we have, going to Ireland and going to Germany. We've been to Germany four or five times now and it's great to be in places like

Berlin. The last time we were over there, somebody sent me this thing from YouTube, and it was some footage someone had shot in the audience when we were doing "Raining on Sunday," and I had them sing the chorus. And there are a couple of thousand people out there singing the chorus of "Raining on Sunday" in English, but with this really thick German accent. It's an amazing feeling.

YOU WON TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST FOR THE ACM'S BACK IN 2001, WHICH WAS ONE OF THE FIRST AWARDS YOU PICKED UP IN YOUR CAREER. LOOKING BACK ON THAT NOW, WHAT DID THAT MEAN TO YOU?

KU: Oh, it was an amazing feeling, particularly for me because I'd been in Nashville so many years—I think it's 16 years this year. I'm glad it took as long as it did. It just makes those kinds of moments so much more sweet and gratifying. I don't take that for granted at all, those moments, and that one particularly was extraordinary.

YOU'VE HAD SOME STRUGGLES IN THE PAST THREE YEARS AND YOU'VE HAD A LOT OF GREAT THINGS HAPPEN IN YOUR LIFE, TOO, LIKE YOUR GROWING FAMILY. HOW DOES THAT AFFECT YOUR MUSIC AND AFFECT YOU AS A PERFORMER—THOSE GOOD AND BAD THINGS YOU'VE GONE THROUGH IN LIFE?

KU: Well, it affects the way I look at what I do especially to be out here touring. What I love about playing live changes every year, and I think that with my marriage and now with impending fatherhood, it's given a really great balance to my life that I never had before.

YOUR MUSIC BRINGS A LOT OF HAPPINESS TO THE PEOPLE WHO COME TO YOUR SHOWS. AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE, WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES YOU THE HAPPIEST?

KU: Balance, really. I mean, I love being home. I love being on the road. I love it when those two things can find a balance. It requires adjustment, but this year has been really beautiful for that.



Congratulations to all those who get to see the stage tonight

FALLSVIEW CASINO

GARY ALLAN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

Living Hard is the title of Gary Allan's eighth album, but it could also be the theme song for his life. Bucking the Nashville system and blazing his own trail through country music, the California-bred Allan has perfected his unique voice, mixing the best of tradition with a rockers' edge. He has also endured personal pain that he has channeled into his music. His new album, featuring the achingly beautiful "We Touched the Sun" and "Learning How to Bend," heralds Allan's journey back after losing his wife, Angela, in 2004. As with all of Allan's music, the new collection is a rockers-and-ballads mix that delves into lost love, regret and realization. The lead single "Watching Airplanes" was a No. 1 hit that brought Allan his seventh ACM nomination this year.



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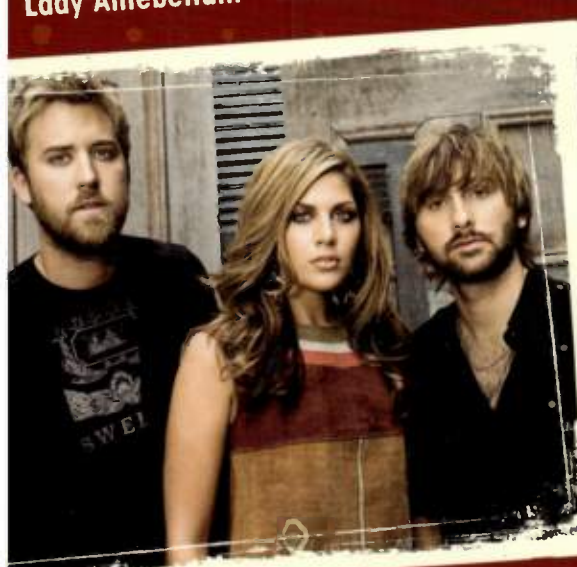
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RODNEY ATKINS

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP MALE VOCALIST, ALBUM OF THE YEAR,
SONG OF THE YEAR, VIDEO OF THE YEAR

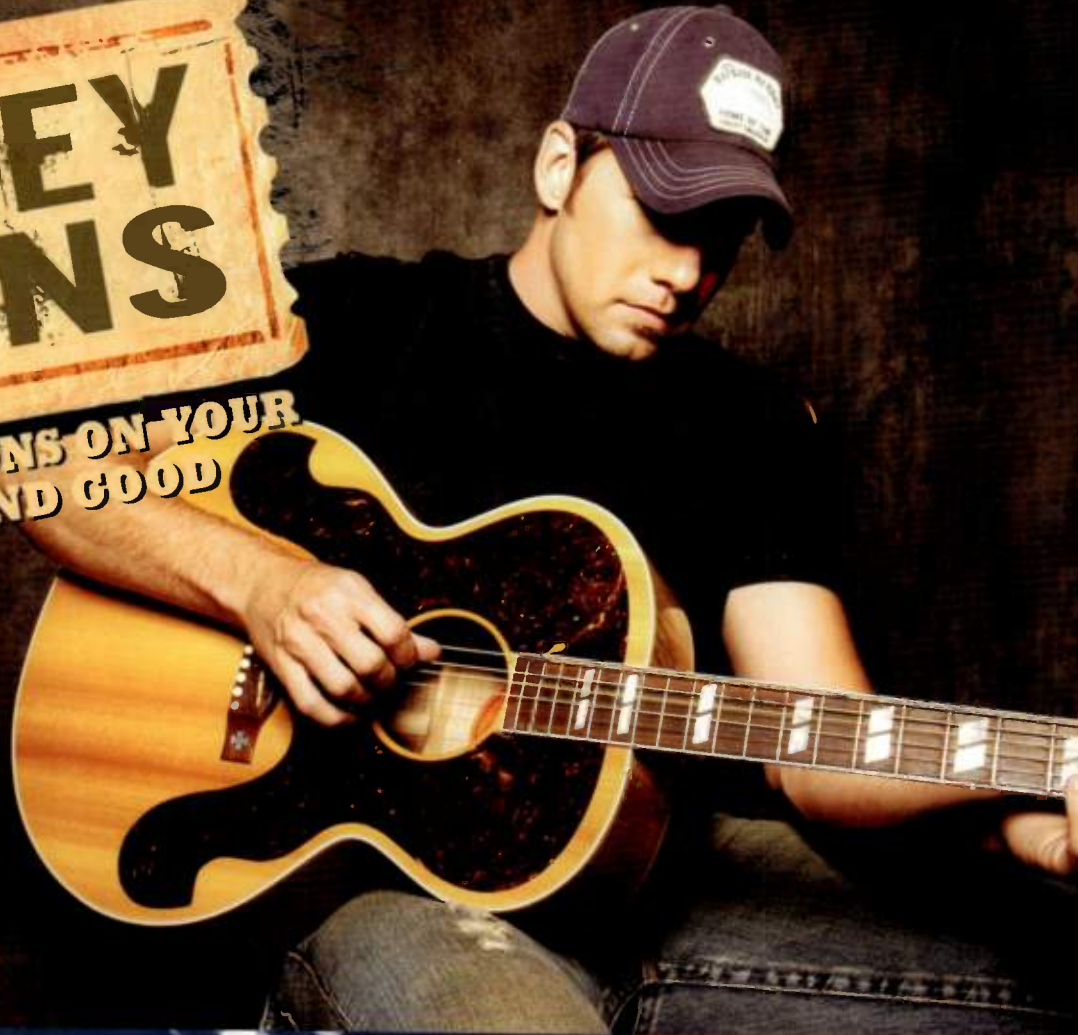
With four consecutive No. 1 singles off of his current album *If You're Going Through Hell*, Rodney Atkins has proven more than worthy of his six nominations this year. His impressive back-to-back success, which is the first since Tim McGraw released a string of consecutive chart-toppers in 2001, speaks volumes about Atkins' laid-back "everyman" attitude and straightforward lyrics that appeal to a wide fan base. His No. 1 hit "Watching You" was the most played country song on the radio last year, an accomplishment Atkins also reached in 2006 with the title track of his album, "If You're Going Through Hell (Before The Devil Even Knows)." The simultaneously comical and sincere "These Are My People" and "Cleaning This Gun (Come On In Boy)" rounded out Atkins' hit list this year. But in addition to beer-raising beats and clever catchphrases, Atkins delivers his signature performance in the nominated video for "Watching You," which also features Atkins' son Elijah. The playful interaction between father and son on screen visually encompasses that earthy, genuine quality Atkins brings to his music - all of which makes him one of the most tangible artists on the country music scene today.



RODNEY ATKINS

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BIG & RICH

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL DUO, SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR,
SONG OF THE YEAR, VIDEO OF THE YEAR

Dynamic duo Big & Rich is known for liking it "Loud." They play anything and everything from rowdy crowd-pleasers to romantic wedding ballads - and they do it with magnetic panache that only the dons of Nashville's MuzikMafia can. Big Kenny Alphin and John Rich have produced four albums as a duo, two of which have achieved No. 1 status. Their current album *Between Raising Hell and Amazing Grace* has yielded three singles, including their first No. 1 song "Lost In This Moment," for which they have received multiple award nominations as producers, writers and vocalists. Alphin and Rich are individually known for their producing and songwriting talents in many circles. Alphin is also heavily involved in international humanitarian work, recently presenting his documentary about Darfur entitled *Bearing Light: A Journey to Sudan* at the Nashville Film Festival. Rich just wrapped the first season of his own television series *Gone Country*, and will also appear as a judge and mentor on the upcoming sixth season of *Nashville Star*.



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BON JOVI

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Anyone following the music of New Jersey rockers Bon Jovi over the years probably wasn't surprised when the band recorded its latest album in Nashville, a town built on songwriters and storytelling. Since releasing its landmark *Slippery When Wet* in 1986, Bon Jovi has been telling its own stories with songs like "Livin' On a Prayer" and "Wanted Dead or Alive." In 2005, the band teamed up with Sugarland's Jennifer Nettles on the country hit "Who Says You Can't Go Home." On 2007's *Lost Highway*, Jon Bon Jovi, Richie Sambora, David Bryan and Tico Torres drew inspiration from Music City and turned out country tinged tunes like "(You Want to) Make a Memory" and the title cut. The project also included "Till We Ain't Strangers Anymore," a duet with LeAnn Rimes that earned Bon Jovi its second ACM nomination.





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BROOKS & DUNN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL DUO

This year marks the 61st ACM nomination for multi-platinum Brooks & Dunn since their wins for both Top New Vocal Duet or Group and Top Vocal Duet in 1991. With a total of 24 ACM Awards and two Grammys being only a few of the accolades under their belts, Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn have proven themselves the reigning super-duo of country music. *Cowboy Town* is Brooks & Dunn's 13th album together, hot off the heels of their platinum 2005 release *Hillbilly Deluxe*. While both of the latest album's Top 10 singles "Proud of the House We Built" and "God Must Be Busy" remain true to Brooks & Dunn's polished style, *Cowboy Town* yields several grittier tunes that sound more at home on the range as the album's title implies. The duo returned from a sold-out Australian tour in March, their album having reached No. 2 on Australian country charts. Stopping only a short while to rest, Brooks & Dunn kicked off their North American *Cowboy Town* tour in April. The top-selling country duo of all time is also very involved with several charitable causes and received the 2007 ACM/The Home Depot® Humanitarian Award for their contributions to the community.





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LUKE BRYAN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

Triple-threat artist Luke Bryan is causing quite a stir in the country music community with his fresh vocal, musical and songwriting skills. The Georgia native scored a Top 5 hit with his first single "All My Friends Say," off of his high-ranking debut album *I'll Stay Me*. The album's title is reflective of Bryan's easygoing, down-home style that audiences find so authentic and irresistible. His second memory-invoking single "We Rode in Trucks" played in the Top 40, as is his current track "Country Man." In addition to gaining recognition as a vocalist, however, Bryan is also making his stamp in the industry as a songwriter. "Good Directions," co-written by Bryan and recorded by Billy Currington, spent three weeks at No. 1 on the country charts. He also wrote the title track of artist Travis Tritt's album *My Honky Tonk History*. With more music yet to make and a brand-new baby boy, Bryan will certainly have his hands full in 2008 - but it's not just his friends saying that this charming artist only gets better and better.





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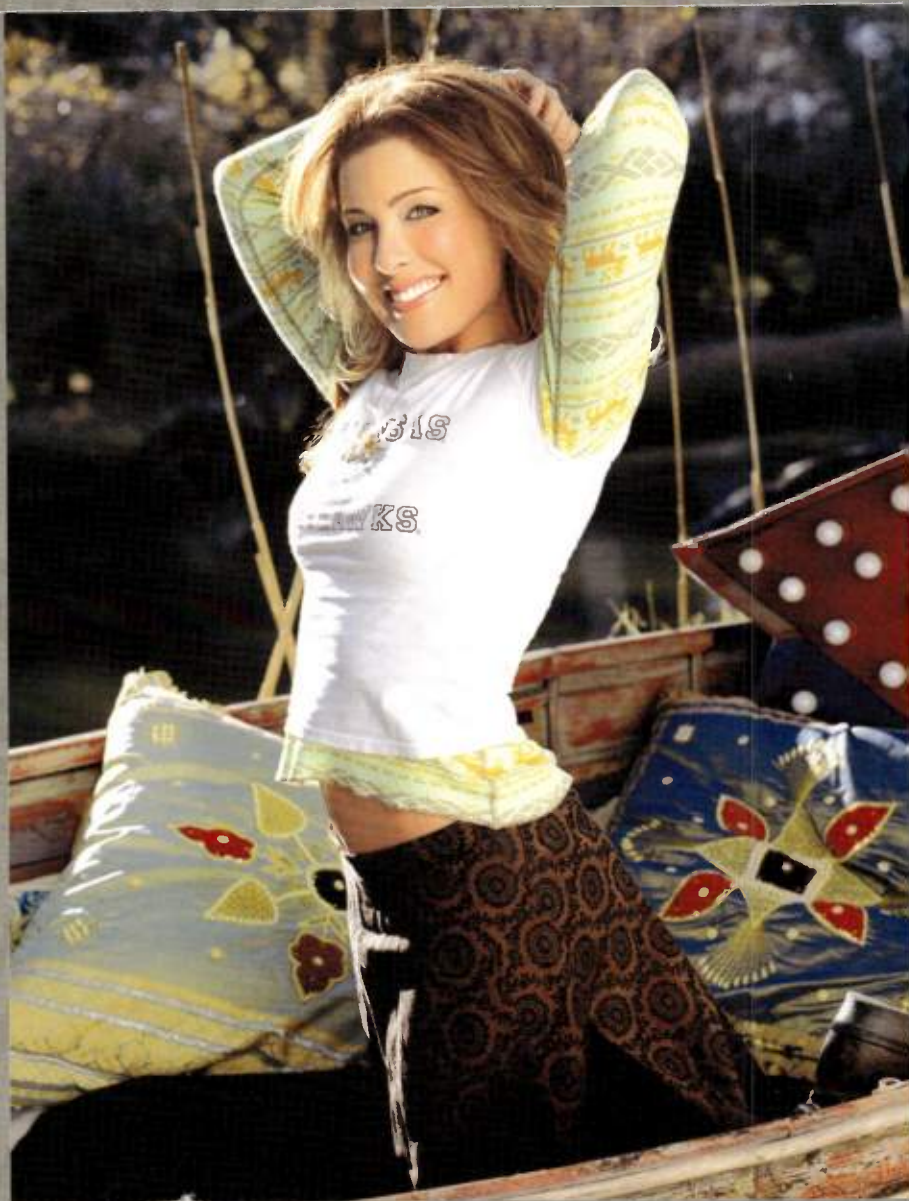
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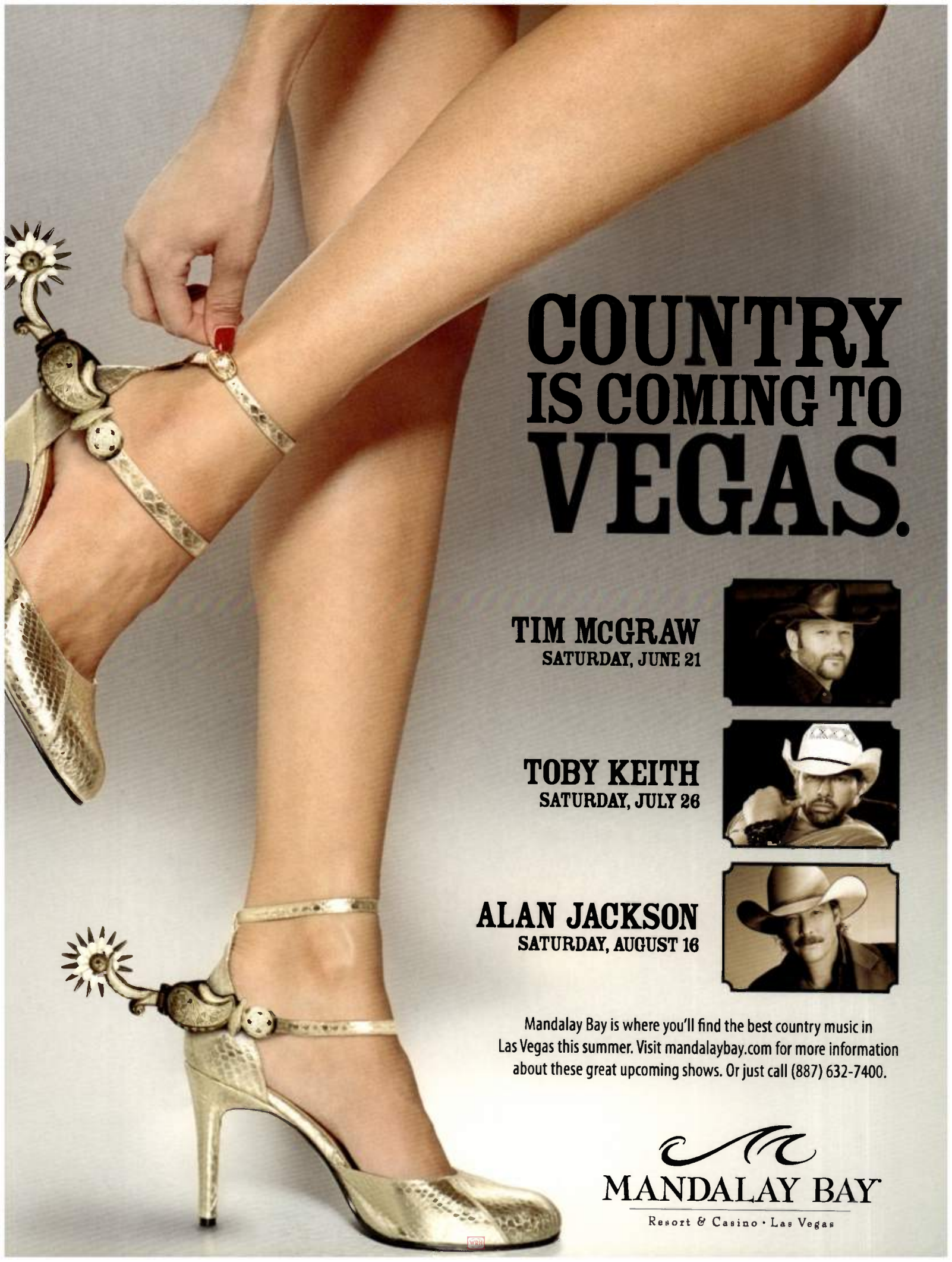
SARAH BUXTON

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

Singer-songwriter Sarah Buxton has been making waves in country music with the long-delayed release of her self-titled debut album. The album was preceded by a digital EP cleverly entitled *Almost My Record*, which gave fans a chance to download Buxton's music as they anticipated the arrival of her first full record. Singles like "Innocence" and "That Kind Of Day" made Top 40 appearances on the *Billboard* charts, as did Keith Urban's Top 10 hit single "Stupid Boy," on which Buxton was a writer. She has also performed as a backup singer for several well-known country acts such as Cowboy Troy, Kenny Rogers and Urban. Her no-holds-barred, true-to-life lyrics and distinctive voice set Buxton apart from many of the up-and-coming female artists, as do her blossoming skills and versatility with both the microphone and the pen.





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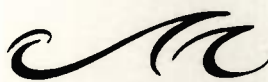
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CAROLINA RAIN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

Stellar harmonies and solid, down-home guitar pickin' have landed tight-knit trio Carolina Rain its first ACM nomination this year. After seven years on the long and often bumpy road to success, Carolina Rain has finally stolen the spotlight with its appropriately titled debut album *Weather the Storm*. The album has produced four singles - "I Ain't Scared," "Get Outta My Way," "Isn't She" and "Dealin'" - three of which have hit the charts. Carolina Rain was also the first act signed by legendary artist Clint Black's Independent record label, Equity Music Group. It is not only the band's apparent musical bond that lends them their magnetic quality, however. Its members - Jeremy Baxter, Rhean Boyer and Marvin Evatt - clearly maintain close friendships with one another as well, and the fun they have singing and playing together makes the tunes they produce simply irresistible.



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KELLY CLARKSON

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Two-time Grammy award winner Kelly Clarkson received her first ACM nomination this year for her collaboration with Reba McEntire on the scintillating single "Because of You" – a song the pair performed on last year's *ACM Awards* show. Clarkson, who is a multi-platinum selling pop artist with numerous hit songs and three studio albums, has distinguished herself as a top artist with impressive vocals that range from rich and husky to powerful and glass-shattering. Her debut album *Thankful* reached No. 1 on the charts, as did her first single "A Moment Like This." Clarkson's current album *My December* is the artist's most intimate work to date. She wrote or co-wrote every track on the album, infusing a much edgier sound upon her traditionally upbeat style. Pairing up with McEntire on the country superstar's compilation *Reba: Duets* proved so successful that Clarkson is co-headlining the *2 Worlds, 2 Voices* tour with McEntire this year.





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SHERYL CROW

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Known as an artist who defies one specific genre, Sheryl Crow has made several appearances on the country, pop and rock charts throughout her expansive musical career. She claimed her first ACM award last year, also for Vocal Event of the Year, for her collaboration with Brooks & Dunn and Vince Gill on the song "Building Bridges." This year, she teams up again with Gill on the reflective single "What You Give Away." Crow is a multi-platinum, nine-time Grammy winner and has received numerous awards for her singing and songwriting talents, but she is also widely known as a passionate activist and humanitarian. She has never been shy of expressing her acute political awareness or deeply personal life experiences, and she touches hard subjects with her soft vocals and earthy blends of blues, rock, jazz and country. Whether performing as a solo artist or in tandem, Crow delivers her own special brand of soul to everything she does.



DIAMOND RIO

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL GROUP



Six-man band Diamond Rio is a perennial name in the Top Vocal Group category. With multiple nods for their more traditional country style and powerful ballads – including 13 Grammy nominations and now 22 ACM nominations (they have won two) – Diamond Rio maintains a subtle elegance that has appealed to audiences for more than 16 years. The band celebrated its 10th anniversary as members of the prestigious Grand Ole Opry in 2008 and continues to stay busy with its well-known charitable work. As national spokespersons for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the members of Diamond Rio (Gene Johnson, Jimmy Olander, Brian Prout, Marty Roe, Dan Truman and Dana Williams) have sponsored “Team Rio” in the Country Music Marathon and Half Marathon to raise funds for four years, contributing to more than \$200,000 in donations for the charity.

Values-centered music and generous involvement in the community distinguish Diamond Rio as an outstanding group in the country music industry.

EAGLES

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL GROUP

Since their first album hit stores in 1972, the Eagles have been crafting an intoxicating blend of country and rock. Their songs are the ultimate sing-alongs, passed down from generation to generation like heirlooms. The signature harmonies on classics like "Seven Bridges Road," "Take It Easy" and, of course, "Hotel California," earned the band a spot in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998. Since then, the legendary lineup of Don Henley, Glenn Frey, Joe Walsh and Timothy B. Schmidt have been keeping fans happy out on the road. In 2007, the Eagles rolled out their seventh studio album, a double disc titled *Long Road Out of Eden*. Released exclusively at Wal-Mart and on the band's website, the album rocketed to the top of the Billboard Top 200 albums chart, selling 711,000 copies in the first week and besting even Britney Spears. Singles "How Long" and "Just Too Busy Being Fabulous" proved the Eagles magic is still there and helped garner them their first ACM nomination for Top Vocal Group since 1975. The "fast lane" has finally brought the Eagles back home to country music.



EMERSON DRIVE

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL GROUP, SONG OF THE YEAR



With its first No. 1 single "Moments" raking in nominations and its latest release "You Still Own Me" climbing the charts, country music group Emerson Drive is enjoying a successful run with its current album *Countrified*. The album is the group's fifth collaboration since its inception in 1995 and peaked at No. 13 on *Billboard's* Top Independent Albums chart. Emerson Drive was *Billboard's* Top Country Artist of the Year in 2002 and won the ACM Award for Top New Vocal Duo or Group in 2003, garnering multiple awards and nominations since then including a Grammy nod for Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for "Moments." The song also dominated the Australian music charts upon its recent international release, hitting the No. 1 spot in April and further expanding Canadian-rooted Emerson Drive's international appeal.

VINCE GILL

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Giving is something that highly acclaimed artist Vince Gill does with the same class and earnestness that has earned him 19 Grammy awards (an unprecedented number for a male country artist) and seven ACM awards. He is actively involved in humanitarian work and fundraising, his efforts acknowledged with the Home Depot Humanitarian Award in 2005.

Gill's nominated single featuring Sheryl Crow is appropriately titled "What You Give Away," and reflects the dynamic artist's humble grounding at the foundation of his monumental career.

These Days, Gill's current Grammy-winning album, is a four-disc tour-de-force of eclectic musical styles and collaborations that stands as a true testament to his prowess as a musician, producer, songwriter and vocalist.

"What You Give Away" is one of two charted singles from the album, the other being "The Reason Why" featuring Alison Krauss.



HALFWAY TO HAZARD

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL DUO



When you've got a powerhouse star like Tim McGraw producing your records, you're certainly on your way. McGraw not only crafted Halfway to Hazard's debut album with StyleSonic Records partner Byron Gallimore, he's also one of their biggest fans-- taking the duo on the road with him and introducing them to the media and country radio. Chad Warrix and David Tolliver grew up about 50 miles away from each other in Southeastern Kentucky, but each found their way with the other kids to the town in the middle named Hazard. Years later both would relocate to Nashville and after stints in other bands, they finally joined forces to write and perform their own brand of gritty Southern country-flavored rock. Released in late 2007, Halfway to Hazard's self-titled debut offered the lead single "Daisy," which featured the duo's tight harmonies and bittersweet storytelling. Other cuts including "Countrified" and "Welcome to Nashville" showcase a rockin' edge and sense of humor, while "Die By My Own Hand" is a moving and unflinching look at one's shortcomings. This promising album earned Halfway to Hazard its first ACM nomination.

JACK INGRAM

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

Jack Ingram may be competing for Top New Male Vocalist, but he's certainly not a newcomer. The Texas singer-songwriter has been playing music for more than a decade now, crisscrossing the country with his Beat Up Ford band and building an enthusiastic fan base one show at a time. His early independent recordings led to record deals that turned out some stellar albums, including 1997's *Living' or Dyin'*, 1999's *Hey You* and 2002's *Electric*. Even Ingram's heroes like Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and Billy Joe Shaver counted themselves as fans. Still, country radio didn't quite know what to do with Ingram until 2007, when Big Machine Records released *This Is It*. The lead single, "Wherever You Are" finally gave him his first No. 1 song, and the follow-ups, "Love You," and "Lips of an Angel," perfectly showcased the singer's slightly skewed sense of humor and his ability to cover a song and make it his own. After spending years honing his skills on the road playing to packed bars, Ingram is now rocking arena shows as the opening act for Brad Paisley, Brooks & Dunn and Sheryl Crow. Millions of country fans are finally hearing what Jack's loyal following has been enjoying all along.



Academy of Country Music Awards

Past Hosts 1966-1985

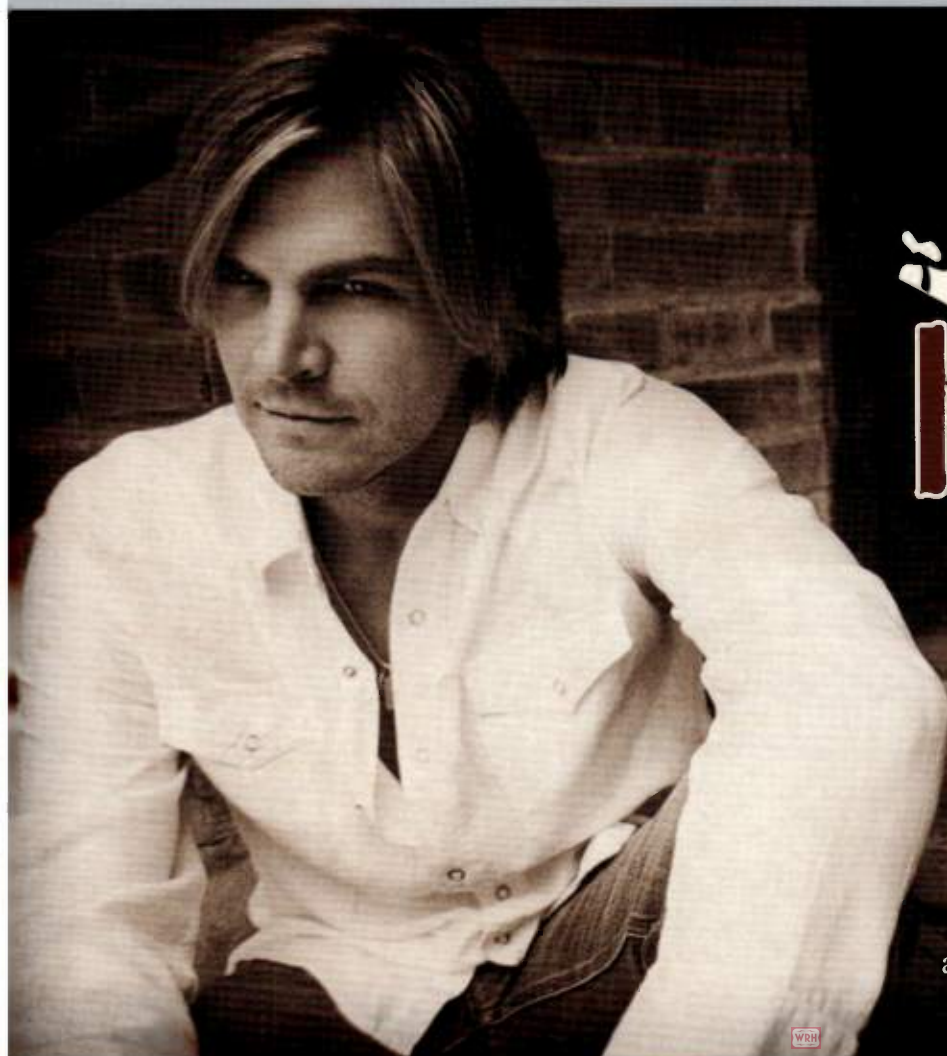
- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1st - 1966 - LORNE GREEN | 10th - 1975 - ROGER MILLER -
LORETTA LYNN | 16th - 1981 - LARRY GATLIN -
TAMMY WYNETTE - DON MEREDITH |
| 2nd - 1967 - LORNE GREEN | 11th - 1976 - MARTY ROBBINS | 17th - 1982 - CONWAY TWITTY -
DOTTIE WEST - MICKEY GILLEY |
| 3rd - 1968 - PAT BUTTRAM | 12th - 1977 - PAT BOONE - PATTI PAGE -
JERRY REED | 18th - 1983 - JERRY REED -
JOHN SCHNEIDER - TAMMY WYNETTE |
| 4th - 1969 - DICK CLARK | 13th - 1978 - DONNA FARGO - KENNY
ROGERS - BARBARA MANDRELL | 19th - 1984 - MAC DAVIS - CRYSTAL GAYLE -
CHARLIE PRIDE |
| 5th - 1970 - BUDDY EBSON | 14th - 1979 - ROY CLARK -
BARBARA MANDRELL - DENNIS WEAVER | 20th - 1985 - GLEN CAMPBELL -
JANIE FRICKE - LORETTA LYNN |
| 6th - 1971 - DICK CLARK | 15th - 1980 - LORETTA LYNN -
CHARLEY PRIDE - CLAUDE AKINS | |
| 7th - 1972 - DICK CLARK | | |
| 8th - 1973 - DICK CLARK | | |
| 9th - 1974 - ROGER MILLER - CHARLIE RICH | | |

Reba McEntire & Dick Clark

Loretta Lynn

Kenny Rogers

Mickey Gilley



JACK INGRAM

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LADY ANTEBELLUM

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

When aspiring songwriter Hillary Scott approached fellow musician Charles Kelley in a Nashville bar in 2006, she wanted to talk music. He thought he might get a date. What they both got is a writing session with fellow up-and-coming tunesmith Dave Haywood, and that almost-romance turned into a hot new trio named Lady Antebellum. Drawing on Kelley's smoky vocals, Scott's irresistible charm and Haywood's tight harmonies, Lady A's self-titled debut album opened at No. 1 on the *Billboard* Country Albums chart at No. 4 on the all-genre *Billboard* 200. The first single, "Love Don't Live Here Anymore," generated crazy media buzz, and the band has played to sold out clubs from New York to Los Angeles. They've already made appearances on the Grand Ole Opry and opened arena shows for Martina McBride. This is their first ACM nomination. The band documented the weeks leading up to tonight's awards show on a series of webisodes titled "Lady Antebellum's Road to the ACM Awards" on CBS.com.



MIRANDA LAMBERT

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP FEMALE VOCALIST, ALBUM OF THE YEAR,
SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR



With two No. 1 albums and several hit singles, fiery singer-songwriter Miranda Lambert has proven herself to be made of the same combustible substances she sings about. "Kerosene" (the title track off of her platinum debut album) and "Gunpowder & Lead" (from her current album *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*) are two of the artist's self-penned songs that show Lambert isn't afraid of a little edge to her rock-infused style. She also has a softer side that shines through on tracks like "Desperation" and a powerful rendition of the Emmylou Harris song "Easy from Now On" (also off of *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*). Lambert wrote or co-wrote eight of the 11 tracks on her current album. Among the accolades for her talent are two Grammy nominations for Best Female Country Vocal Performance, as well as the ACM Award for Top New Female Vocalist in 2006. She clearly has a certain spark that just gets hotter - and it isn't about to be doused anytime soon.

TRACY LAWRENCE

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Multi-platinum artist Tracy Lawrence found his eighth ACM nomination with the success of his chart-topping single "Find Out Who Your Friends Are." The track also features the vocals of Lawrence's long-time friends Tim McGraw and Kenny Chesney. Lawrence, who won the ACM Award for Top New Male Vocalist in 1992, has recorded numerous hit songs including eight No. 1 singles such as "Sticks and Stones," "If the Good Die Young" and "Time Marches On." His current album *For the Love* reached Top Five on the charts, propelled by the widespread popularity of the nominated song. "Find Out Who Your Friends Are" is an honest-to-goodness reminder about the truly important things in life - treasured relationships and unconditional love - that transcend even the toughest situations. Lawrence embraces this theme in both his music and his own life. He is well known for his involvement in charitable causes, many of which are funded through the Tracy Lawrence Foundation. He is also on the National Advisory Council for the Alzheimer's Association. Lawrence consistently offers authenticity and a big heart to audiences - with, of course, a little help from his friends.



LITTLE BIG TOWN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL GROUP



Flawless harmonies, inviting energy and a sound that alternates gracefully between warm and edgy make Little Big Town much more "big" than "little" as one of country music's hottest vocal groups. The band - which is comprised of Karen Fairchild, Kimberly Schlapman, Phillip Sweet and Jimi Westbrook - has been together for 10 years, releasing their platinum breakthrough album *The Road to Here* in 2005 and their current album *A Place to Land* in late 2007. Hits from the down-home boot stomper "Boondocks" and pedal-to-the-metal "Good As Gone" to the soul-warming "Bring It On Home" and sweetly seductive "A Little More You" have all earned places in the Top 20, with the group's current single "I'm With the Band" still on the charts. Little Big Town's close-knit chemistry is tangible in both their music and live performances, and each member's strong sense of home and family transfers easily to Little Big Town listeners. Schlapman and Sweet both became parents in the last year, but continue to blend life on the road with life at home as the band gains well-earned recognition - the same fusion in which fans of Little Big Town have found their own place to land.



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MARTINA MCBRIDE

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

Long known as the little lady with a powerhouse voice, Martina McBride is no stranger to the top ranks of female vocalists. Among other ACM awards, McBride has been nominated for the Top Female Vocalist Award every year since 1997 and has won three times, also garnering the Home Depot Humanitarian Award in 2003. As the solo producer of her ninth studio release *Waking Up Laughing*, the established artist has reached new heights both creatively and professionally. The album is McBride's first original material in four years and features three songs she co-wrote with Brad and Brett Warren - "Beautiful Again," "How I Feel" and the impelling anthem "Anyway." The latter song is McBride's fastest-rising single ever, and pays tribute to the courage, faith and values that are central to all of McBride's work. Her strong voice is the instrument of an even stronger character that inspires McBride's audiences, and the nearly perfect control she maintains through every performance lends her that timeless caliber only achieved by truly outstanding artists.



MARTINA McBRIDE

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REBA MCENTIRE

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

"Reba" is pretty much a brand name in country music, not to mention a well-known moniker on the stage and screen as well. She is a classic artist and respected personality in the business. McEntire returns this year to host the ACM Awards for an unprecedented 10th time, also reeling in her 43rd ACM nomination. McEntire has garnered 12 ACM awards during her illustrious 34-year career, as well as two Grammy awards and numerous other accolades for both her music and acting careers. She is truly a Jill-of-All-Trades, continuously developing her own clothing, footwear and home-decorations lines while still performing on multiple projects. McEntire recently wrapped her hit Golden Globe-nominated television comedy series *Reba*, but plans to pursue more onscreen work in the future. Her current album, *Reba: Duets*, is a star-studded collaboration with an eclectic mix of recording artists from Justin Timberlake and Don Henley to Trisha Yearwood. The album's hit debut single "Because of You" features fellow nominee Kelly Clarkson and showcases the soulful, powerhouse vocals of both songstresses. Their chemistry is so ignitable that Clarkson joins McEntire this year for their hot-selling *2 Worlds, 2 Voices* tour.



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TIM MCGRAW

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Tim McGraw is an international country music star, known for his own amazing string of hits and multi-platinum album sales, but he has also received much praise for his work with other artists. He's been nominated six times for the Academy's Vocal Event of the Year award, winning two for "It's Your Love" and "Just to Hear You Say That You Love Me" with wife Faith Hill. His collaboration with rapper Nelly on 2006's "Over and Over" was a No. 1 crossover hit, giving pop and rap fans a taste of his country soul. Most recently, McGraw reached the top spot on the classic rock chart with "Nine Lives," a song he co-wrote and performed with legendary rockers Def Leppard. Tonight, McGraw is nominated again for the ACM's Vocal Event trophy with longtime pals Tracy Lawrence and Kenny Chesney for the No. 1 song, "Find Out Who Your Friends Are." McGraw has yet another collaboration on the horizon. He's penning his first children's book with songwriter Tom Douglas. *My Little Girl*, based on the poignant hit song from the movie *Flicka*, will hit bookstores in October.



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MONTGOMERY GENTRY

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL DUO

"What Do Ya Think About That" perfectly encapsulates the straightforward, no-bones-about-it attitude of country-rockers Eddie Montgomery and Troy Gentry. Nominated for ACM's Top Vocal Duo every year since they first blazed onto the music scene as Montgomery Gentry and won Top New Vocal Duo or Group in 1999, the duo has remained at the forefront of modern country music. The reflective single "Lucky Man" from their current gold album *Some People Change* achieved No. 1 status, joining the ranks of Montgomery Gentry's other chart-topping singles "If You Ever Stop Loving Me" and "Something to Be Proud Of." While their signature sound is unabashedly hard-edged and high-energy, Montgomery Gentry embraces a realness in their music that caters to the common man and covers every aspect of day-to-day life from partying to church-going, joy to pain, and love to the loss of it. *Some People Change* features four songs co-written by either Montgomery or Gentry, and their current single "Back When I Knew It All" (from the forthcoming album of the same name) has already reached Top 20 status on the charts. The duo consistently delivers music with a drive and passion that keeps them rockin' the ranks with the best.



Academy of Country Music Awards

Past Hosts 1986-2008

21st - 1986 - MAC DAVIS - REBA McENTIRE - JOHN SCHNEIDER

22nd - 1987 - PATRICK DUFFY - THE JUDDS

23rd - 1988 - REBA McENTIRE - HANK WILLIAMS, JR.

24th - 1989 - PATRICK DUFFY - K.T. OSLIN - GEORGE STRAIT

25th - 1990 - ALABAMA - THE JUDDS - GEORGE STRAIT - TAMMY WYNETTE

26th - 1991 - CLINT BLACK - KATHY MATTEA - GEORGE STRAIT

27th - 1992 - CLINT BLACK - LORRIE MORGAN - TRAVIS TRITT

28th - 1993 - RANDY OWEN - REBA McENTIRE - GEORGE STRAIT

29th - 1994 - REBA McENTIRE - ALAN JACKSON

30th - 1995 - CLINT BLACK - TANYA TUCKER - JEFF FOXWORTHY

31st - 1996 - BROOKS & DUNN - FAITH HILL - CRYSTAL BERNARD

32nd - 1997 - GEORGE STRAIT - CRYSTAL BERNARD - JEFF FOXWORTHY

33rd - 1998 - NO HOST

34th - 1999 - NO HOST

35th - 2000 - DOLLY PARTON

36th - 2001 - LeANN RIMES

37th - 2002 - REBA McENTIRE

38th - 2003 - REBA McENTIRE

39th - 2004 - REBA McENTIRE

40th - 2005 - NO HOST

41st - 2006 - REBA McENTIRE

42nd - 2007 - REBA McENTIRE

43rd - 2008 - REBA McENTIRE



Reba McEntire
and
Alan Jackson



Dolly Parton



Clint Black



John Schneider
Reba McEntire &
Mac Davis

MONTGOMERY GENTRY

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JAKE OWEN

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

Jake Owen started a string of success with his debut album *Startin' with Me*. The album, which has been certified gold and reached a Top 10 position on country charts, offers an open-hearted and honest perspective on life with its appealing mixture of rock-inspired party songs like the lead-off single "Yee Haw" and slower, seductive tunes such as the current single "Something About a Woman." Both songs are Top 15 hits, accompanying the album's introspective Top 10 title track on the charts. Owen co-wrote all 11 songs on *Startin' with Me*. Since its release, he has performed as an opening act for some of country music's most mainstream artists including Brad Paisley, Carrie Underwood and Sugarland. Owen has proven that he can hold his own, continuing to please audiences and peers alike with his particular blend of ballad-singing and boot-stompin'.





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KELLIE PICKLER

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

This is Kellie Pickler's second consecutive ACM nomination for Top New Female Vocalist. Although she has only been on the country music scene since 2006, Pickler has already made her stamp in the industry. Known for her lighthearted personality and quirky candidness, Pickler is as distinctive a character as she is an artist. Her gold-certified debut album *Small Town Girl* topped *Billboard's* Top Country Albums chart and made her the best-selling new country solo artist of 2006. The album has also yielded three hit singles, including "Red High Heels," "I Wonder" and the current stiletto-stomper "Things That Never Cross a Man's Mind." Pickler co-wrote five of the songs on *Small Town Girl* and received an ASCAP award for her writing skills on "Red High Heels." Having toured with Brad Paisley in 2007 and performed for U.S. troops last December on her first USO tour, Pickler has been caught up in what could only be described as a whirlwind start to her career. She is currently at work on her sophomore album, due out in late summer or early fall.





KELLIE PICKLER

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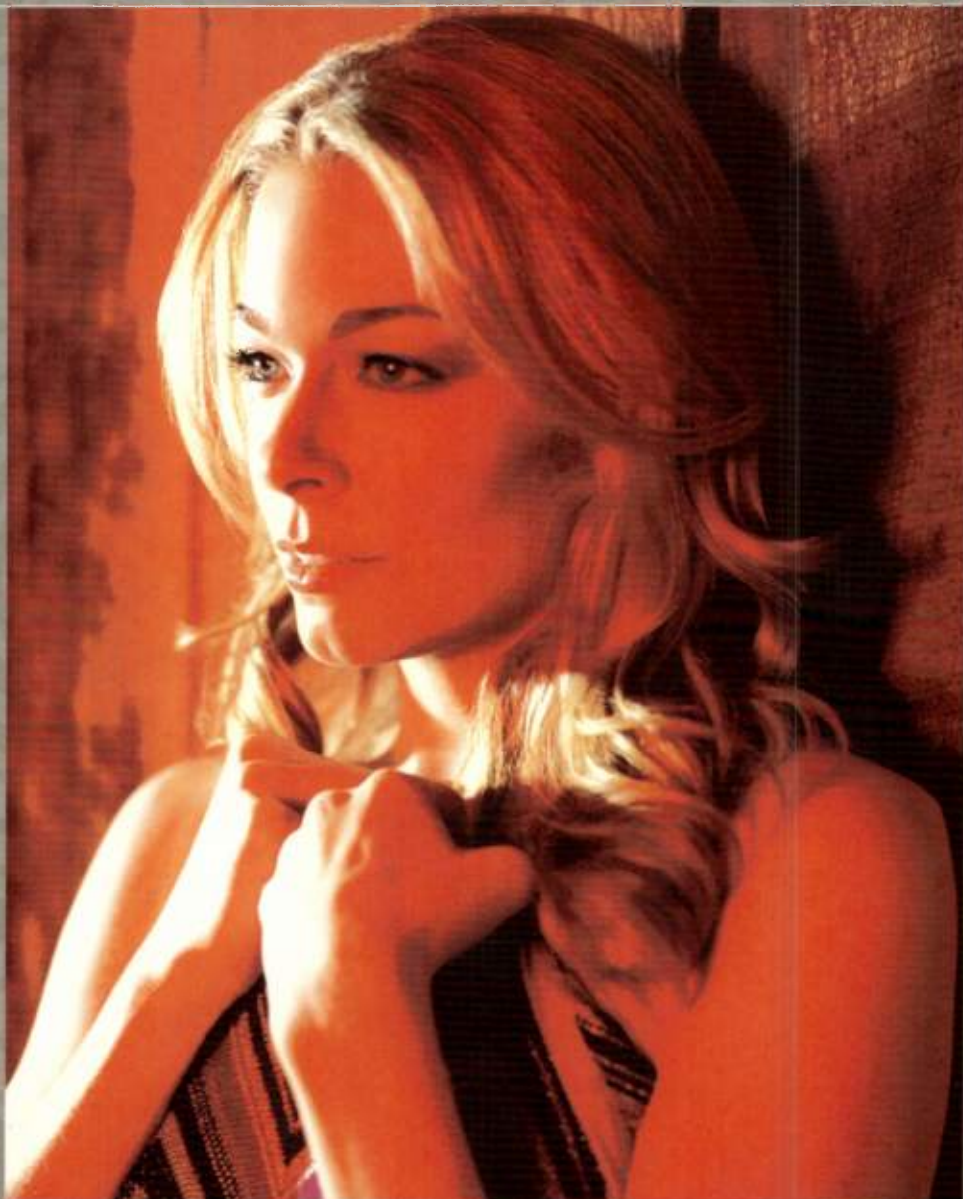
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LEANN RIMES

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP FEMALE VOCALIST, VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

Family is the perfect album title for an artist who has grown up in the country music community, and LeAnn Rimes' latest release encapsulates the 12-year journey she embarked on when she began her music career at the age of 13. Although she is young, Rimes is a well-grounded figure in country music and undisputedly one of the best female vocalists in the business. On her long list of accomplishments are three ACM awards and two Grammys; Rimes has the distinction of being the youngest artist ever to win a Grammy award and the first country act to win the Grammy for Best New Artist. Her current album *Family*, which is the first on which Rimes wrote or co-wrote every song, is a mature and intimate compilation that showcases not only the artist's signature skyrocketing vocals but her creative depth as well. Her versatility is also apparent in her collaboration with the veteran rock band Bon Jovi on their nominated track "Till We Ain't Strangers Anymore." Rimes has clearly established herself as both a pioneer and a settler in the music business and continues to grow in talent and tenacity as one of the industry's reigning female artists.



SUGARLAND

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP VOCAL DUO, SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR,
SONG OF THE YEAR, VIDEO OF THE YEAR



It's clear that Kristian Bush and Jennifer Nettles of hot vocal duo Sugarland live up to the advice of their sophomore album title: *Enjoy the Ride*. While their current total of 10 ACM nominations (including one win for Top New Vocal Duo or Group in 2005), several industry awards, multi-platinum album sales and two No. 1 hits are more than enough proof that Sugarland is in the fast lane, their infectious energy and artistic versatility show more than anything that this duo is in for the long ride. Whether they're jumping on conveyor belts and rockin' "Everyday America" or rendering a full house silent with the piercing acoustics of "Stay," Bush and Nettles exude a perfect harmony of charisma and honesty that complements their soulful sound. Sugarland's fearless fusion of rock and twang grows increasingly popular with country and non-country folk alike, and their third album, scheduled for release this fall, will undoubtedly prove even sweeter than the last.

TAYLOR SWIFT

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP FEMALE VOCALIST, TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST,
ALBUM OF THE YEAR

It's been quite a year for the youngest nominee, 18-year old Taylor Swift. Her self-titled debut album reached triple-platinum status and has yielded four Top 10 singles to date, including the catchy No. 1 smash "Our Song." Swift, who wrote or co-wrote every track on the album, made her entrance onto the country music scene with "Tim McGraw," a sweetly nostalgic song she penned and titled after her favorite country superstar. "Teardrops on My Guitar" and her smokin' current single "Picture to Burn" have also heated up the charts, making appearances on both the country and pop music lists. Swift recently received two CMT Music Awards for her No. 1 music video of "Our Song," adding to her growing collection of honors that also includes a CMT Music Award for her "Tim McGraw" video and several nominations (among them her first Grammy nod for Best New Artist). Swift's refreshing energy and clear artistic talent have only just begun to shine. The young singer-songwriter is currently at work on her second album, which will be released in the fall.





Taylor Swift

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CARRIE UNDERWOOD

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

Since the release of her multi-platinum debut album *Some Hearts* just two years ago, Carrie Underwood has proven to be one of country music's hottest, most record-breaking superstars. *Some Hearts*, which is the best-selling solo female country debut in history, charted four hit singles. "Jesus, Take the Wheel," "Before He Cheats" and "Wasted" all reached No. 1 status. Underwood's most successful single "Before He Cheats" also earned her one of the three Grammy awards she has won. Underwood's second double-platinum album *Carnival Ride* debuted at No. 1 and has scored another pair of No. 1 singles, "So Small" and "All-American Girl," with her edgy current single "Last Name" still climbing the charts. This year, the talented singer shared the stage with Keith Urban on their *Love, Pain and the Whole Crazy Carnival Ride* tour, in addition to headlining her first solo tour. With reams of awards and accomplishments already under her belt - including her recent induction into the esteemed Grand Ole Opry - Underwood returns to the ACM Awards this year to defend her title as the reigning Top Female Vocalist in country music.



THE WRECKERS

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS NOMINEE

NOMINATED FOR TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP



Michelle Branch and Jessica Harp - together known as country music duo The Wreckers - have garnered their third ACM nomination this year, an addition to a list of acknowledgements that also includes both a CMA nomination and a Grammy nomination for Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal. Their debut album *Stand Still, Look Pretty*, which achieved gold certification, also rocked the country charts by landing in the Top Five and yielding three hit singles. "Leave the Pieces" was the duo's first No. 1 song, followed by the Top 10 tune "My, Oh My" and bittersweet single "Tennessee." *Stand Still, Look Pretty* gained international recognition as well, topping the United Kingdom Country Chart. Although Branch and Harp have taken a break as The Wreckers in order to work on solo albums respectively, they plan to reunite in the future and bring their successful synergy again to the country music industry.

ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC/THE HOME DEPOT HUMANITARIAN AWARD

2008 RECIPIENTS RASCAL FLATTS

The Academy of Country Music/The Home Depot Humanitarian Award recognizes country artists who serve others with a generous spirit and help build the dreams of those in need. This year's recipient is multi-platinum band Rascal Flatts, who was selected for its good works by a blue-ribbon committee of executives from the country music industry and well as local and national philanthropic leaders.

For the third year in a row, Rascal Flatts earmarked money from its Nashville tour stop for the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, a non-profit teaching and research hospital that provides a place to hope and a place to heal for children and their families. This year's concert raised \$829,581, bringing the band's total contribution to \$2.2 million. Each year the guys also have spent time with the hospital's patients and their families, like 3-month-old Sam Strain whom the band met during a visit in August 2007. "It was a powerful moment, very humbling," says guitarist Joe Don Rooney of holding little Sam. "Here's this precious little baby with a hospital bracelet on. All of us have been sick before, but none of us have been sick like these kids have been sick. Visiting this hospital is just life changing."

Vanderbilt Children's Hospital is ranked as one of the 10 best children's hospitals and is in the top 10 for pediatric cancer care in the nation, offering comprehensive services to more than 100,000 patients each year. The hospital's main challenge is having enough room to accommodate the number of children they need to treat, but Vanderbilt spokeswoman Carole Bartoo says Rascal Flatts' contributions will help make expansion a reality. "The amazing thing to me is that the band has gotten so much bigger since they first started working with us, but like clockwork they still show up every year to an intimate gathering of the patients and families," Bartoo said. "These guys get it, and they've been much more than financial support to us."

In addition to their work at Vanderbilt, Rascal Flatts is very involved with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, hosting a child at each of their concerts. Since 2004, the band has also served on the American Red Cross Celebrity Cabinet, promoting blood drives and recording public service announcements for the relief organization. Rascal Flatts has featured the work of the Red Cross prominently in its latest video "Every Day."

"We have been blessed with some incredible successes in our career these past couple of years," said Rooney, "But the most rewarding thing for us is the opportunity to give back to our community."

As the recipient of the Humanitarian Award, Rascal Flatts will receive a beautiful crystal trophy designed by Tiffany & Co. during the live CBS telecast. They will also be honored with a playground donated by The Home Depot and the company's national nonprofit partner KaBOOM!, which envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America. The playground will be built by The Home Depot volunteers and community members in the city of Rascal Flatts' choice.

"The Humanitarian Award embodies the kind of spirit that the Academy strives to foster within the industry," said Bob Romeo, Executive Director of the Academy of Country Music, "and artists like Rascal Flatts show the spirit that makes us so proud to be part of the country music community."

Past recipients of the Humanitarian Award include **Vince Gill, Lonestar, Martina McBride, Neal McCoy, Reba McEntire and Brooks & Dunn.**



Rascal Flatts presents their latest donation to Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. Pictured L-R: bottom row- Lyric Street Records executives Greg McCann, Kevin Herring and Randy Goodman top row- Doug Howard (Lyric Street Records), Joe Don Rooney, Kevin Churchwell (Vanderbilt), Gary LeVox, Jay DeMarcus, Dr. Harry Jacobson (Vanderbilt), Trey Turner (Manager) and Doug Nichols (manager) Photo by Chris Hollo



Jay DeMarcus, Joe Don Rooney and Gary LeVox meet Vanderbilt patient Sam Strain. Photo credit: Dana Johnson/Vanderbilt

2007 RECIPIENTS BROOKS & DUNN



After receiving the Academy of Country Music/The Home Depot Humanitarian Award in May 2007, award-winning country duo Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn teamed up with volunteers from The Home Depot, the Academy of Country Music and KaBOOM! on Oct. 25, 2007, to build two new playgrounds on the same day. One was erected in Brooks' hometown of Shreveport, La., and the other was built in Dunn's adopted hometown of Nashville.

Brooks and Dunn were hard working men, jumping in as hands-on volunteers for both builds, first flying to Shreveport for an early morning build at the Shreveport-Bossier Community Renewal Friendship House, and later that day, returning to Nashville for a build at The Edgehill Center. Their participation brought much awareness through media attention and gave the community members a great space to enjoy.



Clockwise from top left: Kix and Ronnie shovel for the playground; Officials from The Home Depot join Kix and Ronnie in the board cutting ceremony; Ronnie works with the socket wrench; Volunteers join community members at the new playground; Kix mixes concrete



You can do it. We can help.™

SPECIAL AWARDS

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

*T*he Academy of Country Music Special Awards are voted on by the ACM Board of Directors and are not necessarily awarded every year, but instead are given out in years when there are clear and deserving candidates.

Tonight, Garth Brooks is the first artist to receive the Academy's Crystal Milestone Award. This new accolade was established in 2007 to commemorate a specific, remarkable achievement by an artist or industry leader.

This year the board has chosen Brenda Lee, the Oak Ridge Boys, Conway Twitty and Porter Wagoner as winners of the Cliffie Stone Pioneer Award, which is presented to an outstanding pioneer of country music. Legendary broadcaster

Dick Clark will receive the Jim Reeves International Award, presented to an individual (not necessarily a performing artist) for outstanding contributions to the acceptance of country music throughout the world.

Bill Anderson and the late Fred Rose will receive the first ever Poet's Award, which goes to a songwriter or songwriters for outstanding musical and/or lyrical contributions throughout their careers in the field of country music. Special consideration is given to a song or song's impact on the culture of country music.

The Pioneer and Poet's Award winners, along with winners for Musician/Band Leader/Instrumentalist, will be honored at a special event in Nashville later this year.



Dick Clark with Reba McEntire backstage at the Academy of Country Music Awards.

CRYSTAL MILESTONE AWARD

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Garth Brooks may be in semi-retirement, but he's proving he's still very much in the game. The Recording Industry Association of America has declared Brooks—with 123 million in record sales—the best-selling solo artist of all time, surpassing even Elvis Presley.

For this amazing accomplishment, Brooks is the first artist to receive the Academy of Country Music's Crystal Milestone Award, which is given to an artist or industry leader to commemorate a specific, remarkable achievement.

The RIAA ceremony—held in Los Angeles Nov. 5, 2007, near Brooks' star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame outside the legendary Capitol Records building—was pure Garth. Moments after receiving two new RIAA Diamond Awards for albums *Sevens* and *Garth Brooks*, he was down in the crowd showing the fans his new trophies.

"This award reflects the magnitude of the country audience and what they can accomplish when they act together," Brooks said. "Mostly I am proud for country music and take honor in playing a part in bringing this milestone to rest under the flag of country music."

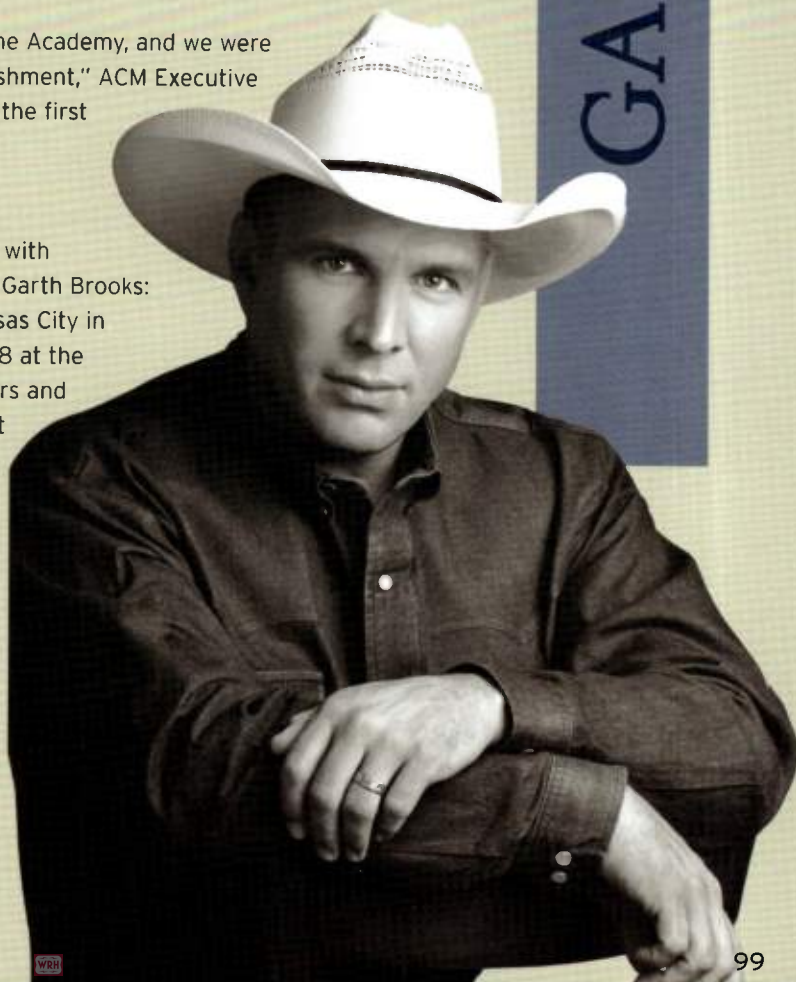
His latest record-setting feat is, of course, not the first time Brooks has shattered records and set a new mark of excellence. He is a six-time winner of the ACM Entertainer of the Year award, making him the most honored artist in that award category in the Academy's 43-year history.

"Garth has had a long-standing and great history with the Academy, and we were thrilled to recognize his latest record-breaking accomplishment," ACM Executive Director Bob Romeo said. "It's only fitting that Garth be the first artist to receive the Crystal Milestone Award."

And there could be more milestones to come. After his self-imposed hiatus, Brooks roared back onto the charts with the No. 1 "More Than a Memory," from his latest release *Garth Brooks: The Ultimate Hits*. He sold-out a nine-night stand in Kansas City in 2007, and he played five sold-out shows in January 2008 at the Los Angeles Staples Center to raise money for firefighters and victims of the recent California wildfires. Tickets sold out in 59 minutes, making Brooks the first performer to sell out that many LA shows in one day. To accommodate fans, Brooks played five concerts in two days—two on Friday, Jan. 25 and three on Saturday, Jan. 26—the first triple header in a U.S. arena. One of the shows was broadcast live as a CBS TV special.

He may now be back in Oklahoma with his kids and wife, Trisha Yearwood, but there's no way to predict where Brooks will take his career—and country music—next.

GARTH BROOKS



CLIFFIE STONE PIONEER AWARD

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Thanks to an impressive string of pop hits in the 1950s and 1960s, Brenda Lee remains one of the best-selling female artists in history, and she introduced the music of Nashville to eager audiences all around the world.

Lee grew up in the Atlanta area as Brenda Mae Tarpley, but a disc jockey eventually dubbed her Brenda Lee to make her name easier to remember. Her father died when she was 9, so her mother remarried and the family relocated several times. Ultimately they moved to Springfield, Mo., at the urging of Red Foley, so she could join the cast of the Ozark Jubilee. Her success there led to extensive TV appearances with Steve Allen, Perry Como and Ed Sullivan. And she wasn't yet a teenager.

In 1956, she landed a record deal with Decca Records and worked with Paul Cohen and Owen Bradley on her first sessions. She appeared on the country chart with "One Step at a Time" in 1957. That same year she debuted on the Grand Ole Opry and met one of her favorite singers, Elvis Presley. In addition, her hit "Dynamite" led to a clever nickname - Little Miss Dynamite -- that she has carried throughout her long career.

With surprisingly strong sales in France, she launched a European tour and has since become an ambassador for Nashville by performing in Europe, as well as Asia, Australia, Japan and South America. When she toured in England and Germany, The Beatles opened concerts for her. In the 1960s, she re-recorded her hits in numerous languages to satisfy her international fan base.

Meanwhile, Lee emerged as a chart force on the U.S. pop scene in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as Bradley produced some of the most memorable, melodic songs of that era - like the feisty "Sweet Nothin's" and the poignant "I'm Sorry," as well as "Emotions," "Fool #1," "Break It to Me Gently" and "You Can Depend on Me." Always seeking material from a variety of sources, Lee even scored a No. 1 pop hit with an opera aria, rewritten as "I Want to Be Wanted." During this time in her career, she also covered songs by the likes of Bill Anderson and Jerry Crutchfield, Jackie DeShannon, Harlan Howard, Jerry Reed, Ronnie Self and Mel Tillis. This year also marks the 50th anniversary of one of her most enduring classics, "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

In 1963, Lee married her childhood sweetheart, Ronnie Shacklett, a long-lasting union that introduced two daughters, Jolie and Julie. Health issues in the late 1960s and early 1970s led to a break in touring, although she found acceptance at country radio, landing Top 10 hits with Kris Kristofferson's "Nobody Wins," Shel Silverstein's "Wrong Ideas" and "Big Four Poster Bed," and a collaboration with the Oak Ridge Boys, "Broken Trust."

In 1997, Lee joined the Country Music Hall of Fame, followed by her induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002 - the only woman to be honored by both institutions. In 2007, admirers like Kix Brooks, Charlie Daniels, Ronnie Dunn, Vince Gill, Emmylou Harris, George Jones, Alison Krauss, Martina McBride, Dolly Parton and Pam Tillis lent their voices to her latest album, *Gospel Duets With Treasured Friends*.

Brenda Lee



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame®

The Oak Ridge Boys

Although their roots were in gospel, the Oak Ridge Boys ultimately scored enormous success in country music with their signature four-part harmonies and crowd-pleasing concerts.

The quartet has had various incarnations since the 1940s, but the most famous lineup of the Oak Ridge Boys took shape in 1973. William Lee Golden, known for his long, white beard, joined the band in 1965, followed by Duane Allen in 1966. Richard Sterban arrived in 1972, one year ahead of Joe Bonsall. Already well-established in gospel circles, they attempted to cross over into country music with inspirational music, but it didn't work. At their lowest point they received encouragement from Johnny Cash in a Las Vegas hotel room to stay in the game. To prove his support, Cash and The Carter Family recorded "Praise the Lord and Pass the Soup" with the group, marking the Oaks' first charting country single, in 1973.

Nevertheless, the quartet struggled for a few more years, until Paul Simon invited them to harmonize on his 1977 hit, "Slip Sliding Away," which led to a record deal of their own. In 1977, "Y'all Come Back Saloon" finally introduced their distinctive style to a welcoming mainstream country audience. A year later, the Academy of Country Music awarded them with two trophies - Vocal Group of the Year and Album of the Year.

Their career momentum continued for another decade, with an astonishing 17 No. 1 hits, including "I'll Be True to You," "Leaving Louisiana in the Broad Daylight" (an early cut for Rodney Crowell) and "Trying to Love Two Women."

Their most famous song appeared in 1981, as country fans enthusiastically sang along with the irresistible "oom papa mow mow" hook of "Elvira." Written by Dallas Frazier, "Elvira" won the Academy of Country Music's Single Record of the Year, as well as a Grammy for country vocal group. After reaching No. 1 with "Fancy Free," the Oaks notched another massive country hit, "Bobbie Sue," with Sterban's inimitable riff: "Bah bah bah bah."

In 1983, their version of Eddy Raven's "Thank God for Kids," sung by Golden, became a concert staple. And the hits kept coming - "American Made," "I Guess It Never Hurts to Hurt Sometimes," "Everyday," "Make My Life With You," "Little Things" and "Touch a Hand, Make a Friend." In 1986, they released "When You Get to the Heart," a collaboration with Barbara Mandrell. Their next single, "You Made a Rock Out of a Rolling Stone," was co-written by Kix Brooks, five years before Brooks & Dunn first entered the chart.

In 1987, Golden departed the band, shortly after the recording of "It Takes a Little Rain (To Make Love Grow)." Steve Sanders, the Oaks' rhythm guitarist on tour, stepped into Golden's role, singing lead vocals on the No. 1 hit, "Gonna Take a Lot of River." They earned their final No. 1 hit ("No Matter How High") in 1990, giving them chart-topping songs in three consecutive decades. Golden returned to the group in 1996. Today, the Oaks' touring schedule remains active, blending their first love of gospel music, along with dozens of country hits from throughout their incredible career.



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame

The sensual growl in Conway Twitty's voice immediately endeared him to country fans throughout the 1970s and 1980s, even though he earned his first success as a pop singer.

Born in Mississippi and raised in Arkansas, Twitty had the potential to play pro baseball, but was instead drafted into the Korean War. When he was discharged, he traveled to Memphis to record in Sun Studios, although the sides were unreleased. To focus on his stage presence and songwriting, he accepted a club residency in Hamilton, Ontario, where he wrote "It's Only Make Believe." The song was a No. 1 smash in 1958, but when Twitty wanted to cross over to country, his label did not renew his contract.

However, Ray Price liked Twitty's "Walk Me to the Door" enough to record it, and it climbed into the Top 10 in 1962. Three years later, Owen Bradley signed Twitty to Decca Records, and by 1968, country radio had finally accepted him - and gave him his first No. 1 hit, "Next in Line."

In 1970, Conway Twitty set the astonishing pace for the decade with "Hello Darlin'" - one of the most recognizable singles in country music history. From then on, he pretty much opened every concert with those famous words (which he wrote), and his performance earned a Grammy Award. A year later, he teamed with labelmate Loretta Lynn on the No. 1 hit, "After the Fire is Gone," paving the way for "Lead Me On," "Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man" and "As Soon as I Hang Up the Phone," among many others. The Academy of Country Music awarded their partnership with four trophies for Top Vocal Group in 1971, 1974, 1975 and 1976.

Meanwhile, Twitty's solo career forged ahead. He composed words for Floyd Cramer's instrumental song, "Last Date," and the renamed version - "(Lost Her Love) On Our Last Date" - hit No. 1 in 1972. His version of Don Gibson's "I Can't Stop Loving You" also topped the charts. However, his most enduring songs from that era are the ones he wrote, like "You've Never Been This Far Before," "Linda on My Mind" and "Touch the Hand." In 1975, he won two more Academy of Country Music awards, for Album of the Year and Top Male Vocalist.

In 1979, Twitty grabbed another career song with "Don't Take It Away," and the new decade brought "I'd Just Love to Lay You Down," "Tight Fittin' Jeans" and "Red Neckin' Love Makin' Night." He also adapted his music to fit the sounds of the time, reaching No. 1 with covers of the Pointer Sisters' "Slow Hand" and Bette Midler's "The Rose." By the mid-1980s, Twitty had scored a record-breaking 40 No. 1 hits, either as a solo artist or with his close friend, Loretta Lynn.

Twitty died in 1993, while still maintaining his active touring schedule. Fifteen years later, a new touring musical inspired by his life is currently in the pre-production stages. In addition, his live shows have clearly inspired contemporary stars like Kenny Chesney, who often says that Twitty sang the words that women wanted to hear, and that men wished they could say.

Conway Twitty



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame®

Porter Wagoner



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame®

an acclaimed album produced by Marty Stuart. With his family by his side, Wagoner died in October 2007 after a valiant fight with lung cancer.

Porter Wagoner's smiling face and sparkling rhinestone jackets made country fans feel at home during his 50 years on the Grand Ole Opry. When people brought televisions into their homes in the 1960s, he greeted them with his own show, bringing along a very special guest that later wrote one of her biggest hits about him.

Wagoner, a native of West Plains, Mo., began working for a radio station in nearby Springfield, Mo., in 1951. He signed with RCA Records in 1952, and a year later, Carl Smith reached the Top 10 with one of Wagoner's songs, "Trademark." In 1955, he reached No. 1 on the country chart himself with "A Satisfied Mind." Despite numerous appearances on the Ozark Jubilee out of Springfield, Wagoner and his family moved to Nashville in 1956 and he joined the Grand Ole Opry a year later.

In 1960, he launched a syndicated television show that was heavy on homespun humor, and the broad exposure raised his profile immensely. He hit his stride in 1962 with the No. 1 hit, "Misery Loves Company," written by Jerry Reed. In addition, "Green, Green Grass of Home," "The Cold Hard Facts of Life" and "The Carroll County Accident" are some of the most accomplished story songs of that era. He also recorded songs by Johnny Bond ("Your Old Love Letters"), Freddie Hart ("Skid Row Joe"), Bill Anderson ("I've Enjoyed as Much of This as I Can Stand") and Waylon Jennings ("Julie"). Wagoner closed the decade with three Grammy wins for religious recordings with the Blackwood Brothers.

Of course, his most famous singing partner will always be Dolly Parton, who joined the cast of his show in 1967. They appeared on the country charts together starting with "Last Thing on My Mind." Their version of George Jones' "Just a Girl I Used to Know" - re-titled "Just Someone I Used to Know" - has since been recorded by Emmylou Harris and John Anderson, Patty Loveless and Jon Randall, and Lee Ann Womack. Wagoner and Parton were nominated four times for the Academy of Country Music's top vocal duo.

In 1974, they reached No. 1 with "Please Don't Stop Loving Me," a song they co-wrote. That same year, Parton's own song, "Jolene," reached No. 1 on the country chart, indicating a promising solo career. Although they parted ways after a bitter split, she was nonetheless inspired to write one of her most famous songs, "I Will Always Love You," about their time together. They later reconciled, and Parton offers a special memorial to Wagoner at her Dollywood theme park.

Wagoner's syndicated TV show concluded in 1981 and he appeared a year later in the Clint Eastwood film, *Honkytonk Man*. Blessed with a gregarious personality, Wagoner personally greeted guests to Opryland USA theme park in the 1990s. In 2007, he was honored for his 50th Opry anniversary and enjoyed a renewed interest in his music after releasing *Wagonmaster*,

BILL ANDERSON

Over the course of 50 years, Bill Anderson has written songs for some of the biggest names in country music, ranging from Ray Price to George Strait - and racking up 37 Top 10 country hits as a performer in his own right.

Anderson studied journalism at the University of Georgia in Commerce, Ga., where the nighttime scenery inspired him to write "City Lights." He initially recorded the song himself, but it was Price's 1958 version that has become a country classic. Anderson notched his first solo Top 10 hit in 1960 with "Tips of My Fingers," later a Top 10 hit for Roy Clark, Eddy Arnold and Steve Wariner. Anderson joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1961 and remains one of its most identifiable members.

In 1962, Anderson perched at No. 1 for seven weeks with his own song, "Mama Sang a Song." A year later, he repeated that remarkable achievement with "Still." His writing success remained strong in 1964, as Connie Smith famously introduced herself with "Once a Day." That same year, "Saginaw, Michigan" (a Bill Anderson-Don Wayne co-write) reinvigorated Lefty Frizzell's career.

Contemporary stars have also turned to "Whisperin' Bill" for inspiration. Vince Gill and Anderson co-wrote Gill's 1995 Top 10 hit, "Which Bridge to Cross, Which Bridge to Burn." In 2002, Kenny Chesney released "A Lot of Things Different," which Anderson co-wrote with Dean Dillon. Two years later, Brad Paisley and Alison Krauss turned heads with "Whiskey Lullaby," which Anderson wrote with Jon Randall. Finally, in 2007, Anderson shared his first award from the Academy of Country Music with Buddy Cannon and Jamey Johnson for co-writing Strait's "Give It Away," which was named Song of the Year. Six decades after he first penned a song, Bill Anderson's words are still making a lasting impact on country music.



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame®

FRED ROSE



Photo credit: Country Music Hall of Fame®

Following the success of writing songs for Hollywood's singing cowboys, Fred Rose co-founded Nashville's first music publishing house, and nurtured the career of a young Hank Williams. Both men were charter inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1961.

As a young man, Rose played for tips in the clubs of St. Louis and Chicago, then moved to Nashville to work for WSM. As a songwriter, he scored a Western-inspired pop hit, "We'll Rest at the End of the Trail," in 1936. He capitalized on his success by writing songs for Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, but landed his most recognizable hit more than 20 years after his death, when Willie Nelson broke through at country radio with "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain" in 1975.

In 1942, Rose partnered with Roy Acuff to found Acuff-Rose Music, which published esteemed songwriters such as Boudleaux and Felice Bryant. He ultimately brought Williams to the attention of MGM Records. Rose is listed as a co-writer on many of Williams' most enduring hits, including "Mansion on the Hill," "Settin' the Woods on Fire," "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive" and "Kaw-Liga." He also wrote the Western swing classic, "Roly Poly," later recorded by The Dixie Chicks with Asleep at the Wheel for a Bob Wills tribute album.

Rose and Acuff established the Hickory label in 1953, but Rose died the following year. He joined the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970 and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1985. Rose's son, Wesley Rose, continued to build Acuff-Rose as one of the most successful publishing companies in Nashville history.

JIM REEVES INTERNATIONAL AWARD

2008 ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

DICK CLARK

Mention the show *American Bandstand* to just about anyone across the globe and two words quickly come to mind: Dick Clark. His youthful persona and everyman demeanor was an immediate hit with music fans, giving him a valuable platform to promote music and performers worldwide.

Dubbed "American's Oldest Teenager," Clark is well known for his ties to rock music, but one of his earliest radio gigs was at country station 1490 WOLF in Syracuse, New York. Before he picked up his *American Bandstand* microphone in 1956, his first television hosting job was on country music show *Cactus Dick and the Santa Fe Riders*. While *Bandstand* would take him to international popularity in the pop music world, Clark's interest in country music has continued throughout his 50-year career in show business.

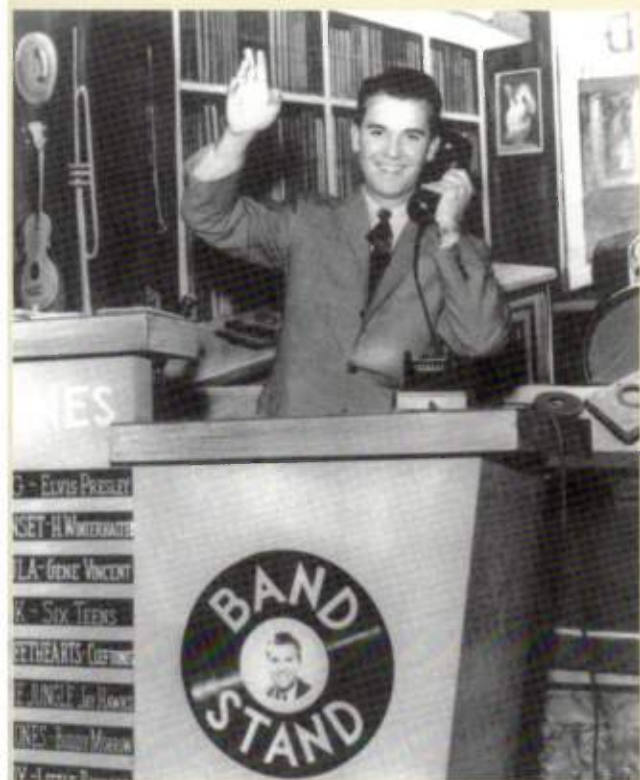
In 1979, Clark joined forces with the Academy of Country Music to bring our organization's annual awards show to NBC and then, later, to CBS. With his guidance and expertise, the *Academy of Country Music Awards* broadcast has continued to grow and change with every decade. Clark was more than just a producer, sometimes stepping in front of the camera. Clark hosted the show four times, starting with the 4th Annual ACM Awards in 1969 and following with stints in 1971, 1972 and 1973. In the '80s and '90s, he was a fixture

backstage doing live interviews with the newly minted winners. Just as *American Bandstand* was a rite of passage for up-and-coming pop singers, talking to Dick Clark backstage at the *ACM Awards* on live network television was a mark of success for country acts.

In addition to his work with the Academy, Clark also was very welcoming to country acts on his other productions. *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve* and the *American Music Awards* have featured country acts prominently since their inceptions in 1972 and 1973 respectively. *American Bandstand* also offered TV exposure to country acts, including Alabama, Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, Tanya Tucker and Conway Twitty. Clark remained very active in the *ACM Awards* until he suffered a stroke in 2004. His son, R.A. Clark, carries on the family tradition as executive producer of the show.

After a lifetime of handing out trophies to others for their talent and tenacity, it's only fitting that this year Dick Clark is on the receiving end of the Academy's Jim Reeves International Award.

Top: Clark on *American Bandstand*
Middle: Clark with Alabama
Bottom: Clark with Faith Hill and Tim McGraw
Photos courtesy Dick Clark Productions



NEW ARTISTS' PARTY FOR A CAUSE

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

The name says it all! The 2008 New Artists' Party for a Cause was definitely a raucous party, and it raised money for a great cause.

Held Saturday, May 17th in the MGM Grand's Marquee Ballroom, the show featured the hottest up-and-coming talent in country music. Taking the stage were the Academy's Top New Male Vocalist nominees Luke Bryan, Jack Ingram and Jake Owen; Top New Female Vocalist nominees Sarah Buxton, Kellie Pickler and Taylor Swift; and Top New Duo/Group Nominees Carolina Rain and Lady Antebellum.

The evening was hosted by the voice of the ACM Awards, Shawn Parr. In addition to great music, the night included a charity auction of once-in-a-lifetime items including a Harley Davidson V-Rod motorcycle signed by country artists as well as private backstage meet & greets with Kenny Chesney, Rascal Flatts, George Strait, Taylor Swift and Rascal Flatts. Special thanks to our awesome auctioneer, Col. David Woods. Money raised from ticket sales and the celebrity auction benefits the Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund.

To see clips from this year's show, visit our internet partner MSN.com.





Clockwise from Top Left: Kellie Pickler; Lady Antebellum; Luke Bryan; Carolina Rain; Jack Ingram; Taylor Swift; Jake Owen; Sarah Buxton

CHARITY MOTORCYCLE RIDE

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Eddie Montgomery and Troy Gentry strapped on their helmets and climbed on their Harleys to host the Academy of Country Music Charity Motorcycle Ride for the fifth year in a row. More than a thousand bike enthusiasts joined the duo bright and early on Saturday, May 17th to raise money for the ACM Charitable Fund.

"This event keeps getting bigger and bigger every year," said Montgomery. "It's one of the highlights of the week in Las Vegas, and we're raising more and more money for the ACM Charitable Fund as new people continue to join us on the ride. I'm proud to be a part of such a great cause."

Gentry added, "It's an honor to be involved with such an incredible mix of people and artists who are willing to donate their time and money to the Fund."

The ACM Charity Motorcycle Ride kicked off from Las Vegas Harley-Davidson, one of the largest Harley-Davidson dealerships in the nation. Riders cruised through the scenic Nevada desert and along snow-capped mountains, stopping for lunch at the Mt. Charleston Lodge. The ride ended at historic Fremont Street in downtown Las Vegas, where the celebrity bikers rolled in to do a four-hour jam.

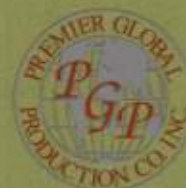
The ride is sponsored by Harley-Davidson of Cool Springs, Las Vegas Harley-Davidson, Robert and Kathy Atelian, Premier Global Productions Co, Inc. and Stoney's Rockin' Country.

Artists who participated include Keith Anderson, Sarah Buxton, Carolina Rain, Stephen Cochran, Ira Dean, Randy Houser, Emma Mae Jacob, Jamey Johnson, Lady Antebellum, Little Big Town, Cody McCarver, Jeremy McComb, Craig Morgan, Heidi Newfield, James Otto, The Road Hammers, The Roys, Two Foot Fred, Whiskey Falls, Bluefield, Richie McDonald, Tommy Lee James, Rhonda Townes and American Gladiators' Wolf (Hollywood Yates).

The Academy would like to send a very special thank you to Eddie Montgomery and Troy Gentry; John Dennis and Alicia Lanier of Parallel Entertainment; Ricky Kelley and Lisa Cook of Harley-Davidson of Cool Springs; Dawn Schmidt and Hog Captains and volunteers of Las Vegas Harley-Davidson; all our participating artists; All-Star Jam Band and bandleader Mike Brookshire; Musical Director Lisa Webb; Susan Jackson and officers from the Nevada Highway Patrol; Kevin Pachtinger, Barbara O'Court and Thomas Schneekloth of Mt. Charleston Lodge; Bart Butler, Al Dukes, Scott Legieza, Anna Maria Williams, Bob Mitchell, Darlene Mitchell, John Sester and the dedicated team of ACM volunteers.

To see photos from this year's event and to find out more about the ACM Charitable Fund, visit acmcountry.com.





Clockwise from Top Left: Riders start the journey; Riders take a break; Ride hosts Montgomery Gentry; Back Row: Cody McCarver, Randy Hoser, Jamey Johnson, The Road Hammers, Jeremy McComb and Stephen Cochran Second Row: Christian Kane, James Otto, Halfway to Hazard, Lady Antebellum, Emma Mae Jacob Front Row: Ira Dean, Troy Gentry, Heidi Newfield, Sarah Buxton, Eddie Montgomery, Sugarland, Damon Johnson of Whiskey Falls, Craig Morgan and Keith Anderson

CELEBRITY GOLF CLASSIC

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

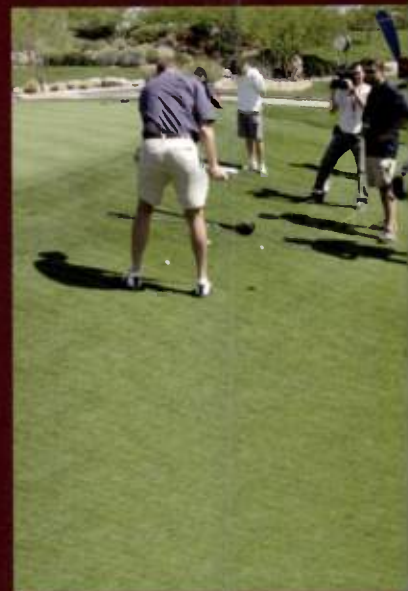
Multi-platinum trio Rascal Flatts took a break from making hit records to hit the links as hosts of the 5th Annual Academy of Country Music Celebrity Golf Classic. Held on Saturday, May 17th, the event catered exclusively to a sold-out group of 100 golfers at TPC Las Vegas, a course considered the home of professional golf in Vegas. The proceeds raised benefit the Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund.

"The Academy feels privileged to have Rascal Flatts host the Academy of Country Music Celebrity Golf Classic for the first time," said David Young, Senior Director of Operations for the ACM. "They are such a dedicated group of artists, who truly understand the value of our charitable fund. It is always a compliment to our cause to work with those who are invested, generous and enthusiastic."

The 2008 tournament is sponsored by Complete Logistics and cosponsored by Sound Image. Participating sponsors include PING, Aldila, Fitzgerald Hartley Co., CAA, McGhee Entertainment, William Morris Agency, Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, MGM Grand, Dr. Pepper and SunTrust Bank.

The Academy would like to thank our generous sponsors, faithful volunteers and our loyal supporters who make this tournament possible. A special thanks also goes out to our dedicated committee that works so hard to pull the tournament together: Steve Hauser, tournament chairman; David Young, tournament coordinator; Denis Alpert, David Corlew, Chris Farren, Mark Hartley, Gayle Holcomb, Darin Murphy, Jo Ann Rossi, Jonathan Stone and Tim Wipperman.

To find out more about the ACM Charitable Fund, visit acmcf.org.





Clockwise from Top Left: Golfers warm up before they hit the course; hosts Gary LeVox, Joe Don Rooney and Jay DeMarcus of Rascal Flatts; Players get ready to hit the links in their golf carts; TPC Las Vegas clubhouse; Competitor demonstrates the perfect follow through; TPC Las Vegas golf course

FREMONT STREET CONCERTS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Since 2006 the Academy has taken country music off the strip downtown to Fremont Street, where Las Vegas visitors and die-hard country fans mix for a one-of-a-kind concert experience. Two free stages offer an array of talent to the thousands who gather there for a good time, and the energy is off the charts! This year's shows, held on Friday, May 16th and Saturday, May 17th, were headlined by legendary singer Randy Owen and award-winning duo Sugarland.

Owen, famous for fronting the beloved band Alabama, is now striking out on his own. He treated the crowd to songs from his debut solo album, *One on One*. His current single, "Braid My Hair," already has made waves at country radio. As part of Alabama, Owen has received 66 ACM nominations and taken home 19 trophies.

Sugarland -featuring members Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush-took the stage on Saturday following the 5th annual Charity Motorcycle Ride and Jam. The duo performed cuts from its multi-platinum album *Enjoy the Ride*, which includes the ACM-nominated song "Stay." Sugarland was named the ACM's Top New Duo/Group for 2005 and was nominated for four awards this year.

Also performing on the ACM's Fremont Street stages this year were hot newcomers James Otto, Whiskey Falls, Keith Anderson, Heidi Newfield, Lost Trailers and Billy Currington.

Past acts to play Fremont Street include Gretchen Wilson, Big & Rich, Phil Vassar, Halfway to Hazard and Emerson Drive.

The Fremont Street Experience is a five-block entertainment zone in downtown Vegas. It features the world's largest video screen at 1,500 feet long 90 feet above the pedestrian mall. VivaVision, with 12.5 million digital lights and a 550,000-watt sound system, dazzles visitors nightly with light and sound shows. Encompassing 10 hotel casinos, 60 restaurants and free entertainment, Fremont Street Experience attracts over 18 million annual visitors.

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) is the title sponsor of the two-day event. The LVCVA is charged with marketing Southern Nevada as a tourism and convention destination worldwide, and also with operating the Las Vegas Convention Center and Cashman Center. With approximately 136,000 hotel rooms in Las Vegas alone and 9.7 million square feet of meeting and exhibit space citywide, the LVCVA's mission centers on attracting ever-increasing numbers of leisure and business visitors to the area.

A special thank you goes out to Jeff Victor, Catherine Gipple and Les Powell of Fremont Street Experience, Las Vegas Events, Lance Sterling of The Canyon Club, Ken Johnson of the Four Queens Hotel, Gail Gellman, Hellen Rollens, David Haskell, Shawn Pennington, all our participating artists, R.J. Romeo, Johnny Setser and our dedicated ACM volunteer team.

To see photos from this year's show, visit acmcountry.com.



Clockwise from Top Left: Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush of Sugarland; Fremont Street crowd; Gretchen Wilsom in 2006; John Rich and Big Kenny of Big & Rich in 2006; Randy Owen



ALL-STAR JAM

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

One night, one stage...ALL Stars! The All-Star Jam has become an anticipated Academy tradition. Immediately following the annual awards show, this free-wheeling concert is the place where stars can let their hair down and the fans can have fun watching them do it!

This year's show will be bigger than ever, with appearances by more than 20 artists. The three and a half hour concert will include sets by ACM board member Tracy Lawrence as well as Miranda Lambert, Randy Owen, Kellie Pickler and ACM Board member and hell-raising Renaissance man John Rich. And that's the beauty of the All-Star Jam—you never know who'll show up! Past impromptu pairings have included longtime buddies Kenny Chesney and Lawrence as well as Buck Owens' protégés Brad Paisley and Dwight Yoakam, not to mention a long list of stellar talent that has graced the stage.

So after the lights go down on the ACM Awards stage, grab your All-Star Jam ticket, head over to the venue and stake a good spot. There's no telling who you'll see!



From top: Brad Paisley and Dwight Yoakam, 2006; John Rich of Big & Rich, 2007; Kenny Chesney and Tracy Lawrence, 2007; Taylor Swift, 2007

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ACADEMY HISTORY

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS



In 1964, performers Eddie Miller and Tommy Wiggins and club owners Mickey and Chris Christensen had the vision to establish the Country and Western Academy. In the beginning, the organization focused on the western 13 states, with support from artists who were based on the West Coast. Buck Owens, Merle Haggard, Glen Campbell, Roger Miller, Tex Williams, Jimmy Wakely, Wynn Stewart and Johnny Bond were all very active in the organization's early years.

The first awards show was held in 1966, honoring 1965 accomplishments. Kay Adams received the award for Most Promising Female Vocalist and Merle Haggard was voted the Most Promising Male Vocalist. Bonnie Owens took the Top Female Vocalist award and Buck Owens received the Top Male Vocalist nod. Entertainer of the Year was introduced as a category for the first time in 1970. Merle Haggard received the honor that first year, and eventually went on to win the first Triple Crown Award in 2005 for winning in the Most Promising Male, Top Male and Entertainer of the Year categories. Only five other artists to date have shared in that accomplishment (Haggard, Barbara Mandrell, Mickey Gilley, Brooks & Dunn and Kenny Chesney).

In the early 1970s, the name was changed to the Country and Western Music Academy, and by 1974 was finally renamed the Academy of Country Music. The Academy dedicated itself to introducing country music and its artists not only to new fans, but also to the business community. The organization held seminars to demonstrate to business leaders how country could help sell their products and draw attention to their businesses.

ABC began airing the ACM Awards show in 1972, and when the Academy became associated with Dick Clark Productions, Inc., in 1979 the show moved to NBC. In 1998, the show moved to CBS where it remains today. The Academy has always acknowledged its West Coast heritage by including some of Hollywood's most recognizable celebrities as guests on the show. They have performed and presented with the biggest stars of country music, bridging the gap between the screen and the radio.

The Academy's involvement in community and charity events has been far reaching since 1983 with the creation of the Celebrity Golf Classic. The tournament was renamed the Bill Boyd Celebrity Golf Classic after the passing of Academy Executive Director Bill Boyd in 1995. Now called the ACM Celebrity Golf Classic, the tournament has raised well over \$1 million for numerous charities and has become one of the finest charitable tournaments in the country. The Academy now embarks on several events each year which bring artists, music and charitable people together to have a great time while

Top: 1969 - Waylon Jennings
and Marty Robbins

Above: 1970 - Charley Pride and
Merle Haggard

ACADEMY HISTORY

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

giving back to the community, such as the ACM Charity Motorcycle Ride and the New Artists' Party for a Cause™.

In 1987 the Academy began a partnership with Country Radio Broadcasters by sponsoring the annual Super Faces show, which was renamed Music City Jam in 2005. The show, which is the opening night event for the Country Radio Seminar in Nashville, has showcased many of the biggest names in the genre from Hank Williams, Jr. and Alan Jackson to Garth Brooks, Martina McBride, MuzikMafia, Keith Urban, Toby Keith and Brad Paisley.

The Academy of Country Music® Awards made a monumental move to Las Vegas in 2003, broadcasting the show from Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino. The move proved to be a shot of adrenaline for the Academy and the country music industry. In its sixth year, The Week Vegas Goes Country® has become a highly anticipated event for the entire music community. The show is now held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena, offering thousands of country music fans the chance to attend the show along with the industry's brightest.

In addition to the annual awards show, the Academy has partnered with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and the Fremont Street Experience to present two nights of concerts on historic Fremont Street in downtown Vegas. The high-energy shows, free and open to the public, have included headliners Big & Rich, Gretchen Wilson, Randy Owen and Sugarland as well as a host of up-and-coming talent.

In 2005, the Academy of Country Music celebrated its 40th anniversary. To celebrate the occasion, the Academy taped a television special honoring ACM milestones in several artists' careers. The 40th Anniversary Celebration marked the first television venture for the Academy outside of the annual awards show.

This year the Academy makes history yet again. For the first time ever, the show is being broadcast in high definition, and the fans were invited to vote online in the Entertainer of the Year category, choosing their favorite from the five nominees selected by the professional membership. As ACM Executive Director Bob Romeo said in this year's letter, the move "engages our fans and fosters a more interactive show experience" and also shows "the Academy's efforts to embrace the digital age and continue to support the expansion of the country music industry." Yet again the Academy follows the path laid out by our founders: To expand the boundaries of country music and take it to bigger and better places.

In 2008, the Academy's staff and outreach continue to grow. As we honor country's best tonight for our 43rd year, we can only dream of where we'll go next.





Clockwise from top left: Glen Campbell;
1994 - Reba McEntire and Allan
Jackson; 1991 - George Strait and Dick
Clark; 2007 - Kenny Chesney; Hank
Williams Jr.; Garth Brooks

PREVIOUS WINNERS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

1965

Band Leader/Band Buckaroos
 Bass Bob Morris
 Best Vocal Group Bonnie Owens,
 Merle Haggard
 Drums Muddy Berry
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Lead Guitar Phil Baugh
 Man of the Year Roger Miller
 Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Kay Adams
 Most Promising Male Vocalist
 Merle Haggard
 Music Publisher Central Songs
 Outstanding Country Music Club
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
 Piano Billy Liebert
 Producer/A&R Man Ken Nelson
 Radio Personality Biff Collie
 Songwriter Roger Miller
 Steel Guitar Red Rhodes
 Talent Management/Booking Agent
 Jackie McFadden
 Television Personality Billy Mize
 Top Female Vocalist Bonnie Owens
 Top Male Vocalist Buck Owens
 Trade Publications Billboard Magazine

1966

Band Leader/Band Buckaroos
 Bass Bob Morris
 Country Nightclub of the Year Palomino -
 North Hollywood, California
 Drums Jerry Wiggins
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Lead Guitar Jimmy Bryant
 Man of the Year Dean Martin
 Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Cathie Taylor
 Most Promising Male Vocalist Billy Mize

Most Promising Vocal Group Bob Morris,
 Faye Hardin
 Music Publisher Central Songs
 Piano Billy Liebert
 Producer/A&R Man Ken Nelson
 Radio Personality Biff Collie, Bob Kingsley
 Song of the Year "Apartment #9," Bobby
 Austin, Fuzzy Owen, Johnny Paycheck
 Steel Guitar Ralph Mooney, Tom Brumley
 Talent Management/Booking Agent
 Jackie McFadden
 Television Personality Billy Mize
 Top Female Vocalist Bonnie Guitar
 Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard
 Top Vocal Group Bonnie Owens and
 Merle Haggard

1967

Album of the Year "Gentle On My Mind," Al
 Delroy, Glen Campbell
 Band Leader/Band Buckaroos
 Bass Red Wooten
 Outstanding Country Music Club
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
 Drums Pee Wee Adams
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Best Vocal Group Bonnie Owens and
 Merle Haggard
 Drums Muddy Berry
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Lead Guitar Jimmy Bryant
 Man of the Year Joey Bishop
 Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Bobbie Gentry
 Most Promising Male Vocalist Jerry Inman
 Piano Earl Ball
 Radio Personality Bob Kingsley
 Single Record of the Year "Gentle On My
 Mind," Al Delroy, Glen Campbell
 Song of the Year "It's Such A Pretty World
 Today," Dale Noe, Freeway Music

Steel Guitar Red Rhodes
 Television Personality Billy Mize
 Top Duo Bonnie Owens, Merle Haggard
 Top Female Vocalist Lynn Anderson
 Top Male Vocalist Glen Campbell
 Top Vocal Group Sons of the Pioneers

1968

Album of the Year "Glen Campbell &
 Bobbie Gentry," Bobbie Gentry,
 Glen Campbell
 Band of the Year (Club) Tennesseans
 Band of the Year (Touring) Buckaroos
 Bass Red Wooten
 Outstanding Country Music Club
 (Metropolitan) Palomino - North Hollywood,
 California
 Outstanding Country Music Club (Regional)
 Golden Nugget- Las Vegas, Nevada
 Drums Jerry Wiggins
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Lead Guitar Jimmy Bryant
 Man of the Year Tom Smothers
 Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Cheryl Poole
 Most Promising Male Vocalist Ray Sanders
 Piano Earl Ball
 Pioneer Award Art Satherly
 Radio Personality (Los Angeles) Larry
 Scott
 Radio Personality (Regional) Tex Williams
 Single Record of the Year "Little Green
 Apples," Roger Miller
 Song of the Year "Wichita Lineman,"
 Jim Webb
 Steel Guitar Red Rhodes
 Television Personality Glen Campbell
 Top Female Vocalist Cathie Taylor
 Top Male Vocalist Glen Campbell
 Top Vocal Group Johnny Mosby,
 Jonie Mosby

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

1969

Album of the Year "Okie From Muskogee,"
 Merle Haggard
Artist of the Decade Marty Robbins
Band of the Year Strangers
Bass Billy Graham
Country and Western Disc Jockey
 Dick Haynes
Country Comedy Act Roy Clark
Country Nightclub of the Year
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
Drums Jerry Wiggins
Fiddle Billy Armstrong
Jim Reeves Memorial Award Joe Allison
Lead Guitar Al Bruno
Man of the Year Frank Peppiatt,
 John Aylsworth
Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Donna Fargo
Most Promising Male Vocalist
 Freddy Weller
Piano Floyd Cramer
Pioneer Award Bob Wills
Rhythm Guitar Jerry Inman
Single Record of the Year "Okie From
 Muskogee," Merle Haggard
Song of the Year "Okie From Muskogee,"
 Merle Haggard
Specialty Instrument John Hartford
Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons
Television Personality Johnny Cash
Top Female Vocalist Tammy Wynette
Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard
Top Vocal Group Kimberleys

1970

Album of the Year "For the Good Times,"
 Ray Price
Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Tony Booth Band
Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers

Bass Billy Graham, Dyle Holly
Country Comedy Act Roy Clark
Country Nightclub of the Year Palomino -
 North Hollywood, California
Disc Jockey Corky Mayberry
Drums Archie Francis
Entertainer of the Year Merle Haggard
Fiddle Billy Armstrong
Jim Reeves Memorial Award Bill Boyd
Lead Guitar Al Bruno
Man of the Year Hugh Cherry
Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Sammi Smith
Most Promising Male Vocalist Buddy Alan
News Publication Billboard Magazine
Piano Floyd Cramer
Pioneer Award Patsy Montana, Tex Ritter
Radio Station KLAC -
 Los Angeles, California
Single Record of the Year "For the Good
 Times," Ray Price
Song of the Year "For the Good Times,"
 Ray Price
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Television Personality Johnny Cash
Top Female Vocalist Lynn Anderson
Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard
Top Vocal Group Kimberleys

1971

Album of the Year "Easy Lovin',"
 Freddie Hart
Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Tony Booth Band
Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers
Bass Larry Booth
Country Comedy Act Roy Clark
Country Nightclub of the Year Palomino -
 North Hollywood, California
Disc Jockey Larry Scott
Drums Jerry Wiggins

Entertainer of the Year Freddie Hart
Fiddle Billy Armstrong
Jim Reeves Memorial Award Roy Rogers
Lead Guitar Al Bruno
Man of the Year Walter Knott
Most Promising Female Vocalist
 Barbara Mandrell
Most Promising Male Vocalist Tony Booth
Piano Floyd Cramer
Pioneer Award Bob Nolan, Stuart Hamblen,
 Tex Williams
Radio Station KLAC - Los Angeles,
 California
Single Record of the Year "Easy Lovin',"
 Freddie Hart
Song of the Year "Easy Lovin',"
 Freddie Hart
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Television Personality Glen Campbell
Top Female Vocalist Loretta Lynn
Top Male Vocalist Freddie Hart
Top Vocal Group Conway Twitty,
 Loretta Lynn

1972

Album of the Year "Happiest Girl/USA,"
 Donna Fargo
Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Tony Booth Band
Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers
Bass Larry Garner (Booth)
Country Nightclub of the Year
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
Disc Jockey Larry Scott
Drums Jerry Wiggins
Entertainer of the Year Roy Clark
Fiddle Billy Armstrong
Jim Reeves Memorial Award
 Thurston Moore
Lead Guitar Al Bruno
Man of the Year Lawrence Welk

PREVIOUS WINNERS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

Most Promising Female Vocalist

Tanya Tucker

Most Promising Male Vocalist

Johnny Rodriguez

Piano Floyd Cramer

Pioneer Award Cliffie Stone, Gene Autry

Radio Station KLAC -

Los Angeles, California

Single Record of the Year "Happiest

Girl/USA," Donna Fargo

Song of the Year "Happiest Girl/USA,"

Donna Fargo

Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons

Television Personality Roy Clark

Top Female Vocalist Donna Fargo

Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard

Top Vocal Group Statler Brothers

1973

Album of the Year "Behind Closed Doors,"

Charlie Rich

Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Sound

Company, Tony Booth Band

Band of the Year (Touring) Brush Arbor

Bass Larry Booth

Country Nightclub of the Year

Palomino - North Hollywood, California

Drums Jerry Wiggins

Entertainer of the Year Roy Clark

Fiddle Billy Armstrong

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Sam Louvello

Lead Guitar Al Bruno

• Most Promising Female Vocalist

Olivia Newton-John

Most Promising Male Vocalist

Dorsey Burnette

On-Air Personality of the Year Craig Scott

Piano Floyd Cramer

Pioneer Award Hank Williams Sr.

Radio Station KLAC -

Los Angeles, California

Single Record of the Year "Behind Closed Doors," Charlie Rich

Song of the Year "Behind Closed Doors,"

Kenny O'Dell

Steel Guitar Red Rhodes

Top Female Vocalist Loretta Lynn

Top Male Vocalist Charlie Rich

Top Vocal Duet or Group Brush Arbor

1974

Album of the Year "Back Home Again,"

John Denver

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Palomino Riders

Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers

Bass Billy Graham

Country Nightclub of the Year

Palomino - North Hollywood, California

Drums Jerry Wiggins

Entertainer of the Year Mac Davis

Fiddle Billy Armstrong

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Merv Griffin

Lead Guitar Al Bruno

Most Promising Female Vocalist

Linda Ronstadt

Most Promising Male Vocalist

Mickey Gilley

Piano Floyd Cramer

Pioneer Award Johnny Bond, Merle Travis,

Tennessee Ernie Ford

Radio Personality Larry Scott

Radio Station KLAC -

Los Angeles, California

Single Record of the Year "Country

Bumpkin," Cal Smith

Song of the Year "Country Bumpkin,"

Cal Smith

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Top Female Vocalist Loretta Lynn

Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard

Top Vocal Group Conway Twitty,

Loretta Lynn

1975

Album of the Year "Feelings," Loretta Lynn,

Conway Twitty

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Palomino Riders

Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers

Bass Billy Graham

Country Nightclub of the Year

Palomino - North Hollywood, California

Disc Jockey of the Year Billy Parker

Drums Archie Francis

Entertainer of the Year Loretta Lynn

Fiddle Billy Armstrong

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Dinah Shore

Lead Guitar Russ Hansen

Most Promising Female Vocalist

Crystal Gayle

Most Promising Male Vocalist

Freddy Fender

Piano Jerry Lee Lewis

Pioneer Award Roy Rogers

Radio Station KLAC -

Los Angeles, California

Rhythm Guitar Jerry Inman

Single Record of the Year "Rhinestone

Cowboy," Glen Campbell

Song of the Year "Rhinestone Cowboy,"

Glen Campbell

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Top Female Vocalist Loretta Lynn

Top Male Vocalist Conway Twitty

Top Vocal Group Loretta Lynn,

Conway Twitty

1976

Album of the Year "Gilley's Smoking,"

Mickey Gilley

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Possum Hollers

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

Band of the Year (Touring) Red
 Rose Express
 Bass Curtis Stone
 Country Nightclub of the Year Palomino -
 North Hollywood, California
 Disc Jockey of the Year Charlie Douglas
 Drums Archie Francis
 Entertainer of the Year Mickey Gilley
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Jim Reeves Memorial Award Roy Clark
 Lead Guitar Danny Michaels
 Most Promising Female Vocalist Billie
 Jo Spears
 Most Promising Male Vocalist Moe Bandy
 Piano Hargus "Pig" Robbins
 Pioneer Award Owen Bradley
 Radio Station KLAC -
 Los Angeles, California
 Rhythm Guitar Jerry Inman
 Single Record of the Year "Bring It On
 Home," Mickey Gilley
 Song of the Year "Don't the Girls Get
 Prettier at Closing Time," Mickey Gilley
 Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
 Top Female Vocalist Crystal Gayle
 Top Male Vocalist Mickey Gilley
 Top Vocal Group Loretta Lynn,
 Conway Twitty

1977

Album of the Year "Kenny Rogers,"
 Kenny Rogers
 Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Palomino Riders
 Band of the Year (Touring)
 Sons of the Pioneers
 Bass Larry Booth
 Career Achievement Johnny Paycheck
 Country Nightclub of the Year
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
 Disc Jockey of the Year Billy Parker

Drums Archie Francis, George Manz
 Entertainer of the Year Dolly Parton
 Fiddle Billy Armstrong
 Guitar Roy Clark
 Jim Reeves Memorial Award Jim Halsey
 Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins
 Pioneer Award Sons of the Pioneers
 Radio Station KGBS -
 Los Angeles, California
 Single Record of the Year "Lucille,"
 Kenny Rogers
 Song of the Year "Lucille," Kenny Rogers
 Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy
 Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons
 Top Female Vocalist Crystal Gayle
 Top Male Vocalist Kenny Rogers
 Top New Female Vocalist Debby Boone
 Top New Male Vocalist Eddie Rabbitt
 Top Vocal Group Statler Brothers

1978

Album of the Year "Y'all Come Back
 Saloon," Oak Ridge Boys
 Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Rebel Playboys
 Band of the Year (Touring)
 Original Texas Playboys
 Bass Rod Culpepper
 Country Nightclub of the Year
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
 Disc Jockey of the Year Billy Parker
 Drums Archie Francis
 Entertainer of the Year Kenny Rogers
 Fiddle Johnny Gimble
 Guitar James Burton
 Jim Reeves Memorial Award Joe Cates
 Keyboard Jimmy Pruett
 Pioneer Award Eddie Dean
 Radio Station KVOO - Tulsa, Oklahoma
 Single Record of the Year "Tulsa Time,"
 Don Williams

Song of the Year "You Needed Me,"
 Anne Murray
 Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy
 Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons
 Top Female Vocalist Barbara Mandrell
 Top Male Vocalist Kenny Rogers
 Top New Female Vocalist Christy Lane
 Top New Male Vocalist John Conlee
 Top Vocal Group Oak Ridge Boys

1979

Album of the Year "Straight Ahead,"
 Larry Gatlin
 Artist of the Decade Loretta Lynn
 Band of the Year (Non-Touring)
 Midnight Riders
 Band of the Year (Touring) Charlie
 Daniels Band
 Bass Billy Graham
 Country Music Movie of the Year
 Electric Horseman
 Country Nightclub of the Year
 Palomino - North Hollywood, California
 Disc Jockey King Edward IV
 Drums Archie Francis
 Entertainer of the Year Willie Nelson
 Fiddle Johnny Gimble
 Lead Guitar Al Bruno
 Jim Reeves Memorial Award Bill Ward
 Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins
 Pioneer Award Patti Page
 Radio Station KFDI - Wichita, Kansas
 Single Record of the Year "All The Gold in
 California," Larry Gatlin & Gatlin Bros.
 Song of the Year "It's A Cheatin' Situation,"
 Moe Bandy
 Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy
 Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons
 Top Female Vocalist Crystal Gayle
 Top Male Vocalist Larry Gatlin
 Top New Female Vocalist Lacy J. Dalton

PREVIOUS WINNERS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

Top New Male Vocalist R.C. Bannon

Top Vocal Group Moe Bandy, Joe Stampley

1980

Album of the Year "Urban Cowboy," Full

Moon/Asylum, Irving Azoff

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Palomino Riders

Band of the Year (Touring) Charlie

Daniels Band

Bass Curtis Stone

Country Music Movie of the Year "Coal
Miner's Daughter," Bernard Schwartz -

Universal

Country Nightclub of the Year Gilley's -

Pasadena, Texas; Palomino - North

Hollywood, California

Disc Jockey of the Year Sammy Jackson

Drums Archie Francis

Entertainer of the Year Barbara Mandrell

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar Al Bruno

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Ken Kragen

Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins

Nightclub of the Year Gilley's -

Pasadena, Texas

Pioneer Award Ernest Tubb

Radio Station KLAC -

Los Angeles, California

Single Record of the Year "He Stopped

Loving Her Today," George Jones, Billy
Sherrill, Epic Records,

Song of the Year "He Stopped Loving Her
Today," George Jones, Bobby Braddock,

Curly Putman, Tree Publishing

Special Achievement George Burns

Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy

Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons, J.D. Maness

Top Female Vocalist Dolly Parton

Top Male Vocalist George Jones

Top New Female Vocalist Terri Gibbs

Top New Male Vocalist Johnny Lee

Top Vocal Duet Joe Stampley, Moe Bandy

Top Vocal Group Alabama

1981

Album of the Year "Feel's So Right,"

Alabama, Harold Shedd, Larry McBride,

RCA Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Desperados

Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers

Bass Joe Osborn, Curtis Stone

Country Nightclub of the Year Billy Bob's -
Fort Worth, Texas

Disc Jockey of the Year Arch Yancey

Drums Buddy Harman

Entertainer of the Year Alabama

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar James Burton

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Al Galico

Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins

Pioneer Award Leo Fender

Radio Station WPLO - Atlanta, Georgia

Single Record of the Year "Elvira," Oak

Ridge Boys, Ron Chancey, MCA Records

Song of the Year "You're The Reason God
Made Oklahoma," Senor, David Frizzell,

Larry Collins, Peso Music, Sandy Pinkard,
Shelly West, Cibie Music Companies,

Wallet Music

Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy

Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons

Tex Ritter Award Any Which Way You Can

Top Female Vocalist Barbara Mandrell

Top Male Vocalist Merle Haggard

Top New Female Vocalist Juice Newton

Top New Male Vocalist Ricky Skaggs

Top Vocal Duet David Frizzell, Shelly West

Top Vocal Group Alabama

1982

Album of the Year "Always On My Mind,"

Willie Nelson, Chips Moman,

Columbia Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Desperados

Band of the Year (Touring) Ricky Skaggs

Bass Red Wooten

Country Nightclub of the Year Gilley's -
Pasadena, Texas

Disc Jockey of the Year Lee Arnold

Drums Archie Francis

Entertainer of the Year Alabama

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar Al Bruno

Jim Reeves Memorial Award

Jo Walker-Meador

Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins

Pioneer Award Chet Atkins

Radio Station KIKK - Houston, Texas

Single Record of the Year "Always On My
Mind," Willie Nelson, Chips Moman,
Columbia Records

Song of the Year "Are The Good Times
Really Over," Merle Haggard, Shade

Tree Music

Specialty Instrument James Burton

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Tex Ritter Award "The Best Little

Whorehouse in Texas"

Top Female Vocalist Sylvia

Top Male Vocalist Ronnie Milsap

Top New Female Vocalist Karen Brooks

Top New Male Vocalist Michael Murphey

Top Vocal Duet David Frizzell, Shelly West

Top Vocal Group Alabama

1983

Album of the Year "The Closer You Get,"

Alabama, Harold Shedd, RCA Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Tennesseans

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

Band of the Year (Touring)

Ricky Skaggs Band

Bass Joe Osborn

Country Nightclub of the Year Gilley's -
Pasadena, Texas

Disc Jockey of the Year Rhubarb Jones

Drums Archie Francis

Entertainer of the Year Alabama

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar Reggie Young

Keyboard Floyd Cramer

Pioneer Award Eddy Arnold

Radio Station KRMD -

Shreveport, Louisiana

Single Record of the Year "Islands In The
Stream," Dolly Parton, Kenny Rogers, Barry
Gibb, Albhy Galuten, Karl Richardson, RCA
Records

Song of the Year "The Wind Beneath My
Wings," Gary Morris, Jeff Silbar, Larry
Henley, Warner House of Music, WB
Gold Music

Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Tex Ritter Award Tender Mercies

Top Female Vocalist Janie Fricke

Top Male Vocalist Lee Greenwood

Top New Female Vocalist Gus Hardin

Top New Male Vocalist Jim Glaser

Top Vocal Duet Dolly Parton and

Kenny Rogers

Top Vocal Group Alabama

1984

Album of the Year "Roll On," Alabama,

Harold Shedd, RCA Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Tennesseans

Band of the Year (Touring)

Ricky Skaggs Band

Bass Joe Osborn

Country Music Video of the Year "All My
Rowdy Friends Are Comin' Over Tonight,"

Hank Williams Jr., John Goodhugh

Country Nightclub of the Year Gilley's -
Pasadena, Texas

Disc Jockey of the Year (Medium Market)

Billy Parker

Disc Jockey of the Year (Large Market)

Coyote Calhoun

Disc Jockey of the Year (Small Market) Dan
Hollander

Drums Larrie Londin

Entertainer of the Year Alabama

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar James Burton

Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins,

John Hobbs

Pioneer Award Roy Acuff

Radio Station of the Year (Large Market)

WMC - Memphis, Tennessee

Radio Station of the Year (Medium Market)

KVOO - Tulsa, Oklahoma

Radio Station of the Year (Small Market)

WLWI - Montgomery, Alabama

Single Record of the Year "To All The Girls
I've Loved Before," Willie Nelson, Julio

Iglesias, Richard Perry, Columbia Records

Song of the Year "Why Not Me," The Judds,

Brent Maher, Harlan Howard, Sonny

Trockmorton, Cross Keys Music, Tree

Publishing, Welbeck Music, Blue

Quill Music

Specialty Instrument Ricky Skaggs

Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons

Tex Ritter Award "Songwriter"

Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire

Top Male Vocalist George Strait

Top New Female Vocalist Nicolette Larson

Top New Male Vocalist Vince Gill

Top Vocal Duet The Judds

Top Vocal Group Alabama

1985

Album of the Year "Does Ft. Worth Ever
Cross Your Mind," George Strait, Jimmy
Bowen, MCA Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Nashville Now

Band of the Year (Touring) Ricky Skaggs

Bass Joe Osborn

Country Nightclub of the Year Billy Bob's -
Fort Worth, Texas

Country Music Video of the Year "Who's
Gonna Fill Their Shoes," George Jones

Disc Jockey of the Year Eddie Edwards

Drums Archie Francis

Entertainer of the Year Alabama

Fiddle Johnny Gimble

Guitar James Burton

Keyboard Glen Hardin

Pioneer Award Kitty Wells

Radio Station WAMZ - Louisville, Kentucky

Single Record of the Year "Highwayman,"

Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Johnny

Cash, Kris Kristofferson, Chips Moman,

Columbia Records

Song of the Year "Lost in the Fifties (In The
Still Of The Night)," Ronnie Milsap,

Troy Seals, Mike Reid, Lodge Hall, Fred

Parris, Llee Music, Two Sons Music, WB

Music Corporation

Specialty Instrument James Burton

Steel Guitar Buddy Emmons

Tex Ritter Award Sweet Dreams

Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire

Top Male Vocalist George Strait

Top New Female Vocalist Judy Rodman

Top New Male Vocalist Randy Travis

Top Vocal Duet The Judds

Top Vocal Group Alabama

PREVIOUS WINNERS

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1986

Album of the Year "Storms Of Life," Randy Travis, Kyle Lehning, Warner Brothers Records
Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Nashville Now
Band of the Year (Touring) Ricky Skaggs Band
Bass Emory Gordy Jr.
Career Achievement Carl Perkins
Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse Steak House & Saloon - Santa Ana, California
Country Music Video of the Year "Whoever's In New England," Reba McEntire, Jon Small, Jeff Schock
Disc Jockey of the Year Chris Taylor
Drums Larrie London
Entertainer of the Year Hank Williams Jr.
Fiddle Mark O' Connor
Guitar Chet Atkins
Keyboard John Hobbs
Pioneer Award Minnie Pearl
Radio Station KNIX - Phoenix, Arizona
Single Record of the Year "On The Other Hand," Randy Travis, Kyle Lehning, Keith Stegall, Warner Brothers Records
Song of the Year "On The Other Hand," Randy Travis, Don Schlitz, Paul Overstreet, Don Schlitz Music, MCA Music Publishing, Scarlet Moon Music, Writer's Group Music
Specialty Instrument James Burton
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire
Top Male Vocalist Randy Travis
Top New Female Vocalist Holly Dunn
Top New Male Vocalist Dwight Yoakam
Top Vocal Duet The Judds
Top Vocal Group The Forester Sisters

1987

Album of the Year "Trio," Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt, George Massenberg, Warner Brothers Records
Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Nashville Now
Band of the Year (Touring) Strangers
Bass David Hungate, Emory Gordy Jr.
Country Music Video of the Year "80's Ladies," K.T. Oslin, Jack Cole, Marc Ball
Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse Steak House & Saloon - Santa Ana, California
Disc Jockey of the Year Jim Tabor
Drums Archie Francis
Entertainer of the Year Hank Williams Jr.
Fiddle Johnny Gimble
Guitar Chet Atkins
Keyboard John Hobbs, Ronnie Milsap
Pioneer Award Roger Miller
Radio Station of the Year KNIX - Phoenix, Arizona
Single Record of the Year "Forever And Ever Amen," Randy Travis, Kyle Lehning, Warner Brothers Records
Song of the Year "Forever And Ever Amen," Randy Travis, Paul Overstreet, Don Schlitz, Don Schlitz Music, Scarlet Moon Music, Writers Group Music, MCA Records
Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas, Ricky Skaggs
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire
Top Male Vocalist Randy Travis
Top New Female Vocalist K.T. Oslin
Top New Male Vocalist Ricky Van Shelton
Top Vocal Duet The Judds
Top Vocal Group Highway 101

1988

Album of the Year "This Woman," K.T. Oslin, Harold Shedd, RCA Records
Artist of the Decade Alabama
Band of the Year (Non-Touring) Nashville Now Band
Band of the Year (Touring) Desert Rose Band
Bass Curtis Stone
Country Music Video of the Year "Young Country," Hank Williams Jr., Brent Bowman, Bill Fishman, Preacher Ewing
Disc Jockey of the Year Dandalion, Jon Conlon
Drums Steve Duncan
Entertainer of the Year Hank Williams Jr.
Fiddle Mark O' Connor
Guitar Al Bruno
Keyboard John Hobbs
Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse Steak House & Saloon - Santa Ana, California
Pioneer Award Buck Owens
Radio Station of the Year WSIX - Nashville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "Eighteen Wheels And A Dozen Roses," Kathy Mattea, Allen Reynolds, Mercury Records
Song of the Year "Eighteen Wheels And A Dozen Roses," Kathy Mattea, Gene Nelson, Paul Nelson, Bellevus or Not Music, Screen GEMS-EMI Music, Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp.
Specialty Instrument Charlie McCoy
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Top Female Vocalist K.T. Oslin
Top Male Vocalist George Strait
Top New Female Vocalist Suzy Bogguss
Top New Male Vocalist Rodney Crowell
Top Vocal Duet The Judds

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

Top Vocal Group Highway 101

1989

Album of the Year "Killin' Time," Clint

Black, James Stroud, Mark Wright,

RCA Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Nashville Now

Band of the Year (Touring)

Desert Rose Band

Bass Michael Rhodes

Country Music Video of the Year "There's A

Tear In My Beer," Hank Williams Jr., Ethan

Russell,

Joanne Gardner

Disc Jockey of the Year Jon Conlon

Drums Steve Duncan

Entertainer of the Year George Strait

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar Brent Rowan

Keyboard Skip Edwards

Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse

Steak House & Saloon -

Santa Ana, California

Radio Station of the Year WSIX - Nashville,

Tennessee

Single Record of the Year "Better Man,"

Clint Black, James Stroud, Mark Wright,

RCA Records

Song of the Year "Where've You Been,"

Kathy Mattea, Don Henry, Jon Vezner,

Cross Keys Music (ASCAP), Wrensong

(ASCAP)

Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Top Female Vocalist Kathy Mattea

Top Male Vocalist Clint Black

Top New Female Vocalist

Mary Chapin-Carpenter

Top New Male Vocalist Clint Black

Top New Vocal Duet or Group

Kentucky Headhunters

Top Vocal Duet The Judds

Top Vocal Group Restless Heart

1990

Album of the Year "No Fences," Garth

Brooks, Allen Reynolds, Capitol Records

Band of the Year (Non-Touring)

Boy Howdy Band

Band of the Year (Touring)

Desert Rose Band

Bass Bill Bryson

Country Music Video of the Year "The

Dance," Garth Brooks, John Lloyd Miller,

Marc Ball

Disc Jockey of the Year Gerry House

Drums Steve Duncan

Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar John Jorgenson

Keyboard John Hobbs

Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse

Steak House & Saloon -

Santa Ana, California

Pioneer Award Johnny Cash

Radio Station of the Year WSIX -

Nashville, Tennessee

Single Record of the Year "Friends In Low

Places," Garth Brooks, Allen Reynolds,

Capitol Records

Song of the Year "The Dance," Garth

Brooks, Tony Arata, Pookie Bear Music,

Morganactive Music

Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire

Top Male Vocalist Garth Brooks

Top New Female Vocalist Shelby Lynne

Top New Male Vocalist Alan Jackson

Top New Vocal Duet or Group

Pirates of the Mississippi

Top Vocal Duet The Judds

Top Vocal Group Shenandoah

Video of the Year Garth Brooks

1991

Album of the Year "Don't Rock the

Jukebox," Alan Jackson, Keith Stegall,

Scott Hendricks, Arista Records

Bass Roy Huskey Jr.

Disc Jockey of the Year Gerry House

Drums Eddie Bayers

Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar John Jorgenson

Keyboard Matt Rollings

Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse

Steak House & Saloon -

Santa Ana, California

Pioneer Award Willie Nelson

Radio Station of the Year WAMZ -

Louisville, Kentucky

Single Record of the Year "Don't Rock the

Jukebox," Alan Jackson, Keith Stegall,

Scott Hendricks, Arista

Records Nashville

Song of the Year "Somewhere in My Broken

Heart," Billy Dean, Richard Leigh, EMI April

Music Inc., EMI Blackwood Music Inc., Lion-

Hearted Music (ASCAP/BMI)

Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas

Steel Guitar Paul Franklin

Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire

Top Male Vocalist Garth Brooks

Top New Female Vocalist

Trisha Yearwood

Top New Male Vocalist Billy Dean

Top New Vocal Duet or Group

Brooks and Dunn

Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn

PREVIOUS WINNERS

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Top Vocal Group Diamond Rio

Video of the Year "Is There Life Out There,"

Reba McEntire, Robin Beresford, Jack Cole

1992

Album of the Year "Brand New Man,"

Brooks and Dunn, Don Cook, Scott

Hendricks, Arista Records Nashville

Bass Glenn Worf

Disc Jockey of the Year Jon Conlon

Drums Eddie Bayers

Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar John Jorgenson

Keyboard Matt Rollings

Country Nightclub of the Year Billy Bob's -

Fort Worth, Texas

Pioneer Award George Jones

Radio Station of the Year KNIX -

Phoenix, Arizona

Single Record of the Year "Boot Scootin'

Boogie," Brooks and Dunn, Don Cook, Scott

Hendricks, Arista Records Nashville

Song of the Year "I Still Believe In You,"

Vince Gill, John Jarvis, Benefit Music,

Inspector (ASCAP/BMI)

Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Tex Ritter Award "Pure Country"

Top Female Vocalist

Mary Chapin-Carpenter

Top Male Vocalist Vince Gill

Top New Female Vocalist Michelle Wright

Top New Male Vocalist Tracy Lawrence

Top New Vocal Duet or Group Confederate

Railroad

Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn

Top Vocal Group Diamond Rio

Video of the Year "Two Sparrows in a

Hurricane," Tanya Tucker, Brent Hedgcock,

Joanne Gardner

1993

Album of the Year "A Lot About

Livin'," Alan Jackson, Keith Stegall, Arista

Records Nashville

Bass Glenn Worf

Career Achievement John Anderson

Disc Jockey of the Year Willy Loon,

Tim Hattrick

Drums Eddie Bayers

Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar Brent Mason

Keyboard Matt Rollings

Country Nightclub of the Year Toolies

Country - Phoenix, Arizona

Pioneer Award Charley Pride

Radio Station of the Year KNIX -

Phoenix, Arizona

Single Record of the Year

"Chattahoochee," Alan Jackson, Keith

Stegall, Arista Records Nashville

Song of the Year "I Love the Way You Love

Me," John Michael Montgomery, Chuck

Cannon, Victoria Shaw, Gary Morris Music,

Tast Auction (ASCAP/BMI), BMC Songs Inc.

Specialty Instrument Terry McMillan

Steel Guitar J.D. Maness

Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year

Bill Bachand

Top Female Vocalist Wynonna

Top Male Vocalist Vince Gill

Top New Female Vocalist Faith Hill

Top New Male Vocalist

John Michael Montgomery

Top New Vocal Duet or Group

Gibson Miller Band

Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn

Top Vocal Group Little Texas

Video of the Year "We Shall Be Free," Garth

Brooks, Tim Miller

1994

Album of the Year "Not A Moment Too

Soon," Tim McGraw, Byron Gallimore,

James Stroud, Curb Records

Bass Glenn Worf

Disc Jockey of the Year Gerry House

Drums Eddie Bayers

Entertainer of the Year Reba McEntire

Fiddle Mark O' Connor

Guitar Brent Mason

Jim Reeves Memorial Award Garth Brooks

Keyboard Matt Rollings

Country Nightclub of the Year Billy Bob's -

Fort Worth, Texas

Pioneer Award Loretta Lynn

Radio Station of the Year WSIX -

Nashville, Tennessee

Single Record of the Year "I Swear," John

Michael Montgomery, Scott Hendricks,

Atlantic Records

Song of the Year "I Swear," John Michael

Montgomery, Frank J. Myers, Gary Baker,

Morganactive Music, Rick Hall Music

(ASCAP)

Specialty Instrument Terry McMillan

Steel Guitar Paul Franklin

Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year

George Moffett

Top Female Vocalist Reba McEntire

Top Male Vocalist Alan Jackson

Top New Female Vocalist Chely Wright

Top New Male Vocalist Tim McGraw

Top New Vocal Duet or Group

The Mavericks

Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn

Top Vocal Group The Mavericks

Video of the Year "The Red Strokes," Garth

Brooks, Jon Small, Steven Carter

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

1995

Album of the Year "The Woman In Me,"
Shania Twain, Robert John Lange,
Mercury Records
Bass Glenn Worf
Disc Jockey of the Year Gerry House
Drums Eddie Bayers
Entertainer of the Year Brooks and Dunn
Fiddle Rob Hajacos
Guitar Brent Mason
Keyboard Matt Rollings
Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse
Steak House & Saloon -
Santa Ana, California
Pioneer Award Merle Haggard
Radio Station of the Year WSIX -
Nashville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "Check Yes or
No," George Strait, Tony Brown,
MCA Records
Song of the Year "The Keeper of The
Stars," Tracy Byrd, Danny Mayo, Dickey
Lee, Karen Staley, Murrah Music Corp., New
Haven Music, Pal Time Music Inc. (BMI),
Sixteen Stars Music, Songs of Poly
Gram Int'l
Special Achievement Jeff Foxworthy
Specialty Instrument Terry McMillan
Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
George Moffett
Top Female Vocalist Patty Loveless
Top Male Vocalist Alan Jackson
Top New Duet/Group Lonestar
Top New Female Vocalist Shania Twain
Top New Male Vocalist Bryan White
Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group The Mavericks
Video of the Year "The Car," Michael
Salomon, Jeff Carson, Maureen Ryan

1996

Album of the Year "Blue Clear Sky," George
Strait, Tony Brown, MCA Records
Bass Glenn Worf
Disc Jockey of the Year Gerry House
Drums Eddie Bayers
Entertainer of the Year Brooks and Dunn
Fiddle Stuart Duncan
Guitar Brent Mason
Jim Reeves Award Bob Saporiti
Keyboard Matt Rollings
Country Nightclub of the Year Crazy Horse
Steak House & Saloon -
Santa Ana, California
Pioneer Award Roy Clark
Radio Station of the Year WSIX -
Nashville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "Blue," LeAnn
Rimes, Wilbur C. Rimes, Curb Records
Song of the Year "Blue," LeAnn Rimes, Bill
Mack, Fort Knox Music (BMI), Trio Music
Specialty Instrument Terry McMillan
Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
Bob Romeo
Top Female Vocalist Patty Loveless
Top Male Vocalist George Strait
Top New Duet/Group Ricochet
Top New Female Vocalist LeAnn Rimes
Top New Male Vocalist Trace Adkins
Top Vocal Duet Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Sawyer Brown
Video of the Year "I Think About You,"
Collin Raye, Steven Goldmann,
Susan Bowman

1997

Album of the Year "Carrying Your Love
With Me," George Strait, Tony Brown, MCA
Records
Bass Glenn Worf

Disc Jockey of the Year Tom Rivers
Drums Eddie Bayers
Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks
Fiddle Larry Franklin
Guitar Brent Mason
Keyboard Matt Rollings
Country Nightclub of the Year Buck Owens
Crystal Palace - Bakersfield, California
Pioneer Award Charlie Daniels
Radio Station of the Year WUSN -
Chicago, Illinois
Single Record of the Year "It's Your Love,"
Faith Hill, Tim McGraw, James Stroud, Byron
Gallimore, Curb Records
Song of the Year "It's Your Love," Faith Hill,
Tim McGraw, Stephy Smith, EMI
Blackwood Music Inc. (BMI)
Special Achievement Garth Brooks
Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness, Paul Franklin
Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
Gil Cunningham
Top Female Vocalist Trisha Yearwood
Top Male Vocalist George Strait
Top New Female Vocalist Lee Ann Womack
Top New Male Vocalist Kenny Chesney
Top New Vocal Duet or Group The Kinleys
Top Vocal Duo/Group Brooks and Dunn
Video of the Year "It's Your Love," Faith
Hill, Tim McGraw, Sherman Halsey
Vocal Event of the Year "It's Your Love,"
Faith Hill and Tim McGraw

1998

Album of the Year "Wide Open Spaces,"
Dixie Chicks, Blake Chancey, Paul Worley,
Monument Records
Artist of the Decade Garth Brooks
Bass Glenn Worf
Casino of the Year Las Vegas Hilton - Las
Vegas, Nevada

PREVIOUS WINNERS

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Disc Jockey of the Year Moby
 Drums Eddie Bayers
 Entertainer of the Year Garth Brooks
 Fiddle Stuart Duncan
 Guitar Brent Mason
 Keyboard Matt Rollings
 Country Nightclub of the Year Wild Horse
 Saloon - Nashville, Tennessee
 Pioneer Award Glen Campbell
 Radio Station of the Year WSIX -
 Nashville, Tennessee
 Single Record of the Year "This Kiss," Faith
 Hill, Byron Gallimore, Warner Bros. Records
 Song of the Year "Holes In The Floor Of
 Heaven," Steve Wariner, Billy Kirsch,
 Hamstein Cumberland, Kid Julie (BMI)
 Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas
 Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
 Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
 Jimmy Jay
 Top Female Vocalist Faith Hill
 Top Male Vocalist Tim McGraw
 Top New Female Vocalist Jo Dee Messina
 Top New Male Vocalist Mark Wills
 Top New Vocal Duet/Group Dixie Chicks
 Top Vocal Duo/Group Dixie Chicks
 Video of the Year "This Kiss," Faith Hill,
 Steven Goldmann, Susan Bowman
 Vocal Event of the Year "Just To Hear You
 Say That You Love Me," Faith Hill, Tim
 McGraw, Dann Huff

1999

Album of the Year "Fly," Dixie Chicks, Blake
 Chancey, Paul Worley, Monument Records
 Bass Glenn Worf
 Casino of the Year Boulder Station - Las
 Vegas, Nevada
 Disc Jockey of the Year Dusty Chandler
 Drums Eddie Bayers
 Entertainer of the Year Shania Twain

Fiddle Stuart Duncan
 Guitar Brent Mason
 Keyboard Hargus "Pig" Robbins,
 John Hobbs
 Country Nightclub of the Year
 Gibson's Caffè Milano -
 Nashville, Tennessee
 Pioneer Award Tammy Wynette
 Radio Station of the Year KUZZ -
 Bakersfield, California
 Single Record of the Year "Amazed,"
 Lonestar, Dann Huff, BNA Records
 Song of the Year "Amazed," Lonestar,
 Aimee Mayo, Marv Green, Chris Lindsey,
 Careers-BMG Music Publishing Inc., Golden
 Wheat Music, Warner-Tamerlane Publishing
 Corp., Songs of Nashville DreamWorks
 (BMI), Silverkiss Music
 Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas
 Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
 Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
 Randy Wright
 Top Female Vocalist Faith Hill
 Top Male Vocalist Tim McGraw
 Top New Female Vocalist Jessica Andrews
 Top New Male Vocalist Brad Paisley
 Top New Vocal Duet/Group
 Montgomery Gentry
 Top Vocal Duo/Group Dixie Chicks
 Video of the Year "Breathe," Faith Hill,
 Anastasia Simone, Lili Zanut
 Vocal Event of the Year "When I Said I Do,"
 Clint Black and Lisa Hartman Black

2000

Album of the Year "How Do You Like Me
 Now?!" Toby Keith, James Stroud,
 DreamWorks Records
 Bass Michael Rhodes
 Career Achievement Kenny Rogers
 Pioneer Award Barbara Mandrell

Casino of the Year Sam's Town -
 Robinsonville, Mississippi
 Disc Jockey of the Year Carl P. Mayfield
 and the P-Team
 Drums Eddie Bayers
 Entertainer of the Year Dixie Chicks
 Fiddle Mark O'Connor
 Guitar Brent Mason
 Keyboard John Hobbs
 Country Nightclub of the Year Billy Bob's -
 Fort Worth, Texas
 Radio Station of the Year WIVK - Knoxville,
 Tennessee
 Single Record of the Year "I Hope You
 Dance," Lee Ann Womack, Mark Wright,
 Sons of the Desert, MCA Records
 Song of the Year "I Hope You Dance," Lee
 Ann Womack, Mark D. Sanders, Tia Sillers,
 MCA Music Publishing, Choice is Tragic
 Music, Ensign Music Corp.(BMI), Soda
 Creek Songs (ASCAP), Sons of the Desert
 Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas
 Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
 Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year
 Bob Romeo
 Tex Ritter Award "O'Brother, Where
 Art Thou?"
 Top Female Vocalist Faith Hill
 Top Male Vocalist Toby Keith
 Top New Female Vocalist Jamie O' Neal
 Top New Male Vocalist Keith Urban
 Top New Vocal Duet or Group Rascal Flatts
 Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
 Top Vocal Group Dixie Chicks
 Video of the Year "Goodbye Earl," Dixie
 Chicks, Evan Bernard, Keeley Gould
 Vocal Event of the Year "I Hope You
 Dance," Lee Ann Womack, Mark Wright,
 Sons of the Desert, MCA Records

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

2001

Album of the Year "O Brother, Where Art Thou?," T-Bone Burnett, Soundtrack - Mercury Records
Bass Michael Rhodes
Casino of the Year Boulder Station - Las Vegas, Nevada
Club of the Year Bluebird Cafe' - Nashville, Tennessee
Disc Jockey of the Year Stu Evans
Don Romeo Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year Brian O'Connell
Drums Eddie Bayers
Entertainer of the Year Brooks and Dunn
Fiddle Stuart Duncan
Guitar Jimmy Olander
The Home Depot Humanitarian Award Reba McEntire
Keyboard John Hobbs
Pioneer Award Ronnie Milsap
Radio Station of the Year KPLX - Dallas, Texas
Single Record of the Year "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)," Alan Jackson, Keith Stegall, Arista Records Nashville
Song of the Year "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)," Alan Jackson, EMI April Music Inc., Tri-Angels Music (ASCAP)
Specialty Instrument Jerry Douglas
Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
Top Female Vocalist Martina McBride
Top Male Vocalist Alan Jackson
Top New Female Vocalist Carolyn Dawn Johnson
Top New Male Vocalist Phil Vassar
Top New Vocal Duet or Group Trick Pony
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn

Top Vocal Group Lonestar
Video of the Year "Only In America," Brooks and Dunn, Michael Merriman, Stephanie Reeves
Vocal Event of the Year "I Am a Man of Constant Sorrow," Soggy Bottom Boys, T-Bone Burnett

2002

Album of the Year "Drive," Alan Jackson, Keith Stegall, Arista Records Nashville
Bass Glenn Worf
Casino of the Year Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino - Las Vegas, Nevada
Club of the Year Wild Horse Saloon - Nashville, Tennessee
Don Romeo Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year Louis Messina
Drums Lonnie Wilson
Entertainer of the Year Toby Keith
Fiddle Larry Franklin
Gene Weed Special Achievement Award George Strait
Guitar John Willis
The Home Depot Humanitarian Award Lonestar
Keyboard Matt Rollings
Country Nightclub of the Year Wild Horse Saloon - Nashville, Tennessee
On-Air Personality of the Year Tony and Kris
Pioneer Award Alabama
Radio Station of the Year WIVK - Knoxville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "The Good Stuff," Kenny Chesney, Buddy Cannon, Norro Wilson, BNA Records
Song of the Year "I'm Movin' On," Rascal Flatts, Philip White, D. Vincent Williams, Las Vegas, Murrah Music Corp.(BMI), Songs of Megalex, WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

Specialty Instrument Mark Casstevens
Steel Guitar J.D. Maness
Top Female Vocalist Martina McBride
Top Male Vocalist Kenny Chesney
Top New Female Vocalist Kellie Coffey
Top New Male Vocalist Joe Nichols
Top New Vocal Duet or Group Emerson Drive
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Rascal Flatts
Video of the Year "Drive (For Daddy Gene)," Alan Jackson, Robin Rucker, Steven Goldmann
Vocal Event of the Year "Mendocino County Line," Lee Ann Womack, Willie Nelson, Matthew Serletic

2003

ACM/Launch Video of the Year "Beer For My Horses," Toby Keith, Willie Nelson, Mark Kalbfeld, Michael Salomon
Album of the Year "Shock 'N Y'all," Toby Keith, James Stroud, DreamWorks Records
Audio Engineer of the Year William (Billy) Sherrill
Bass Michael Rhodes
Casino of the Year Boulder Station - Las Vegas, Nevada
Don Romeo Talent Buyer/Promoter of the Year Fran Romeo
Entertainer of the Year Toby Keith
Fiddle Aubrey Haynie
Gene Weed Special Achievement Award Willie Nelson
Guitar Brent Rowan
The Home Depot Humanitarian Award Martina McBride
Country Nightclub of the Year The Trap - Nashville, Tennessee
On-Air Personality of the Year Blair Garner
Percussion/Drums Eddie Bayers

PREVIOUS WINNERS

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

Piano/Keyboard John Hobbs
Pioneer Award Ray Price
Producer of the Year Tony Brown
Radio Station of the Year WSIX -
Nashville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "It's Five O'Clock
Somewhere," Alan Jackson, Jimmy Buffet,
Keith Stegall, Arista Records Nashville
Song of the Year "Three Wooden Crosses,"
Randy Travis, Kim Williams, Douglas
Johnson, Kim Williams Music (ASCAP),
Mike Curb Music (BMI), Sony/ATV Tunes
(ASCAP), Sweet Radical Music (ASCAP)
Specialty Instrument
Kirk "Jelly Roll" Johnson
Steel Guitar Paul Franklin
Top Female Vocalist Martina McBride
Top Male Vocalist Toby Keith
Top New Artist of the Year Deirks Bentley
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Rascal Flatts
Vocal Event of the Year "It's Five O'Clock
Somewhere," Alan Jackson, Jimmy Buffet,
Keith Stegall, AristaRecords Nashville

2004

Video of the Year "Whiskey Lullaby," Brad
Paisley, Alison Krauss, Don Lapore,
Rick Schroder
Album of the Year "Be Here," Keith Urban,
Dann Huff, Capitol
Records Nashville
Audio Engineer of the Year
Ron "Snake" Reynolds
Bass Glenn Worf
Casino of the Year Mandalay Bay Resort
and Casino - Las Vegas, Nevada
Don Romeo Talent Buyer/Promoter of the
Year Brian O'Connell
Entertainer of the Year Kenny Chesney
Fiddle Stuart Duncan

Guitar Brent Mason
Jim Reeves Memorial Award
Charlie Nagatani
Nightclub of the Year Buck Owens Crystal
Palace - Bakersfield, California
On-Air Personality of the Year Tim & Willy
Percussion/Drums Lonnie Wilson
Piano/Keyboard Steve Nathan
Pioneer Award Chris LeDoux
Producer of the Year James Stroud
Radio Station of the Year WIVK-
Knoxville, Tennessee
Single Record of the Year "Live Like You
Were Dying," Tim McGraw, Darran Smith,
Byron Gallimore, Curb Records
Song of the Year "Live Like You Were
Dying," Tim McGraw, Tim Nichols, Craig
Wiseman, Big Loud Shirt(ASCAP),
ICG/Warner (BMI)
Specialty Instrument Randy Scruggs
Steel Guitar Dan Dugmore
Top Female Vocalist Gretchen Wilson
Top Male Vocalist Keith Urban
Top New Artist of the Year
Gretchen Wilson
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Rascal Flatts
Vocal Event of the Year "Whiskey Lullaby,"
Alison Krauss, Brad Paisley, Frank Rogers,
Arista Nashville

2005

Video of the Year "When I Get Where I'm
Going," Brad Paisley and Dolly Parton
Producers: Mark Kalbfeld, Peter Tilden,
Director: Jim Shea
Album of the Year "Time Well Wasted,"
Brad Paisley, Producers: Chris DuBois,
Frank Rogers, Arista
Audio Engineer of the Year Justin Niebank
Bass Michael Rhodes

Venue of the Year Mohegan Sun Casino -
Uncasville, CT
Don Romeo Talent Buyer Suzanne Wilson -
Wilson Events, Inc.
Promoter Louis Messina -
The Messina Group
Entertainer of the Year Kenny Chesney
Fiddle Jonathan Yudkin
Guitar Pat Buchanan
Jim Reeves Memorial Award
Louise Scruggs
Nightclub Billy Bob's - Fort Worth, TX
On-Air Personality (National) Blair Garner -
After MidNite
On-Air Personality (Major Market) Gerry
House & The House Foundation - WSIX
Nashville, TN
On-Air Personality (Medium Market) Scott
Innes - WYNK Baton Rouge, LA
On-Air Personality (Small Market) Becky
Austin & Brad Austin - KLUR
Wichita Falls, TX
Percussion/Drums Shannon Forrest
Piano/Keyboard Mike Rojas
Pioneer Award Little Jimmy Dickens, Kris
Kristofferson, Bill Monroe and Earl Scruggs
Producer Buddy Cannon
Radio Station (Major Market) WFMS -
Indianapolis, IN
Radio Station (Medium Market) WUSY -
Chattanooga, TN
Radio Station (Small Market) WGSQ -
Cookeville, TN and WYCT - Pensacola, FL
Single Record of the Year
"Jesus Take The Wheel,"
Carrie Underwood
Producer: Mark Bright, Arista

PREVIOUS WINNERS LISTED BY YEAR

Song of the Year "Believe," Writers: Ronnie Dunn (BMI), Craig Wiseman (ASCAP)
Sony/ATV Tree Publishing Co. (BMI),
Showbilly Music (BMI), Big Loud Shirt Industries (ASCAP) Brooks & Dunn
Specialty Instrument Bryan Sutton
Steel Guitar Player Paul Franklin
Top Female Vocalist Sara Evans
Top Male Vocalist Keith Urban
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Rascal Flatts
Vocal Event of the Year "When I Get Where I'm Going," Brad Paisley and Dolly Parton,
Producers: Chris DuBois, Frank Rogers,
Arista
Top New Female Vocalist of the Year Carrie Underwood
Top New Male Vocalist of the Year
Jason Aldean
Top New Duo/Group of the Year Sugarland
The Home Depot Humanitarian Award
Vince Gill

2006

Video of the Year "Before He Cheats,"
Carrie Underwood
Producers: Randy Brewer
Director: Roman White
Album of the Year "Some Hearts,"
Carrie Underwood
#1, 2, 4, 7, 10, & 13 Produced by Mark Bright; #3, 6, 8, 9, 11, & 12 Produced by
Dann Huff
19 Recordings Limited/Arista Records
Audio Engineer of the Year
Steve Marcantonio
Bass Glenn Worf
Venue of the Year Grand Ole Opry House -
Nashville, TN
Don Romeo Talent Buyer Bill Magann -
Variety Attractions

Promoter Mike Smardak -
Outback Concerts of TN, Inc.
Entertainer of the Year Kenny Chesney
Fiddle Aubrie Haynie
Guitar Brent Mason
Jim Reeves Memorial Award
Buck Owens
Mae Boren Axton Award
Jack Lameier
Career Achievement Award
Tim McGraw and Faith Hill
Nightclub Buck Owens Crystal Palace -
Bakersfield, CA
On-Air Personality (National)
Bob Kingsley - Bob Kingsley's Country Top
40 (Jones Radio Network)
On-Air Personality (Major Market) Jim, Deb
and Kevin - WFMS, Indianapolis, IN
On-Air Personality (Medium Market)
Charlie James and Pam Wilder - WCOS,
Columbia, SC
On-Air Personality (Small Market)
Mike Lawrence and Dana Carole - KHKX,
Midland, TX
Percussion/Drums Eddie Bayers
Piano/Keyboard John Hobbs
Cliffie Stone Pioneer Award Harlan Howard,
Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings,
Don Williams
Producer Dann Huff
Radio Station (Major Market)
WSIX - Nashville, TN
Radio Station (Medium Market)
WIVK - Knoxville, TN
Radio Station (Small Market)
WPAP - Panama City, FL
Single Record of the Year
"Give It Away,"
George Strait
Producers: Tony Brown, George Strait

MCA Nashville
Song of the Year "Give It Away,"
Writers: Bill Anderson, Buddy Cannon,
Jamey Johnson
Publishers: ©2006 Sony/ATV Tree
Publishing/Mr. Bubba Music, Inc., admin. by
Sony/ATV Music Publishing (BMI); Run Slow
Music, admin. by ICG (ASCAP); EMI
Blackwood Music Inc. (BMI)
Specialty Instrument Stuart Duncan
Steel Guitar Player Michael Johnson
Top Female Vocalist Carrie Underwood
Top Male Vocalist Brad Paisley
Top Vocal Duo Brooks and Dunn
Top Vocal Group Rascal Flatts
Vocal Event of the Year "Building Bridges,"
Brooks and Dunn with Vince Gill and Sheryl
Crow, Producers: Tony Brown, Ronnie Dunn
and Kix Brooks, Arista Nashville
Top New Female Vocalist of the Year
Miranda Lambert
Top New Male Vocalist of the Year
Rodney Atkins
Top New Duo/Group of the Year
Little Big Town
The Home Depot Humanitarian Award
Brooks and Dunn

AWARDS VOTING CRITERIA

43RD ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC® AWARDS

The following are the official criteria and voting procedures used by the Academy of Country Music (ACM) to determine its annual award winners. The criteria and voting procedures are set forth by the Board of Directors of the ACM ("the Board") in accordance with the by-laws, and may be amended from time to time as the Board deems appropriate in the best interest of country music. Any disputes shall be resolved by the Chairman of the Board in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

VOTING PROCEDURE

The voting procedure shall comply with all legal requirements and any requirements of any network airing the awards show. Disputes as to voting procedure shall be resolved by a majority of the Board. Ballots will be tabulated by an independent accounting firm. Effective for the 2005 show and all future shows, ACM members will vote via the Internet for all award categories.

NOMINATION ROUND:

The membership will submit one nomination in each of the following categories; Entertainer of the Year, Top Male Vocalist, Top Female Vocalist, Top New Male Vocalist, Top New Female Vocalist, Top New Vocal Duo or Group, Top Vocal Group, Top Vocal Duo, Single Record of the Year, Vocal Event of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year and Video of the Year. Any entry receiving fifteen (15) or more nomination votes will go before a review committee to ensure the entry meets all eligibility criteria (see "criteria" below).

SECOND ROUND:

In the second round, five (5) votes must be cast in each category for the category to be counted. The five (5) nominees receiving the most votes in each category will be placed on the third ballot. In the case of a tie, the additional nominees will be included on the third ballot.

FINAL ROUND:

In the final round, only one (1) vote will be cast in each category. The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, both winners will receive an award.

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES VOTED ON THE THIRD BALLOT

A Blue Ribbon Committee will submit five (5) nominees to be approved by the Board for the third and final ballot in the following categories; Casino of the Year, Nightclub of the Year, Venue of the Year, Don Romeo Talent Buyer of the Year and Promoter of the Year, based on the criteria for each category (see "criteria" below). The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, both winners will receive an award.

MBI BALLOT (Musician/ Bandleader/ Instrumentalist)

The MBI ballot is voted on by only those members that are classified in the Artist/Entertainer, Musician/Band Leader/Instrumentalist or Producer/Engineer/Studio Manager categories. A Blue Ribbon Committee will submit five (5) names to be approved by the Board for the MBI ballot in the following categories; Guitar, Keyboards, Bass, Drums, Steel Guitar, Fiddle, Specialty Instrument(s), Producer and Audio Engineer. The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, both winners will receive an award.

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the individual, duo or group who showed the most overall success in the country music industry during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered in arriving at this award include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music, success of music videos, live concert ticket sales, artistic merit, appearances on television, appearances in films, songwriting, writing and contributions to the country music industry. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a combination of votes from the membership of the ACM and viewer voting.

TOP MALE VOCALIST

This award is presented to an outstanding individual male vocalist in the country music industry during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered in arriving at this award include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

This award is presented to an outstanding individual female vocalist in the country music industry during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered in arriving at this award include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

This award is presented to an outstanding individual male vocalist in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition

through his efforts during the preceding calendar year. The artist must have charted a single in the Top 30 on Billboard/Radio & Records (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) Country Airplay charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Sound Scan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

An artist may be a nominee in this category for two consecutive years. If an artist is a winner in this category his first year on the ballot, he will not be eligible in this category for a second year.

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

This award is presented to an outstanding individual female vocalist in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through her efforts during the preceding calendar year. The artist must have charted a single in the Top 30 on Billboard/Radio & Records (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) Country Airplay charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Sound Scan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

An artist may be a nominee in this category for two consecutive years. If an artist is a winner in this category her first year on the ballot, she will not be eligible in this category for a second year.

TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

This award is presented to an outstanding duo featuring a vocalist or group featuring a vocalist (herein called "duo or group") in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the preceding calendar year. The duo or group must have charted a single in the Top 30 on Billboard/Radio & Records (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) Country Airplay charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Sound Scan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

A duo or group may be a nominee in this category for two consecutive years. If they are a winner in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category for a second year.

TOP NEW ARTIST

*The Board of Directors may elect to give out this award from time to time in lieu of the Top New Male Artist, Top New Female Artist, and Top New Vocal Duo or Group by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

This award is presented to an outstanding individual male vocalist (herein called artist), female vocalist (herein called artist), duo or group featuring a vocalist (herein called "duo or group") in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the preceding calendar year. The artist, duo or group must have charted a single in the top 30 on Billboard/Radio & Records (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) Country Airplay charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Sound Scan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM. An artist, duo or group may be a nominee in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category for a second year.

TOP VOCAL GROUP

This award is presented to an outstanding group featuring at least one vocalist in the country music industry during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered in arriving at this award include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

TOP VOCAL DUO

This award is presented to an outstanding duo featuring at least one vocalist in the country music industry during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered in arriving at this award include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of records, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the Top Vocal Group by the Board, and shall be called the Top Vocal Group or Duo.

AWARDS VOTING CRITERIA

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SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist, producer and record company of an outstanding country music single record during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music embodying the single, and the impact of the single on consumers and the country music industry. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM. Any single commercially and/or promotionally released prior to the preceding calendar year, but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication chart during the preceding calendar year, is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

SONG OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the songwriter(s), publisher(s) and artist(s) performing an outstanding country music song of the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the success of the song at radio, sales of prerecorded music embodying the song and the impact of the song on consumers and the country music industry. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) of the ACM.

Any song contained on an album commercially released prior to the preceding calendar year, but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication chart during the preceding calendar year, is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist(s), producer(s) and record company of an outstanding country music album during the preceding calendar year. The Album must have attained minimum sales of 300,000 units and/or maintained an average of 20,000 unit sales per week since release as reflected by Sound Scan during the qualification period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

Any album commercially released prior to the preceding calendar year, but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication chart and greatest commercial success during the calendar year, is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

Any album, which contains more than three (3) previously released selections including, but not

limited to, "best of" or "greatest hits" albums are not eligible.

VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist(s), producer(s) and record company of an outstanding country music event single record during the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of prerecorded music embodying the single, video exposure and artistic merit of the single. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the membership of the ACM.

Any single commercially and/or promotionally released prior to the preceding calendar year, but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication chart during the preceding calendar year, is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

To be eligible, the single must be collaboration between two or more artists who do not normally perform together and are credited on the track listing.

VIDEO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the producer, director and artist performing an outstanding country music video during the preceding calendar year. Emphasis shall be placed on creativity, production, visual appeal and impact on consumers and the country music industry. Other factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success of any single record for which the video was made at radio, sales of prerecorded music embodying the single record for which the video was made and success on any accepted video chart in the country music industry (sales or performances). The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the board. The winner shall be determined by a combined vote of the professional and associate membership of the ACM.

Any country music video released prior to the preceding calendar year, but which achieves its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication chart during the preceding calendar year, is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

ON-AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music "on-air" radio personality of the year, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. A demonstration of the Disc Jockey/personality's "on-air" presentation of a maximum length of ten (10) minutes must be uploaded to the ACM voting site along with their

daypart's market share/ratings information for the calendar year of the award, the nominee's community service, industry involvement, charitable contributions, etc. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to ratings, community service, industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top (5) five nominees for the ballot. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

Entries will be judged using market size consideration based on Arbitron markets. 1-50 Major; 51-150 Medium and above 150 Small.

NATIONAL ON-AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music national "on-air" radio personality of the year, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. National on-air personality entrants must provide information showing that they air on a minimum of ten (10) markets with a minimum of thirty-six (36) shows airing in the previous calendar year. A demonstration of the Disc Jockey/personality's "on-air" presentation of a maximum length of ten (10) minutes must be uploaded to the ACM voting site along with a description of any industry involvement. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top (5) five nominees for the ballot. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding radio station, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The radio station will upload a (15) fifteen-minute (maximum length) composite demonstration of the station's on-air presentation to the ACM voting site along with description of the radio station's best attributes including market share/ratings information for the calendar year of the award, community service, industry involvement, charitable contributions, etc. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to ratings, community service, industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top (5) five nominees for the ballot.

The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

Entries will be judged using market size consideration based on Arbitron markets. 1-50 Major; 51-150 Medium and above 150 Small.

CASINO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding casino, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit five (5) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The venue must have bought or promoted at least fifteen (15) country concerts/dates during the calendar year of the award, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified two weeks in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

NIGHTCLUB OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music nightclub, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit five (5) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The nightclub must have bought or promoted at least fifteen (15) country concerts/dates during the calendar year of the award, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified two weeks in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

VENUE OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding venue, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit five (5) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The venue must have bought or promoted at least six (6) country concerts/dates during the calendar year of the award, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified two weeks in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

AWARDS VOTING CRITERIA

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DON ROMEO TALENT BUYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding talent buyer, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit five (5) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The buyer must have bought at least twenty (20) country concerts/dates during the calendar year of the award, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified two weeks in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

PROMOTER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding promoter, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit five (5) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The promoter must have promoted at least twenty (20) country concerts/dates during the calendar year of the award, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible to win the award for the current calendar year. The winner will be notified two weeks in advance of the Academy of Country Music awards show so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

MBI BALLOT - VOTED BY ONLY THOSE MEMBERS IN THE ARTIST/ENTERTAINER, MUSICIAN/BAND LEADER/INSTRUMENTALIST AND PRODUCER/ENGINEER/STUDIO MANAGER CATEGORIES.

The below criteria applies to the following instrumental categories:

Top Guitarist
Top Piano/Keyboards Player
Top Bass Player
Top Percussionist/Drummer
Top Steel Guitar Player
Top Fiddle Player
Top Specialty Instrument(s) Player

This award is presented to an outstanding session player for the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio (i.e. player's performance is embodied on a single which achieves "Top 20" or better as set forth in the relevant Billboard or R&R charts) and/or sales of pre-recorded music embodying the performance of player (i.e. "Top 20" or better as set forth in the Billboard "Top Country Albums" chart). Any single or album embodying the player's performance, and commercially released prior to the preceding calendar

year, but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication or chart during the preceding calendar year is eligible unless it has appeared on a previously published ACM ballot in this category. Five (5) nominees shall be selected by the Selections Committee via the MBI as set forth herein and shall be subject to the approval of the ACM Board. Any individual that won this category for the previous year is not eligible to be nominated for the subsequent year only - no consecutive winners. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the Artist/Entertainer and Musician/Band Leader/Instrumentalist membership of the ACM.

AUDIO ENGINEER OF THE YEAR OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding audio engineer for the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to; success at radio (i.e. engineered a single which achieves "Top 20" or better as set forth in the relevant Billboard or R&R charts) and/or sales of pre-recorded music (i.e. "Top 20" or better as set forth in the Billboard "Top Country Albums" chart). Any single or album crediting "engineer" for engineering same and commercially released prior to the preceding calendar year but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication or chart during the preceding calendar year is eligible unless it has appeared on a previously published ACM ballot in this category. Five (5) nominees shall be selected by the Selections Committee via the MBI as set forth herein and shall be subject to the approval of the ACM Board. Any individual that won this category for the previous year is not eligible to be nominated for the subsequent year only - no consecutive winners. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the Artist/Entertainer and Musician/Band Leader/Instrumentalist membership of the ACM.

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding producer for the preceding calendar year. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio (i.e. produced a single which achieves "Top 20" or better as set forth in the relevant Billboard or R&R charts) and/or sales of pre-recorded music embodying the performance of player (i.e. "Top 20" or better as set forth in the Billboard "Top Country Albums" chart). Any single or album which credits "producer" for producing same and commercially released prior to the preceding calendar year but achieving its highest charted position in any accepted country music industry publication or chart during the preceding calendar year is eligible unless it has appeared on a previously published ACM ballot in this category. Five (5) nominees shall be selected by the Selections Committee via the MBI as set forth herein and shall

be subject to the approval of the ACM Board. Any individual that won this category for the previous year is not eligible to be nominated for the subsequent year only - no consecutive winners. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the Artist/Entertainer and Musician/Band Leader/Instrumentalist membership of the ACM.

SPECIAL AWARDS CRITERIA

(The following do not have to be given each year)

GENE WEED SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Presented for unprecedented, unique and outstanding individual achievement in the field of country music during the preceding calendar year, voted by the Board of Directors.

CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

(Criteria Revised March, 2007)

Presented to an individual artist, duo, group or multiple artist collaboration. Recipient(s) must have advanced the popularity and acceptance of country music through their endeavors in the entertainment industry in multiple areas during the preceding calendar year, including but not limited to writing, recording, production, concert tours/festivals, film, television, literary works, philanthropic contributions and other goodwill efforts. This award may also be presented to an individual artist, duo or group that achieved initial fame in prior years, and has experienced significant and substantial career resurgence. Award voted by the Board of Directors.

JIM REEVES INTERNATIONAL AWARD

(Name and Criteria Revised March, 2007)

Presented to an individual, not necessarily a performing artist, for outstanding contributions to the acceptance of country music throughout the world, voted by the Board of Directors.

CLIFFIE STONE PIONEER AWARD

(Name revised January 2007)

Presented to an outstanding "Pioneer" of country music. Although the award will continue to be the "Pioneer" award, on May 17, 1998, the Board of Directors voted this award will also be known as "The Clifflie" in honor of Clifflie Stone.

TEX RITTER AWARD (Motion Picture)

A movie released and/or receiving major exposure during the preceding calendar year, featuring or utilizing country music, voted by the Board of Directors. (In 1985, the Board felt there weren't enough movies to submit this award to membership - can be voted by the Board or the membership - Board's decision as to voting procedure.)

ARTIST OF THE DECADE

Presented to an outstanding country performer who has traveled internationally over the decade bringing country music to the world through concerts, recordings and special events and one who allies "humanity" with fame and financial achievements.

MAE BOREN AXTON AWARD

(Criteria Revised March, 2007)

The Mae Boren Axton Award is given in recognition of years of dedication and service by an outstanding individual to the Academy of Country Music.

THE HOME DEPOT HUMANITARIAN AWARD

This award was created to recognize an artist or group in the country music industry that is committed to serving others, has a generosity of spirit, and a dedication to helping build the dreams of those in need, voted on by the ACMCF Board of Directors.

POET'S AWARD

This award is presented to a songwriter or songwriters for outstanding musical and/or lyrical contributions throughout their careers in the field of country music. Criteria to be considered include longevity and consistency with special consideration given to a song or songs' impact on the culture of country music.

CRYSTAL MILESTONE AWARD

The award is given to artist or industry leader to commemorate a specific, remarkable achievement.

CBS

THANK YOU



On behalf of the Academy of Country Music Board of Directors and staff, we'd like to thank CBS Television and its affiliates for their continued commitment to the *Academy of Country Music Awards* and enthusiastic support of country music. A special thank you also goes out to CBS.com for partnering with us on the Academy's first-ever online fan vote for Entertainer of the Year. We're thrilled to work with such a great team of creative and passionate individuals!

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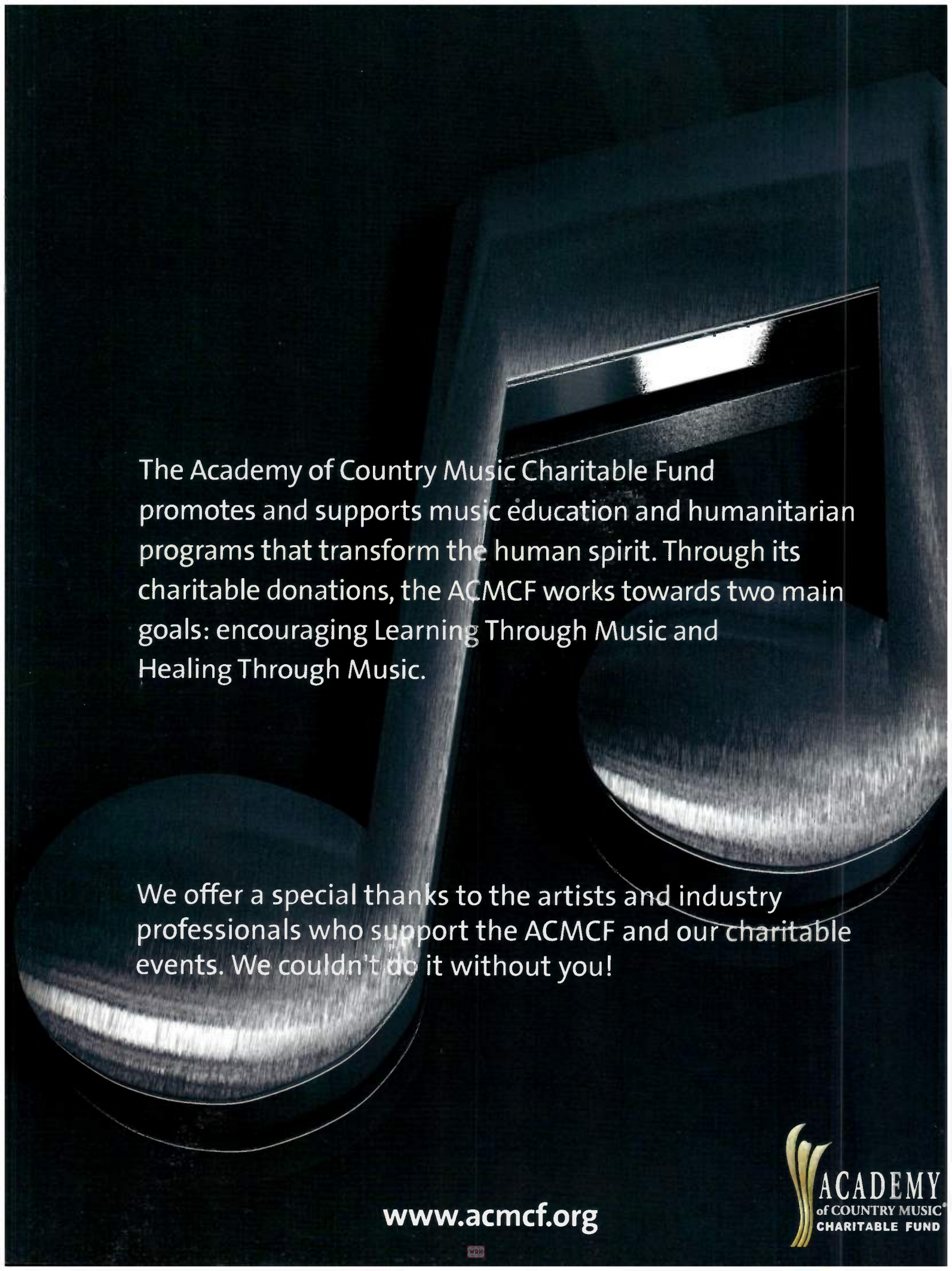
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