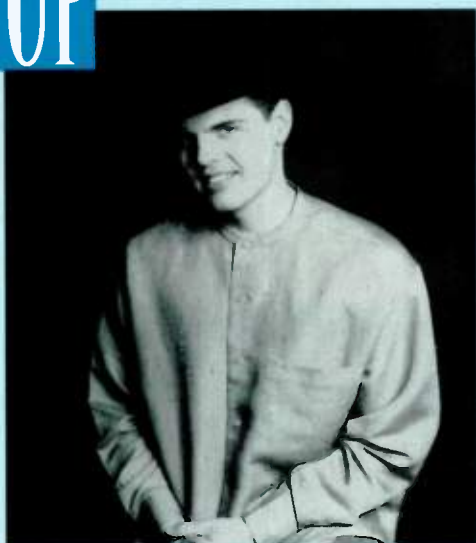


# CLOSE UP

MAY 1995

**INSIDE:**  
**Rick Trevino**  
**Shenandoah**  
**Gail Davies**  
**Ray Wiley Hubbard**





**"As long as I'm prepared, then it's going to help me with the music industry."  
- RICK TREVINO  
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At age 30, John Michael Montgomery seems to be growing comfortably into the role of Country Music superstar. His secret may be that he doesn't look at himself in that light. Before a recent concert, John Michael kicked back in blue jeans and a Pearl Jam baseball cap to talk about the loss of his father and other things that truly matter to him.

"Some people are born to travel and be on the road. I wasn't. I like seeing the sights and then getting back home."

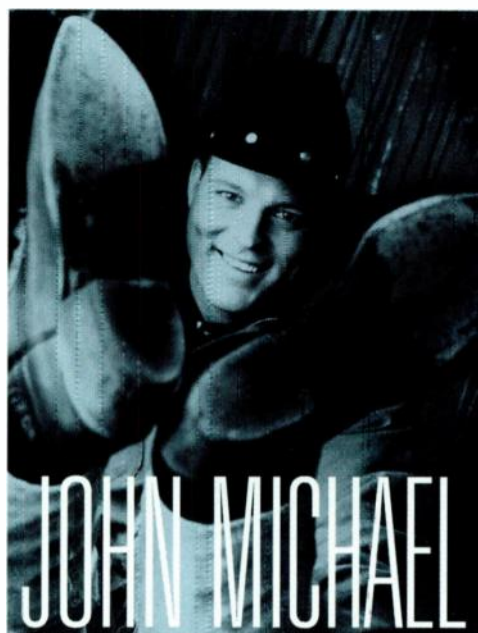
Home is a Kentucky farm just down the road from the farm where his father was raised. Buying the farms topped John Michael's wish list as the Atlantic artist's music career took off.

"That was the first thing I wanted to do, because when you grow up and go to your grandmother's house every Sunday, she cooks dinner, and you get to run all over this farm. And all of sudden a few years later, somebody else owns it. It's like, 'Hey, that ain't right.' You can't stand the fact that you can't go back on that farm. It's like having a piece of you pulled away and sold off.

*"You just kind of learn to live and appreciate that every day you have somebody that you love on this earth."*

It's a piece of the family, especially with my dad being born and raised there. So I was lucky enough that the first thing I was able to do was to go and buy that farm back and the house that my dad built there."

John's father, Harold Montgomery, died in the home last August after battling with prostate cancer for three years. As a local artist and leader of the Montgomery Family Band, he had led the way for his son's music career



"Music was just one of the things we had together, and the farm was another. More than anything, I can look at my hands or look at myself in the mirror and see my dad in me all the time. I've got his smile. As long as I'm living, I'll always remember the relationship we had and see him. Your parents are just a part of you and...I'm going to carry on what my dad taught me, whether it's about life or music. I'm reminded of that every day.

"Music was probably the love of his life that hampered him. It was such a large dream of his to be able to be successful in it. It didn't happen for him, but it happened to his son, and he was enjoying it as much as I was...It bothers me that he's not able to enjoy the dream come true...I wanted to share that with him and bring him out on the road and let him experience as much as he could. Of course, that didn't happen. But you just kind of learn to live and appreciate that every day you have somebody that you love on this earth. You can't take that for granted, because they could be gone tomorrow."

Remaining true to his roots helps the young artist keep everything in perspec-

tive. "I try to be as normal as possible, like the everyday person you meet out on the street. Sometimes if you're put on a pedestal, you are not supposed to be that way. You're supposed to be a little bit better. I don't ever want to feel like I'm better than anyone else...That's one reason I still live at home, because I have my little circle of friends, and I can go home and be just John or John-boy. I ain't this star figure to them, and I can walk around and go fishing. I've got to have that in my life. I've always got to be grounded around that. When you get into the celebrity/entertainment thing, you're pretty much in that world of nothing but material things. I can't go very far on that."

The Country heartthrob hopes to share his life with his own family soon.

"Probably the biggest goal is one day finding the young lady I want to settle down with, marry and have kids and grandkids. This music thing is just a small portion of my life...I'm enjoying this part of my life now, so when it's time to commit to my wife, to a relationship, that's what my life will be, and all this will have to take a back seat."

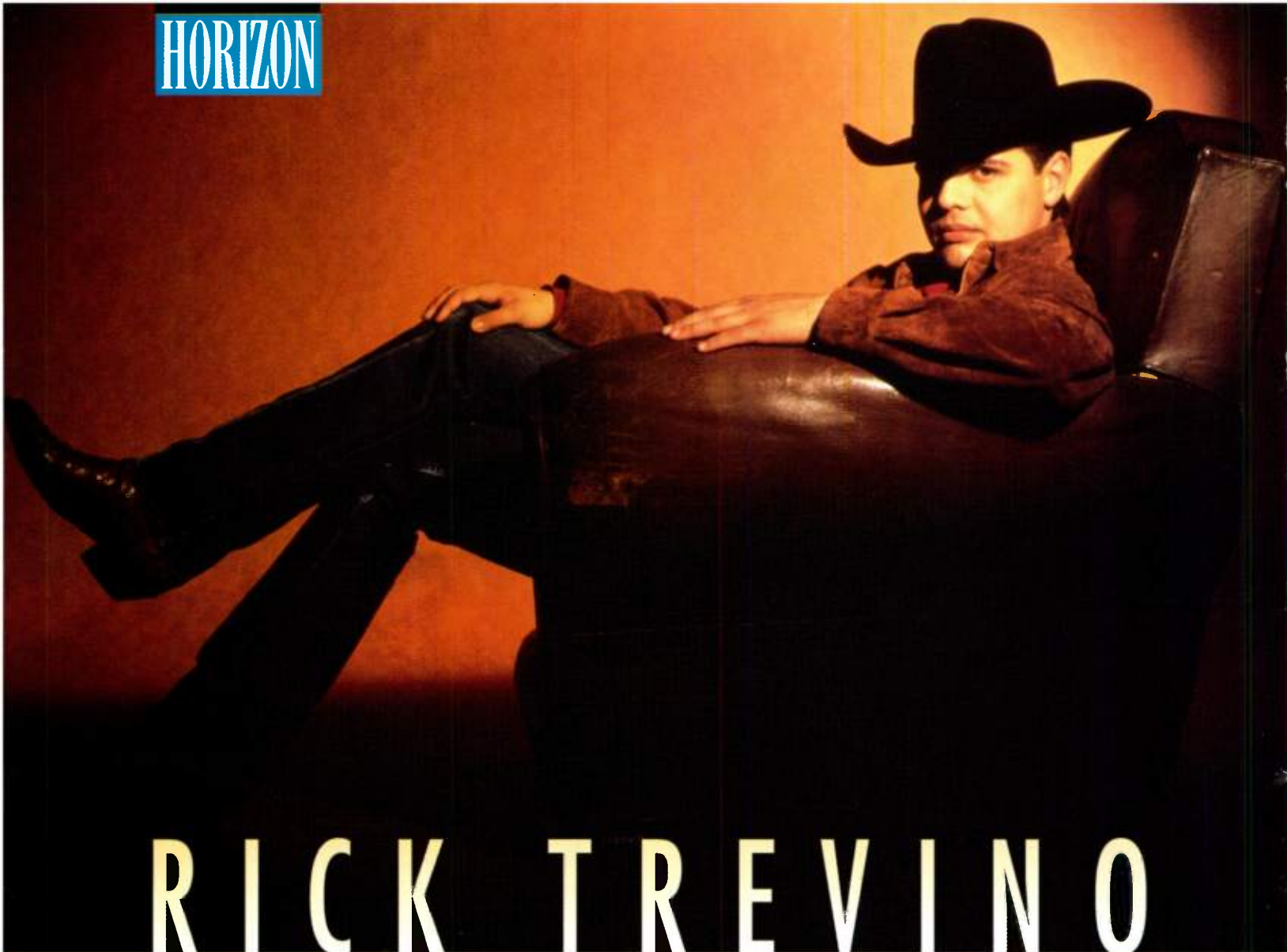
Despite multi-platinum albums and chart-topping love ballads, John Michael says he

*"This music thing is just a small portion of my life."*

doesn't want to be known for his trademark dimples and black cowboy hat.

"When all is said and done and my name is mentioned, I hope they can say, 'Well, he was a nice guy.' That's the bottom line. I'm like everybody else, and I've got my funny ways. I get upset sometimes. But I try to always realize if I'm wrong or not. I have a really large conscience. If I feel I can go to bed and sleep at night without something bearing on my mind, then I've had a pretty good day." **GU**

• SHANNON HEIM



# RICK TREVINO

In March 1994, Rick Trevino found himself hosting a lunch for the CMA staff - a chance to get acquainted and introduce his debut lp RICK TREVINO. One year later, he returned to CMA for another luncheon just prior to the release of LOOKING FOR THE LIGHT, his latest album on Columbia Records. CMA staff members found Rick's transformation from shy new artist to outgoing hit-maker remarkable. But the evolution was natural for the self-confident Texas native.

"The first time through is a little nerve wracking," he says philosophically of that first visit. "But just like anything else, the second time around is easier. I don't have to prove anything 'cause I have already succeeded at having a few

hit records. There is a certain comfort level that I have reached.

**"I wouldn't be able to have a number one record if I was trying to copy someone else."**

"The whole reason why any artist would be nervous from the beginning is that they want to make the right impression on whoever they are performing for, whether it is an audience or whether it is your first single on the radio. The first impression is important. Because of that,

you need to be sharp. I need to have my act together. I need to have my music ready, to be as prepared as possible. As long as I'm prepared, then it's going to help me with the music industry."

That preparation includes putting a great support team together, from his record label to his manager to his band. "Everyday I call the label to see what is going on, call my manager and see what happened today, if there is anything that I need to know. Sometimes you can't always communicate like that. Sometimes you know everybody is out of pocket, and you just have to trust the people that you work with.

"You have to really feel in your heart that these people are...that you are getting your money's worth. Especially the people on the road - I need to feel that they are working as hard as they possibly can, and they are making smart decisions. I have a lot of respect for them. If they weren't playing with me, they would be playing with someone else. That's how good they are. I expect the best, and I get that. Whenever it is time to do a performance, a very critical radio performance like a CRS or a showcase, my band has always delivered the product. They have never been short of being great. I have played with them for a long time. We're all from the same place, groomed by that Austin music scene."

**"...the more people at a show, the better I am."**

This year, Rick and his band will be playing a variety of venues, doing some clubs and fairs on his own as well as opening some of the top names in the industry, including Sawyer Brown.

"The bigger the venue and the bigger the stage, the more people at a show, the better I am. In a club, you've got the first half of the dance floor that are listening to the music, and the back half are just kind of drinking beer and having fun. But when you are at an arena, all 50,000 or all 30,000 are watching you perform, and that's what I like. I do much better in the bigger arenas and the bigger venues, although I like playing the honky tonks too, because you can play longer."

For Rick, entertainment isn't just another word. It's his livelihood, and he works hard to ensure that audiences will come back the next time around.

"There are a few different tools that I use to keep them entertained. I make sure that when I sing, I expect them to hear what is on the CD or what comes over the radio, and that is a flawless performance of the music. I do my vocal exercises before I get up on stage and sing a little bit, so when I get up there, the first note that comes out of my mouth is right there. The people expect to hear nothing but the best. I like to get away from the guitar a little bit and move

around and get the audience involved. I try to move to the song. The song moves me. I try to keep eye contact with the back of the room even though I can't see them. I'll point and make sure that they know I am looking at them, and I'll acknowledge the people up in the rafters, way in the back. Just keep the show as up-tempo as possible and try to have as many hit records on the radio so when we go out live, they'll be expecting that.

"Each single is very important. You get national exposure with that top five single or top 10. The more top 10s that you release, the more people in the country will know who you are. I feel like we are in a good position right now to release this new album. More people are aware of my music than ever."

No longer a rookie in the studio, Rick says making the second album was a much easier experience than making the first one.

"The public knows who you are, the fans know who you are, and radio knows who you are, not to mention the publishers here in Nashville know what you are all about. They've got a better grasp of what kind of style you are looking for, so when you get pitched songs, the material is a lot more consistent. For me, the material was a lot better the second time around. So this second time has been refreshing.

"Vocally, I am a better singer. I think I've come a long way, doing a lot of shows and just kind of finding that musical direction a little bit better than the first album. We honed in on a more consistent musical direction. As an overall artist being the songwriter, the singer, the entertainer...everything has kind of grown, and I have been educated this year."

Part of that education has been learning that his time is not really his own. In fact, Rick's hard-pressed to recall the last day he had off.

"A day that I didn't worry about the business? Probably Christmas. This past Christmas I didn't worry about music. I try to write every day. But as time goes on and as the success level goes up, I'll be able to take some time off."

For now, he has other priorities. "I would like to have longevity. I really enjoy what I do, because it is such a musician's dream. If you

have been a musician for a long time and you finally get a record deal, it is the most gratifying thing in the world. Just to be able to do this for the rest of my life is a goal in itself. I would like consistent top 10 records. I want to have another number one record. That is probably the immediate goal that I am looking for right now."

With so many new artists lining the Country Music horizon, Rick manages to stand out by establishing a sound that is his alone.

**"The product has to be primo."**

"I wouldn't be able to have a number one record if I was trying to copy someone else. You get new artists every week, and that's why the music needs to be great. The product has to be primo. Don't copy someone else's song just because it went to number one. Keep doing what you are doing, make your identity be accepted, and *your* identity will go to number one."

But as his identity becomes increasingly more popular, he risks losing his anonymity. Fortunately, that's not a big dilemma for Rick.

**"...I have been educated this year."**

"That is part of the sacrifice. What makes a musician have a passion for music is that goal to be a superstar. Everybody that picks up a guitar and starts practicing and starts playing in clubs, everyone that is out there in music has that dream of being a superstar or a famous musician or making a living at music. They know what comes along with that - having to sign the autographs and to be a person that people are familiar with from a visual perspective. They know what you look like, so they are going to see you in the grocery stores and they are going to stop you. And, hey, if that ever stops happening to me, I'll be upset!" **CU**

**- Janet E. Williams**

Some of Country Music's hottest artists will perform at the 24th Annual International Country Music Fan Fair, scheduled to take place June 5 - 10 at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds in Nashville. Throughout the week, over 70 artists will take the Fan Fair stage, including Wynonna, Alan Jackson and Billy Ray Cyrus. The annual event, sold out since early February, is sponsored by CMA and the Grand Ole Opry.

"With acts still being added to the already incredible artist lineup, 1995's schedule proves why Fan Fair is the pre-eminent festival event in Country Music," said Ed

# ALL-STAR LINEUP SET FOR

Benson, CMA's executive director. "We deeply appreciate the artist and industry support, which makes this unique event possible."

Supergroup Alabama returns to the Fan Fair stage, marking its first appearance since the early '80s. The group was forced to cancel a 1993 performance due to illness.

Other artists returning to the Fan Fair stage to entertain over 24,000 Country Music fans include John Berry, Mark Chesnutt, Diamond Rio, Joe Diffie, Toby Keith, Neal McCoy, Tim McGraw, Lorrie Morgan, Lee Roy Parnell and Clay Walker.

One highlight promises to be the appearance of George Jones and Tammy Wynette during the MCA Records show. Fans of the highly popular stage production "Always...Patsy Cline" will find its star, Mandy Barnett, performing during the Asylum Records show.

Fan Fair registrants will see several new faces on the stage in 1995, including Arista's million-selling band, The Tractors; Wade Hayes and Rick Trevino, each of whom has already scored a number one single; hit songwriter Woody Lee and Canada's Lisa Brokop.

*With more artists to be added, the current artist lineup for Fan Fair '95 is:*



*Alabama*

## MONDAY, JUNE 5

BLUEGRASS SHOW  
7 - 10 p.m.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 6

CURB RECORDS & MCG CURB RECORDS  
10 a.m. - Noon  
Junior Brown  
Tim McGraw  
Hank Williams Jr.

## MERCURY NASHVILLE

2:30 - 4:30 p.m.  
The Statler Brothers - host  
Terri Clark  
Billy Ray Cyrus  
Wesley Dennis  
Sammy Kershaw  
Kathy Mattea  
Kim Richey  
Keith Stegall

## MCA RECORDS & DECCA RECORDS

7 - 10 p.m.  
Decca Records  
Rhett Akins  
Mark Chesnutt  
Helen Darling  
MCA Records  
Tracy Byrd  
Bobbie Cryner  
George Jones & Tammy Wynette  
David Lee Murphy  
Wynonna

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

LIBERTY RECORDS  
& PATRIOT RECORDS  
10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*Liberty Records*  
George Ducas  
Chris LeDoux  
Shenandoah  
*Patriot Records*  
John Berry  
Lisa Brokop  
Noah Gordon

## WARNER/REPRISE & ASYLUM RECORDS

2 - 4:30 p.m.  
*Warner/Reprise Records*  
David Ball  
Faith Hill  
Victoria Shaw  
Russ Taff  
*Asylum Records*  
Brother Phelps  
Mandy Barnett  
The Cox Family  
Terry Radigan  
Bryan White

## RCA RECORDS & BNA RECORDS

7 - 10 p.m.  
Alabama  
Lorrie Morgan



*Clinton Gregory*



*Hank Williams Jr.*



*Sammy Kershaw*

# R 1995 FAN FAIR STAGE

## THURSDAY, JUNE 8

ATLANTIC RECORDS &  
GIANT RECORDS

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

*Atlantic Records*

Confederate Railroad

Tracy Lawrence

Woody Lee

Neal McCoy

*Giant Records*

Doug Supernaw, host

Mark Collie

Daryle Singletary

Rhonda Vincent

Clay Walker

## THURSDAY, JUNE 8

ARISTA RECORDS &  
CAREER RECORDS

2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Steve Wariner - host

BlackHawk

Diamond Rio

Radney Foster

Alan Jackson

Lee Roy Parnell

The Tractors

## COLUMBIA/EPIC RECORDS

7- 10 p.m.

Stacy Dean Campbell

Joe Diffie

Wade Hayes

Ty Herndon

James House

Patty Loveless

Ken Mellons

Collin Raye

Larry Stewart

Doug Stone

Rick Trevino

## FRIDAY, JUNE 9

POLYDOR NASHVILLE

10 - 11:30 a.m.

Amie Comeaux

Davis Daniel

Clinton Gregory

4 Runner

Toby Keith

The Moffatts

Shane Sutton

Chely Wright

1 - 3:30 p.m.

*Naomi Judd - host*

RIVER NORTH NASHVILLE

Holly Dunn

Steve Kolander

Ronna Reeves

STEP ONE RECORDS

Don Cox

Western Flyer

SUGAR HILL RECORDS

Tim O'Brien

Sweethearts of the Rodeo

ROUNDER RECORDS

The Delevantes

Alison Krauss

Riders In The Sky

## SATURDAY, JUNE 10

GRAND MASTERS FIDDLING  
CHAMPIONSHIP

(Opryland USA)

10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**FAN FAIR**

**D**aron Norwood isn't one to hedge a bet. That's why he's putting all his cards on his next Giant Records single, "My Girl Friday", the story of a divorced father who picks up his daughter on Friday. Since adding the song to his show, he's been getting an incredible response with it.

"I think the guys, the reason they can relate to the song is because they're relating to me and going, 'Gosh, he's been there, and I'm there right now.' Sometimes different story content is needed in Country Music. I was really grate-

**"Sometimes different story content is needed in Country Music."**

ful when I found the song. My daughter, Krista, got to be in the video. She's 7. She is a ham, too. I think she did better than me. I was trying to think of everything - how is she doin', is she doin' okay? She nailed her part, and I messed up mine."

The video will hit tv screens a couple of weeks before the single hits radio.

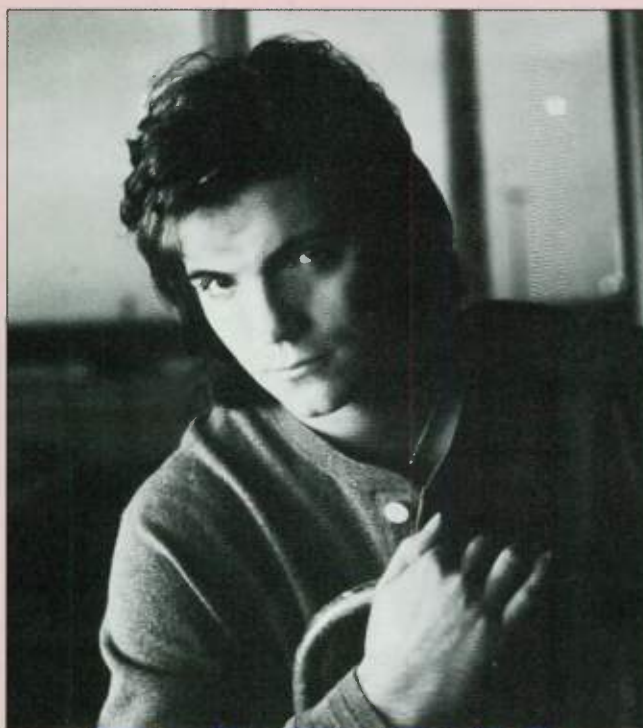
"Videos can set up a song if it's done just right. People look at it and go, 'Wow! I'm into this.' Then they're at work, and they call up the radio station and say, 'Can I hear 'My Girl Friday'? I've had it on my mind all day since I saw it on tv this morning.'"

It was Daron's suggestion to let Krista be a part of the video. The original concept had him playing the piano and singing with actors portraying the parts. "When I read the script, I told my label, 'There's only one thing missing from this video. I need to add my daughter to it.' James (Stroud, label president) agreed with me.

"They do listen to me on some things, but every little thought I have, I just don't bring it out unless it's really important. That way, when I do say something, they know that I really mean it and how I feel. We haven't really disagreed that many times. We both

want what's best. Sometimes what I want is not best. Sometimes what I do want, they'll agree. It's a good relationship."

Daron's new album, **READY WILLING AND ABLE**, contains one song that's particularly special to the artist. He cowrote



# DARON NORWOOD

"Mama Cried" as a tribute to his own mother. "That is a very personal song. I wrote 40 to get there. In two weeks, I wrote 'Mama Cried' and the song on the Keith Whitley tribute album, 'Little Boy Lost'. I wrote 'em back to back, and then they both got cut. I haven't written one since.

"I write basically when I feel like I'm needing things, I'm needing certain songs. I've written a lot of songs and have some put back that I think I should record, but I don't want to bring 'em out unless I really feel like they're there. There's a song I wrote called 'I Cut Myself On A Piece Of Your Broken Heart' that I really believe in. It's about a guy who knows it's over. Period. Can't change it. But he went back to her one more time, and when he did, he cut himself on a piece of that broken heart, 'cause she...it was just like daggers being thrown. Brutal. It

**"Radio needs to know I'm sincere about what I'm doing."**

wasn't happening. So cold she didn't never say nothing. So there's one song. But if I find one that's better than that, mine'll be gone, just like they have in the past. I really keep an open mind."

He's excited about "My Girl Friday". "We're working to get one single that works all together. That's my motto - all together now! Get the video happening, get the radio in there to spur it along, get the magazines and articles out together. We've kind of had...I guess it's like shooting in the wind. We hit some, and we missed some, but we got real close.

"I had a lot of fun with 'Cowboys Don't Cry' and 'Bad Dog'. The next three things, I want 'em to be real solid. Radio needs to know I'm sincere about what I'm doing. I want to be around. I think everybody's waiting for that all together now. 'My Girl Friday' - if all together now works on this one, then a year from now, I'll be so high, pull me out of the clouds! I'm happy right now. I've got a bus, a band, a new album and people who believe in me. I've got a good chance with this one." **CU**

- Janet E. Williams

# CMA AWARDS BALLOTING SCHEDULE

Reminder to all members: the first ballot for the 29th Annual CMA Awards will be mailed on May 26. All CMA individual members in good standing will receive the ballot. If you have any questions regarding the status of your membership, contact CMA's membership department at (615) 244-2840.

Winners will be announced during the live broadcast of "The 29th Annual CMA Awards" on Wednesday, October 4. The gala telecast will begin on CBS-TV at 8 p.m. EDT.

The entire balloting process for the CMA Awards is conducted and certified by the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche. Staff members of CMA do not vote for the awards, nor do they handle or tabulate any of the three ballots.

## Following is the 1995 CMA Awards schedule:

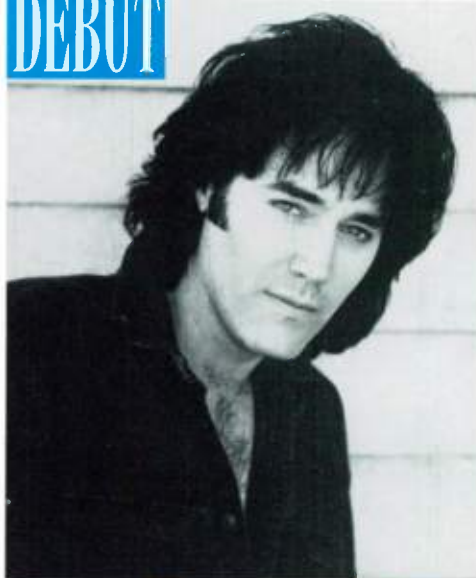
- MAY 26** First ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
- JUNE 22** Deadline to return first ballot to Deloitte & Touche
- JULY 7** Second ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
- AUGUST 10** Deadline to return second ballot to Deloitte & Touche
- AUGUST 15** CMA Awards finalists announced at press conference
- AUGUST 23** Final ballot mailed to all CMA members in good standing
- SEPTEMBER 26** Deadline to return final ballot to Deloitte & Touche
- OCTOBER 4** Winners announced on live CMA Awards telecast, CBS-TV, 8 p.m. EDT



Travis Tritt recently celebrated his latest platinum album, *TEN FEET TALL AND BULLETPROOF*.

Enjoying the gala event are (l to r) Warner/Reprise's Bill Mayne, publicist Nancy Russell, Warner/Reprise President Jim Ed Norman, Tritt, producer Gregg Brown, co-manager Ken Kragen, co-manager Gary Falcon and Warner/Reprise's Doug Grau.

# DEBUT



## DAVID LEE MURPHY

*Record Label:* MCA Nashville

*Debut Album:* OUT WITH A BANG

*Singles:* "Party Crowd", "Fish Ain't Bitin'", "Just Once"

*Management:* Doug Casmus, D. Management Company

*Booking Agency:* William Morris Agency

*Publicist:* Jules Wortman, MCA Nashville

*Influences:* Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Elvis Presley

When David Lee Murphy arrived in Nashville in 1983, his goal was to gain recognition as a songwriter. Cuts by Reba McEntire ("Red Roses Won't Work Now"), Doug Stone ("High Weeds And Rust") and others signalled success in that field, but that wasn't quite enough. The Illinois native determined to perfect his songwriting skills so he could write an album for himself.

Upon hearing David Lee's demo tape, producer Tony Brown signed him to MCA Nashville and chose one of the tunes on the tape, "Just Once", for the soundtrack of "8 Seconds", the Luke Perry feature film about bullrider Lane Frost. David Lee's dream of his own album followed. OUT WITH A BANG contains 10 tunes written or cowritten by the lanky singer/songwriter.



# STEVE FISHELL

*F*rom playing trombone in the school band to producing albums for award-winning artists like Pam Tillis and Canada's Charlie Major, Steve Fishell has relied on a common theme - the music is good if it *feels* good.

"Music has to be about passion," Steve explains. "It's about the feeling that music evokes. I'm really into that side of what an artist does. About helping them record something that would stand up in 10 years rather than just something that is expendable. I think that's the mark of a true recording artist. And I think that's what the definition of a recording artist should be, not a Country Music star.

"The producer is almost like a third eye in a career. You want to be a person's musical associate, also a bit of a psychologist, a bit of a therapist, you're a gopher sometimes, all kinds of things. But it's very important to help the artist realize what it is they see themselves as. The term artist I take very seriously. I think in Nashville, it sometimes isn't. I think it's important to respect the artists' point of view. It is their name on the record.

"I'm very hands off at a certain point. I think that it's a democratic process. The artist was signed for a reason. Your job as a producer is to help that artist focus and define

exactly what it is they want to do and present the best possible representation of their music. I love music. I love the studio. I love being in the thick of things...The producer's job is to be the conduit of all these different ideas, and it's the artist's job to have all these different ideas floating around in the air.

*"I can't stress how much incredible intuitive knowledge about music and about feel I learned from Emmylou."*

"Pam Tillis, for instance, will offer a myriad of incredible ideas. I love that. It's so important. I would much rather work with someone who has an opinion and has the capacity to think on the spot rather than just be like a deer in the headlights, when you're just so shocked you freeze."

Even as a lanky young student, Steve was drawn to expressing himself through music.

"In grade school, they sized me up and decided I was tall enough to play trombone. I think the fact that you have notes moving around affected me somewhat. I've always

been taken by the vocal quality that a trombone has, the moving slide...I got into the steel guitar by listening to people like Duane Allman on the slide guitar and David Lindley (Jackson Browne) on lap steel and Rusty Young (Poco) on the pedal steel. Just really taken by those instruments and the way people used them. I think it's a beautiful way to express yourself. You paint a picture around the vocal with this instrument."

Steve started studying steel guitar at the age of 19, while a student at the University of California in Santa Barbara.

"I was the frustrated English major in the band," Steve recalls. "I always felt like I should be doing something else. It was a quest."

His search for his proverbial place in the world led him to the studio, playing steel guitar on tracks for artists including Sheena Easton, Marshall Crenshaw and Emmylou Harris. He eventually began touring with Emmylou as a member of her Hot Band.

Steve attributes much of his producing style to Harris and her producer, Brian Ahern.

"I can't stress how much incredible intuitive knowledge about music and about feel I learned from Emmylou - from observing her in the studio and hearing the songs that

she would record and how she would record them, and the whole philosophy of staying out of the way of the song. The song is king. And that's what Nashville is about too. The song is always the king. The lyrics are important, and everything else is an embellishment. It should be like an interwoven musical quilt, if you will, around this lyric. The lyric is the most important thing that has to be front and center. Everything else is just there to support it and to add color to that song.

"It's usually the most simple thing that works the best. I try to underproduce. I even call it recording sometimes...I always think it's more powerful when there's less on the track. If we can get away with one

*"I don't like things to be perfect. I'd rather that they be a little funky or a little sloppy."*

acoustic guitar, we'll do it. It doesn't seem very revolutionary, but it's just a spirit."

His years as a studio musician also give Steve insight as a producer.

"As a player, through my recording experience in Los Angeles and here, I know what it's like to be on the other side of the glass...If someone can be a producer and a record executive, which we find a lot of here, then I don't see any reason why a person can't be a musician and a producer. I think you can wear several hats as long as you wear them separately...It's very difficult to play your instrument and focus on the big picture. Playing the steel guitar is a major distraction. Tuning the steel guitar is the most frustrating thing that anyone can do on the face of the earth.

"I don't want to be one to judge who's good and who's bad, but if something moves me, I want to be able to help them get it down on tape. I've really been lucky to work with some people like Pam Tillis and Raul Malo, Rodney Foster and Jann Browne, who are truly compassionate about what they do. It's

a privilege to be able to do that - to get in the middle of that and to witness them in the studio and point them in a certain direction so they don't get lost, and capture that.

"If I can help the big picture by just a little

*"The song is always the king."*

comment here or there, I'll toss it in. But basically, I go by feel. I'm real loose about perfection. I don't like things to be perfect. I'd rather that they be a little funky or a little sloppy...I love to have things feel good - that's what matters most and that just comes from a subjective opinion of thousands of records that I've listened to. When I think something's feeling good, that's it. We put it down, and we get on to the next thing. You can play a song a thousand different ways, and each one of those ways will be right. But I think that it's the producers role to know when it's done. The producer needs to be able to tell the artist that this is good, this is a good representation of who you are. Let's move on to the next thing. It's really simple, but it's hard for some people to do that."

"With Country Music, everyone is focusing on what radio will play. That's pretty much the goal and the challenge. I love rising to that occasion. I like to make rootsy, aggressive straightforward records, and I don't really like to layer things or get too busy with the mix or have the mix be too grandiose. The mix should be an enhancement of a finely recorded instrument.

"I'm egoless about production. I'm open to ideas from anybody. I don't need the ego gratification of the power role. I have enough responsibility as it is. I still have to answer for what I turn in, and they always give me way more rope than I need to hang myself. I've swayed once or twice. But generally speaking, everything turns out fine."

Fine is an understatement considering Steve's success in Canada and the U.S. Charlie Major and THE OTHER SIDE, his debut album on Arista/BMG Canada, have

broken Canadian records by amassing six number one hits. The album was named Album of the Year at the Canadian Country Music Association Awards, and Major was named Male Vocalist of the Year by both the CCMA and the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. Fishell also produces the Canadian group Prairie Oyster, whose ONLY ONE MOON album spawned two number one hits. The group was named Entertainer of the Year by the CCMA and won a Group of the Year honors at CARAS' Juno Awards.

Here in Nashville, Pam Tillis' SWEET-HEART'S DANCE album is platinum and has produced two number one hits so far.

"I really enjoy working with female artists because of the diversity you find. Some producers would say that they don't sell enough records. Well, to hell with that. I like working with artists that have diversity...Female artists are just more evocative. There are more nuances, and they're not afraid to be eclectic as much as male artists. I don't mean to generalize. I just find that you can express yourself more fully with a female artist."

*"Tuning the steel guitar is the most frustrating thing that anyone can do on the face of the earth."*

Currently, Steve is back in the role of musician, touring internationally with Emmylou Harris and the Hot Band's 20th Anniversary Tour. In the future, he wouldn't mind working with another of his favorite artists, Stevie Wonder.

"I just heard that Stevie Wonder wants to make a Country record. I'd do anything to help him achieve that goal, 'cause I have been a huge fan of his for years." The Hot Band member adds appropriately, "I know he won't have any problems without me, but if he ever needs my help, I'll be there in a hot second." **CU**

**-SHANNON HEIM**

# DUBLIN



**CMA board member Paul Fenn of ASGARD, Ltd. (left) and Richard Wootton (right) of British public relations firm Byworth-Wootton renew their acquaintance with CMA board member Clint Black and his wife Lisa Hartman Black.**



**CMA Executive Director Ed Benson (left) and CMA President Tony Conway (second from left) welcome Kris Kristofferson (right) to a reception given by Irish Prime Minister John Bruton (second from right) at Dublin Castle.**

Time for a limerick? Perhaps, as CMA Executive Director Ed Benson (right) enjoys a light moment with singer/song writers Clint Black (left) and Radney Foster during the Dublin trip.



# '95

## Highlights from CMA's April board meeting in Dublin, Ireland



Patriot singer John Berry (left) joins the receiving line with George Ducas and Deana Carter (center) as they are welcomed by U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Jean Kennedy Smith (right).



A hatless George Ducas performs during one of the many CMA board activities in Dublin. He promised to give his hat to Irish Prime Minister John Bruton because the Prime Minister liked it so much.

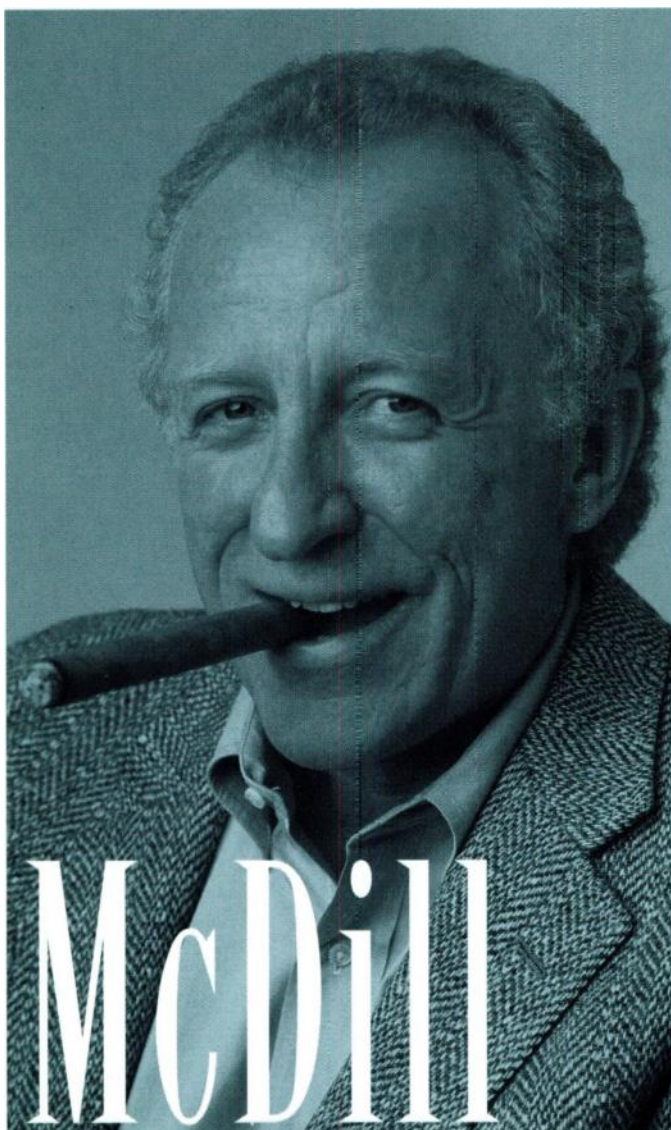


CMA President Tony Conway of Buddy Lee Attractions (left) and CMA Chairman Kitty Moon of Scene Three, Inc. (right) chat with U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Jean Kennedy Smith during a reception for the CMA board of directors at her home.

**"FAR BETTER IT IS  
TO ATTEMPT MIGHTY  
THINGS, TO WIN  
GLORIOUS TRIUMPHS  
EVEN THOUGH  
CHECKERED BY  
FAILURE THAN TO  
TAKE RANK WITH  
THOSE POOR SPIRITS  
WHO NEITHER ENJOY  
MUCH NOR SUFFER  
MUCH BECAUSE THEY  
LIVE IN THE GRAY  
TWILIGHT THAT  
KNOWS NOT VICTORY  
OR DEFEAT."**

**TEDDY ROOSEVELT**

# Bob McDill



shooting pheasants in South Dakota.

"It seemed like a simple thing, but I never got around to it." In November, he's going to England for his first driven shoot hunt and plans to hunt in Argentina.

"And then career-wise, you think if there is anything I need to say, I had better say it... 'cause you realize two-thirds of your life is probably gone - if you're lucky."

Bob sees truth in the Gail Sheehy book "Passages". "You get to be 50, and you become less ambitious, less hard-driving, much less materialistic. You couldn't care less about stuff and cars... But you do become more spiritual, and you want to try to get that part of your life together. You want to try to

pay attention to your friends. You look at all of those people around you that you have been taking for granted all of your life. Been taking them for granted for 20 years, and suddenly you realize how important all that is... Young males really are terribly ambitious and aggressive, and for 20-something years that is all I did, just grit my teeth and push."

Now Bob is leisurely studying astronomy, economics and re-reading "The Iliad". After penning more than a thousand songs, he still enjoys his craft.

"It's easier to write, but harder to have something to say... It's a great feeling playing

And like the Teddy Roosevelt quote that sits framed on his office table, Bob has had his share of success - in recent singles like "On The Road" and "Gone Country" - and failures, including the breakup of his 20-year marriage. This year, he turned 50.

**"IT'S A GREAT FEELING  
PLAYING GOD."**

"It makes you think. If there is anything I want to do, I had better get on with it. So in the last year or two I have done some things that I've always wanted to do" including

**T**he head chef of the Buffalo River Rod, Gun and Bloody Mary Society and Gentleman's Club kicks back in his neat office with a view of the alley side of 16th Street. Enthusiasm seeps into his voice in describing his specialty - "grilled duck with a brown sauce."

On his Arkansas hunting lease, he's notorious for his culinary concoctions, but on Music Row, Bob McDill is legend and lore. He's penned more than 30 number one hits and won dozens of awards including an induction into the Nashville Songwriters Association International Hall of Fame.

God. You create those characters, and they all sort of come together, and you create that little world and manipulate those people and make them talk...and it is on tape and on paper. It's a great high."

He says songwriters need to be attentive.

"Listen to that voice in you...Look at the big, big hits. The big hits are always different, wacky, left field. They are never right down

"...YOU REALIZE TWO-THIRDS OF YOUR LIFE IS PROBABLY GONE - IF YOU'RE LUCKY."

the middle. They are different. The big songs break new artists. New artists may, from that time forward, get tamer and tamer and more white bread and less interesting, but that first one is always a knock out."

In songs like "Song of the South" and the Don Williams' hits "Rake And Ramblin' Man" and "Amanda", Bob's characters come alive.

"You have to know who that person is and have him speak and talk in a certain way...If they speak in cliches they are just cardboard cutouts, and everybody is bored to death, including the songwriter."

*I still hear the soft southern wind in the  
live oak trees  
Those Williams boys they still mean a lot  
to me  
Hank and Tennessee  
I guess we're all gonna be what we're  
gonna be  
So what do you do with good ole boys like  
me.*

No song character is richer than the one in "Good Ole Boys Like Me".

"Redneck means someone who is ignorant and backward and illiterate and unwashed. A good ole boy doesn't necessarily have to be that. And the power of the 'Good Ole Boy' song is that you describe that person who is literate, and his father does walk around with a bottle in his hand and talk about his code of honor."

Bob's toyed with writing stories, including one for an outdoor magazine. "I sold a story a couple of years ago. Worked on it three or four months and got \$300 for it. I thought, 'I'll wait to retire to do this.'"

Bob says that even though he's been writing for more than a quarter of a century, he still fears his muse may vanish one day.

"It has been over for me so many times that they're not countable. You look in the mirror and think, 'Who are you kidding? You'll never write another song as long as you live, and you know it...It's gone. It's been gone, and you have been faking it for years.' We all go through it."

"...FOR 20-SOMETHING YEARS THAT IS ALL I DID. JUST GRIT MY TEETH AND PUSH."

Songwriters have a tougher time now, Bob believes, because so many artists write their own material.

"Somebody said 60 percent of the awards given at BMI were given to writer- artists so that leaves 40 percent for the rest of us, and we've got 10 times as many people fighting over that 40 percent to get those records."

And what would Bob have been if he hadn't been a composer?

"Angry and frustrated, I guess. Mean probably. Meaner than I am now. Be like one of those people at 50 who'd be very bitter about life."

"SAVE YOUR MONEY BUT HAVE A BIG TIME."

Now he's striving for poise and balance in life, and hopes his 22-year-old daughter Katie does the same.

"On the one hand, I want her to live life full tilt, hold nothing back. On the other hand, I want her to be as sensible as possible. Take care of business and take care of herself. Can you do both things? If she can do both those things, that would make me happy for her. It is a balance. That is what we all need to achieve with everything. Save your money but have a big time. Take care of your health, but you may as well enjoy good food and wine, good cigars.

"A friend of ours at the (hunting) club recently had a heart attack, and they were all terrified. We got up at six in the morning, and they were all three sitting there with dry oatmeal, no milk. This is beyond the skim milk thing. No sugar...Dry oatmeal, eating this goop. I mean, God, life is too short. Just take a few years off my life, and let me have two percent milk on my oatmeal, please!" **CU**

- Teresa George

"Good Ole' Boys Like Me"  
© 1979 PolyGram International Publishing, Inc. (ASCAP)

"Country's new tide of self-directed women owes a debt to Gail Davies, who a decade ago was the first female to sing, play guitar, write her own songs, lead a band and produce her own records," wrote *USA Today* in 1990, just one year after *NEWSWEEK* said of her, "Critics have been scratching their heads for years over why she isn't a superstar."

With a slate of top 10 hits from "Blue Heartache" to "Round The Clock Lovin'", Gail became one of a handful of singers to watch in the early 1980s. She was lauded by critics, had success on Country radio and influenced dozens of today's contemporary artists, yet never fully stepped into the spotlight. She quit performing on a regular basis in 1992 when Jimmy Bowen hired her as Liberty Records' first female staff producer, where she worked with numerous developmental acts. But Gail's passion for songwriting, singing and producing never ebbed during her "retirement". An acoustic concert tour in Europe last year spurred her into action.

"Every place we went, people knew my songs. One guy in Amsterdam, a record store owner, asked, 'When are you gonna have another record out?' I came home and thought maybe I should make another record. I thought, 'How will I go about that?' I probably couldn't get a deal, because I am over 30 - 47 to be exact - and I wanted to have total control of what I did. My son (Chris, age 12) and I had a talk about it, and we decided to refinance my house, take the money and make an album."

Gail became a one-woman record company, producing ECLECTIC on her own label, Little Chickadee Productions. With distribution lined up through DNA (the distributor for Rounder Records and others), she's ready to share the results of her labors with her fans.

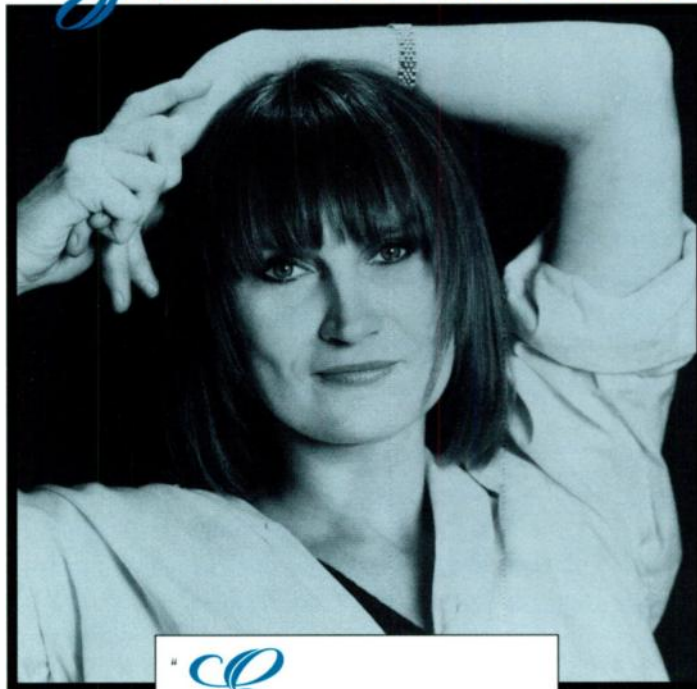
"We didn't go through and fix every little note. I hate how clean and sterile and generic Country Music has become. When you listen to the old Beatles records and the old Linda Ronstadt, things that I grew up enjoying, they're not perfect. Now people get in the studio and, I love to quote Bowen on this, 'Sometimes you get in there, and you got a hillbilly with too many options.' You just keep fixing and fixing and fixing. Wallpaper hanging is just like producing records. I decided I wanted to hang this wallpaper perfectly, so I took a ruler and smoothed out all the bubbles. When I got done, it was perfect. I stepped back and looked at it, and I had worked it so hard that I had scraped the color off of the wallpaper."

"That's what people do when they produce records. They get it so perfect that they suck all the life out of it, all the flesh and blood realism out of the music. Part of this is backlash of the new technology. The technology we have

# Off The

*Even though Country Music has more radio stations on local AM or FM channel on a regular basis, this concentrated hike through some of the less-known Country favorites*

## Gail Davies



"Everybody talks about me as a producer and not as a writer."

today is wonderful for the preservation of music, not for the constant cleaning and cleaning and cleaning, until we get every breath clipped out. An engineer said to me one time, 'Do you want me to take that breath out before that line?' I looked at him and went, 'Well, I gotta breathe!' This album is pretty much a live, direct-to-disk performance. Everybody went in there and just played. And there are some glitches and some things in the solos the guys wished that they could have done over. But it's live, it's a performance. If you understand that, then you'll like the record.

"I think it kinda blows people away. They don't know how to take me. It's always, 'What she doing now?' Everybody talks about me as a producer and not as a writer.

They forget the songs that I have written - 'Tell Me Why' for Jann Browne, 'Hometown Gossip' for the Whites, 'Bucket To The South', along with my hits. Sometimes I feel totally ignored as a songwriter, so this album I wrote 100 percent of every song. The musicians that I work with, I respect tremendously, and I solicit their input at all times. All the guys had input so that it would have other dimensions besides just Gail Davies."

She admits that she misses performing. "I was with the William Morris Agency for 20 years. When I left there in 1986, I didn't go out to perform again for...I think it was 1993 when I did the Kerrville Folk Festival. I got a standing ovation. It was so exciting, and I thought, 'Boy, I want to do this.' But once you leave that arena, it's very hard to get back in. I wouldn't even know where to start."

...continued on page 24

# Beaten Track

tions than any other format, there are still some artists you might not hear on your

You will find them, however, off the beaten track of mainstream music. Take a traditional routes, and you'll find an abundance of music from some established names, including Gail Davies and Ray Wylie Hubbard.

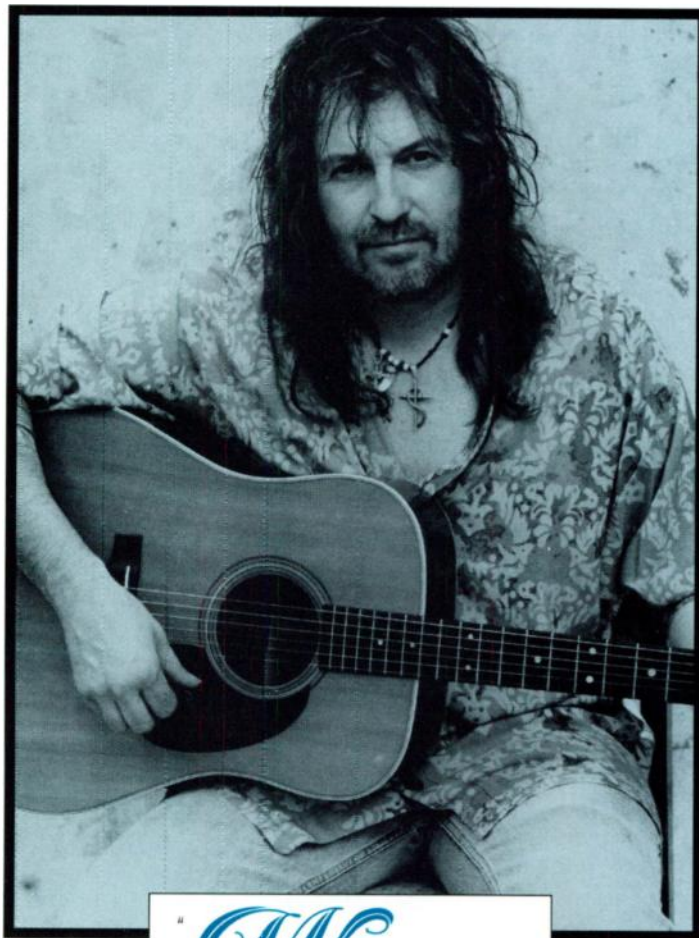
**R**egarded by many as one of the most substantive figures of the fabled progressive Country movement in Texas, honky-tonk troubadour Ray Wylie Hubbard tasted commercial success with his '70s outlaw anthem, "Up Against The Wall (Redneck Mother)", recorded by Jerry Jeff Walker. Since then, Ray's been a mainstay on the club circuit. But fame as a recording artist has eluded him. LOCO GRINGO'S LAMENT, his current release on DejaDisc, may change that.

"This is kind of my first adventure into the music business," Ray jokes. "The music has always been there. It's the business part of it that's been kind of shaky!"

Part of the outlaw movement that launched Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings, Ray has seen his cronies find commercial success as superstars. "Willie and Waylon knew how to work in that framework and get what they wanted," he recently told D Magazine. "We (Ray and his former band, the Cowboy Twinkies) didn't understand how to do it...Willie was the old one, Waylon was the mean one, and I was the wild one."

He admits he would like a second chance at some parts of his life. "I definitely have some regrets, but also I feel that I had to go through some of that, the experience, which hopefully shows in my writing. There would be some changes and some things I would have done differently, but I'm very happy with where I am right now."

## Ray Wylie Hubbard



"*When I came out of this fog, I developed a conscience.*"

age 43, I took my first-ever guitar lesson. When I played in high

Ray's love of performing has far outweighed commercial considerations. "I really got my gratification performing and writing. I always felt like a working musician, able to make a living, wrote songs on the side. Five or six years ago, I made a conscious decision or effort to strive to become a songwriter. That's what I really started out to be, and then I got sidetracked by being a honky tonk singer. I lost purpose and kind of got away from my first love in music."

Throughout his career, Ray's fans have demanded "Up Against The Wall". "It's sometimes like an albatross around my neck. It's been both a blessing and a curse. It's gotten my name out there. Everyone is expecting everything to be like 'Redneck Mother', but I have written some ballads - a little more sensitive, a little more integrity.

"I feel like I really don't know who wrote 'Redneck Mother'. That was a different person - definitely a different lifetime and a different dimension! I was a lot younger and wilder, and the times were a little more intense back then. Hopefully I've grown a little bit, matured. I feel like I've changed."

Ray called on his own experiences when writing the songs that ended up on LOCO GRINGO'S LAMENT. "'Didn't Have a Prayer' was pretty much where I was for a time. I was a honky tonk singer living that honky tonk lifestyle. One time I got out there, didn't even have a prayer, didn't have a guitar, didn't have anything. That song has got a little hope - hope that came back from that dead end highway."

The Oklahoma native is realistic about his former lifestyle. "I cleaned up my act seven years ago and came out of this honky tonk

fog I was living in. That helps a lot, when you can write a song and remember it! I changed the way that I thought and got into my first love, which was songwriting. I went to learn about it. So at

...continued on page 24

# WELCOME!

*CMA welcomes the  
following new  
organizational members:*

## BRONZE:

Boomtown, Verdi, NY  
CKBW-AM/FM, Bridgewater  
Nova Scotia, Canada  
CKRC-AM, Winnipeg,  
Manitoba, Canada  
Cupit Music, Nashville, TN  
Jay Collier Entertainment,  
Nashville, TN  
KVAD-FM, Windsor, CO  
KZUA-FM, Holbrook, AZ  
Stage Craft Nashville, Inc.,  
Nashville, TN  
TCS-World of Country  
Music, Gerelsberg, Germany  
WBWI-FM, West Bend, WI  
WCSD-FM, Cookeville, TN  
WELL-FM, Battle Creek, MI  
Western Washington Fair  
Association, Puyallup, WA  
WHUG-FM, Jamestown, NY  
WKDE-FM, Altavista, VA  
WKKO-FM, Toledo, OH  
WPXZ-AM, Punxsutawney,  
PA  
WQZX-FM, Greenville, AL  
WSBL-FM, Selbyville, DE

## SILVER:

Entertainment Properties,  
Scottsdale, AZ  
WSEK-FM, Somerset, KY

## IN MEMORIAM

### TIM FOLTZ

Tim Foltz, a lighting technician of Bandit Lites, died April 6 in an automobile accident. He was 23. Foltz had worked with the company since the age of 16. For the last three years, he was a member of the lighting crew for Alan Jackson.

## COUNTRY MUSIC SALES REACH RECORD MARK IN '94

Consumer sales of Country Music reached an all-time high in 1994 - nearly \$2 billion - according to the Recording Industry Association of America's 1994 Consumer Profile, released on March 28.

"This growth in sales reinforces Country Music's continuing entrenchment as mainstream music in America," said Ed Benson, CMA executive director. "It's significant that Country Music is on a growth cycle in which the dollar value of Country Music has quadrupled since 1989."

According to the RIAA figures, the recording industry as a whole grew a record 20 percent, from \$10 billion in 1993 to \$12 billion in 1994. Although Country Music's market share dipped slightly in 1994 to 16.3 percent, the format's dollar sales reached a record of \$1.967 billion.

RIAA figures are based on the number of units shipped, computed at suggested list price.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

SRO '95, CMA's international entertainment expo, takes place October 5-7 at the Nashville Convention Center.

Complete registration information will be available in late June. Check future issues of CLOSE UP for details.



## MARCH ALBUMS

### GOLD:

#### THE GARTH BROOKS COLLECTIONS

Garth Brooks...Liberty

#### WHAT A WAY TO LIVE

Mark Chesnutt...Decca

#### FROM YAZOO CITY

(MISSISSIPPI TALKIN')

Jerry Clower...MCA

#### YOU'VE GOT TO STAND FOR SOMETHING

Aaron Tippin...RCA

### PLATINUM:

#### THINKIN' PROBLEM

David Ball...Warner Bros.

#### BLACKHAWK

BlackHawk...Arista

#### THE GARTH BROOKS COLLECTION

Garth Brooks...Liberty

#### GREATEST HITS, VOLUME I

Randy Travis...Warner Bros.

#### GREATEST HITS, VOLUME II

Randy Travis...Warner Bros.

#### BUENAS NOCHES FROM A LONELY ROOM

Dwight Yoakam...Reprise

### MULTI-PLATINUM:

#### THE GARTH BROOKS COLLECTION

Garth Brooks...3M...Liberty

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY

## ALBUMS

### GOLD:

#### GREATEST HITS, VOL III

Alabama...RCA

#### THE HITS

Garth Brooks...Liberty

#### NO ORDINARY MAN

Tracy Byrd...MCA

#### THE JOHNNY CASH SHOW

Johnny Cash...Columbia

#### GREATEST HITS 1979-1989

Rosanne Cash...Columbia

#### STORM IN THE HEARTLAND

Billy Ray Cyrus...Mercury

#### MIDNIGHT WIND

Charlie Daniels Band...Epic

#### HAVE I GOT A DEAL FOR YOU

Reba McEntire...MCA

#### GREATEST HITS VOLUME III

Marty Robbins...Columbia

#### LEAD ON

George Strait...MCA

### WHAT'S YOUR MAMA'S NAME

Tanya Tucker...Columbia

### WOULD YOU LAY WITH ME

Tanya Tucker...Columbia

### STRONG ENOUGH TO BEND

Tanya Tucker...Liberty

### GREATEST HITS

Tanya Tucker...Liberty

### TENNESSEE WOMAN

Tanya Tucker...Liberty

### IF I COULD MAKE A LIVING

Clay Walker...Giant

### GREATEST HITS, VOLUME II

Tammy Wynette...Epic

### PLATINUM:

#### ACES

Suzy Bogguss...Liberty

#### THE HITS

Garth Brooks...Liberty

#### THE JOHNNY CASH PORTRAIT

Johnny Cash...Columbia

#### NOTORIOUS

Confederate Railroad...Atlantic

#### THIRD ROCK FROM THE SUN

Joe Diffie...Epic

#### YOU MIGHT BE A REDNECK IF

Jeff Foxworthy...Warner Bros.

#### STRAIGHT AHEAD

Larry Gatlin...Columbia

#### BEST OF VINCE GILL

Vince Gill...RCA

#### TAKE ME AS I AM

Faith Hill...Warner Bros.

#### STICKS AND STONES

Tracy Lawrence...Atlantic

#### WHAT A CRYING SHAME

The Mavericks...MCA

#### TAKE THIS JOB AND SHOVE IT

Johnny Paycheck...Epic

#### THE BEST OF

Dan Seals...Liberty

#### LEAD ON

George Strait...MCA

#### GREATEST HITS 1990-1992

Tanya Tucker...Liberty

### MULTI-PLATINUM

#### NO FENCES

Garth Brooks...13M...Liberty

#### ROPIN' THE WIND

Garth Brooks...11M...Liberty

#### THE CHASE

Garth Brooks...6M...Liberty

#### THE HITS

Garth Brooks...5M...Liberty

#### GREATEST HITS

Patsy Cline...6M...Decca/MCA

#### WHO I AM

Alan Jackson...2M...Arista

#### PICKIN' ON NASHVILLE

The Kentucky Headhunters...2M...Mercury

#### LIFE'S A DANCE

John Michael Montgomery...2M...Atlantic

#### KICKIN' IT UP

John Michael Montgomery...3M...Atlantic

#### WYNONNA

Wynonna...4M...Curb/MCA

### PLATINUM VIDEOS:

#### "Greatest Hits"

Reba McEntire...MCA Music Video

# CMA Index: Country Music Continues Growth Trend

Country Music continues its healthy growth trend, according to the latest CMA Index, compiled by CMA to quantify Country Music's expansion.

The 1994 CMA Index shows that Country Music business revenues for 1994 increased by 13 percent from 1993. Revenues have more than doubled since the base year - from 100 points in 1990 to 232 points in 1994.

"The CMA Index gauges the state of the Country Music industry by tracking several key components of the business," says CMA Executive Director Ed Benson. "We are pleased with the obvious trend of continued overall growth and demand. These numbers continue to reflect the entrenchment of Country Music as a mainstream entertainment medium."

The CMA Index compares a cumulative sampling of Country Music record sales, radio advertising revenue, cable television revenues, concert revenues and magazine circulation revenues. The index is not intended to be a measurement of the total dollar revenues within the industry.

The largest area of growth sampled was in cable TV net revenues, which grew from \$208 million in 1993 to \$243 million in 1994, and magazine circulation revenues, which saw a 73 percent increase from \$32 million in 1993 to \$55 million in 1994. Included in the figures for magazine circulation this year were the important new publications COUNTRY WEEKLY and NEW COUNTRY MAGAZINE.

The CMA Index is compiled from data published by the Recording Industry Association of America, Duncan's Radio Market Guide, Gaylord Entertainment Company, AMUSEMENT BUSINESS Magazine and the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

## MEMBERSHIP RECRUITERS

Thanks to the following CMA members who recently recruited new members:



Connie Bradley, Chris Caravacci, Horton Frank, Merle Kilgore, Ann Knight, David McQuitty, Frances Preston, Al Schlesinger and Steve Tolin.

## AWARDS

Leonard T. Rambeau, president of Balmur, Ltd., was honored by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences with the *Global Achievement Award* on March 26. The award recognized Rambeau's outstanding contribution to the global music communities. He is the long-time personal manager of Anne Murray and also represents Canadian stars George Fox and Rita MacNeil. Rambeau is only the second recipient of this honor, which was awarded to singer Bryan Adams in 1991.

John Michael Montgomery and Ken Kragen will be honored by the Western and English Manufacturers Association with award presentations on June 9. Montgomery will receive the *Country Western Lifestyle Award*, selected by the readers of **COUNTRY AMERICA** Magazine. Kragen, who manages Travis Tritt, Trisha Yearwood and Kenny Rogers, will be honored with the *In The Tradition of the American*

West award. It is presented annually to an individual who demonstrates the initiative, diligence, integrity and resourcefulness necessary to make significant, lasting contributions to the industry. He has promoted the images of the American West through various media for many years on a national basis. His love of the American West is apparent through the movies, Country Music and television projects on which he has worked.

## MEDIA

Joe Diffie has been tapped to provide the narration for the nationwide broadcast of Westwood One's "The New Faces Of Country Music". The three-hour special airs in early May.

Huntsman Entertainment Inc. has launched "The Country HitMakers Daily Update", a daily vignette designed to be the companion piece to the company's weekly, nationally syndicated radio series, "Country HitMakers". The update is a 90-second daily feature that is available on a barter basis.

The music business program of Nashville's Belmont University has released its second student-produced CD, *MOVING ON*. The disc, which offers a mixture of alternative, contemporary Christian, Country and instrumental music, was created, performed, recorded, produced and engineered by current and former music business students. Proceeds benefit the Belmont music business scholarship fund. *MOVING ON* is available at Tower Records in Nashville.

CMT: Country Music Television and Universal Cable TV Network Public Company, Ltd. of Bangkok, Thailand have signed an agreement for distribution of CMT throughout that country. UTV has plans to construct cable systems throughout Thailand, which has over 12 million television homes, and has begun operation in Bangkok. CMT expanded its international reach to 35 million homes worldwide with the addition of Latin America on April 1.

## NEW COMPANIES

Alan C. Bernard, former MTM Music Group chairman, has opened The Bernard Company, a management firm. The company will be sharing office space with The Buckskin Company at One Music Circle South, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 259-2599.

Timothy L. Miller has opened First Run Studios, a 24-track recording facility. First Run Studios is located at 2807 Azalea Place, Nashville, TN 37204; (615) 269-7656; fax (615) 269-7898.

Chris Keaton has opened Chris Keaton Productions, Ltd., focusing on free-lance songplugging and production. The company is located at 809 18th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 329-2348; fax (615) 327-4311.



CMA Executive Director Ed Benson (right) presents Wade Hayes with a certificate honoring the chart-topping song "Old Enough To Know Better (But Still Too Young To Care)".  
- Photo by John Lee Montgomery III

Veteran performance artist **Sarah Reynolds** has opened **Sarah Reynolds & Associates**, a consulting firm to assist developing and established Country artists. For more information, contact the firm at 504 Dahlia Drive, Brentwood, TN 37027; (615) 371-8861.

## NEWSLINE

**CMT: Country Music Television** is a participating sponsor of the seven month international tour of **Columbia Records** singer/songwriter **Mary Chapin Carpenter**. Carpenter will play more than 70 dates in 33 states and in Europe, wrapping up in the state of Washington on September 24. Carpenter's schedule includes more than a dozen concerts in the United Kingdom.

**International Songwriters Co-op** has launched a series of seminars called "ISC Presents: The Professionals", with noted professionals sharing their knowledge of the music industry with songwriters. The series begins on May 25 at Nashville's Clubhouse Inn & Conference Center. For registration information, contact ISC at 1719 West End, Suite 214E, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 327-9977.

**Silver Dollar City** in Branson, MO has joined with **American Kids**, a non-profit group that promotes and develops talent, and **Spotlight Talent** for the "Branson Talent Showcase". The contest is open to all ages, with winners receiving cash awards, recording contracts, ribbons, plaques and other gifts. For entry forms and information, call (800) 240-7016.

The **Original Braun Brothers** will gather for the **Braun Brothers Reunion Concert** at Stanley, ID City Park on June 18. Joining the festivities will be **Muzzie Braun and the Boys**, **Don Edwards** and others. For information, call (208) 879-4677.



Host **Marty Stuart** (center) leads a jam session during the taping of "Down Home Front Porch Blues Marty Party Special" at the Ryman Auditorium. Guests included (l to r) Kentucky Headhunters **Fred Young** and **Richard Young**, vocalist **Larry Marrs**, **Travis Tritt**, **Vassar Clements**, "Uncle" **Josh Graves** and **Gene Libbee**, bassist for the Nashville Bluegrass Band. The special airs May 24 on TNN: The Nashville Network.

The **Original Music Instrument Co.**, a division of **Gibson Guitar**, has introduced the first in its line of artist signature series guitars. Internationally known Dobro guitar player **Tom Swatzell** was the first artist to receive the honor. The "Tom Swatzell Signature" limited edition is a square-neck with abalone inlays. The first 200 instruments will be personally signed by Swatzell.

## ON THE MOVE

**Garth Fundis** will head the Nashville office of newly-formed **Almo Sounds**, a record company founded in 1994 by **A&M Records** founders **Herb Alpert** and **Jerry Moss**. Fundis, named director of Nashville operations, made his mark as an independent record producer working with artists such as **Trisha Yearwood**, **Keith Whitley**, **Don Williams**, **Alabama** and **Lari White**. He was formerly vice president of **A&R** at **RCA Records**. **Almo Sounds** has a pressing and distribution deal for North America with **Geffen Records**. The Nashville office will be housed at 1904 Adelicia Avenue, Nashville, TN 37212. Other staff announcements are expected to be made shortly.

**Sybil Waters Stewart** has joined the staff of the **Country Music Foundation** as marketing director. With an extensive background in the travel and tourism industry, she was most

recently assistant commissioner of marketing and advertising for the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.

**Stephan Schulte** has been named vice president, **GWSC**, Europe by **Group W Satellite Communications**. Based in Group W's London office, Schulte will oversee sales and marketing activities for CMT Europe. He also will serve as CMT Europe's key liaison with record companies in Europe. He was formerly a London-based independent television consultant.

**Lee Adams** has joined the promotion team of **Decca Records** as director of regional promotion, Northeast. Formerly vice president of operations at **WHYL Radio** in Carlisle, PA, she will be based in Baltimore, MD.

**Gene Hughes Sr.** has joined forces with **Polydor Nashville** as an artist development consultant, working closely with the label's promotions department. A former recording artist himself, Hughes was recently head of his own management company, which he closed in order to take his new position. **Buddy Cannon** has resigned as Polydor's vice president of **A&R** in order to pursue other interests. **Michael Brooks** joins the label's promotion team as promotion manager, Northeast region, based in Baltimore, MD. He was formerly with **River North Nashville** and has an extensive radio background.



Members of Boy Howdy sign autographs following their performance at the kick-off concert of the Wal-Mart Country Music Across America Tour. The show, which also featured Wade Hayes, was the first in a series of 202 concerts featuring numerous Country entertainers, including Noah Gordon, Lisa Brokop, Daron Norwood, David Lee Murphy, Woody Lee, Billy Montana, Steve Kolander, Russ Taff and Terri Clark.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**Ken Robold** has been promoted to director of finance and accounting at **Mercury Nashville**. He will be responsible for overseeing all financial issues for the label, as well as overseeing finance for Polydor Nashville. He was formerly manager of finance and accounting.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**Rowanne McIntyre** has been promoted to national promotion coordinator at **Warner/Reprise Nashville**. The New Orleans native joined the staff in 1993 as national promotion assistant. **Brad Howell** has been named Southeast regional promotion manager for the label. Known in Country radio as Brad West, Howell was formerly program director at KNIX in Phoenix.

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**Jack Egas** has joined **Magnatone Records** as coordinator of promotion/marketing. He has relocated to Nashville from Los Angeles, where he was international marketing assistant and national field coordinator at Hollywood Records. **Margy Holland** is the label's manager of media and artist relations. He was formerly senior publicist at PLA Media. **Randy Chapman** is Magnatone's promotion

manager, Southwest. He was formerly vice president of programming as well as music and promotion director at KALF in Chico, CA. **Robin Lightner** has been named promotion manager, Southeast. Lightner was formerly with RCA Records in product development.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**Larry B. Williams**, **Patricia Stotts** and **Michelle Dube** are the latest additions to the staff of Branson, MO-based **Americana Television Productions, LLC**.

**Williams**, a 15-year veteran in Hollywood as a writer/producer/actor, has been named senior vice president in charge of production for the company. **Stotts**, a CPA, is the company's chief financial officer. **Dube** joins the staff as program supervisor.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**Danita Allen** has resigned as editor of **COUNTRY AMERICA Magazine** to accept an associate professorship at the **University Missouri School of Journalism**. She will be relocating to Fayette, MO in late May.

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**Lane Cross** joins the staff of **Gehl Force Management**, assisting in the management and development of the company's current roster. He brings current client **Loretta Lynn** to the firm.

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**Bill Hobbs** has joined the staff of **NEW COUNTRY Magazine** as assistant editor, Nashville. He has worked as a reporter for a variety of newspapers, including *The Tennessean*.

◆ ◆ ◆  
**Greg Hill** has been appointed director of creative services for **Magnatone Publishing**. He was formerly with Hot House Music Group.



Martina McBride strikes a winsome pose in her new RCA video, "Where I Used To Have A Heart". The clip was directed by Steven Goldmann for High Five Productions.  
- Photo by John Lee Montgomery III

**Steve Pickle** has been promoted to director of creative services for **TNN: The Nashville Network**. He will direct the creation of on-air network promotions, including graphics, animation, music and program development. He joined the TNN staff in March 1994 following an extensive career with numerous television stations.



**Judi Marshall** has joined the staff of **First Run Studios**, where she will oversee daily operations as well as coordination of publishing, artist development and studio scheduling. Marshall was formerly singer/songwriter **Tom T. Hall's** manager.

## SIGNINGS

**Lee Roy Parnell** to PolyGram Music Publishing...**Skip Ewing** to Acuff-Rose Music...**Russell Smith** to MCA Music Publishing...**Terri Clark** to Buddy Lee Attractions...**Baillie and The Boys** to Cross Three Management...**Robert Byrne** to EMI Music Publishing...**Brick Alan** to Gratton Stephens Entertainment...**Paul Overstreet** to Integrity Music...**Dennis Matkowsky** to Reunion Publishing...**Tareva Henderson** to The Bobby Robert Company for booking...**Fruit of the Loom Country Comfort Music Series** to Trifecta Entertainment for publicity.

## VIDEO

**Neal McCoy** visits a local radio station to debut a new song in his latest video, **"They're Playing Our Song"**. **John Lloyd Miller** directed the clip, utilizing the **WDKN** studio in **Dickson, TN**. **Dee Butler** produced the **Atlantic** video for **Scene Three**.



**Rhett Akins** had to relocate his video shoot from **Reno, NV** to **Tucson, AZ** when eight inches of snow interfered with the filming of **"That Ain't**



*Tracy Lawrence becomes a farmhand in his new Atlantic video, "Texas Tornado". Director Marc Ball shot the clip on location at Brodoc Farms nears Belles End, Tennessee. Anne Grace produced the video for Scene Three.*

**My Truck"**. The delay in production caused the **Decca** artist to cancel an appearance with **Reba McEntire** in **Roanoke, VA**.



**Travis Tritt's** latest video, **"Tell Me I Was Dreaming"**, is a sequel to his hit **"Anymore"**. The **Warner Bros.** artist again portrays a disabled Vietnam veteran in the riveting clip, directed by **Michael Merriman**. **Bryan Bateman** produced for **Pecos Films**.



Canadian artist **Stephanie Beaumont** tapped director **Chris Rogers** to oversee her **"Love And Dreams"** video. **Jamie Amos** produced for **Pecos Films**.



**AristoMedia** has released its **"Annual Report on the Status of Country and Christian Video Outlets"**, Individual comprehensive reviews of the avail-

able video outlets at various levels compiled from the company's ongoing communication and research efforts with video programmers. The report includes a detailed rundown on national cable outlets, nationally syndicated broadcast shows, multi-regional shows, international opportunities, regional outlets, video pools and more. Information includes subscriber counts, market penetration and ratings. For a copy, contact **AristoMedia** at P.O. Box 22765, **Nashville, TN 37202**; (615) 269-7071; fax (615) 269-0131.

*Kenny Chesney gets comfortable while filming his new BNA clip, "Fall In Love". Steven Miller and Brad Murano directed the video for Film Xero.*





Songwriter Tony Arata celebrates his latest number one, "Here I Am", recorded by Patty Loveless. Joining the festivities are (l to r) publisher Tommy Williams, publisher Don Tolle, ASCAP's Connie Bradley, publisher Dennis Morgan, Arata and his daughter Kate, Loveless, Jamie and Allison Arata and (kneeling) Sony Music's Allen Butler and Doug Johnson.

- Photo by Alan Mayor

# Off The Beaten Track

## Gail Davies

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Though fans won't find Gail on the road - not yet, anyway - they can look forward to hearing her on the radio again. "I'm shipping the record to the GAVIN Americana stations. I'm hoping they'll find something on the album that they can play on the alternative Country format."

"I'm actually running my own little record company!"

ECLECTIC is another accomplishment to add to her already lengthy list of achievements. "What I hope to accomplish creatively, artistically, I've accomplished. What I hope to accomplish commercially is to sell this record, so I don't lose my house!" she says with a laugh. Reflecting on her future, she adds, "And to make it a vehicle to be able to perform and sing again."

For more information on ECLECTIC, write to Little Chickadee Productions, P.O. Box 210151, Nashville, TN 37221.

## Ray Wylie Hubbard

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school, I just learned the guitar chords and wrote 'Redneck Mother'. All of a sudden I was thrown out there, thrown to the wolves when I wasn't quite ready. I wasn't really comfortable with my guitar playing.

"When I came out of this fog, I developed a conscience, and that helped my songwriting a little bit, too. A lot of these songs were just kind of gifts. I wasn't writing them for a record deal, because I never did know if I would record again. I haven't set the recording world on fire. Most of my recording projects were half-baked ideas, under-funded, independent, a lot of stuff I did myself. This album really means a lot to me."

And although he's concentrating on writing more songs, Ray can still be found in clubs, coffeehouses and on college campuses, per-

forming both the old and the new. "People will come to see me for 'Redneck Mother' but maybe they'll go away with a different idea. The main thing right now would be for people to listen to this album and get something out of it. It's kind of like with the song 'The Messenger'...I have something to tell people,

but you can't always be so overtly blatant. You have to do it subtly. Maybe they'll come and hoop and holler over 'Redneck Mother' and go away with a little bit of hope and faith in themselves." **CU**

- Janet E. Williams

"Five or six years ago, I made a conscious decision or effort to strive to become a songwriter."

For more information on Ray Wylie Hubbard's LOCO GRINGO'S LAMENT, contact DejaDisc at 537 Lindsey Street, San Marcos, TX 78666; (512) 392-6610; fax: (512) 754-6886.

# TALENT POOL

Although Sandi Spika has been designing stage clothes for Reba McEntire and other Country artists for almost 10 years, it was only two years ago that she found herself a household name. When Reba wore the eyebrow-raising red dress with the plunging neckline on "The 1993 CMA Awards", the dress - and its designer - were the talk of fans nationwide.

## LATE BLOOMER

Although Sandi's other designs haven't received as much attention as the now-legendary red dress, they have established her as one of the premier stage costuming designers in the industry. You might think she's been at home behind a Singer or Bernina since childhood. But it wasn't until she studied at the University of New Mexico, where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, that designing clothes became her passion.

"I was lucky that my mom sewed a lot of things. She had four girls that she had to do homecoming dresses and prom dresses for. I never really had to sew, because she was there to do it. I never took Home Ec classes to learn - couldn't stand the thought of it until I was in college. Then I started making my own things. I understood and appreciated the way you could create and do something different if you made it yourself."

**"I guess I'm a traveling companion."**

## COTTON-EYED JOE

Sandi combined her interest in stage costuming with her hobby of country dance competitions.

"In college, I was involved in theater costuming and worked at the Albuquerque Civic Light Opera. After that I got really interested in competitive country dancing. I designed what I wanted to wear for competition - more elegant evening things that had a western slant to them. I had been doing competition clothes for people around the country and thought, 'I dance and listen to this music all the time. Why can't I try to do the same kind of design work for a singer?'"

## RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

She took the initiative and gave Reba her portfolio during a meet-and-greet in 1986.

"She was the only one I approached. I'd always loved her singing, and then I saw her on an awards show. I thought, 'Wouldn't it be fun to do something for her?' Out of that whole show, it just stuck in my mind that I could make a dress that has some pizzazz to it. When I knew she was coming into town, it just worked out. I had given her a little



SANDI  
SPIKA

*Starstruck  
Entertainment*

portfolio with my work and a letter that said, 'This is what I do. If I can help you, let me know.' She called me about a month after I had given that to her and said, 'Hey, what about this dress on this page?'

"She called totally out of the blue. I was excited and thrilled and very, very proud. She has pictures of her wearing that first dress at Carnegie Hall. It's black suede and has kind of a burgundy and gold tapestry fabric on the shoulders. It has gold bugle bead fringe up and down in a very distinct, geometric pattern. She wore the hoot out of it!"

## OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

For a few years, Sandi lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico and designed clothes for Reba long distance. One day while they were planning some new show clothes, Reba said, "What about coming on the road with me?"

"I told her, 'I'll try it for six months, and let's see how it goes.' It's been six years now, and I'm still having a great time. I do a combination of things. When we get to the show, I do her hair and make sure all her costumes are in order and ready. I help her do everything from go to interviews and 'meet-and-greets' to play cards with her. I guess I'm a traveling companion. We have a lot of fun, and I'm

really lucky that we get along great. We like to eat - it doesn't sound like a job requirement. We shop a lot. I buy a lot of suits and just regular casual clothes. That's a never-ending thing, between buying the right shoes, the right belt and earrings and all that."

## SANDI'S WORKSHOP

Sandi has expanded her realm of responsibilities since she began her one-woman operation. She oversees not only Reba's wardrobe, but also that of the 10 dancers and three backup singers on tour with the MCA superstar. She's also worked with Linda Davis, Faith Hill, Rhett Akins and even LaToya Jackson - to name a few.

"Up until the last two years, I designed everything, swatched all the fabrics and coordinated everything from the fabric to the bead work. In the last couple of years, I've trained and acquired some assistants. I have people that are very dedicated, hard workers, and they do really good work. My mother works full time for me. She cuts, constructs, she does some of the most incredible bead work that I've ever seen! Most of the work is done in Nashville, but I also have very talented workers across the U.S. who help during peak times via Federal Express."

## PRETTY BUT PRACTICAL

As a professional designer, Sandi has several tips to offer beginners in the costuming profession.

"Use a lot of common sense. I like to pick fabrics that I know will be durable and road tough, because Reba wears the same costumes for

**"I like to pick fabrics that I know will be durable and road tough."**

almost a year. She has 14 costume changes. Some of the things she's only in for one or two songs, but they still need to be durable. We put lightweight linings, lightweight inner facings so that the whole garment is really comfortable. That's important especially for summer."

## COCO CHANEL, A LA MUSIC CITY?

Although she never aspired to take Paris - or even Fifth Avenue - by storm, Sandi hopes to make her designs available on the consumer level - someday.

"I plan on direct mail order, and I have that in progress. I'd really like to develop a team of people so that I can have fun working with more things, more photo shoots, more videos and make the circle bigger!" **CU**

- Janet E. Williams

# SUMMER SIGHTS & SOUNDS

SUMMER IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, AND TWO OF THE ENTERTAINMENT AND TOURISM INDUSTRY'S MOST POPULAR DESTINATIONS ARE GEARED UP TO PRESENT SOME OF THE TOP COUNTRY PERFORMERS IN THE NATION.



## OPRYLAND USA'S NASHVILLE ON STAGE

Thirty-two top Country singers will perform during the second season of Nashville On Stage concerts at Nashville's Opryland USA. The series kicked off in March with shows by the Oak Ridge Boys and runs through October 28, closing out the season with Willie Nelson.

Liberty singer Tanya Tucker will perform 35 shows, more than any other artist. Her labelmates The Oak Ridge Boys will make 12 appearances. All Nashville On Stage shows begin at 7 p.m. in the 4,000-seat Chevrolet/Geo Celebrity Theatre. Nashville On Stage concert tickets include admission to the Opryland theme park after 6 p.m.

Artists appearing during the 1995 season, in addition to Tucker and The Oak Ridge Boys, are: Suzy Bogguss, Tracy Byrd, Johnny Cash featuring June Carter and the Carter Family with John Carter Cash, Mark Chesnutt, Mark Collie, Confederate Railroad, Billy Ray Cyrus, Billy Dean, Diamond Rio, Faith Hill, Toby Keith, Tracy Lawrence and Patty Loveless. Also scheduled to perform are Martina McBride, Barbara Mandrell, Kathy Mattea, Lorrie Morgan, Willie Nelson, Daron Norwood/Lari White, Eddie Rabbitt, Ricky Van Shelton, Statler Brothers, Doug Stone, Marty Stuart, Pam Tillis, Aaron Tippin and Tammy Wynette.

Nashville On Stage concerts are priced from \$14.95 - \$21.95. For complete ticket information and reservations, call (615) 889-6611.



## "ALWAYS ...PATSY CLINE" RETURNS TO RYMAN

"Always...Patsy Cline", the historical two-act musical about the legendary star, returns to the historic Ryman Auditorium for the 1995 season with an extended engagement.

Mandy Barnett returns in the role of Patsy Cline. Last year, she won rave reviews for her captivating portrayal of Cline with her riveting renditions of more than 20 songs made famous by the



**ALL-STAR LINEUP AT  
BRANSON'S GRAND  
PALACE**

**B**ranson's Grand Palace will feature some of Country's top names in "The Grand Palace SuperStar Showcase" that begins May 28 with Sawyer Brown and continues through October 15 with Barbara Mandrell. Co-owner Kenny Rogers will play 24 dates at the four-year-old venue, which will also spotlight Russian comedian Yakov Smirnoff as the Palace's morning star, bringing his unique brand of comedy to Branson at 9 a.m. through December 23rd.



"Patsy! A World Premiere Tribute To Patsy Cline" will run through October as the Grand Palace signature show. The musical event stars Gail Bliss and was created with the help of Patsy Cline experts, including Gordon Stoker of the Jordanares as musical consultant. Jim Stafford serves as comedy director for the program.

**THE GRAND PALACE SUPERSTAR SHOWCASE,  
WILL FEATURE TWO PERFORMANCES DAILY  
OF THE FOLLOWING ARTISTS:**

**MAY 28 ♦ Sawyer Brown and  
Deborah Allen**

**AUGUST 27 ♦ Sammy Kershaw  
and guest**

**JUNE 25 ♦ Barbara Mandrell and  
Ronna Reeves**

**SEPTEMBER 17 ♦ Barbara  
Mandrell and Western Flyer**

**JULY 2 ♦ Lorrie Morgan and  
James House**

**SEPTEMBER 24-25 ♦ Vince Gill**

**JULY 9 ♦ Ricky Van Shelton and  
Daron Norwood**

**OCTOBER 8 ♦ Barbara Mandrell  
and Western Flyer**

**JULY 30-31 ♦ George Jones and  
Bryan White**

**OCTOBER 15 ♦ Barbara Mandrell  
and guest**

**AUGUST 13 ♦ Billy Ray Cyrus**

For ticket information, call  
(800) 5-PALACE.

Grand Ole Opry star. Tere Myers will again portray the colorful character of Louise Seger, the loyal fan whose correspondence with Cline provides the storyline for the production.

Performances begin May 4 and continue through October 28 in the 2,000-seat auditorium.

"Always...Patsy Cline" premiered in Houston in 1988. Creator J. Ted Swindley directs the Ryman production. Tickets are \$18 and can be reserved by calling (615) 889-6611.

UP·CLOSE

# SHENANDOAH

**M**embers of Shenandoah are looking ahead to the success of their latest lp, *IN THE VICINITY OF THE HEART*, and leaving behind a trail of legal battles, record labels and hit singles. The lp - the group's fastest selling album to date - is Shenandoah's first release on Liberty Records since leaving RCA last year and Columbia before that.

IT TOOK A LONG TIME TO CONVINCE THE POWERS-THAT-BE SHENANDOAH DOESN'T SELL RECORDS ON A BALLAD.

- RALPH EZELL

"When we had signed with RCA, they were getting us after a little bit of a lull in our career," explains lead singer Marty Raybon. Lawsuits regarding the group's rights to the name Shenandoah were being settled, but the industry and the public were not as certain as the band about the group's resiliency.

"RCA really resurrected us from a lot of that stuff," he says. "I think that's some of the reason for the success at Liberty right now. I think more than anything, it's the perseverance that's always been there for us. There's a large degree of still being hungry for it."



Besides changing labels, the group has taken on Don Cook as producer. We're going to have to slow down."

"Our records have always tended to be a little more on the slick side, especially the ballads," explains drummer Mike McGuire. "In our live shows, we've always had a lot more edge to our music, and that's what we wanted to try to get. I don't think we were trying to change our sound so much as we were trying to capture it - just trying to capture what we do live."

Known for hit ballads like "I Want To Be Loved Like That" and "Ghost In This House", the group has made an effort to record more uptempo numbers.

"That always shocked me - the fact that record executives said, 'You need a ballad. Ballads sell your records.' Well, that wasn't true with Shenandoah," comments bass player Ralph Ezell. "When we put out a ballad, it would go to number one on the charts, but it didn't sell records. When we put out 'Church On Cumberland Road' or 'Two Dozen Roses', it would sell records. It took a long time to convince the powers-that-be Shenandoah doesn't sell records on a ballad."

"Somewhere In The Vicinity", the title track duet with Alison Krauss, has been an exception to the rule, hitting the top ten as well as spurring album sales. "We've had number ones with ballads, but as far as selling product, VICINITY is the first album that we've sold where a ballad seemed to do as well as this one has," Marty explains.

The group is anxious to play its uptempo tunes in concert. They hit the road this month.

"We've hardly worked at all this year so far," Mike says. "Throughout our career, we've done in excess of 200 days a lot of years. It'll take a toll on you, being gone from your families that much."

The group can't help but chime in to explain the reasons Mike is no longer so anxious to be on the road.

"Wait a minute. Wait a minute," chides Marty. "Let's put it where the rubber meets the road. Mike got married, and now his attitude has changed."

Last year, Mike married fellow Alabama native Teresa Blake, who stars as Gloria on the daytime drama "All My Children".

"It used to be the rest of us were saying, 'I can't be out this much. I've got a family.' And Mike would go behind our backs and say, 'Man, book all those days,'" jokes Ralph. "Now, we're saying we haven't been out in a while. We need to go to work. And Mike has gone behind our back and said, 'Look, we can't work that much.

ONE OF THE STRONGEST THINGS THAT WE'VE HAD IS THAT WE'VE NEVER CHANGED MEMBERS.

- JIM SEALS

Marty, Mike, Ralph and lead guitarist Jim Seals tease each other like a bunch of brothers. It will be a change touring this year without keyboard player Stan Thorn, who quit the group to pursue his ambitions as a jazz musician.

"Stan was such a part of this band," Marty says. "It's really kind of hard to set somebody back in that place, put them on the photographs. In other words, kind of give them the things in which somebody else earned," explains Marty. "I don't mean to make it sound like we're not fair people. It's just that if it wasn't going to be all five of us and it's going to be the four of us, then it'll be the four of us, 'cause we're the ones that went through the stuff that we have and have seen the things that we've done. Nobody else is gonna take Stan's place."

Another keyboardist has been hired as a side musician.

"One of the strongest things that we've had is that we've never changed members," adds Jim. "We were all very close to Stan. We wish him the best."

That sense of brotherhood is what helped them overcome the legal battles, financial difficulties and lull in record sales.

"It was certainly a bit of proving ground for the group in a lot of ways," Marty recalls. "I think it tended to make us really respect and get to the point where we really felt like we need to earn where we were at...For me, more than anything else in the world, my faith in Christ helped me get through it. I knew without a shadow of a doubt whatever the divine plan of this whole thing was, that it was going to be answered... In fact, we'd pray a lot about it together."

"One of the things that strengthened us a lot was that we did have choices," explains Jim. "It had gotten to the point where financially it was incredible what we would have to dig out from under. It probably would have been more beneficial (financially) to quit, which we talked about doing, change the name or several different things. We were given that choice or the choice of filing personal bankruptcy,

that's five individuals doing that. And believe it or not, in less than 24 hours, we all talked to our wives and agreed to do the bankruptcy thing...paying everybody back...I think that was probably the beginning of a whole new commitment that we had to each other. That

was a very trying time to go through when you're having number one records, and you're wondering if you're going to eat cornbread and beans that night."

He continues, "There's an unspoken thing...we're kind of indelibly marked on each other regardless of what happens. Even Stan. Stan's always going to be a brother. Those things will fade a little bit, but they'll never entirely go away." **CU**

- SHANNON HEIM

## MAY

16

- George Strait makes his chart debut with "Unwound", 1981
- Reba McEntire's GREATEST HITS certifies platinum, 1989

17

- Diamond Rio charts a number one hit with "Meet In The Middle", 1991



18

- \* **GEORGE STRAIT**; Pearsall, Texas
- \* **JOE BONSALE** *Oak Ridge Boys*; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

19

- Clint Black tops the Country charts with his debut single, "A Better Man", 1989
- "King of the Road" by Roger Miller certifies gold, 1964

20

- Alabama scores a number one hit with "If I Had You", 1989
- Jerry Reed makes his chart debut with "Guitar Man", 1967
- Toby Keith tops the charts with "I Wish I Didn't Know Now", 1994

21

- Waylon Jennings tops the Country charts with "Luckenbach, Texas", 1977
- George Strait's THE CHILL OF AN EARLY FALL certifies gold, 1991
- Dwight Yoakam scores a number one record with "Ain't That Lonely Yet", 1993



22

- \* **DANA WILLIAMS** *Diamond Rio*; Dayton, Ohio

23

- \* **RALPH PEER**; Kansas City, Missouri
- Ricky Van Shelton's "Backroads" tops the Country charts, 1992

24

- \* **MAC WISEMAN**; Waynesboro, Virginia
- \* **SHELLY WEST**; Cleveland, Ohio
- The Judds' GREATEST HITS and K.T. Oslin's '80S LADIES certify platinum, 1989
- Mark Chesnutt's "Blame It On Texas" hits number one, 1991

25

- \* **RICH ALVES** *Pirates Of The Mississippi*; Pleasanton, CA
- \* **TOM T. HALL**; Olive Hall, Kentucky
- THIS TIME by Dwight Yoakam certifies platinum, 1993

26

- \* **HANK WILLIAMS, JR.**; Shreveport, Louisiana
- Jimmie Rodgers dies, 1933
- Willie Nelson makes his first chart appearance with "Touch Me", 1962
- BRAND NEW MAN by Brooks & Dunn certifies gold, 1992



27

- \* **DON WILLIAMS**; Plainview, Texas
- John Conlee enters Country charts for the first time with "Rose Colored Glasses", 1978
- Clay Walker's "Dreaming With My Eyes Open" debuts on the Country charts, 1994
- THE PATSY CLINE COLLECTION certifies gold, 1993
- Tim McGraw's NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON goes multi-platinum, 1994

28

- \* **CHARLIE McCOY**; Oak Hill, West Virginia
- Kathy Mattea's "Eighteen Wheels & A Dozen Roses" stays at number one for the second consecutive week, 1988
- Toby Keith's debut single, "Should've Been A Cowboy", tops the charts, 1993
- Confederate Railroad's debut lp certifies gold, 1993

29

- \* **DANNY DAVIS**; Randolph, Massachusetts
- Billy Ray Cyrus scores a phenomenal number one record with his debut single, "Achy Breaky Heart", 1992
- Hank and Audrey Williams divorce, 1952

30

- \* **JOHNNY GIMBLE**; Tyler, Texas
- \* **WYNONNA JUDD**; Ashland, Kentucky
- Johnny Cash's "I Walk The Line" enters the Country charts, 1956
- THE BEST OF DAN SEALS certifies gold, 1991

31

- "If The Devil Danced In Empty Pockets" by Joe Diffie tops the charts, 1991

## JUNE

1

- \* **RONNIE DUNN** *Brooks & Dunn*; Coleman, Texas

2

- \* **CARL BUTLER**; Knoxville, Tennessee
- Hal Ketchum's PAST THE POINT OF RESCUE goes gold, 1992

3

- Steve Wariner tops the Country chart with "Where Did I Go Wrong", 1989
- Donna Fargo hits number one with "The Happiest Girl In The Whole USA", 1972



4

- \* **FREDDY FENDER** *Baldemar Huerta*; San Benito, Texas

5

- \* **DON REID** The Statler Brothers; Staunton, Virginia
- Brenda Lee's "I'm Sorry" begins its climb to number one on the pop charts, 1960
- Wynonna Judd racks up her first gold platinum lp, WYNONNA, 1992

6

- \* **JOE STAMPLEY**; Springhill, Louisiana

7

- "The Thunder Rolls" by Garth Brooks begins a three-week stay at number one on the Country charts, 1991

8

- Doug Stone's **I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU** certifies gold, 1992
- **TIME PASSES BY** by Kathy Mattea goes gold, 1994

9

- Kathy Mattea has the number one song in the country with "Come From The Heart", 1989

10

- Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family record together in Louisville, Kentucky, 1931
- Clint Black has the top song on **BILLBOARD'S** Country chart with "A Better Man", 1989
- Vince Gill scores another number one with "Whenever You Come Around", 1994

11

- Patty Loveless tops the charts with "Blame It On Your Heart", 1993
- **HEART OVER MIND** by Anne Murray goes gold, 1985
- Hank Williams debuts on the Grand Ole Opry, 1949
- **FAST MOVIN' TRAIN** by Restless Heart certifies gold, 1991

12

- Tex Ritter is inducted as a member of the Grand Ole Opry, 1965
- Trisha Yearwood hits number one with "The Woman Before Me", 1992

13

- Vernon Dalhart records "The Wreck Of The Old '97" and "The Prisoner's Song", Country Music's first million-seller, 1924

14

- Ernest "Pop" Stoneman dies, 1968
- Alabama makes chart debut with "My Home's In Alabama", 1980

15

- **\*WAYLON JENNINGS;** Littlefield, Texas
- The Oak Ridge Boys' **DELIVER** lp certifies gold, 1984
- Patsy Cline is badly injured after being thrown through the windshield in an automobile accident, 1961
- Hank Williams, Jr.'s **FULL ACCESS** home video certifies gold, 1990
- Ricky Skaggs has the number one song on R&R's Country chart with "Lovin' Only Me", 1989
- Pam Tillis' **PUT YOURSELF IN MY PLACE** goes gold, 1992

17

- **\*RED FOLEY;** Blue Lick, Kentucky
- Garth Brooks' **NO FENCES** album certifies multi-platinum with sales of 8 million, 1992
- "What's In It For Me" by John Berry debuts on the Country charts, 1994

18

- Aaron Tippin's "Working Man's Ph.D." debuts on the Country charts, 1993
- Hank Williams climbs the chart with "Take These Chains From My Heart", 1953
- Boudleaux Bryant dies, 1987

19

- **\*DOUG STONE;** Atlanta, Georgia
- Conway Twitty has a hit with "Slow Hand", 1982
- Loretta Lynn debuts on the Country charts with "Honky Tonk Girl", 1960
- Eddy Arnold enters the charts with "Cowboy", his 100th Country hit, 1976

20

- **\*ANNE MURRAY;** Springhill, Nova Scotia, Canada
- **\*CHET ATKINS;** Luttrell, Tennessee
- **\*ENCORE** by Mickey Gilley certifies gold, 1991



21

- **\*KATHY MATTEA;** Cross Lanes, West Virginia
- Johnny Cash's first single, "Hey Porter", is released, 1955
- Don Williams tops the charts with "You're My Best Friend", 1975

22

- **\*KRIS KRISTOFFERSON;** Brownsville, Texas
- **\*ROY DRUSKY;** Atlanta, Georgia



23

- **\*JUNE CARTER CASH;** Maces Spring, Virginia
- George Strait's **GREATEST HITS VOLUME III** album goes platinum, 1988

24

- Alabama's **AMERICAN PRIDE, PASS IT ON DOWN** and **SOUTHERN STAR** certify platinum, 1993

25

- Collin Raye tops the Country charts with "Little Rock", 1994
- "Let Go" by Brother Phelps debuts on the Country charts, 1993
- David Houston enters Country charts with "Almost Persuaded", 1966

26

- The Oak Ridge Boys make their chart debut with "Family Reunion", 1976
- **\*GREAT VIDEO HITS: THE JUDDS** certifies gold, 1990
- Vince Gill's "I Still Believe In You" debuts on the charts, on its way to number one, 1992

27

- Joe Maphis dies, 1986

28

- **\*LESTER FLATT;** Overton County, Tennessee
- **\*GEORGE MORGAN;** Waverly, Tennessee
- Roy Orbison and Emmylou Harris enter Country charts with "That Lovin' You Feelin' Again", 1980
- Alan Jackson's "Don't Rock The Jukebox" charts at number one, 1991

29

- George Jones scores a number one hit with "He Stopped Loving Her Today", 1980
- **\*SIMPLE MAN** by the Charlie Daniels Band certifies gold, 1990
- Reba McEntire earns a platinum album with **READ MY MIND**, 1994

30

- The first Country Music recording session takes place when Eck Robertson and Henry Gilliland record six fiddle tunes at the Victor studio in New York City, 1922
- Vern Gosdin hits number one with "I Can Tell By The Way You Dance", 1984
- Ronnie Milsap makes chart debut with "I Hate You", 1973

[Factfile is compiled from the *Illustrated Country Almanac* by Richard Wootton (Dial Press), *The Illustrated History of Country Music* by the editors of **COUNTRY MUSIC** magazine (Doubleday/Dolphin Books), *The Encyclopedia of Folk, Country and Western Music* by Irwin Stambler and Grelun Landon (St. Martin's Press), and the Country Music Foundation's **OFFICIAL COUNTRY MUSIC CALENDAR**, as well as from original research.]

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|||||

## DATEBOOK

### MAY

- 7-9** GAVIN Country Seminar / Burbank Hilton /  
Burbank, CA / (415) 495-3200
- 11-14** Music West '95 / Hotel Vancouver /  
Vancouver, British Columbia /  
(604) 684-9338
- 26-18** International Singer-Songwriter Festival /  
Frutigen, Switzerland / (512) 327-5084;  
fax (512) 327-4328



BMI executive Frances Preston (third from right) enjoyed the spotlight when she received the ninth Master Award, presented by the Nashville Entertainment Association in recognition of her contributions to the Nashville music industry. Among the 500 community leaders offering their congratulations were (l to r) Mac Davis, Tennessee First Lady Martha Sundquist, Governor Don Sundquist, Randy Owen and Gary Morris.

- Photo by Beth Gwinn

### JUNE

- 5-11** 24th International Country Music Fan Fair /  
Tennessee State Fairgrounds / Nashville
- 5** TNN/MUSIC CITY NEWS Country Awards /  
Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville
- 17** Swiss Alps Country Fun Fair / Sportzentrum /  
Grindelwald, Switzerland / Contact InterNash  
Productions at (615) 726-1777

### JULY

- 12-13** CMA Board of Directors Meeting /  
Four Seasons Hotel / Boston
- 14** Americana International '95 Country In The  
Park / Donington Park / Castle Donington  
Derby, UK / Contact Christopher Jackson at  
(44) 60-239-0595

### AUGUST

- 15** CMA Awards Nominee Press Conference /  
Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville
- 25-27** British & Irish Country Music Festival /  
Pavilion Theatre / Worthing, West Sussex,  
England

### SEPTEMBER

- 2-4** Michael Martin Murphey's WestFest / Copper  
Mountain Resort / Copper Mountain, CO

### OCTOBER

- 4** 29TH Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry  
House / Nashville
- 5** CMA Annual Membership Meeting /  
Nashville
- 5** CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Nashville
- 5-7** SRO / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville
- 15** Country Gold Festival / Aspecta / Kumamoto,  
Japan / Contact Judy Seale at:  
(615) 256-6615; fax (615) 256-6717