

\$2

Music Row™

Nashville's

Music Industry

Newspaper

VOL 5 NUMBER 3 JUNE 1985

ESTABLISHED 1981



Jukeboxing Now & Then

The Magic Box
Remembered

45 RPM:

Rosanne Cash, &
Southern Pacific Get
Singled Out

Interview:
Buddy Killen
Shares A
Few Of His
Recipes...For
Success

Special A Strings Supplement

(See page 20)

Plus

- ★ Album Reviews
- ★ Music Video Reviews
- ★ The Club Scene
- ★ Dollars & Sense
- ★ and More . . .



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— TABLE OF CONTENTS —

The Streets Of Music Row	4
The Magic Box Remembered: Jukeboxing Now and Then	13
Dollars and \$ense	14
45 RPM: New Single Reviews	16
The Vinyl Conflict: Two Album Critics Go Head to Head	22
Buddy Killen Interview: Recipes For Success	24
Video Section Video Vision: Video Music Reviews	28
Video Directory	29
The Club Report: Live Music	30
The Directory	32
Keeping Track	36

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MUSIC ROW . . . is distributed to studios, publishing companies, recording companies, pro audio stores, musician's unions and many other music industry related organizations in the Nashville area. In addition copies are sent out monthly to over 300 key reporting country music radio stations all over the U.S.A. We would appreciate receiving press releases concerning items of interest to the professional music community.

MUSIC ROW

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MUSIC INDUSTRY NEWSPAPER

To receive the next 12 issues of Music Row, send name, address, plus \$20.00 for postage and handling to: Music Row, P.O. Box 158483, Nashville, TN 37215.

ALL ABOUT THE COVER

Exile's musical roots dig long and deep into country music. Drummer **Steve Goetzman** and **Les Taylor**, who share guitar and lead vocal work with **J.P. Pennington**, played in country bands while growing up in a hotbed of country and bluegrass music in and around Kentucky. **Marlon Hargis**, Exile's keyboard whiz, and Pennington, performed on the Renfro Valley Barn Dance. Pennington's uncle was the late Country Music Hall of Famer, Red Foley. **Sonny Lemaire**, who plays bass and sings background vocals was born in Virginia and grew up just across the Ohio River from Louisville.

The group first formed in 1963 as a high school band. In 1978 after going through various personnel changes and without a record deal they entered a Kentucky studio and cut "Kiss You All Over". The song got them signed to a label, and then topped the pop charts for four weeks selling some four million records worldwide.

After that incredible success, things seemed to burn out for a while. Their songwriting was earning hits for others. ("The Closer You Get", "Take Me Down", "It Ain't Easy") but as an act things were on the back burner. Surrounded by their songs, the group slowly made the transition back to their original roots and honed their style to seek a contract in country music. Finally with some help from producer Buddy Killen, they were signed by Rick Blackburn to Epic Records in 1983. Since then it's been a journey down the "yellow brick road". After a well received first release the group then racked up four consecutive #1 singles: "Woke Up In Love," "I Don't Want To Be A Memory," "Give Me One More Chance," and "Crazy For Your Love."

The new single "She's A Miracle" from the group's second album "Kentucky Hearts" is top ten as of this writing and climbing.

If Exile's country success boosts the group back into the crossover pop charts, the music business might be treated to a new feat—a double-reverse crossover! Whether it happens or not, Exile's members are perfectly happy where they are—sitting atop the country music charts.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1985 NEW FACES SHOW

Dear David Ross:

I was disappointed to read your assessment of the New Faces Show which, in your words, was "little to get excited about." Having been part of this year's Show, I feel your readers should be made aware of certain conditions which prevented the artists who participated in the Show from being presented at their best.

Unfortunately for the ten acts performing that night, the committee in charge of the Show failed to realize the importance of pre-show sound checks and allowed other seminar functions to be held in the room all afternoon prior to the Show. This made it impossible for the sound company to do their job properly. Due to lack of time, the sound company was still trying to get things working during the banquet dinner just before the Show. Even though we had asked those in charge early in the day if we could at least check vocal microphones and lead instru-

ment lines before the Show, no one got a sound check. As a result, the Show was severely hampered by the poor quality of the sound. Entire lead guitar and banjo rides were inaudible; vocals were either without clarity or completely turned off.

In previous performances under professional conditions, I have seen Carl Jackson and Vince Gill mesmerize an audience with their extraordinary musical talents. They, as well as the rest of us did our best that night. The sound was simply not together. This was a shame for all involved, particu-

larly when you consider the great opportunity an artist has by appearing in the show.

Next year, I hope the committee involved with the New Faces Show will make the proper arrangements for the Show to be presented in the most professional manner possible; but if problems arise, as they did this year, I hope you will take those things into consideration when sharing your review with your readers.

Tim Wright
THE WRIGHT BROTHERS

CMA Board Meeting Initiates Video Award

An award honoring the Country video medium was one of the many decisions initiated at the second quarterly CMA Board of Directors meeting held May 15-23 in Australia and New Zealand. The meetings also produced the election of two new officers.

Bill Sherard of WPKX Radio in Washington, D.C. will fill Don Nelson's unexpired term as Vice President. Nelson resigned after accepting a position with a radio station that does not program country music and felt a country broadcast executive would be more representative on the board. Charlie Ochs of KJJJ Radio in Phoenix, Arizona replaced Bill Anderson as Assistant Secretary. Anderson's resignation was served due to the recuperation of his wife, Becky, from an auto accident last fall.

Plans were discussed on continuing efforts aimed at establishing the first United Kingdom Country Album chart. Also new ideas were discussed for the Talent Buyers Entertainment Marketplace to be held at the Hyatt Regency, October 11-13.

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EVENTS CALENDAR

June 10-16

Int. Country Music Fan Fair. Sponsored by CMA and Grand Ole Opry. Tenn. State Fairgrounds. 615-244-2840.

June 16

Outdoor concert with the A-Strings, including rhythm and brass sections. Centennial Park.

June 26

Entre Computer and MetroGnome Software co-sponsor two seminars; "Computer Applications for the Booking Agency," and "Computer Applications for the Music Publisher." Spence Manor, morning and afternoon sessions. (615) 254-5550.

June 26

Nashville Music Association's general membership election/birthday celebration. 5:30 Vanderbilt Hotel, Nashville.

June 29

The Songwriter's Guild Foundation sponsors a one-day lyric writing seminar with author, Sheila Davis. Blair School 9AM-5:30PM. \$15 for members, \$25 non members. 329-1782.

July 20

NSAI Summer Seminar, Belmont College, Nashville. (615) 321-5004.

September 5

NMA Harlan Howard Birthday Bash. (Rain date Sept. 6th) 321-5662.

★ ★ CHARTBOUND ★ ★

JACKIE BELL

"Don't Sing Me No Sad Song Tonight"



Recently signed on the Jammer record label, Jackie Bell made her way to Nashville from Saskatchewan, Canada. The 19-year-old singer appeared on the Tommy Hunter show in Canada and also performed at numerous country fairs, and clubs. Determined to expand her career, Jackie made the decision to move to Music City. It was not long before she was signed with Jammer Records. Recently the young country singer appeared on The

Nashville Network TV show, "You Can Be A Star," and also on "Nashville Now."

Her new record, "Don't Sing Me No Sad Song Tonight" has just been released and is being distributed to country stations all over the U.S. National promotion is being handled by Mike Borchetta Promotions. For more information contact: Jammer Records, 38 Music Sq. E., Nashville, TN. 37203. (615) 726-0300.

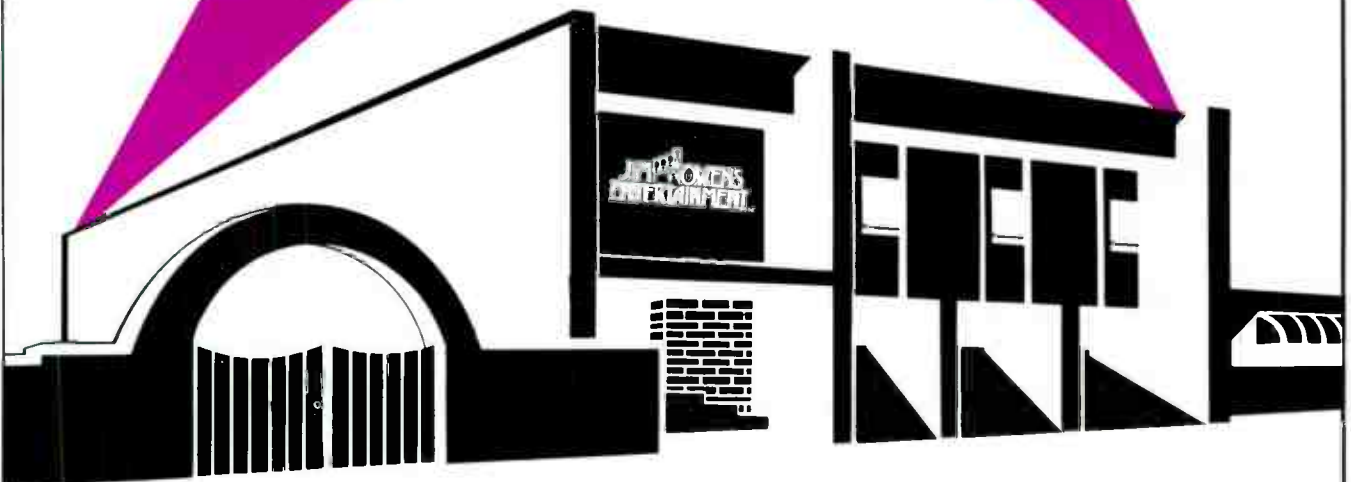
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MUSICAL CHAIRS

MetroGnome Software has announced three new packages for studios, publishers, and music producers . . . **Sandy Neese**, formerly music reporter for the Tennessean, has been named Director of Media and Public Relations for the **MTM Music Group** . . . Writer, **Tom C. Armstrong**, recently guested on radio WPLN's Talking Library show "The Sound Of It," hosted by **Maria Simpson** . . . **Nationwide Sound** has signed an agreement with **Genesee Records** of Litchfield, Michigan to market and distribute the soundtrack album for the movie, "In The Name Of Freedom." . . . **Vicki Lee** from Pensacola, Florida has signed a recording contract with **Rustic Records**, to be produced by **Harold Bradley** . . . **Gaylon Arrington** has announced the formation of **El Dorado Records** with Nashville offices. 321-3070. First release on the label is a single by **Freddie Hart**, marketed with a unique miniature 3" flexible disc . . . **John McEuen's** seventh annual Rocky Mountain Opry will feature **Arlo Guthrie, Bonnie Rait, David Bromberg, Ricky Skaggs, and The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**. The event will take place on July 7 in Denver Colorado . . . **The Statlers** recently opened their series of Marlboro sponsored concerts with two sellouts in Greensboro, and then Charlotte, N.C. The vocal quartet is now using three large video screens to enhance the live show . . . Singer/songwriter **Allen Frizzell** has signed with **Epic Records** and will be produced by **Pete Drake** . . . **Grand Music Group** opened under the direction of President/exclusive writer **Mikey Hiter**, at 1710 Grand Ave. Other Grand writers include; **Pat Patrick** (also secretary-

treasurer), **Joe Allen, Jim Dowell** (producer/co-publisher), **Kent Blazy, and Buddy Blackmon** . . . **Shelley West** has signed with **McFadden and Associates** for booking . . . **Anne Murray's** "A Little Good News" **Capitol** album has been certified Gold by R.I.A.A. based on sales through February, 1985. It's her eighth gold album . . . **Top Billing International** and officials of **The John F. Kennedy Center For The Performing Arts** in Washington D.C., have announced an association designed to bring a series of Country concerts to the nation's capitol. According to **Top Billing's Tandy Rice**, "Jerry Clower's personal appearance dates for 1985 are, quite simply, all gone." . . . **Tracy Lynden** has been signed to **RCA** with production duties to be handled by **R.C. Bannon** . . . **Kenny & Dolly's** Christmas album, "Once Upon A Christmas" has gone platinum . . . **Limelights, Inc.**, has acquired a major new partner, merging with **Hugh Rodgers** who was formerly based in Atlanta . . . **The Country Music Foundation** will issue twelve rare **Hank Williams** performances titled, "Just Me And My Guitar" in May. Compiled and produced by **CMF's Bob Pinson**, the songs presented are never-before-released demonstration recordings unearthed after a thorough search of the **Acuff-Rose** song vaults . . . **Churchill Records & Video** has moved to new offices at 1111 16th Ave S. The company has also formed a new subsidiary, **Century Artists Management**, which has signed **Dwight Yoakam**. 329-1700 . . . The "Performing Arts Summit—A Meeting Of Musical Greats" featured host, **Janie Fricke, Chet Atkins, Liona Boyd,**

George Jones, T.G. Sheppard and Mark Gray. All proceeds from the June 6 event at TPAC went to the T. J. Martell Foundation for Leukemia and Cancer Research . . . **Southern Tracks Records**, Atlanta, has signed author **Lewis Grizzard** to a recording contract . . . **Charlu Reigle** has joined the **Business Journal** as entertainment writer, 254-9154 . . . **MESA Recording** artist, **Karen Taylor-Good** has signed a long term management contract with **Robert Porter and Ewell Roussell** of Porter and Roussell Management, Inc . . . **John Conlee** will play a benefit concert June 2 in Omaha, Nebraska with proceeds to go to the Family Farm Defense Fund . . . **Gibson guitar** announces a new design acoustic pickup called **SORS** (symbiotic oriented receptor system) which "utilizes the piezoelectric design concept with a remarkable new piezo polymer film to give an incredible frequency response of from 100 seconds per cycle to 10 million cycles per second." . . . Four of the tracks from **Chet Atkins** new all-star guitar album "Stay Tuned" were recently used as background music on the ABC soap opera, "One Life To Live." **John Hartford and Riders In The Sky** have joined to become semi-regulars on **The Liberty Flyer**, the American acoustic music radio series which currently airs on 90 commercial stations and 410 affiliates of the Armed Forces Radio Network. Produced in Asheville, N.C. by the Linear Group, the show debuted on January 4, 1985 . . . **BMI's Frances Preston** announced the appointments of **Roger Sovine, VP, Nashville Operations, and Joe Moscheo, VP, Special Projects.**



GIRLS' NIGHT OUT. Enjoying a number 1 celebration cake for the writers of "Girls' Night Out," recorded by the Judds are: (left to right) **Jeff Bullock**, writer; **Connie Bradley**, ASCAP; **Brent Maher**, writer/producer; and **Merlin Litchfield**, ASCAP.

Entre Computer Takes On Music Industry Software Line

MetroGnome, Inc., a Nashville-based computer firm specializing in business management software for the music industry announced that **Entre Computer Center** has signed on as a **MetroGnome** software dealer. Initially, **Entre** will focus its efforts in the Nashville market with an eye toward expanding into other key markets through its centers in such areas as New York and Los Angeles.

According to **MetroGnome** president, **Mark Augelli**, some of the firm's specialized packages include software for recording studios, music publishers, booking agencies, record companies, and producers.

Entre and **MetroGnome** will jointly sponsor two free seminars on June 26, at the **Spence Manor** hotel. "Computer Applications for the Booking Agency," and "Computer Applications for the Music Publisher." For information call 298-4948.



NEWLY APPOINTED. **BMI's** senior v.p., **Frances Preston**, congratulates **Joe Moscheo**, (left) v.p. special projects, and v.p./Nashville, **Roger Sovine**, on their new titles with the performing rights organization.

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ARTHRITIS FUNDRAISER. Margo Smith (left) and Dianne Sherrill along with many other performers helped raise funds for the Arthritis Foundation during a benefit telethon.

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WORTH MENTIONING

★ "Independent Labels: Revolution or Evolution?" a forum presented by the NMA and sponsored by Masterfonics and Merit Music featured panelists; Barrie Bergman, Record Bar; Alan Bernard, MTM Music; Charlie Fach, Compleat Records; John Prine, Bug Records; Joe Talbot, Precision Record Pressing; and Don Tolle, Noble Vision Records. The panel was moderated by Stan Byrd on Chart Attack promotions.

★ Coal Miners Daughter was selected as one of five American films to be shown as part of a five week cultural exchange project with China. Sissy Spacek who won an Academy Award for her portrayal of Loretta Lynn will travel to China for the event.

★ Sandra Rhodes, Charlie Chalmers, and Brenda Barnett showcased an array of sparkling originals and spirited covers at the Suttler on April 23. Vinyl aficionados will recall that Sandra, sister Donna (former "Lonesome Rhodes" partner), and Charlie provided the soulful vocal backing that adorned so many hits recorded in Memphis and Muscle Shoals. — Pete Loesch

★ Congratulations to producer, Ken Laxton and wife, Faye, who recently celebrated their 25th silver wedding anniversary!

★ The Music Shop, a new telephone album sales marketing company is running several different spots on The Nashville Network. The company sells a complete catalog of country product, on album, cassette, or compact disc. Their phone number, what else? 1-800-FOR A HIT.

★ Hank Williams Jr. proved himself worthy of Entertainer Of The Year status at a recent MTSU concert. The bluesman gave

the crowd all they came for and more. The Bama band was tight, well rehearsed and supported the show beautifully while Hank played guitar, fiddle, piano, and some lap steel. At the end he ripped off his shirt and was standing up on the piano firing a rifle into the air. The rowdy fans and friends loved it!

★ During the first RIAA multi-platinum awards ceremony, Country artists were honored with awards for the sale of more than 24 million albums. Alabama's album sales accounted for ten million of the cumulative figure.

★ Eddie Rabbitt claims to have lost 50 lbs. due to his recent running regimen. His organization is now calling the 6' 3" runner, Fast Eddie.

★ "The Story of the Louisiana Hayride" an hour long documentary produced by Rick Smith and Carole Adornetto Leslie, was previewed at the Country Music Hall of Fame. Present in the audience were many of the notables who appear in the show. Narrated by Hank Williams Jr., the show traces the development of the Hayride, referring to it as "a fast moving stream that fed the big river of country music. If the Opry was heaven or paradise, then the Hayride was heaven's door."

★ Rosanne Cash's new album "Rhythm & Romance" could be the vinyl event of the summer. Written by Rosanne and various co-writers the tracks contain a collection of country and pop sounds that blend beautifully. Especially poignant is "My Old Man".

— David M. Ross

Entertainers Against Hunger

Entertainers Against Hunger, a permanent fund-raising and distributing organization, has been incorporated and will begin operations im-

mediately according to the Edward Morris and Mark Renz who established the fund.

The corporation's charter stipulates that all funds collected directly from entertainers will be spent on food for the needy, both here and abroad. All administrative and operational costs will come from contributions from those associated with the entertainment industry, but who are not performers themselves.

A self-perpetuating board of directors will be made up of five members of the entertainment community, each of whom will serve a one-year term. Acting as temporary board members are Sandy Neese, newly appointed director of media and public relations for MTM Music; Henry Cory, singer/songwriter and former worker for Oxfam the international hunger relief agency; Michael Johnson, Commerce Union Bank; Ed Morris, Billboard Magazine; and Mark Renz, former projects coordinator for the March of Dimes.

248-3131

41 MUSIC SQUARE EAST

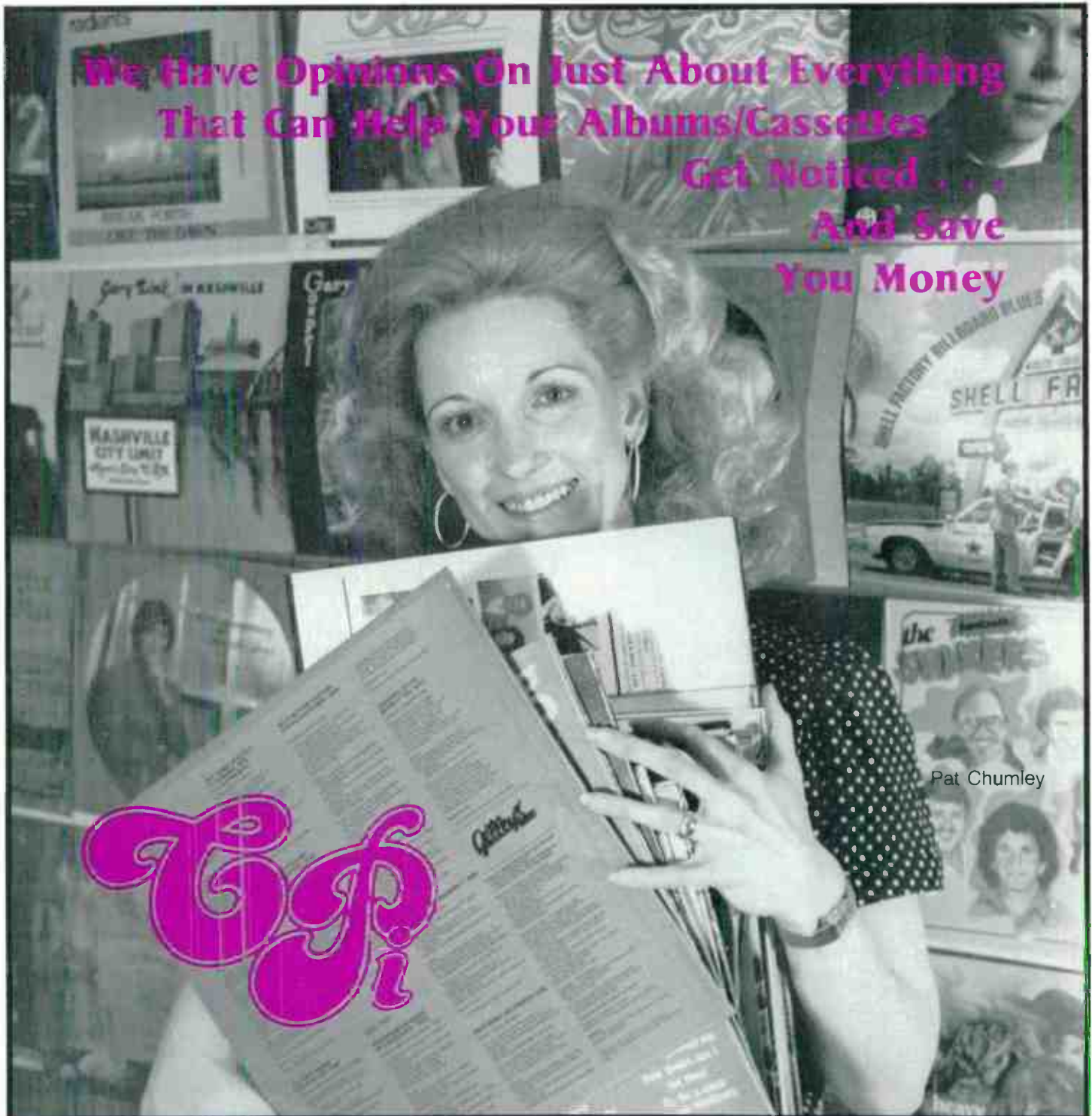
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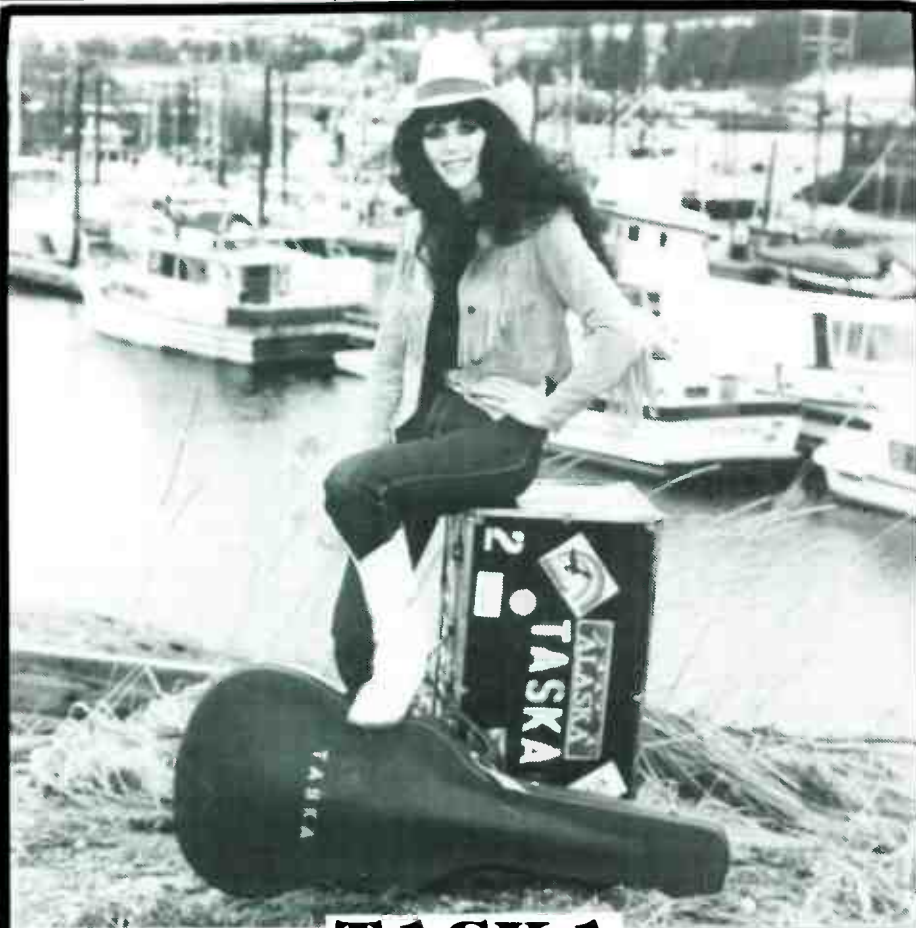
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WILL THE REAL STUNTPERSON PLEASE STAND. Earl Thomas Conley (left) and T.G. Shepard surround lovely Heather Thomas at the Academy Of Music Awards. Heather plays 'Jody' on TV series The Fall Guy.



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Fifth Annual Wild Turkey Battle Of The Bands Competition Underway

Local competitions in 101 different clubs all across the country will be underway between June 1 and August 31 looking for the best in country music bands. After regional run-offs the top groups will be brought to Nashville for the grand finals on October 25 at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center. This years show will be hosted by Mel Tillis and Gus Hardin.

The first place winner will receive \$5,000. and a one year booking contract with Buddy Lee Attractions. In addition they will record an album. According to Jerry Free, president Wild Turkey Battle of Country Bands, information can be obtained by calling (615) 254-7777.

Baseball Fantasy Camp

Oak Ridge Boy, Richard Sterban, will host the first annual Music City All-Star Baseball Fantasy Camp that will allow registrants to train for a week with all-star retirees. Seven former baseball greats are set as coaches: Dick McAuliffe, Hank Aguirre, Johnny Bench, Pat Dobson, Willie Horton, Jim Price, and Joe Torre. A maximum of 90 signees will be accepted for the one week event on July 21-26. For more information call (615) 748-1801.



TEAMWORK. Glen Campbell and the team from Borchetta Promotions got together at a recent gathering for Glen's latest album, "Letter To Home" held at the Music Mill. Shown left to right are: Scott Borchetta, Campbell, Sheilah Hayes and Mike Borchetta.



Alan Maynor

MUSIC MEETS THEATER. Bruisers, Pinkard and Bowden went berserk at a recent Nashville premiere of "Rustler's Rhapsody," when they discovered that their song "Crumblin' Stumbleweed" which appears on the movie's soundtrack album had been booted from the film itself. They wildly leaped out of their seats and began threatening the event's MC's, radio 95FM personalities Marijo Monette and Katie Haas. The women have responded by challenging the half-crazed pair to a wrestling match to be held on May 30 at the Tenn. State Fairgrounds.

"One Big Family" Who's Who

For those of you having a little trouble identifying all the voices on the "One Big Family" single, the following list identifies the singers as they appear on the record: George Jones, Eddy Arnold, Faron Young, Tanya

Tucker, Dobie Gray, Ray Sawyer, Lynn Anderson, Bobby Bare, The Kendalls, The Jordanaires, Ronnie McDowell, Roy Acuff, Ronnie McDowell, Troy Seals, Tanya Tucker, Troy Seals, Tanya Tucker.

Acting Workshop To Feature Tony Shepherd

Sponsored by the Nashville Music Association, Tony Shepherd, talent director for Aaron Spelling Productions will host a two day workshop in Nashville on July 20,21. The classes will be limited to 80 people and is open to anyone interested in becoming a professional actor/actress. Cost for the two days is \$175. For reserving space and/or more information call The Branton Agency, 329-3332.

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Dollars & Sense

IMPROVING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BANKER

by Kerry P. O'Neil, CPA

On March 21 the Nashville Music Association and the Nashville banking community held an all day conference designed to bridge the gap between the two industries. There were four panel sessions, two of which were hosted by the bankers. In the first banking panel, Will Vance, Vice-President, Third National Bank, discussed the fundamentals of a good banking relationship. The simplicity of his comments is striking. As is often the case, the fundamentals are the things we overlook the most. The following is excerpted from his talk:

9 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BANKER

1. Keep him/her informed - tell both the good and bad news - **NO SURPRISES!**

2. Send him/her a financial statement annually - make sure it's thorough and truthful.

3. Allow plenty of lead time for credit requests - bring all of the necessary back-up information.

4. Don't overdraw your accounts.

5. Don't borrow all over town.

6. Keep your accounts with the banker you borrow from.

7. Pay out your loans from time to time.

8. Don't negotiate rates too hard - discuss rates in person, not on the phone.

9. Don't make promises you know you can't keep - if you can't keep a promise, communicate quickly and thoroughly why you couldn't.

A successful banking relationship is of great importance. It is often the difference between a thriving company with funds for expansion and a troubled one unable to compete. Look at how your relationship measures up against these standards. The secret to a good banking relationship is simple - credibility, communication, and continuity.

— Good Luck & Take Care



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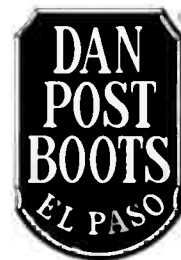


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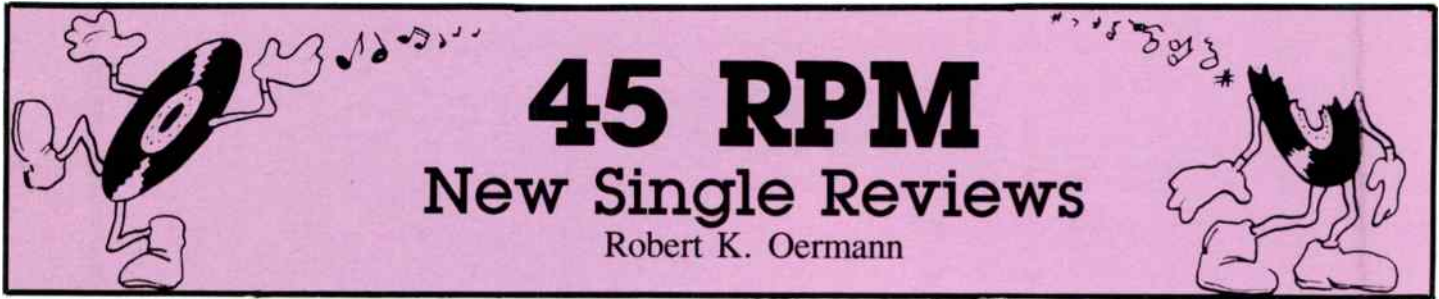


Jimmy Buffett



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It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. By that I mean there wasn't all that much to be indifferent about this month. Either that, or I'm becoming more opinionated (What????!).

I'd have given CBS Label of the Month honors for an unprecedented third straight time, except for the fact that we only had three singles on hand to judge. Keith Stegall, Lacy J. Dalton and Rosanne Cash were all in contention for Single of the Month. The freshness of approach gets Rosanne the nod.

RCA, always a contender, gets Label of the Month honors. Not a duff item in the release schedule for Nipper this time around.

Beyond question the most exciting new act of the month is **Southern Pacific**. I put on the tape every morning to make myself feel good about the world and face a day with a celebration of melody that stays in my brain hour after hour. I understand that my colleagues in the Vinyl Conflict column elsewhere in this periodical are reviewing the LP this month. I can only assume they have the same excellent taste I do. DISCOVERY isn't a big enough honor for something this good. Joy, joy, joy.

Kindly address further great discs to: Music Row, P.O. Box 158483, Nashville, TN 37215.

DON McHAN

"T.V. The Ruler"

Writers: Jean Merritt, Don McHan; Producer: Charlie Fields; Publisher: Great Chalice, BMI. Great Chalice 850001 (615-255-2175).

Belongs in the topical song hall of fame for its great anti-television message. Can't say much for the melody or performance, though.

DON R. BRYANT

"Tears For Breakfast"

Writer: Don R. Bryant; Producer: Don R. Bryant; Publisher: Lowery/Snap Finger, BMI. Southern Trucks 1038 (404-325-0832).

Robot country, complete with recitation, cornball words, and automatic-pilot arrangement.

MACK LAMBERTH

"Looking To Learn"

Writer: Mack Lambirth; Producer: Don Bryant; Publisher: Snap Finger, BMI. SnapFinger 13338 (404-442-3300).

Skates dangerously close to the thin ice that covers the "Don't Give Up Your Day Job" section of the lake. The kindest thing you can say is that whatever his limitations, Mack conveys a great deal of sincerity.

DAVID WALSH

"Alice, Rita, and Donna"

Writer: C.W. Fields; Producer: Charlie Fields; Publisher: Jason Dee, BMI. Chara 196 (615-255-2175).

Snooze vocalist gets lucky with a real tasty South-of-the-border instrumental arrangement. Producer Fields gets a salute for valor on a musical battlefield against overwhelming odds.

DENISE BURRESS

"Gimme A Break"

Writer: Denny Farris; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Last Stand, BMI. Soundwaves 4754

Give you break? That's exactly what I did, right in

half.

DOC & SMITTY BAND

"Please Don't Change the Taste"

Songwriter: Ron Orwich; Producer: J.D. Miller; Publisher: Falls City, BMI. Bridges 16054.

Topical Lyric Hall of Fame winner #2! Only in country music could a song about changing the Coke formula find its way onto plastic. Nice & witty, right down to the little musical bubble noises.

LEN WADE

"Feels Like Love Tonight"

Writer: T. Skinner, K. Bell, J. L. Wallace; Producer: Jerry Kennedy; Publisher: Welk, BMI. Mercury 880723-7.

Len's vocal has got all sorts of neat little effects and shadings in it on this outing. I also dug the insinuating little guitar riff that repeats softly throughout. Crafty, catchy.

R. W. WHITE

"Closin Time"

Writer: Rawson, Haggerty; Producer: Tony Migliore; Publisher: Northward, PRO. Lone Star 0003.

Give him another drink. Maybe he'll pass out and shut up.

MAC DAVIS

"I Never Made Love"

Writer: B. McDill; Producer: Jimmy Bowen; Publisher: Welk, BMI. MCA 52573.

This man has surely had one of the most inconsistent, up-and-down careers in recording history. I thought he was down for the count last time around, but here he is back again with plenty of punch. The ol' boy still has class.

BOBBY & BILLY SPROUT

"Never Be Anyone Else But You"

Writer: Baker Knight; Producer: Wayne Edmondson, Rusty Adams; Publisher: CBS/Unart/Maragan, BMI. Sound Track 1060 (615-297-2239).

The static on the lousy pressing was infinitely more interesting than the music in the grooves. Sonic torture.

FREDDY POWERS

"My San Antonio Rose"

Writer: F. Powers; Producer: Merle Haggard & Jimmy Bowen; Publisher: Mount Shasta, BMI. MCA 52585.

Silvery, slippery Les Paul-type playing kicks along a western swing sashay down memory lane. Powers is an instant classic. A single that grins all around the room.

CARROLL BAKER

"It Always Hurts Like the First Time"

Writer: Rory Bourke, Steve Bogard; Producer: Mike Francis; Publisher: Chappell, ASCAP. Tembo 8520.

The multiple award-winning Canadian legend is less than legendary this time out. I daydreamed through the whole thing.

PAUL PROCTOR

"Tennessee Woman"

Writer: P. Proctor; Producer: B. Castleman; Publisher: Possum Kingdom, BMI. BNA 013 (615-776-2343).

Tennessee woman, Texas lady, Georgia girl, Alabama gal, Kentucky maid . . . Hardly a striking, original, novel, or even remotely interesting song concept. And, oh yes: You sing flat.

EXILE

"Dixie Girl"

Writers: S. LeMaire, J. Paine; Producer: Mike Chapman; Publisher: Careers/Arista, BMI/ASCAP, MCA/Curb 52596.

Hey, now here's a brilliant twist. Not just the

Southern Girl idea: This one has the "tight blue jeans" line in it. Hackneyed and commonplace in the extreme.

JACK GREER

"Lovin' Lady"

Writer: J. Greer; Producer: Kevin Bonar; Publisher: Texas Roadrunner, ASCAP. RRP 21585.

This "Lovin' Lady" "lights my fire." What a month for creative songwriting, huh?

THE KENDALLS

"If You Break My Heart"

Writer: M. Garvin, B. Jones, T. Shapiro; Producer: Brian Fisher; Publisher: Tree/O'Lyric, ASCAP/BMI. Mercury 880828-7.

A serious miscalculation. She's a country singer trying to carry off a pop performance and failing. Also: In my opinion, Jeannie without the harmonies of Royce is only half as interesting on disc.

ALBERT UPDYKE

"Silver Tongued Devil Strikes Gold"

Writer: Randy Upton; Producer: Wayne Hodge; Publisher: Tieche, BMI. Stargem 2330.

There's a real fine vocalist hiding on this single somewhere, I think. What if they tried this song a tad more uptempo, with a decent arrangement and production? At least then poor Albert would maybe have a fighting chance.

VICTORIA SHAW

"New Love"

Writer: Herb McCallough, David Innis; Producers: Mike Daniel, Jim Dowell; Publisher: Welk, MPB 5012 (615-329-2278).

An old "Music Row" favorite, back with her usual excellent performance. Another gem from a lady that keeps on comin.' The Daniel/Dowell setting gives her diamond voice plenty of sparkle.

THE BLASTERS

"Help You Dream"

Writer: Dave Alvin; Producer: Jeff Eyrich; Publisher: Bug, BMI. Warner/Slash 7-29055.

The sublime Jordanaires, alone, make this well worth a listen.

GEORGE PICKARD

"Coke Was It"

Writers: George Pickard, Wayne Hodge; Producer: Wayne Hodge; Publisher: Timesstar/Newwriters, ASCAP/BMI. Stargem 2331 (615-244-1028).

WHAT??? ANOTHER Coca-Cola song???? This is truly incredible. For those of you paying any attention to this mini-trend, stick to the funny single. This one has pretensions of being SERIOUSLY SENTIMENTAL about this non-event in American culture.

TERRY GREGORY

"Every Second Someone Breaks a Heart"

Writer: R. Grossman; Producer: Bob Montgomery; Publisher: Tree, BMI. Scott Brothers 04921.

Robust-voiced Gregory clocks in with a tension-filled rocker. Always an absorbing performer, this time out she rides atop a crackling arrangement with a snappy, intriguing lyric.

GARY JOSEY

"Surrounded"

Writers: Austin Roberts, Tom Campbell, Todd Cerney; Producer: Roy Haws, Lonnie Wright; Publisher: Welk/MCA/Criswold/Hopi, ASCAP. CBT 1315 (214-586-1828).

Tough, tasty little uptempo item. Recorded in Houston, it's ample proof that you can get a professional country sound someplace besides Music Row.

KEITH STEGALL**“Pretty Lady”**

Writer: Keith Stegall; Producer: Kyle Lehning; Publisher: Apr/Keith Stegall, ASCAP, Epic 34-04934.

I can see them now, gliding across Texas dancefloors to the strains of this easy-going bopper. Brent Mason's giddy guitar is propulsion enough to get you off your chair. Do I hear Keith's first top-5 single here, radio men?

R. J. McCLINTOCK**“Stop Me (If I'm Wrong)”**

Writer: Ken Wesley; Producer: Patty Parker; Publisher: White Cat, ASCAP, Comstock 1778 (193-631-6060).

R.J.'s got a nice “hurting” quality in his voice; and the shimmering waterfall steel guitar notes are simply lovely. Producer/pin-up gal Parker strikes aural pay-dirt yet again.

HEART OF NASHVILLE**“One Big Family”**

Writers: Ronnie McDowell, Mike Reid, Troy Seals; Producer: Ronnie McDowell, Ernie Winfrey; Publisher: Heart of Nashville Foundation, ASCAP/BMI, Compleat 679001-7.

Besides being for a good cause, this single is a really fun country fans' guessing game as the various vocalists take their turns standing in the cameo spotlight.

DOUG PETERS**“Captured By Love”**

Writer: Doug Peters; Producer: Patty Parker; Publisher: Doug Peters Music, BMI, Comstock 1982 (913-631-6060).

Peters isn't much as a vocalist, but he has shown consistent promise as a songwriter and should be encouraged in that direction.

LACY J. DALTON**“You Can't Run Away From Your Heart”**

Writer: Wendy Waldman; Producer: Marshall Morgan, Paul Worley; Publisher: Screen Gems/EMI/Moon & Stars/Berger Bits, BMI/ASCAP, Columbia 38-04884.

S-o-o-o sexy sounding. I just fell hopelessly head over heels in love with this woman all over again.

ROSANNE CASH**“I Don't Know Why You Don't Want Me”**

Writers: R. Cash, R. Crowell; Producer: Rodney Crowell & Dave Thoenes; Publisher: Chelcain/Coolwell/Granite, BMI/ASCAP, Columbia 38-04809.

Wonderfully involving. Every time I listen, I get caught up in something else: Vince's backups, the overlapping verses, the synthesizer droplets, the crunching drum, the chiming guitar, the lyric, the barbershop pole ribbon ending.

DOLLY PARTON & KENNY ROGERS**“Real Love”**

Writers: David Malloy, Richard (Spady) Bannon, Randy McCormick; Producer: David Malloy; Publisher: Deb/Dave/Mallven/Cottonpatch, BMI/ASCAP, RCA 14058.

I love the way these two sound together: Usually stars of this magnitude are beyond sounding as truly involved in singing as these two. This goes #1 on my playlist.

SAMMI SMITH**“You Just Hurt My Last Feeling”**

Writers: Hank Cochran, Royce Porter; Producer: Bobby Bobo, Ray Pennington; Publisher: Tree/Southwing, BMI/ASCAP, Step One 342 (615-255-3009).

Welcome back. I've missed you. Get a better producer.

REBA McENTIRE**“Have I Got a Deal For You”**

Writers: M. P. Heaney, J. Leap; Producer: Jimmy Bowen & Reba McEntire; Publisher: Songmedia/Friday Night, BMI, MCA 52604.

A voice and personality that transcend vinyl. A country music superstar.

VIK CHANDLER**“Then I'll Stop Loving You”**

Writers: Roger Bowling, Glen Sutton; Producer: Ron Corneilus; Publisher: ATV/Flagship, BMI, Soundwaves 4756.

Conversational in tone, but full of unique phrasing. Soothing, yet never boring. This guy is a real stylist. He and his single get an A-plus from this reviewer.



Holly
DUNN

“Playing
For Keeps”⁷²⁰⁵²

Produced by **TOMMY WEST**

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MEL TILLIS**"You Done Me Wrong"**

Writers: Ray Price, S. Jones; Producer: Harold Shedd; Publisher: Cedarwood/Fort Knox, BMI, RCA 14061.

A country chestnut gets an up-to-date treatment from Mel and Harold. Auspicious label debut.

HENRY LEWIS**"Jalapeno Lips"**

Writers: C. H. Lewis Jr., Jimmy Payne; Producer: Joe Gibson, Jimmy Payne, Henry Lewis; Publisher: Henry/HitKit, BMI, Burgundy 1009.

What is possibly the worst rhyme scheme in the entire history of recorded popular music crashes into the brain with the couplets "jalapeno lips/tortilla chips" and "holy guacamole/bless-a my soul-ay." It gives me Montezuma's Revenge to listen to this one.

ALABAMA**"40 Hour Week"**

Writers: Dave Loggins, Lisa Silver, Don Schlitz; Producer: Harold Shedd, Alabama; Publisher: MCA/Patchwork/Don Schlitz, BMI/ASCAP, RCA 14085.

My hat is off to these guys; my hand's on my chest; and there's a tear in my eye. It fills me with pride in country music to know there's an act that gives such dignity to the working people of America. And how much taller we can all stand to know it's the most popular act we've got. God bless them, as well as the ever-lovin' Loggins, Silver and Schlitz.

SANDY CROFT**"Piece of My Heart"**

Writers: Bert Berns; Producer: Joe Wilson; Publisher: Webb IV, BMI, Capitol 5471.

My initial reaction to the audacity of this cover version was shock. In spite of myself, I like it. She, Joe Wilson and Paul Davis have given the soul/rock standard a genuinely country feel.

SAWYER BROWN**"Used to Blue"**

Writers: F. Knoblach, B. LaBounty; Producer: Randy L. Scruggs; Publisher: Montage/Captain Crystal, ASCAP/BMI, Capitol 5477.

Achingly gorgeous. Another chart-topper.

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GAIL DAVIES**"Unwed Fathers"**

Writers: Bobby Braddock & John Prine; Producer: Gail Davies & Leland Sklar; Publisher: Tree/Big Ears/Bruised Orange, BMI, ASCAP, RCA 14095.

If I had Dolly Parton singing harmony on my record, you can bet I'd have her track turned up a lot louder than this. Regardless, this is a superb performance of a superb song.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC**"Someone Is Gonna Love Me Tonight"**

Writers: Tim Goodman, Bruce Gowdy; Producer: Jim Ed Norman, Southern Pacific, Brad Hartman; Publisher: That's What She Said Music/Making Bets, BMI, Warner Bros. 7-29020.

The California sun bursts through the gray Tennessee skies and the golden light of country-rock shines on a city that wouldn't acknowledge its existence a decade ago. Raise your head to the heavens and give thanks.

LEON EVERETTE**"A Good Love Died Tonight"**

Writer: Roger Murrah; Producer: Bill Rice; Publisher: Blackwood/Shubi, BMI, Mercury 880829-7.

A natural-born Nashville radio record if I've ever heard one. Get in the pick-up, turn it up so we can hear those fiddles, and let's go get a six-pack.

JOHN FOGERTY**"Centerfield"**

Writer: J. C. Fogerty; Producer: J. Fogerty; Publisher: Wenhua, ASCAP, Warner Bros. 7-29053.

The gang in the bleachers is applauding wildly for another home run scored by the visiting team.

THE DIRTY POLKA BAND**"The Dirty Polka"**

Writers: The Dirty Polka Band; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Brown Wrapper, PRO; Brown Wrapper 001 (412-391-8182).

"Dirty" polka, my foot! This is filthy! Custom-made for the exotic collections of X-rated record fans.

WILL RAMBEAUX & THE DELTA HURRICANES**"Jenny Drives A Mustang"**

Writer: Rambeaux; Producer: Marty Cruchfield; Publisher: MCA, BMI, Monza 8501.

Tell the rest of the rockers in town to pack it in: Rambeaux has just released the hottest 45 in town. He fuses classic rock & roll energy with a contemporary studio sound and comes up with the most fiery Nashville single since I don't know when. Raunchy, grinding and great.

MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY**"Carolina In the Pines"**

Writer: Michael Murphey; Producer: Jim Ed Norman; Publisher: Mercury, BMI, EMI America 8265.

Crystalline, sparkling, trilling keyboard arpeggios and tinkly banjo/guitar/mandolin notes make this every bit as enjoyable as the original Epic Records version. A stylish exit from the label.

JIMMY SWAGGART**"Gone At Last Medley"**

Writers: various; Producer: Joe Huffman; Publisher: various; Jim 24-005 (504-769-8300).

In the Lewis/Gilley/Swaggart trinity of cousins, the last-named is the least inspiring.

JACK GREENE**"Looking Back Is Easier"**

Writer: Ray Pennington; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Atlantic, BMI EMH 0037 (615-255-3009).

Nice song with a typically classy Greene performance. But enough, already, with the boombah production featuring the entire cast of "The 10 Commandments."

JIMMY STURR & HIS ORCHESTRA**"Y'All Come"**

Writer: A. Duff; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed, Starr 1449.

A polka version of the Porter Wagoner/Arlie Duff classic. Everybody in Pittsburgh and Milwaukee get down and boogie!

ANNE MURRAY**"I Don't Think I'm Ready For You"**

Writers: Dorff, Brown, Reynolds, Garrett; Producer: Jim Ed Norman; Publisher: Happy Trails, BMI, Capitol 5472.

Emotionally vacant.

BECKY HOBBS**"Hottest 'Ex' in Texas"**

Writers: B. Blackmon, L. Trautner, C. Vipperman; Producer: Grand Coalition/Grand Alliance, ASCAP, EMI/America 8273.

The most delightfully "Texas"-sounding record to hit the airwaves since George Strait rode out of the Lone Star State. Swing your partner.

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Sandy Lehman/You're My Radio/Radiograph

Jimmy C. Newman/My Toot Toot/Denim & Lace

Dani Hayes/True Blue/USA-Country

Jackie Pearson/Please Don't Lead Me On/Shu-Qua-Lok

Jimmy Windrow/I Don't Care Who Knows/Hilton

Rick Fletcher/I'd Do It In a Heartbeat/R&D

Freddie Hart/I Don't Want To Lose You/El Dorado

Paul Cross/Somewhere Between Haggard and

Jones/Hoot Gibson

Bellamy Brothers/Old Hippie/MCA/Curb

Holly Dunn/Playing For Keeps/MTM

Brad Drown/How Can a Man Love a Woman So

Much/Nashville American

Carol Martyn/You'd Be Gone Again/Golden Eagle

Caglo Mac & Kitty Willow/Great Lover/Medical

The Judds/Love Is Alive/RCA/Curb

The Fox Brothers/I Feel Loved/Marada

Lee Wright/The Eyes Have It/Prairie Dust

Atlanta/Why Not Tonight/MCA-MDJ

Restless Heart/I Want Everyone To Cry/RCA

O'Roark Bros./Playing Both Ends Against the Middle/Comstock

Darrell Toomey/Huggin' My Lady/Precision

Bill Crozier/Somewhere Out In Texas/Dec-Lark

T.C. Roberts/The Night Porter Wagoner Came To

Town/Doctor Bob

Silver Creek Express/I Want You/Timestar

George Strait/The Fireman/MCA

Ron Wiggins/Two Lonely People/Jamex

Merle Haggard/Make Up and Faded Blue

Jeans/MCA

Doublespur/Crawl Up and Die/Transworld

Tom T. Hall/A Bar with No Beer/Mercury

Hank C'hancy/I'll Comfort You/CMI

Bobby Lewis/Love Is An Overload/HME

Statler Brothers/Hello Mary Lou/Mercury

Gary Catalina/Have You Hugged Your Kid To-

day/Hey Ho

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The A STRINGS 3RD BIRTHDAY

Music Row Talk



The A Strings
David Davidson

Now celebrating their third anniversary, Nashville's A Strings have become a well known fixture on the recording scene. The group's distinctive string blend is a familiar sound on numerous gold and platinum records by artists such as Alabama, John Conlee, Willie Nelson, George Jones, and many others. When watching television or listening to the radio, those jingle singers imploring you to try a McDonald's Hamburger, Budweiser Beer, or a myriad of other products are often being accompanied by this friendly band of fiddlers.

In addition to their numerous studio projects for both hit makers and undiscovered talent, the group is actively pursuing their own artistic talents. Their unique concept features the string section as a lead instrument, backed by a top flight rhythm and brass section. Recently they were featured on the Nashville Music Association Spotlight Showcase for new talent and at the prestigious Summer Lights Festival. This summer they will again perform at Summer Lights and on June 16 will play a special outdoor concert at Centennial Park.



The group is comprised of 10 core members (players supported entirely by recording), and varies in size depending on the needs of a particular session. Contractor Conni McCollister, who claims to run the group in a democratic fashion by sharing the "leadership, decisions, and costs involved," suggested I meet with herself and several of the players in the group for this interview to help get the whole story.

MR: Conni, on June 14th the A Strings are three years old. How did you start the group and why?

Conni: We came together for the purpose of recording. Often, string sections are an orchestra sub-section, or the best players in the community who only do sessions part time. I don't think there's ever been a case of someone saying, "I'm going to put together a great string

section and look specifically for players who love this kind of work." An ad was placed in the International Music Union paper, and the people who responded were gutsy players from all over the country—concertmasters, show-room and symphony players—who were attracted to the recording business and were confident enough in their abilities to take a chance and become a part of something completely new. In the beginning we had no sure accounts—we just had this idea of a state-of-the-art string group, and these guys left jobs with no promises of anything. It was nuts really...I have such admiration for them all.

MR: What is the special excitement of playing sessions as opposed to more traditional string performing?

Bob: It's finite. The red light goes on: you play, you go to the booth, and you listen. You're dependent on no one but yourself. You play the style the producer wants, and you do it now. It's demanding: it's a skill.

Ted: You feel tremendous appreciation from the producer when you portray exactly what they want, and they let you know it. It's a good feeling. You're part of the creative process, working toward a goal, and the producer has every right to expect the highest quality performance. Every job we play is an audition, and our first priority is pleasing the arranger/producer.

Laura: I've never been in a situation ever, except in solo repertoire, where all of my technique, all my musicianship, every aspect of years of training was so in demand—where it mattered so much. Under the microphone everything is critical—you're naked really; it's that aspect of being on the edge that I love in session playing.

MR: What makes this group different?

Conni: Even though we walk into a session with our scales and Paganini and all that stuff under our fingers, we have also spent hours and hours together talking about creating new sounds



Ted Madsen, Laura Molyneux

Bob Mason



A String

"I think it really does matter. People do care when they have a studio full of players that are hungry to do their best. There is an energy in the playing that communicates all the way to the person buying the record. It becomes part of the total sound. I know it makes a difference." Conni McCollister, Contractor, A Strings

s With A Strings

with various vibratos and new articulations. We see what we're doing as a legitimate art form—every bit as valid as Mozart or Beethoven. The classics are representative of a certain period of time...this is what's happening today. If a producer or arranger wants a wierd new non-traditional sound we're up for it. Also, all our players are soloists in their own right. They're very aggressive players, and we go for an all out, everybody-play-like-a-soloist approach. Because of the way recording sessions are miked, we feel that is the correct approach.

Betty: No matter what this group does, they enjoy playing music. It could be a commercial for Budweiser, backing up Willie Nelson, or playing the Mendelssohn Octet, it doesn't matter. The quality is so high we just enjoy playing together.

Laura: You only find that kind of comradery and excitement in small chamber ensembles that meet once a year at music festivals. I've never seen people with this kind of excitement for a job day in and day out. Each session is a new experience; we're all trying so hard. It just never becomes a grind.

MR: Everyone hears the violins playing the melody and the cellos supporting the section, but how do the violas fit in?

Jim: The viola is not the instrument everyone hears. it's not usually playing the melody, and it's not the glamour instrument. However, it does help hold things together between the bass and melody lines. You sit back and try to continue the bass intonation, linking it to the upper lines. Naturally the upper lines have the responsibility to listen down and continue that intonation.

MR: Your live show features the A Stings with a complete rhythm section and brass. Kris, as well as playing viola with the A Strings, you conceived of and arrange all the music for the live show. What are your goals in that vein?

Kris: Specifically, to create an original vehicle

for strings that is innovative and exciting to both the musicians and the audience. We're trying to incorporate bluegrass, rockabilly, and other types of country music into a new form of music where the strings are the lead instrument, but yet it is true to it's original roots. We have some serious major-label interest at this point, and we're very excited at the prospect of doing a recording project where we're the artist.

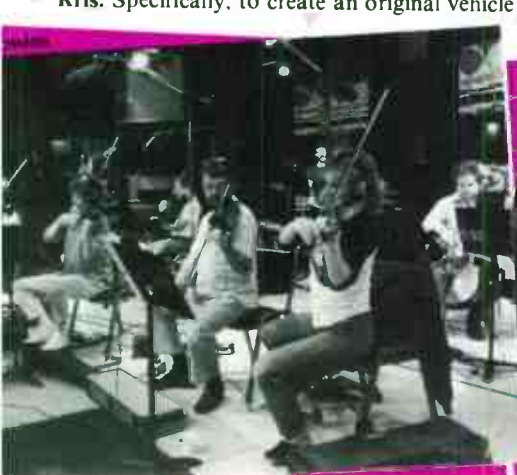
Bob: I enjoy our live performances because we play with far more virility than is possible in an orchestra. It's the music—it's just electric, and the audience reaction is genuinely enthusiastic.

David: I've played a lot of concerts, and I get excited about them, but the first time I played with this group live I could hardly hold my bow. I was just vibrating with energy. Doing something that new, that exciting, and that good has a completely different energy to it.

MR: What do you see in Nashville's string future?

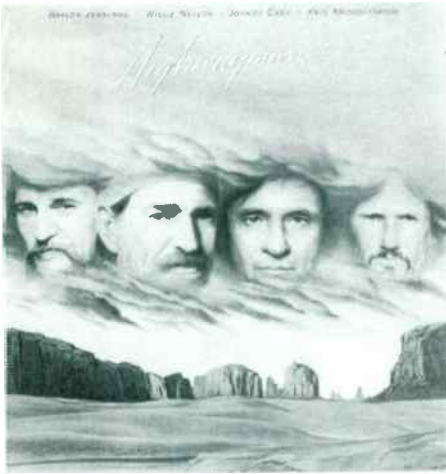
Conni: I absolutely love Nashville, I believe in it as a music center, and I want to see it continue to grow in all areas of music. We still fight the cliché that no one plays anything but fiddle here. Of course, the best fiddlers in the world are here in Nashville, and I don't want to take anything away from them, but the times we've worked for clients from the so-called string centers, like London, LA, and New York, they've been blown away. They can't believe the quality or the attitude here. This is our dream—to be the best string section in the world, and to make Nashville the place to go for strings.

Conni McCollister-Contractor, Lead Violin, Ted Madsen-Violin, Laura Molyneaux-Violin, David Davidson-Violin, Betty Small-Violin, Mark Feldman-Violin, Phyllis Mazza-Violin, Alan Umstead-Violin/Viola, Bob Mason-Cello, John Catchings-Cello, Craig Nelson-Bass, Anthony LaMarchina-Cello, Edgar Myer-Bass, Jim Grosjean-Viola, Kris Wilkinson-Viola



THE VINYL CONFLICT

Starring Pete Loesch and Edward Morris



WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, JOHNNY CASH, KRIS KRISTOFFERSON *Highwayman* Columbia FC 40056

Produced by Chips Moman
Engineered by David Cherry, Chips Moman
Recorded at Momans Recording and Woodland Sound
Mastered by Denny Purcell at Woodland Sound Mastering

ED: Loesch, perhaps it's my own impish delight in driving country music pretenders from the room with my long-winded accounts of the old days that makes me like this album so much. What it is is a collection of cronies descanting on the swift, cruel passage of time—assuredly a dull theme to those looking toward their second Volvo, but an enchanting one to us footsoldiers in the bifocal brigade. Believe it or not, even Cash and Kristofferson soar above their usual vocal limitations on this one.

More compelling than the concept or the cronies, though are the songs that give this project its spine. There's not a one here that I wouldn't squander a quarter on (but some would be second choice on that quarter).

Our fellow literary locusts are already proclaiming that the title cut is "about reincarnation"—an interpretation one might expect from drones weaned on the resurrection myth. I prefer to think that the Jimmy Webb tune applauds the perseverance of the human spirit, and since it's my review, that is the way I'll read it.

Bravely, the four lads even undertake Ed Bruce and Ron Peterson's "The Last Cowboy Song" and confirm that if it is not, indeed, the last one, it's the last bearable one. "Committed To Parkview" is a finely crafted (by Cash) and interpreted piece; but for the life of me, instead of seeing the insane asylum it's written about, I see the Hall of Fame Motor Inn at happy hour.

Guy Clark's "Desperados Waiting For A Train" gets the affectionate, rough-edged treatment its story demands; and I doubt that Bob

Seeger's "Against The Wind" will ever be done with greater fidelity than Cash, Nelson and Jennings accord it.

Of the lot, only Woody Guthrie's "Deportee (Plane Wreck At Los Gatos)" lies outside the theme of time lost. But its indictment of official indifference to the plight of migrant workers makes it as on-target now as the day it was written.

My only complaint is that there is a tad more synthetic backup music here than a man of my years can countenance (which, incidentally, is a reaffirmation that I was right to picket all those damnable Rural Electrification projects). Why, Loesch, I told them as soon as FDR announced it: "Cheap electricity will spell the end to string bands as we know them." And, then, I went on to say . . .

PETE: Ed, however much your bifocals may have enhanced your visual acuity, they could not cure your blind love for this essentially empty vinyl exercise. Apart from the kilowatt count that you decry, little energy seems to have been consumed in the making of this album. Of the admittedly laudable songs tackled by *The Highwayman*, I cannot cite one version to which I would willingly turn in place of the original. A case in point: "Big River." Easily one of the highlights of Cash's Sun output, the tune proceeds so sluggishly here that I swore the guys would **never** make it to New Orleans.

The frequent shifting of lead singers creates a disorienting effect; and the background vocals are scarcely more harmonic than a Democratic convention.

Now if you'll excuse me, Morris, I'm going to shop for another Volvo.



LOUISE MANDRELL *Maybe My Baby* RCA AHL1-5454

Recorded at Emerald Sound, Soundshop and Music Mill
Engineers: Bob Bullock and Pat McMakin

Mastered by Benny Quinn at Masterfonics

PETE: In her most recent RCA bio, Louise Mandrell was quoted as commending the label and producer Eddie Kilroy for "finding the real me, and putting 'that sound' on tape." That Eddie's understanding of Louise's true self must have been ephemeral is indicated by his absence from her new *Maybe My Baby* LP. In his place is Louise's husband R.C. Bannon - with whom, says the artist, she "finally found that the way to capture Louise Mandrell is to let me do something I feel." Kilroy was here, indeed.

Convinced that people are "tired of not feeling good," Louise offers a collection designed to meet *American Bandstand's* strictest standard of danceability. Spearheading the project are covers of recordings by pop/rock luminaries like Sheena Easton ("Devil In A Fast Car") and Rod Stewart ("Some Girls Have All The Luck"). The recipe is rounded out with similarly upbeat originals (including two by Bannon) described by Louise as "absolutely incredible," and predominantly acoustic accompaniment played by "phenomenally creative" musicians. Presto!—A "country" album is born.

So much for truth in packaging. Yes, Louise meshes nicely with some classy background singers for a sprightly interpretation of Eric Carmen's title cut; and Chris Waters and Madeline Stone's "How Did It Get So Late, So Early" receives a heartfelt reading. But Mandrell simply lacks the vocal equipment and punch of a Wynonna Judd. Consequently, on tunes like "You Better Hang Up," she achieves neither the raw power of the original rock version nor the emotional intensity of the best country music.

Nor does the material or concept measure up to Louise's lofty estimation. According to my scales, Kin Vassy and Justin Wilde's "Loving Proof," as well as both Bannon contributions weigh in well under the lightweight limit. Moreover, I fail to perceive the distilling of rock arrangements in an attempt to placate country audiences as a "phenomenally creative" process.

To the contrary, *Maybe My Baby* seems just as calculated not to offend as the country radio programming from which it purports to differ. For me, anyway, that kind of musical menu is hard to digest. Ed Morris, how do YOU spell relief?

ED: Loesch, has your grasp of law fled simultaneously with your sense of chivalry? Surely you must know that it is written into their contracts that artists must proclaim with each new release, "This is my best album ever." Had we taken such proclamations seriously—as you so churlishly insist on here—we should all by now be expecting to hear the celestial harps in stereo.

Having read the same unconscionable sputtering that you did, I was prepared to despise this album. But it's really pretty good. And you can

hardly blame Mandrell for taking the pop road since her pure country attempt with "This Bed Ain't Big Enough" flopped so loudly on the charts.

"I Wanna Say Yes," in spite of its cuteness, is a nice antidote to those prissy little essays on chastity with which country music has been so historically afflicted. Mandrell, like her older sister, is capable of making good country music if she were not so keen on universal acceptance—a yearning that too often leads to universal indifference.

S U S A N R A Y E
T H E R E A N D B A C K



SUSAN RAYE
There And Back

Westexas America EMH-SR-IAL

Produced by Billy Stull, Jerry Wiggins
Engineered by Billy Stull
Recorded at Billy Stull Sound, and Sound Stage

ED: Susan Raye insinuated herself into our hearts back in the late 1960's via the offices of Buck Owens, a chap who demonstrably knows a good thing when he hears it. From this collaboration came such hits as "L.A. International Airport," "My Heart Has A Mind Of Its Own" and "Whatcha Gonna Do With A Dog Like That." Unfortunately, Raye (like her mentor) has been absent from the airwaves of late. Before this effort, her last chart entry was in 1977—and it was no barn-burner.

But whatever happens to this album, her comeback is clearly an artistic success. Her voice is as resilient and controlled as we remember, Loesch, and her eye for the right kind of song remains unerring. To her credit, she does not do a swan dive into the nostalgia bin, hoping to excite that largely somnolent audience that believes record albums are available only at the end of an 800 number.

Raye's first single from *There And Back*—Mac Davis's vengeful little ditty, "Put Another Notch In Your Belt"—has already hit the charts and bounced off. If her backers venture a second single, my vote goes to DeWayne Blackwell's "I Bet You Can't Cry Just One." It's just sappy enough to balance Raye's sometimes excessive (for country music) coolness. There are some delightfully analytical Eddy Raven cuts that might follow, once Raye blasts her way back to wide attention.

Since my advice is free and within her budget, I suggest she use the money saved to get a better backup band for the next album. The one she has here is by no means ghastly, but it does

sort of just chunka-chunk along.
Your witness, Mr. Loesch.

PETE: That your unsolicited career consultation is free. Morris, merely serves to renew my faith in the maxim: You get what you pay for. Only a deviant mind such as yours could expect a chart-buster to result from a pairing of "sappy" material with "excessive coolness."

"Put Another Notch In Your Belt" was probably a misguided choice for release as a single; the tune calls for defiant posturing that seems rather foreign to Raye's nature. Susan's forte, in my judgement, lies in conveying more pensive messages such as "I Can't Watch The Movie Anymore," or "It Takes A Long, Long Time To Say Goodbye" (by Raven and David Powelson). Fortunately, there are enough of those to make *There And Back* an eloquent affirmation of reemergence.



SOUTHERN PACIFIC
Southern Pacific
Warner Bros. 1-25206

Produced by Jim Ed Norman and Southern Pacific with Brad Hartman
Recorded at Lizard Rock Recorders, Sound Stage
Engineers: Brad Hartman, John McFee, Eric Prestidge
Mastered by Eric Prestidge and Glenn Meadows at Masterfonics

PETE: To rock or not to rock is a question that has raged in country music circles since rockabilly terrorized the establishment in the mid-fifties. When country rock acts first sought admission onto hallowed Music City ground in the late Sixties, they found the gates closed by shortsighted guardians who frowned upon seditious behavior such as growing hair long or expressing political views to the left of Roy Acuff. But the serene Nashville Sound could hardly hold the fort forever; after all, by the late Seventies, most eligible record buyers had grown up with rock and roll. Some (unlike me) even managed to become responsible adults. Clearly, it was time for their disposable income to be distributed to Fort Payne, Alabama, and other homes of needy rock-influenced pickers.

Into this more receptive atmosphere comes Southern Pacific, a new Warner Bros. acquisition featuring Tim Goodman and ex-Doobie Brothers John McFee (guitar/fiddle/pedal steel) and Keith Knudsen (drums). Also appearing on the debut LP are accomplished Los Angeles sideman Jerry Scheff and Glenn D. Hardin.

Southern Pacific exhibits the potential to lead

Nashville (kicking and screaming, no doubt) into a new dimension of country rock. I say that, Ed, not merely because of Goodman's compelling lead vocals or McFee and Knudsen's driving instrumental brilliance. While other country rockers pay their bills by pandering to dreams of Dixie or the everyday housewife, Southern Pacific presents delightfully unpretentious selections like "Reno Bound" and Tom Petty's "Thing About You" (with guest Emmylou Harris). The group is not, however, afraid to explore a less conventional theme—as in "The Blaster."

Most importantly, to the producers' credit, a feeling of looseness and spontaneity pervades these tracks. One does not suspect that all the plays were called in a rehearsal hall or corporate board room.

I would, concededly, have moved to strike the lyrically and melodically ordinary "Luanne"; and the question of where have all our "Heroes" gone enralls me no more now than when Bill Anderson raised it fifteen years ago. Still, this album may help awaken the lost souls whose idea of Music City excitement is the unveiling of a new Janie Fricke hair style.

ED: We have not basked in such unanimity of opinion, Loesch since I last suggested it was my turn to buy the drinks. If this band stays at it, it's going to give Alabama, Exile and Restless Heart a run for their money. Traditionalist though I am, I'm not overly concerned about the pop-or-country question, simply because the vocals are clear, the songs by and large literate and the instrumentation properly subdued. What more can we hope for in these hard times?

Besides, Loesch, you're beautiful when you're excited.

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Buddy Killen:

Recipes For Success

by David M. Ross

Born in Florence, Alabama, and recently elected to the newly established Alabama Hall of Fame, Buddy Killen has achieved success in many areas of the music and business world. Today the singer, songwriter, song plugger, picker, producer, and publisher is the Chief Executive Officer at Tree International, which has offices in over 66 countries around the world.

I sat with Buddy in his richly decorated third floor office at Tree International and we talked about the last 35 years or so, of his working life. It was fascinating to find out how he climbed from a \$35 a week employee at Tree, to CEO and built the company into one of the largest country publishers in the world in the process.

MR: When you first arrived in Nashville, you traveled the long and winding road in the back of a bus as a bass player, but now as Chief Executive Officer of your own corporation, you ride in the back of a blue Rolls Royce. What made it happen?

BK: Can I tell you that when I started I couldn't find my butt with a radar set! I knew nothing about business, and had never been disciplined in any way. I came to Nashville as a bass player in 1950, and things were very tough.

I had written a couple of songs and was doing demos for some of the announcers at WSM Radio, who were going to place their songs with Tree (which was only a name at that time, there was no catalog) . . . It was owned by Jack Stapp and Lou Cowan. Jack would come by the studio and we'd talk. I was just a shy kid of about 18 and very scared of Jack and anybody else who was anybody. One day he called me and said, "There's a songwriter in town, would you get with her." My heart skipped four beats and I said "I don't know what to do," and he said "Oh, you'll be fine." So I went down and met this singer-songwriter who was working at the old Andrew Jackson Hotel, took her into the studio and put her songs down. (They were good songs and I later got several recorded.) I called Jack to tell him what had happened and he thanked me. An hour later he called me back and said he wanted to talk. So I went to his office and he asked me if I'd like to go to work for Tree. And that's how it happened. I started as a song plugger, for \$35 a week.

I talked Jack into buying me a \$50 recorder and anytime I heard there was a song somewhere I'd take off with that recorder and put it down. I'd learn the song, ('cause I couldn't afford the demos that we do today) and then go and sing it to a Ray Price or Jim Reeves or Don Gibson or whoever. That's how I got started, pitching live, just me and a piano or guitar, whatever was handy. It worked, and I started getting songs recorded. In 1955 I found "Heartbreak Hotel" and it was our first really big hit.

I continued to make my living playing music on the Opry for about fourteen years while building the company, because I loved it and it gave me an opportunity to be near the stars. I could pick up the phone and get Jim Reeves, Ray Price etc. We'd be traveling together and I could tell them about a new song, or write one with them. We had all kinds of things going, and it was a



terrific way to make contacts. Of course as the company slowly grew I began curtailing my road work and started doing only local television, radio and recording. Around 1965 I made the decision to quit being a sideman because it was too time consuming and I was being pulled in so many directions.

MR: How did you come to own the company?

BK: In 1957 Jack and I became co-owners of the company. I got a little piece of it, about 30%. Later on I got another 10%, and then when Jack died I exercised our buy-sell agreement and became sole owner.

In 1958 we hit a slump, because I think my priorities had drifted out of focus. My secretary came to me and said "Buddy what's going on? Nothing's happening; we're not in the charts."

I got kind of mad at her, but later I sat in my little gray office and thought why? How could we be doing so badly when I care so much? I picked up this little pock-marked spongy rubber ball on my desk, and slammed it against the wall and amazingly, it bounced right back into my hand. I remember sitting there thinking, the law of physics . . . for every action there's a reaction. I started relating that to what I could do. If you want a big field of corn, plant a lot of seeds. Every one of them isn't going to come up, but some will. It became so basic and opened my mind up. I got on the phone and called everybody I knew; songwriters, singers, producers and about two hours later my office was full. I became red-hot. I was working day and night, some days I wouldn't even go to bed, cause I still was making my living playing music.

I'd pack records and ship them out to disc jockeys, everything, it was wild. At one time on the Billboard charts which then only listed the top ten, I had numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8.

MR: Do you still enjoy picking?

BK: I still get out there and play something or sing a little harmony on the records I produce. It becomes more fun and so enjoyable for me, like a kid with a toy. I guess that makes me sort of the 'Alfred Hitchcock' of the music industry . . . he always showed up somewhere in the background of his movies, getting onto a train or walking into an elevator! I'm always doing something on my records, not just to be on them, but because they need it. I know what I want, and I'm capable of doing it, so, rather than calling somebody else, it saves a lot of time if I just run out there and do it. I've been singing on so many of my biggest hits.

I love this business, it's so special to me, and gives me an opportunity to express myself in so many ways. It gives you such a great opportunity to expand your mind and horizons and be successful at the same time. I never get bored.

MR: Obviously, the decisions you make today are a great deal more complex than they were 20 years ago when you were starting out. How and where did you get the administrative training and knowledge to handle it all?

BK: I've never really sat down and tried to figure out Buddy Killen, and what motivates him. I went to school on the job, and I've flown by the seat

of my pants throughout the years. But the computer in your head is continually accumulating all this information that you call on when you are placed in a certain position. On a daily basis you play a quick 20 questions and it tells you what move to make. There are times that you ponder and worry over something, but deep down inside you start trusting your gut feeling. I've always said that gut feeling is common sense trying to tell you what to do. If you listen to it, it will tell you. If you fight it you'll get in trouble every time.

I didn't just wake up one day sitting behind this desk, somebody who knows all the answers. Every day you're put on the firing line. I've made a lot of mistakes. But every time I'd make a mistake I wouldn't do it again. I learned, and watched other people. I learned about priority. Organizing your time. Some of the guys would come around and say "Buddy you're never gonna make it," and I'd ask "Why?" "Well you won't play with us, you won't get out and roll." I'd answer, "I don't have time to roll, I'm working, I'm trying to build a company."

Inside of a person there's a drive, an ambition. You don't have to know anything but you've got to want it, and want to learn how to do it. You have to give up some of the fun and games to make damn sure that you're taking care of business first.

You grow without realizing it. I sit here with a picture of Buddy Killen's domain, and it's amazingly clear in my mind, where everything is, but it's something which happens over a period of time. One needs to grow along with it, so you become mentally as big as what you've built. Anyone can pick up a little calf, but unless you were training each day you'd have a lot of trouble picking it up when it's grown to a 2,000-lb. bull! That's the way it is with a business. You're picking up that little thing every day and it's growing and your muscles are growing with it, your mental muscles. You have to keep in condition.

MR: What about when problems come along?

BK: I never panic. As long as I maintain stability, it always gets handled. If I started falling apart then everything else would quiver and quake too. Maintain your cool and so will the whole organization. They'll come in worried, asking, "What are we gonna do?" I'll say hold it, let's talk about it and find the answer. It's terribly hard sometimes to keep your patience. When I find one of those 'gray areas' it bothers me and I immediately start checking, to find out what the problem is, and fix it. I'll change the people, or whatever is needed to get things straightened out.

MR: You're developing a chain of Po'Folks Restaurant franchises, and also recently purchased The Stockyards Restaurant. Not having had much restaurant experience, how were you able to just jump in? Is it general administrative expertise that gets you through?

BK: I learned a little about the restaurant business by being involved in the Stockyards five years ago when it was first built. I didn't run it then, but I picked up a lot of information. I don't have the inclination or the expertise to go in, and say, run the kitchen on a daily basis, but I can walk through and instantly tell you what's wrong.

I see it, I feel it. You watch your people . . . you know. What really bothers me sometimes is that the people who work for you don't always see it. They don't see the pile of dirt in the corner, and you see it all. But you're supposed to because you're the boss. You're in command of that army of people. When you employ thousands of people as I do, whoever is in command better be on top of it or you'll crumble.

Over a period of time you learn. It's like an artist painting . . . he comes to know the stroke of that brush and how to get what he wants. The businessman becomes a painter as well and knows. It doesn't matter if it's the music business or restaurant business or what; the same prin-

ciples apply, it's all out there in the trenches. If you lose sight of that then you'll fail. Detail is such a large part. Little things, that other people might ignore, but if you do you're in trouble.

MR: How much do you and your companies gross yearly?

BK: I'd rather not comment exactly. We're a private company and it isn't public knowledge. I've never divulged that. However, my businesses generate many millions between Tree, the restaurant chains, real estate, etc.

MR: Will the Country Music record industry bounce back?



sound interpretations

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BK: Country record sales have been flat. I blame a lack of creativity. We had a hot period as you know, the Urban Cowboy craze, but we peaked out of it without looking far enough ahead. If you

listen to the radio, it's boring, wall to wall boring. And it's our fault for not coming up with something special and new. Right now, Country music could use some new sounds. I think the

Judds & Exile are wonderful, and there's some young sounds beginning to happen that could become your big record sales in the next few months, but there's room for a whole lot more. Most of the artists who have been around for a long time but are no longer selling records are the ones who have drifted into that "Let's cut the same kind of song we cut yesterday syndrome." And that's not where hits come from. Breaking out of your style is what causes you to be different. We've allowed our euphoria to last too long. I mean we're not going out of business, it's going to continue, but we're in a valley.

One of the kinds of things that could really help is Roger Miller's new Broadway show, "Big River." It's fabulous, and a wonderful catalyst to show that Country music can again be popular with the masses. I'm so proud of Roger, the show is up for 10 Emmys!

MR: Will we ever get back on the pop charts?

BK: Country music is cold as 'cush' on the pop stations now, and until we go in and start doing something very special we don't deserve to be on those stations. Out of necessity, we will get back on eventually, but we need to come with a "Big Bad John" or "Green Green Grass Of Home" or "King Of The Road." Some piece of material that is so unique that it transcends every boundary. In short, we've got to get back to great music. And good music doesn't need a label. It's out there and it all comes from the song-writing.

MR: Are publishers getting 'hurt' because of all the new technology, like video?

BK: Publishing is a different animal today, it's not like it was. There are many new areas in which to make money. The problem is that most of the people are selling out because they don't understand what's going on, they haven't gone along with the changes. I bought 40 small companies last year.

We can't rely on just album and single cuts anymore. If we weren't looking to movies, commercials, video, whatever, then our income because of mechanicals (record sales royalties) would drop considerably at certain times, like now.

MR: Buddy, you've recently appeared in your first film, what other new plans are you considering for the future?

BK: I'd like to cut lots of big hits! I just took on Ronnie Robbins, and am also producing Exile, and Ronnie McDowell. Certainly we need to keep looking for those great songwriters. We're going to get into television, in the fall. We have a musical comedy show that's already been sold to a sponsor, but I don't want to say any more about that now.

I would like to pull in my horns for a while and concentrate on the music industry. But I say that and then I'll get bored with what I'm doing and reach some more. I've always been that way. I like to be a part of what's going on. If you start trying to analyze why? . . . then you might stop being that way, and you wouldn't want to do that . . . Keeping your mind open is the most important thing.



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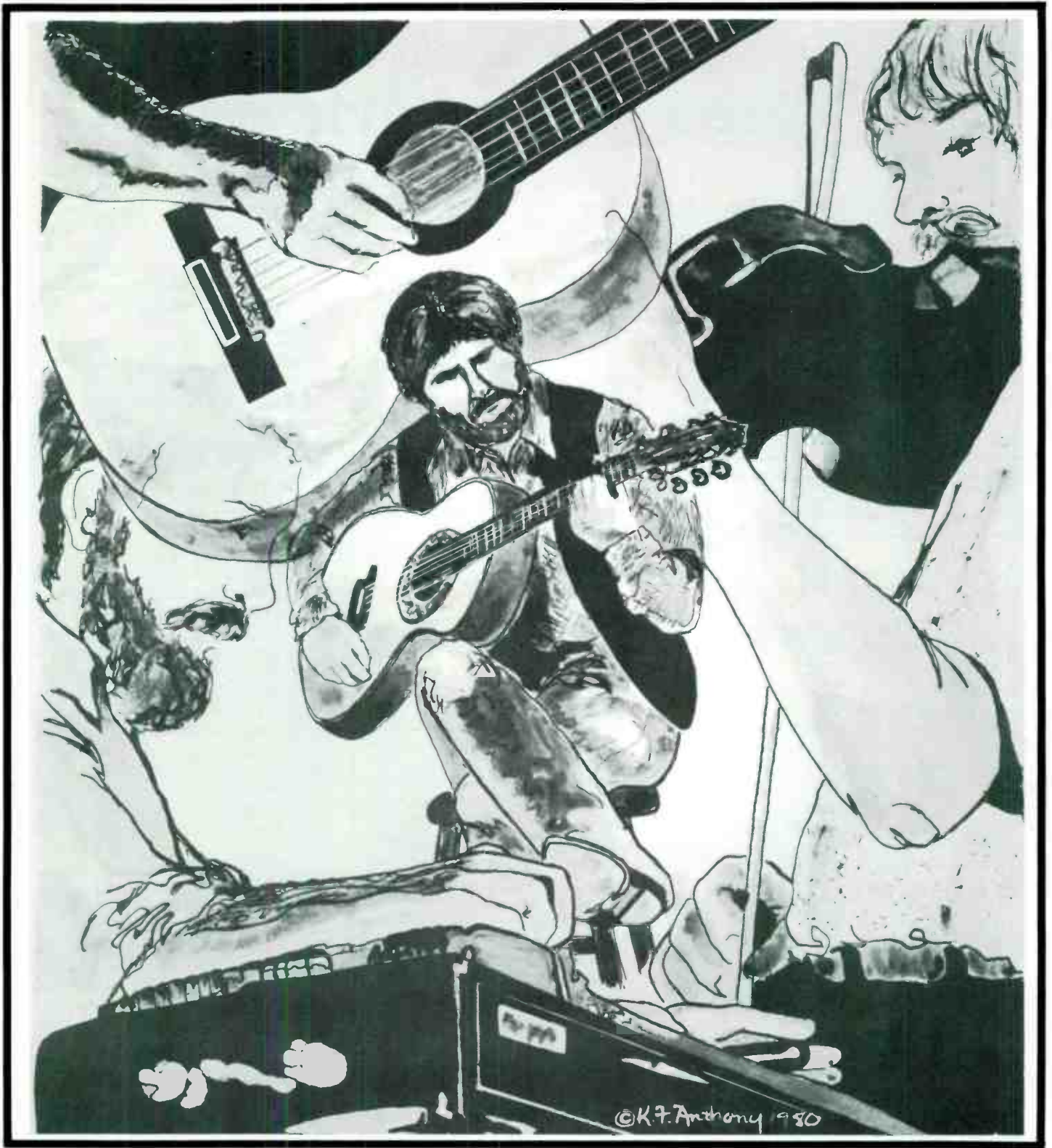

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VIDEO VISION

Video Music Reviews

Lighting seldom strikes twice in real life. But the usual limits of reality mean little in the video realm. In "Highwayman," a new video starring Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson and Johnny Cash, director Peter Israelson resurrects the lightning used in Cecil B. DeMille's "The Ten Commandments."

"I did a lot of begging and pleading to get great effects that wouldn't cheapen the look of the video," says Israelson. "I got the best lightning I could find. It was originally used in the scene where Moses parts the Red Sea."

Israelson is renting the lightning on a per-second basis from the film studio that owns the rights to "The Ten Commandments." Somehow, it all makes a weird kind of sense. Cecil B. DeMille's heavenly lightning lives again in "Highwayman," a video that deals with—what else—reincarnation.

* * * * *

WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, KRIS KRISTOFFERSON and JOHNNY CASH

"Highwayman"

Producer: Jon Small. Columbia.

Reincarnation sounds like an implausible subject for a country video, but the legendary stature of these performers makes all things believable. Each singer plays a social outcast who seems to die, but after their apparent deaths each materializes in the sky against a turbulent background of rolling thunderclouds. Of the four, Waylon has by far the most exotic death scene. He has the unique privilege of being struck by Cecil B. DeMille's million-dollar lightning, plummeting from the top of the Boulder Dam and splashing down in the Colorado River far below. What a classy way to go. In the end, all of the singers' faces reappear on the side of a mountain, creating country music's equivalent of Mt. Rushmore and emphasizing the indestructibility of man's soul.

HEART OF NASHVILLE

"One Big Family"

Producers: The Producer's Group and Nashville Video Label. Compleat.

Country music's famine-relief video succeeds in every way, thanks to sparkling performances by some of Nashville's finest singers and director Steve von Hagel's judicious use of footage from the files of UNICEF. Shots of George Jones, Roy Acuff, Tanya Tucker, Eddy Arnold, Ray Sawyer, Dobie Gray, Lynn Anderson and others alternate with images of adults and children of all nationalities. The song's message of the unity of the human family couldn't be better expressed. Unlike "We Are The World," the lip-syncing is accurate throughout, since much of the video was done as the artists recorded their vocal parts.

Great moments like the Kendalls' spine-tingling harmony part and Lane Brody's playful wink at the camera give this a joyful, spontaneous feel. Bravo!

T. G. SHEPPARD

"Fooled Around And Fell In Love"

Producer: Martin Kahan. Columbia.

Does T. G. Sheppard's slick, lady's-man image make you gag? You'll have to forgive him for it after seeing the way Martin Kahan makes it laughable. As usual, T.G. is busy chasing a new lover—but this time the love-interest turns out to be an orangutan. T.G. takes his simian dream-girl home to meet his folks, and they quickly see how right she is for their boy. Just when it looks like T.G. and his lover will live happily ever after, a jealous ex-girlfriend blows up the couple in their sportscar. Now that's my kind of eternal bliss. As they say on "SCTV," "Boy, he blowed up real good, didn't he?"

ALABAMA

"There's No Way"

Producers: Robert K. Glassenberg and Joanne Gardner. RCA.

"There's No Way" makes the most powerful appeal to the senses yet seen in country video, but it may prove too racy for some conservative audiences. Randy Owen's lover wakes up alone and stretches herself—and her viewers—into wide-eyed conciousness. As she languidly strokes her legs, Randy drives up in his Mercedes (Note: He's moved up. In "Dixieland Delight" the whole group had to make do with an old pickup). As rain pours down, the couple meet outside for a passion-drenched kiss. Back inside the house, Randy gets tied up with a business phone call and chats away earnestly until his lady gets fed up. Finally, she gets down to what's been on her mind all along: she doffs her jeans and jumps his bones. Pretty good, but after seeing T.G.'s video I'm a little disappointed they don't blow up.

CHET ATKINS

"Sunrise"

Producer: Jim Owens Entertainment. Columbia.

When you've got great guitarists like George Benson, Earl Klugh, Mark Knopfler, Larry Carlton and the inimitable Chet to work with, who needs a concept? Director Rod Thompson combines documentary and performance footage in this airy jazz tune. Interviews with Klugh and others reveal the far-reaching influence of Chet's pianistic guitar style. The soundtrack is visibly out-of-sync with the guitarists' fingers here and there, but careful use of slow-motion largely hides that defect. A fine, if somewhat antiseptic, tribute to Chet and the guitar.

GARY MORRIS

"Lasso The Moon"

Producer: Ashe-Bowie. Warner Bros.

Morris' theme song from the cowboy-comedy movie "Rustlers' Rhapsody" picks up on the film's horse-opera tendencies as you'd expect. Morris gallops into San Antonio and looks over more than the local horse-flesh. He dances with blondes, brunettes and red-heads, but isn't satisfied until he spots an unreachable lady in a horse-drawn carriage. She rides off just as he makes up his mind to approach her. This isn't any masterpiece of video-making, but it does play up Morris's image as a romantic ballad-singer. Maybe if I were in love with him it wouldn't seem so drippy.

EXILE

"She's A Miracle"

Producer: Parallax. Epic.

Bestiality must be more popular than I imagined. T. G. Sheppard fell for an orangutan in his clip; the members of Exile take the big tumble for a horse in theirs. As the Exile-ites watch with stop-watches in their sweaty palms, a horse called Miracle wins the Kentucky Derby. Their passion for horse-flesh, however, soon fades in favor of what I like to think of as a more meaningful affection for their own species. They flirt with some bikini-clad ladies at poolside, although how the pool comes into the plot is unclear. One of the band turns out to be a jockey, wins a trophy for his skill and collects a big kiss from a pool-girl. A puzzling story at best.

DAVID WALSH

"Alice, Rita And Donna"

Producer: Bob Cummings. Charta.

Ever wanted to see a country singer cheat on his wife, abandon his family and make off with the life savings of every new woman who's fool enough to bed down with him? Me neither. And after watching this video, I know I never want to see it happen again. David Walsh leaves his wife, Alice, and their three kids in a scummy trailer park after scooping up all his family's spare cash. He heads down the road in search of work, or so he claims. Instead of work, he finds a Texas queen (Don't blame me—that's what the lyrics say) named Rita and they shack up at the Motel 6. Rita tries to get David to hang around, but the threat of impending responsibility overwhelms him. He takes Rita's savings and promises to call as soon as he finds a job. Of course, he finds yet another woman, Donna, and forgets all about Rita. Amazingly, guilt eventually sets in and he actually thinks for a moment about his family back home. What a guy. Personally, I hope he gets herpes.

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VIDEO UPDATES

The Nashville Music Association sponsored an "MTV and VH-1 User's Seminar" on April 29. Bob Pittman, Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer, MTV Networks, Inc. and other key executives addressed a gathering of 171 members of Nashville's entertainment community on the effect of the music video channels on product marketing. A private session was held in the morning for the record labels, and a similar session with lunch in the afternoon for the community. It was announced that VH-1 plans to use about 25% country videos in its programming. A question and answer period was moderated by Frances W. Preston, Senior VP, BMI. . . . Filmhouse Inc., celebrated a house warming for their new offices at 24 Music Sq W. The company specializes in doing tv ads for radio stations. . . . Pat Garrett's new video "Cruisin'" has been receiving good response according to Aristo Video Distribution and has been aired on The Nashville Network. The 65-ft. yacht which is the setting for the clip unfortunately went down off the coast of Mi-

ami only two days after the filming was completed. . . . The listing of hosts for the Music City News Country Awards Show on June 10 continues to grow, and now includes: Roy Clark, Mel Tillis, The Statler Brothers, Marie Osmond, and John Schneider. The Linda DeMith Studio will be doing Hair & Make-up for the award show. . . . Scene Three received a Silver Medal at the Houston based Intl. Film Festival for "Touch And Go," one of five original music videos which premiered on the Crystal Gayle "Album Flash" for HBO/Cinemax. Scene Three recently unveiled their new 16,000 square ft. film and videotape studio. The facility includes the latest in both technical gear and user comforts. Private dressing rooms with shower, and make-up areas, central dining area, guest producers office, special loading dock, and over 500,000 watts of available lighting. . . . "Tennessee Ernie Ford's America" was produced by Connecticut Public TV for public TV stations featuring performances by Larry Gatlin and Lee Greenwood. . . . The

Nashville Network's new show, "Country Notes" features hosts Janet Tyson and Greg Crutcher. The show specializes in "fast-paced, in-depth coverage of current happenings in the country music business."

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LIVE MUSIC

The Club Report

by Jay Orr

MARSHALL CHAPMAN

Bluebird Cafe, May 4.

Marshall Chapman scares me. Her audacious songwriting and performance style rattle the cage of my male preconceptions. She comes across as overtly, aggressively sexual and self-confident, and she can claim rights to the "blues attitude" legacy of chanteuses Memphis Minnie and Bessie Smith.

At the Bluebird on a full-moon Saturday night, she recited a laundry list of men she would consider eligible for inclusion in a musical fantasy she was spinning. Nick Nolte, James Garner, Robert Mitchum, Jake Butcher, and Ray Blanton lost out to Don Knotts, but then Marshall refused Barney's generous offer to escape, countering that she was "Bizzy, Bizzy, Bizzy."

She then moved right into a song called "Love Talk" where she begs some fortunate fellow to scream "ooo-ee" in the wee hours. In the middle she threw in a French rap that I couldn't understand, but I got the idea.

On the next number the band (Fred Williamson, guitar; Dwight Scott, Keyboards & harp; Kenny Bledsoe, drums; and Glenn Worf, bass) set down a slow blues grind, and Marshall gave us an ambulatory anthem, "Daddy Long Legs," about a guy whose limbs she craves. All the while, a photographer in the audience snapped pictures, and Marshall responded to the flash by hiking her mini-skirt to mid-thigh and casting sultry glares at the camera.

Later in the set she got political and socially conscious with "Alabama Bad" and "Booze In Your Blood." I respected her the next morning.

Marshall has cut four albums, and she continues to bless this town with regular appearances. She is one of the strongest, most talented women working in popular music today. She deserves support, but boys, hold on to your gender.

THE JOANNAH MAHAN BAND

Under The Bridge, April 26.

Listening to this blend of three female voices, I kept thinking about a Bay area band popular in the early seventies called "Joy Of Cooking." I remember them now as having recorded songs that induced the easy optimism that sometimes sets in when I eat sprouts in a vegetarian restaurant.

Joannah Mahan, her daughter Sarah, and soprano Miranda Louise, harmonized on gentle Mahan compositions like "Rather Be Me" and "Give Me A Smile" (in which,

lyrically the morning dew actually gets kissed by the morning sun!). The songs brought to mind echos of my early seventies like handmade jewelry, yoga, and clogs. Leader Joannah's cowboy hat and bell bottoms added to the mood.

Daughter Sarah showed that the family pipes are improving as the generations pass when she opened a set with an up-tempo tune of her own, "I Only Want To Rock With You." Guitarist Jerry McKuen followed his charts throughout the evening with commendable dexterity . . . I left between sets, things got too mellow for me.

WORDS AND MUSIC: SPECIAL EDITION

Country Music Foundation, May 14.

Wordsworth wrote that the child is father to the man. Young songwriters from Nashville elementary schools participating in the Country Music Foundation's Words and Music program demonstrated the truth in the poet's perception when they shared their creations in a year-end showcase.

In collaboration with professional tunesmiths, area schoolkids tapped their own motherlode of experience and feeling to produce songs that covered a breadth of subjects including trains, brothers, volleyball-playing roaches, alligators, cats, jogging, and dune buggies. Michael Corder (pen name: "Chillin' C") displayed precocious perception of social issues with "Take A Look At My Pay," and Trevin Daly's caustic rap "You Can't Drive" would shame any who might try to do so while drunk. The CMF education department enlisted Bobby Bare as the evening's host. He and the rest of the seasoned professionals who participated (Tom Pallardy, Woody Bomar, Ervan Parker, Jim Rushing, Tommy Rocco, John Knowles, Layng Martine, Bob McCracken, Patti Ryan and Danny Tate) clearly regarded their young charges with respect and admiration without a hint of elderly condescension. The evening held a lesson for the music industry: the seeds of human experience will always bear creative fruit, which sometimes ripens very early in the season.

Jay Orr is head of technical services at the Country Music Foundation Library and Media Center, Nashville. In his free time he is an avid fan of live music.

TOP INDEPENDENT COUNTRY SINGLES

As reported by The  Network Reporting Stations

"Compiled from over 300 IRC Network Reports"

*Title, Artist, Label, Record #
Producer, Publisher(s), writer(s), Contact*

Survey Period Ending . . . May 25, 1985

Weeks Tracked	Last Survey	This Survey	
8	2	1	YOU'RE EVERY STEP I TAKE Johnny Paycheck, AMI <i>T. Jennings/M. Stills/Master Makers/Silver Dus ASCAP/R.J. Friend</i>
8	1	2	WHEN YOU HELD ME IN YOUR ARMS Rex Allen, Jr. Moonshine <i>Andy DiMartino/Boquillas Canyon/Atlantic BMI/H. Moffett</i>
6	5	3	ALL I DO IS DREAM OF YOU Margo Smith, Bermuda Dunes <i>G. Motola, A. Henson/Robbins ASCAP/A. Freed N.H. Brown</i>
6	6	4	PITY PARTY Bill Anderson, Swanee <i>Walter Hayes/Stallion BMI/B. Anderson</i>
10	3	5	STARLITE Karen Taylor-Good, Mesa <i>T. Sparks/B.K. Kar SESAC/K. Taylor-Good, T. Sparks</i>
4	11	6	SHE WON'T LET GO Ray Price, Step One <i>Ray Pennington/Lyn Pen/PRO BMI/L. Bach</i>
4	18	7	IF IT WAS ANY BETTER Narvel Felts, Evergreen <i>Johnny Morris/Tapadero/Lynn Shawn BMI/E. Burton, T. Grant, M. Morris</i>
6	8	8	LEAVING Charleston Express, Soundwaves <i>J. Gibson, J. Payne/Phono SESAC/J. Fuller</i>
4	13	9	YOU CAN ALWAYS SAY GOODBYE Jim Collins, White Gold <i>Ray Baker/Bright Sky ASCAP/J. Weatherly</i>
4	9	10	COUNTRY MUSIC IS #1 Backwater, AMI <i>Bernie Vaughn/Backwater BMI/L. G. Strobel, K. Currey</i>
6	15	11	FAMILY FARM Steve Westbrook, Timestar <i>Jack Metts/Newwriters BMI/S. Westbrook</i>
4	12	12	BURN BABY BURN Dianne Sherrill, BPC <i>Howard Baine/Tam-Ligh/How-Matt ASCAP/Bayne BMI/C. White, M. White, J. McBee</i>
2	#	13	COKE WAS IT George Pickard, Stargem <i>Wayne Hodge/Timestar ASCAP/Newwriters BMI/G. Pickard, W. Hodge</i>
4	19	14	HOLD ME LOOSELY Don Hall, NSD <i>J. Gibson, J. Payne/Hitki BMI/D. Hall</i>
8	20	15	GO CAT GO J.C. Weaver, Wild Turkey <i>J. B. Barnhill, B. Fischer/Song Peddler BMI/J. Hayes</i>
6	10	16	ONE HEART AWAY Brooks Bros., Buckboard <i>D. Glenn, J. Stroud/Tree/Cross Keys ASCAP/O'Lyric BMI/M. Waters, B. Jones, T. Shapiro</i>
14	4	17	ONLY A DREAM AWAY Mason Dixon, Texas <i>R. Dixon, D. Schaler/MDS ASCAP/P. Detmer</i>
8	16	18	DESPERADO LOVE Sammy Johns, Southern Tracks <i>Michael Garvin/Lowery/Tree BMI/S. Johns, M. Garvin</i>
8	17	19	I'M STILL HERE John Hartford, Flying Fish <i>Jack Clement/Ensign BMI/J. Hartford</i>
10	7	20	CALL ME UP George Pickard, Stargem <i>Wayne Hodge/Timestar ASCAP/G. Pickard</i>
2	#	21	SILVER TONGUED DEVIL STRIKES GOLD Albert Updyke, Stargem <i>Wayne Hodge/Tieche BMI/R. Upton</i>
2	#	22	CALIFORNIA SLEEPING Loy Blanton, Soundwaves <i>Joe Allen/Cross Keys ASCAP/Tree BMI/D. Kirby, C. Putnam</i>
4	23	23	THAT HONKY TONK CALL Tommy Mercer, Buckboard <i>Darrell Glenn/Peer Southern BMI/B. House, B. Stone</i>
8	22	24	RUNNING THE ROADBLOCKS Chris Hillman, Sugarhill <i>A. Perkins/Bar None/Love Lust BMI/C. Hillman, P. Krober</i>
4	#	25	BURNS LIKE A ROCKET Billy Joe Royal, Southern Tracks <i>Nelson Larkin/Garwin/Blue Moon/Famous Music Corp. ASCAP/G. Burr</i>
10	21	26	COUNTRY MUSIC IS COMING HOME Dan Sullivan, Timestar <i>Jack Eubanks/House of Manor BMI/D. Sullivan</i>
2	#	27	I WANT YOU Silver Creek Express, Timestar <i>Gene Miller/Newwriters BMI/J. Harden</i>
6	25	28	DEEP WATER Ray Pennington, Step One <i>Ray Pennington/Milene ASCAP/F. Rose</i>
2	#	29	YOU NEVER NEEDED ME Vickie Lee, NSD <i>Tommy Collins/New Wayside Song ASCAP/Sawgrass BMI/T. Collins, B. Cates</i>
2	#	30	IF I EVER NEED A LADY Cody Bearpaw, Moonshine <i>Lou Bradley/South Town BMI/G. Chrysler</i>

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TRACK FACES: *Debbie Boone performing at TPAC, Nashville; Labelmates Randy Owen and Hillary Kanter at the ACM awards; T. G. Sheppard with Jeffery and Angie shooting a clip for CP, director - Gus Barba, producer - Rod Thompson; Morgan Fairchild meets Mel Tillis backstage at the Stargarden in Dallas, TX.*

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DAVIS ON MCA. *Mac Davis listens to a final mix of his new MCA album, "Till I Made It With You" at Soundstage Studio. Standing are (left to right) guitarist Reggie Young, bass player David Hungate, and engineer Ron Treat. Seated (left to right) producer Jimmy Bowen, and Davis.*

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SHOWCASE



ROBIN LEE/"Paint The Town Blue"

When looking at her impressive list of achievements it's hard to believe that Robin Lee is still a musical newcomer. In less than two years she has earned five nationally charted singles, and a recent top 10 nomination in the Academy of Country Music's New Female Vocalist Award category.

A native Nashvillian, Robin has been performing since she was nine years old. After graduating from high school, she notes that she "really got serious" about pursuing a career in music. Her first break came when she teamed together with producer Johnny Morris. After seeing her perform one evening, he introduced her to Don Bedell, President of Evergreen Records, who also became a fan and signed her to the label. Since then she has had a steady string of increasingly successful chart singles, and also entered the world of music videos with her recent single "Want Ads."

Robin's latest single, "Paint The Town Blue" is a special duet with Lobo. Lobo, who has sold over 15 million singles internationally, is well known for standards such as "I'd Love You To Want Me," and "Me And You And A Dog Named Boo." The song pairs the two in what producer Johnny Morris refers to as "country music magic!"

When not performing or in the studio recording, the brunette beauty likes to spend her time reading. She also enjoys playing the piano, exercising, and admits a to passion for collecting small pieces of china and blown glass figurines. "I especially love to be around people," she says. "I love to laugh and make others laugh." All in all Robin Lee is indeed a very special person. For more information contact: Evergreen Records, 1021 16th Ave. South, Nashville, TN. 37212. (615) 327-3213

SHOWCASE is a paid promotional feature to give exposure to developing acts.



HEART OF NASHVILLE. Planning the promotion of country music's effort to relieve world hunger, "One Big Family," are (left to right) Charles Fach, Compleat Records; Martha 'Skates' Moore, publicity director PolyGram; and Frank Jones, Sr. V.P. country division, PolyGram.

Ronnie McDowell and Buddy Killen produced "One Big Family" at the SOUNDSHOP to aid the World Hunger Fund. Killen also cut tracks on Exile (Pat McMakin engineering) and on Sammy Hall engineered by McMakin and Ernie Winfrey. Travis Turk produced a project for Bonnie Nelson; Joe Chambers produced the Bama Band with Mike Bradley at the controls; Chuck Howard produced Warner Bros.'s Dar-

rell Clanton with engineer Mike Psanos; and Dan Wilson was in producing demos for Tree Publishing on Curly Putman, Bucky Jones, Ron Hellard, and Michael Garvin.

Projects at DISC MASTERING included the Kendall's new single "If You Break My Heart" produced by Brien Fisher; "A Good Love Died Tonight", Leon Everette's new single for Polygram, produced by Bill Rice; and Belle Of The

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Ball, an LP by the group **Southern Crescent** produced by **Harvey Arnold**.

AMPEX Corporation announced the introduction of the Ampex 467 Digital Audio Mastering Tape, an "extremely reliable, high energy" digital mastering tape. The product is designed to perform optimally on all multi-track digital recording systems without requiring individual tape-to-machine realignments.

Steve Davis and **Dennis Morgan** produced five hot demos at **PETE DRAKE PRODUCTIONS** for **Merit Music**, three of which were placed immediately with **Barbara Mandrell**.

At Jack Jackson's **AUDIO MEDIA, Six-Fifteen Productions** recorded regional radio ad campaigns for **J. Walter Thompson/Denver**,

featuring the full line of Ford trucks, and for **G. Heileman Company's** Sterling and Stag beers, and **Mickey's Malt Liquor**.

The **NASHVILLE STRING MACHINE** sessioned with **Glen Campbell, Bobby Bare, Lee Greenwood, Neil Young, Cristy Lane, Dino Karsinakas**, and the **Statler Brothers**. Jingles included **United Airlines, The Dept. of Conservation, and Ford**.

Nashville's **HUMMINGBIRD STUDIO** has been selected as the site for this year's **Star Search** auditions, which will be conducted during the month of June.

Libby Lacey was in **HILLTOP STUDIOS** recording her new single on **K-D Records**, with both sides written and produced by **Shane Sawyer**. **Shane** also produced **Rick Jones'** new sin-

gle "I Need You In My Life", and wrote the songs for **Jes Mony's** new album also tracked at the studio. **Don Acuff** was in recording his new LP entitled "Carrying On The Family Tradition".

Mastering projects for **NASHVILLE RECORD PRODUCTIONS, INC.** included singles on **Jack Green, Sammi Smith, and Ray Price, Jimmy C. Newman, Kathy Mattea, Nat Stuckey, Fred Smothers and Ken Scott**. Also mastered was a new album release by the **Hinsons**.

Current sessions at the **ROCKING HORSE STUDIO** are as follows - Songwriter/Artists **Milton Carroll** and **Barbara Fairchild** recorded demos for a new Christian album with producers **Michael G. Smith** and **Mickey Hiter**. Songwriters **L.E. White** and **Lola Jean Dillon** recorded for **Sawgrass Music**; **Larry Shell** and **Buddy Cannon** tracked demos for **Millhouse Music**; **Larry Gatlin** and producer **Larry Carlton** recorded sides for a new Gatlin album; and Songwriters **Michell Scott** and **Keith Hyman** cut a demo for **Tenth Avenue Music**.

THE GRAND hosted projects by **Raymond Brown**, country artist **Jeremiah**, and **Stacey Lynn Ries**, "The Princess Of Country Music", who completed her "Salute To The Queens Of Country Music" LP. **Joanna Jacobs** recorded her new single at the studio as well.

Bob Angello of **ANGELLO'S SOUND STUDIO** produced and engineered individual demos for **Paul Wetherholt** and **James Lee Reeves**, a single for **Stacey Kostas**, a road album for **Kenny O**, and a promotional jingle for **Michael Dillion**.

MUSIC MILL is cooking up new sides for **Alabama's** next album using the 3-M 32 track digital machine. The group also recorded cuts for a Christmas album with **Harold Shedd** producing and **Jim Cotton, Joe Scaife, and Paul Goldberg** engineering. Other artists at the Mill included **Glen Campbell, Lee Greenwood, Mel Tillis, Roy and Renee Clayborne, Bob Corbin, Sad Urchin, Louise Mandrell, and Warner Bros.'s** delightful group **The Forester Sisters**.

The **A STRINGS** sessioned with the **Florida Boys, George Jones**, and a rising favorite - **Tony Chance**. Other projects included the T.V. show "New Country", and a jingle for **Lowenbrau** beer.

At **STARGEM**, **Wayne Hodge** produced a single on **George Pickard** entitled "Coke Was It", and worked with **Orion** on his next release. **Bob McKinzie** produced **Christine Wyrzten**, and **Dan Hodge** produced an **Easter Seals** project for **Nashstock**.

Lari Goss produced projects for **The Hoppers**, and **The Cathedrals** at **CREATIVE WORKSHOP** with engineer, **Lee Peterzell**. **George Jones** was in doing vocal overdubs with producer **Billy Sherrill** with **Lou Bradley** and **Ed Hudson** engineering. New group **Dorian Blue** cut demos with **John Gilbert** producing and those left field favorites, **B.C. & The Dartz** were cutting with **Buzz Cason** producing and **Mighty Joe Funderburk** sliding the faders.

— Gregg Brown

If you have any studio information, be it audio or video, please send it by the 16th of each month to: Keeping Track, Music Row, P.O. Box 158483, Nashville, TN, 37215.



Connie Lynn

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