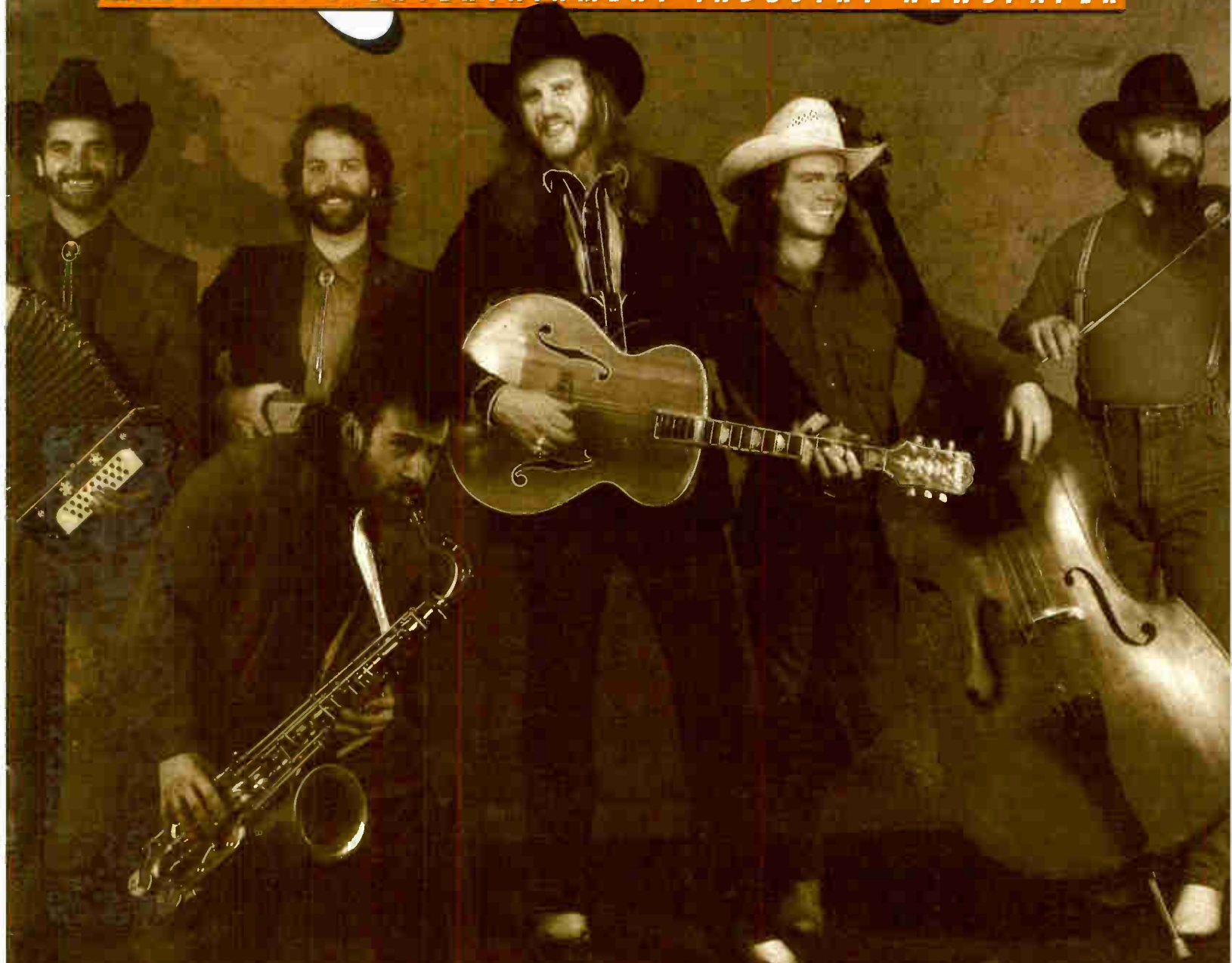


COUNTRY ALBUM CUT CHARTS • DOLLARS & SENSE: *Home Office Deductions* • ALBUM & SINGLE REVIEWS  
BEHIND THE SCENES: *Martha Sharp* • RADIO/RETAIL: *CD Spin-Offs* • NEWS & EVENTS • GOTHAM GOSSIP

# Music Row

NASHVILLE'S ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY NEWSPAPER



*Asleep at the Wheel*

**MID-MONTH EDITION**

World Radio History

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**Re: Gotham Gossip/Feb87**

Dear Jim

It's funny how certain events in your life stand out, and you can remember where you were and what you were doing! Like for example the day Elvis died:

I was sitting in a hotel room waiting to go to work at the Wisconsin State Fair. My job at the time? I was Kenny

Rogers' road manager. Yes it was me who arranged for your picture with Kenny and Dolly Parton. I believe I even sent you a KR belt buckle.

Just wanted you to know I remembered! Yes it was ten years ago, and thanks for the memory.

Garth Shaw, Singing Roadie Music Grp.  
Costa Mesa, CA

Paramount Pictures will feature Darlene Austin's "Sunday Go To Cheatin' Clothes," on the motion picture soundtrack, *Darkness, Darkness*. Darlene is one of the five finalists for the Academy of Country Music's New Female Vocalist Award, and will debut one of her new songs on the nationally-televised show.... Guitar great, Duane Eddy, contributed guitar work on the newly-released rockabilly single by Susan Marshall, "Why Can't You Tell Me Why" from her LP *Don't Play Innocent With Me* on Reptile Records...NSD recording artist, Kathy Edge was on hand at the Country Radio Seminar promoting her record, "I Take The Chance," and was interviewed live on The Music Country Network by Charlie Douglas. Later this month, Kathy is scheduled to appear on "The Louisiana Hayride"...MSR Records has announced the signing of Suzi Deveraux to a long-term recording agreement. Her new single, "Pick Up The Pieces," is set for release, and an LP and music video are in the works...Praxis International artists, The Sluggers, and The Questionnaires, recently headlined a successful return engagement in Nashville at the Exit/In. The Questionnaires have just completed tour dates with 38 Special, and Jason and The Scorchers...Private Lives have completed work on "Reaction To Words," the title track for the group's album debut this spring...

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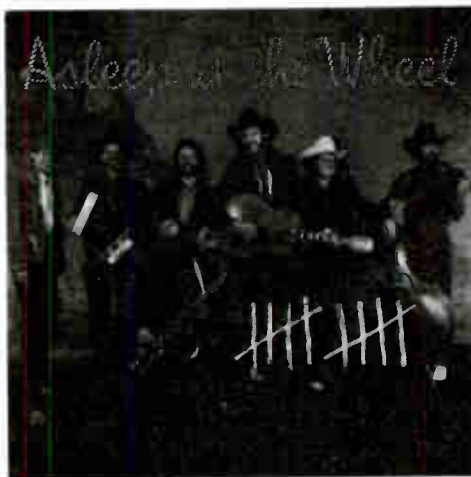
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**All About The Cover**

**T**exas swing ain't dead, it's Asleep At The Wheel. The Wheel's 10th album, *Asleep At The Wheel 10* represents a return to the group's western swing and boogie woogie roots, and features guest appearances from the likes of Pete Anderson, and Johnny Gimble. Huey Lewis co-produced one of the tracks, a unique swing version of his pop hit, "I Want A New Drug." Other notable cuts from their Epic release include: "Tulsa Straight Ahead," the Delmore Brothers' tune, "Blues Stay Away From Me," plus a boogie classic that Willie Nelson suggested they cut, "House of Blue Lights." Nashville fans will get a chance to see them perform their first single from the album, "Way



Down Texas Way," on March 24. The song has been made into a music video featuring a cameo appearance from Willie Nelson.

Previous winners of a Grammy for Best Instrumental Group, an Academy of Country Music award for Best Touring Band, and a Country Band of The Year award by the National Association for Campus Activities, Asleep At The Wheel has also created music for the movies, *Roadie*, *Wanda Nevada*, and *Liar's Moon*. In addition, the band plans to perform between 150 and 200 concert dates this year including a 12 city Budweiser-sponsored tour starting in May.

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*Behind The Scenes:*

# Martha Sharp

*The Role of A&R...  
Signing Randy Travis...Screening New  
Material...A&R Philosophy...*

by David M. Ross

**M**artha Sharp's first introduction to the music industry came as the result of a chance invitation to a recording session. "It was fabulous" she explained, "I decided I wanted to be a writer, went out, and bought a \$43 Kay guitar and a chord book and for the next 8 years I made my living that way." During those years she wrote three million-selling songs including "Born A Woman" and "Single Girl" for Sandy Posey and "Come Back When You Grow Up" for Bobby Vee. But then the cuts stopped coming and eventually she decided to get out of the music business. "I was pouring my heart out for all these people (I'm sure writers all go through this) and I got tired."

Martha decided to continue her education after a brief sojourn from Nashville. "Upon returning, I got a masters degree from Peabody in Human Development Counseling, which is a combin-

ation of education and psychology that qualifies you for virtually nothing." Just as her first romance with songwriting had developed by accident, her eventual return was also unexpected. Looking for summer employment, she was hired at Elektra Records/Nashville. After spending a week on the receptionist desk and then a week filling in as secretary for label head, Jimmy Bowen, her attention again turned back to the music industry. "He offered me a job which I couldn't refuse," Martha confessed, "So I was Bowen's assistant for about a year and a half and one day he just told me he was going to make me a director of A&R. I was terrified by the whole idea but I just did it."

Elektra merged with Warner Bros. in Nashville and later when Bowen left Warners and went to MCA, Martha opted to remain. Partly, her decision was the result of a commitment by Warner Bros. to

begin allowing her to sign new acts, and also she states, "We all really felt that Jim Ed [Norman] wanted to go out there and do it with some new talent, and that was really challenging and exciting. So here I am."

A reserved, but friendly woman, Martha has a surprisingly girlish lilt in her voice which occasionally adds emphasis and emotion by rising to a higher register as she speaks. She is not a nine-to-five person, and regularly takes work home on the weekends and week nights. The label's decision to allow her to pick talent has paid off in platinum. Her signing discovery, Randy Ray, better known to record buyers as Randy Travis, has been heralded as one of the brightest new talents in the country music sky. Her current title is Vice President/A&R, Warner Bros. Records Nashville.

MR: Is it hard to get to you with a song?

MS: No. I will give anybody an audience one or two times. Then, either they've got so much wonderful material that I'll always give them an audience, or I'll expect them to zero in on what I like and don't like and drop tapes off. There are writers who want to come play you every song they ever wrote, and I just don't have time for that.

I try to take all my artists around to the publishers at least once every six months. This gives the writers and the publishers an opportunity to interact with the artist. This morning, I've been taking Randy around. At MCA, we got into a rap with Paul Overstreet and Don Schlitz. They claim that they then went downstairs and wrote a song while we were listening and brought it up. That kind of energy is great. I especially love it when a writer like Paul or Tom Schuyler or Tommy Rocco or Charlie Black (who doesn't do it but I wish he would) calls me and says "Boy, I just wrote a smash for Crystal, can I play it for you right now." I will drop everything cause I know what it's like to be excited about a song that you've just written and you want somebody to hear. I love to be the first one and say 'Got to have a hold on that one!' But mostly, I ask people to bring tapes by.

MR: What criteria do you use for screening songs?

MS: If a song is pitched to me for a particular artist then I try to imagine them singing that song. If it gives me goose bumps then I know it's one I want to play for Jim Ed. There are a lot of factors in the equation, but the song has to reach out and grab me in some kind of emotional way. I have to just feel that with that artist singing, it could be a hit.



Martha Sharp (second from right), and Randy Travis (second from left) pose with other industry executives at a recent celebration hosted by Warner Bros. to honor the platinum certification of *Storms Of Life*, Travis' first album for the label. Martha is credited with having signed the Cinderella-story artist who only a year ago was washing dishes, and performing at a local Nashville nightclub. Also pictured from Left to Right: Warner Bros. label head, Jim Ed Norman; ASCAP Southern Director, Connie Bradley; and ASCAP's Merlin Littlefield.

MR: The other evening I was having a drink with several executives from different labels, and the comment was made that Warner Bros. is the only label in town doing it right...Finding new but solid country talent. What is the A&R dept. philosophy?

MS: The primary philosophy, if there is one, is that in order to continue to exist we're going to have to break new artists. Three years ago when Jim Ed Norman took over I don't think anybody here had a good idea as to how we were going to accomplish that, but the one mandate he gave us was "We're gonna try some stuff. We won't always be right but we're gonna try."

MR: What exactly is A&R, artist and repertoire? What are your duties?

MS: We consult with department heads upon the status of each artist. I do a lot of agitating around here if I think my artists aren't being taken care of...

MR: Your artists?

MS: When I say my artists, I mean either artists which I have signed and/or those who are assigned to me. Paige [Rowden] and Barry [Beckett] and I have the roster divided as far as A&R representation. So, for example, although I'm not directly responsible for signing, say Highway 101, I'm responsible for screening material and working with them in every way that I think A&R ought to be involved. I like a very hands-on approach. If I think that promotion is ignoring a record that shouldn't be ignored, then I'll go in and needle them about it. And likewise with the publicity department.

It varies, but the primary responsibilities are finding new artists, finding the songs that can work for them, and being a liaison with the producers.

MR: After the fact, "armchair quarterbacks" are always the first to insist that signing a successful talent like Randy Travis was obvious. We all know that's not true, but seriously how did you come to take pen in hand?

MS: It really started at a CMA committee meeting. They had invited a retail guest and one thing he said stuck out in my mind, "My customers don't think what they hear on the radio is country." It just clicked in my head and I started thinking, 'Ok, lets give them some country.'

I had lunch with Judy Harris (CBS Publishing) and told her I was looking for a great male country singer, and she said "Randy Ray. He sang on that song I sent you for Hank Jr." When I finally got out to see him, something inside just clicked. I can't explain what that was. But I also felt it years ago when Kris Kristofferson

sat down on my couch and played some songs for me that have long since been forgotten, and something inside of me said 'This man is a star.'

I really liked Randy as a person as well. So I came back to the office and wanted to sign him really bad, but I was scared that the people in the office were going to say 'she's crazy.' Then Kyle Lehning called me

I was scared that the people in the office were going to say 'she's crazy.'

and said "I understand that you're thinking about signing Randy, and I want to put my name in the hat as producer." I knew that if I could go to Jim Ed with that information it would be ok. So I did it! It was just a remarkable confluence of people who came together. I wanted it to be an album of great songs. There was a lot of talent

that went into it.

MR: How did the decision get made to re-release "On The Other Hand," and what hapened to it the first time out?

MS: The truth? Our promotion department just couldn't believe that anything this country could be working. I don't really understand the technical facts as to how the chart game is played but it kind of fell through the cracks. At first it was difficult for people here to trust that the response they were getting was real, but there was an immediate and positive reaction to Randy. The record was #1 in a lot of places where it was played the first time.

Then we put out "1982" and it became obvious that we could no longer ignore what was actually happening. Bob Saporiti would come to staff meetings and say "Radio loves Randy Travis." Kyle had been saying all along that we should re-release "On The Other Hand," and Randy and Lib Hatcher (Randy's manager) wanted it as well. I felt like maybe we had cheated Paul Overstreet (songwriter) somehow by not giving the record enough of a chance. Finally Nick Hunter decided to do it. I really respect him for making that decision cause it was a gutsy move.

## Errol Mahal ★ Chartbound ★ You're The One Love Of My Life



After graduating from the University of Vienna, Errol Mahal began playing his music in various European countries such as Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. His performances led to a deal with Polydor Records and the subsequent release of a #1 hit single "Sick And Tired." The single held the #1 position on the major European charts for four consecutive weeks. Errol attributes

the success of that record to his promotional supporting tour which wound through Geneva, Zurich, Munich, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Brussels, Madrid, London and the French Riviera. Eventually the dark haired singer, who speaks five languages, made his way to the United States where he performed in Las Vegas. Errol has also had the honor of presenting a "command performance" for the Royal Family of Malaysia.

Errol has recently recorded a new ballad on Stargem Records in Nashville, entitled "You're The One Love Of My Life." Produced by Wayne Hodge, the single is being promoted by Bobby Witte, Butch Paulson and Melissa (IRC stations). With this new release, Errol Mahal's career is sailing along in more ways than one, (he is currently headlining on the cruise ship, The Stardancer). For more information contact: Stargem Records, 43 Music Sq E., Nashville, TN. 37203. (615) 244-1025.

*Chartbound is a paid promotional feature to give exposure to new artists.*

## On The Road

Folgers Coffee and Citrus Hill Orange Juice are teaming up for a series of major concerts this spring featuring T.G. Sheppard with all-star lineups of talent including George Strait, Earl Thomas Conley, George Jones, Sawyer Brown, and Sweethearts of the Rodeo in major venues around the country.... Ricky Skaggs is wrapping up his Canadian tour this week, having made appearances in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. His tour coincides with the Canadian release of his *Greatest Hits* album.... Roy Clark was recently selected as a member of the "Hall Of Fame" by the National Association for Campus Activities.... Steve Earle is touring Europe this month, making personal appearances in Holland, France, and England.... George Strait, The Bellamy Brothers and Waylon Jennings are in the midst of major concert tours in support of their newly-released LPs.... The Whites, and Bobby Bare have both joined the talent roster

at Bobby Roberts Entertainment.... Premier One recording act, Mason Dixon, recently named the #1 independent group of the year by *Cashbox* and *Indie Bullet* magazines, has signed a management agreement with Oswald Brothers.... As the result of a successful appearance at the annual CRS New Faces Show in Nashville, Avista's Adam Baker has signed a long-term booking agreement with World Class Talent.... Loretta Lynn and long-time manager David Skepner have reportedly parted ways apparently due to Loretta's lighter performing schedule.... Buddy Lee Attractions has announced the addition of Mike Blake to the booking agency's publicity department.... Veteran booking agent, manager and promoter, Tom Haley has recently opened The Tom Haley Entertainment Agency in Winslow, Arizona. (501) 634-7321.... In April at the Landmark Hotel in Las Vegas, the "ACM Presents The Best of New Country" show will feature Clyde Foley Cummins, and A.J. Masters.

## Worth Mentioning

- Randy Travis was the guest of honor at a recent Warner Bros. reception marking the platinum certification of his debut album *Storms Of Life*. 81 Platinum records were presented to writers, musicians, and publishers who contributed creatively to the project. Travis is also a Grand Ole Opry member.

- The passing of highly respected Music Row publisher, Don Gant, was deeply mourned, when he succumbed to a stroke on March 6. Gant was 44 years old.

- Nashville Entertainment Association will host a series of monthly songwriter seminars. The first panel will be held March 25, at Music Row Showcase, 6:30 pm. The panel will include; Dennis Morgan, Don Pfrimmer, Charles Quillen, and Kent Robbins. Admission: \$4 non-members, \$2 for members.

- The 3rd annual Master Series Concert raised approximately \$17,000 dollars for the W.O. Smith Community Music School according to spokesperson Bruce Hinton. The evening showcased eclectic instrumental music with the emphasis on acoustic sounds. However, several artists such as Giles Reaves and Edgar Meyer utilized a mix of computer generated and midi-synthesized sounds as well. Musical host Mark O'Connor opened the show with a solo fiddle composition "Bonapart's Retreat" which proved to be one of the evenings highlights. He also performed several duet songs with guitarist Chet Atkins. Additional featured musicians were: Jerry Douglas, John Jarvis, Kenny Malone, and Liz Storey.

- After conflicting reports of dissension amongst the Oak Ridge Boys, it was announced that members Richard Sterban, Joe Bonsall and Duane Allen have "voted" the fourth Oak, William Lee Golden out of the group. Plans are to add a new fourth member in time for the planned Oak Ridge Boys '87 Tour scheduled to begin this summer. As recently as several months ago the group held a special press conference to allay rumors of serious problems between them. Their new album *When The Fast Lane Ends* has just been released on MCA Records.

- Schyler, Knobloch and Bickhardt publicist, Cathey Gurley, called in to clarify that the MTM Records trio will use their full names and not the moniker SKB as reported last month in this column.

## Radio Notes

Ricky Skaggs has been tapped by BBC Radio 2 in Britain to host a second series of radio documentaries titled "Hit It Boys," featuring American country music from the 1920s to 1965.... Opryland USA Inc. has promoted Jim Fisher to general manager of WKY radio in Oklahoma City, replacing Bob Meyer, who was named general manager of WSM-AM/FM in Nashville.... David Liston has been named vice president and general manager of WTHI AM/FM in Terre Haute, Indiana.... WLAC AM/FM has just added William M. Deutsch formerly with Sound Seventy Corporation to their Nashville staff as sales executive.... United Stations Radio Networks has announced the debut of "The Country Datebook," a daily 2 1/2 minute capsule that celebrates important events in country music.... Ricky Van Shelton's debut album for Columbia was recently premiered on the Music Country Radio Network in a special two-hour live call-in segment.... During the April weekend prior to the "ACM Awards" telecast, the United Stations Programming Network (USPN) will present "The ACM Awards Nomination Special 1987." And, for the 5th year, USPN is again producing "The Country Six Pack 1987" series to celebrate holiday weekends with special guest stars....

## Gospel

The Gospel Music Association presents Gospel Music Week this year from April 5—9 in Nashville, and will feature three gospel music concert extravaganzas, culminating with the Annual Dove Awards Ceremony on the 9th. The concerts will take place on April 5, 6, & 7 at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, and will feature some of gospel music's greatest talent, including Sandi Patti, the Gaithers, DeGarmo & Key, Mylon LeFevre, Gary McSpadden and Larnelle Harris.... DaySpring recording artist, Cynthia Clawson, Grammy and Dove Award winner, recently performed a concert in Nashville at Belmont College to benefit the school's student union Summer Missions.... Diana Henderson has joined the staff of the Gospel Music Association as administrative assistant to GMA executive director, Donald W. Butler, Sr., and was also recently appointed director of membership for the National Entertainment Journalist Association.... Reunion Records has just introduced a weekly news release service that is available by telephone. Each week, they will provide current information about their artists and industry personnel (615) 329-3706. Reunion has also just signed r&b/dance vocalist Renee Garcia, plus rap artist Michael Peace to their roster....

## Musical Chairs

The Nashville Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (NARAS) will open a major new tourist attraction, *Star Walk*, to honor Country Music's past, present and future Grammy winners. *Star Walk* is scheduled to open in July at Metro Center and will contain handprints, footprints, and personal comments of the Grammy winners on star-shaped 700 pound plaques similar to those at Hollywood's famous Mann's Chinese Theatre. Added to the recently inducted Alabama, Oak Ridge Boys, Crystal Gayle, Dottie West, Jerry Reed, and Conway Twitty at this summer's grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremonies will be 15 more acts to be announced....On March 23, winners are scheduled to be selected for The Nashville Network's (TNN) *Join the Judds Sweepstakes Contest*. A new Jeep Comanche Sportruck, and an all-expense-paid trip to visit with the Judds at the Academy of Country Music Awards Show to be awarded as prizes....Dan Seals recently added another honor to his growing collection when he received a NACA (National Association of Campus Activities) country music Award during their 1987 annual convention. Other winners were Willie Nelson, John Mellencamp, and Alabama....Nancy A. Neil has been promoted to manager of public relations for TNN, where she will also supervise TNN's Viewer Services....RCA recording artist, Ronnie Milsap, is the latest recipient of the Ampex Golden Reel Award, which was presented in recognition of his *Greatest Hits—Volume II* album....Marjie McGraw has recently been named director of media relations for Appalachian Gold Music.... Rattlesnake Annie's first CBS single, "Callin' Your Bluff," has just been shipped. Her debut LP is scheduled for an April release, and features appearances by Willie Nelson and guitar legend, Lonnie Mack....

*Restless Heart* was named 1987 Group Of The Year by *Radio & Records*....Reba McEntire, Entertainer of the Year and three-time Female Vocalist of the Year started 1987 with a number one single and album on MCA, both titled, "What Am I Gonna' Do About You." Her new single "Let The Music Lift You Up," is now climbing the charts. Also, Reba was awarded her first Grammy for Best Female Country Vocal Performance during the Grammy Awards Show last month....T.G. Sheppard begins working

on his third Columbia LP at Muscle Shoals' Fame Recording Studio with producer Rick Hall this month....Led by Crystal Gayle's #1 single, "Straight To The Heart," Chappell/Intersong Nashville recently had three current top 10 songs on the national country charts, including "Mornin' Ride" by Lee Greenwood, and "I'll Still Be Loving You" by Restless Heart. "Straight To The Heart" was the publisher's second #1 single in 1987, following Hank Jr.'s "Mind Your Own Business"....Steve Earle has been named *Rolling Stone* magazine's "Best Country Artist" in their annual "1986 Readers and Critics Poll." Steve's next MCA album is



NSAI Songwriter of the Year, Paul Overstreet; NSAI executive director, Maggie Cavender; and Don Schlitz who co-wrote the NSAI song of the Year "On The Other Hand" with Paul.

scheduled for a May release and will be co-produced by Tony Brown, Emory Gordy Jr. and Richard Bennett....Jay R. Morgenstern, executive v.p./general manager of Warner Bros. Music, and president of Warner Bros. Publications, has been elected to the ASCAP Board of Directors as a publisher member....Sandra Carl has recently been named executive director of the new Nashville Convention Center....The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band has just kicked off their 1987 touring year with former Eagle member, Bernie Leadon, replacing John McEuen...."Country In A Crate," the promotional packaging effort by MCA, Camelot Music, and Jeep won the "Award for Creative Excellence" at the January Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The promotion ran in over 200 Camelot stores nationwide and featured a cassette of Reba McEntire's current MCA LP, "What Am I Gonna Do About You"....MCA has also kicked off a national promotion centered on Waylon Jennings' sec-

ond LP for the label, *Hangin' Tough*.... TNN's popular Nashville Now show celebrates its fourth anniversary, plus National Cable Month when it inaugurates its fifth year of broadcasting next month with a weeklong live telecast from the Landmark Hotel in Las Vegas....

Doc Watson received his fourth Grammy Award last month for *Riding The Midnight Train*, his first bluegrass LP on the Sugar Hill label in the Traditional Folk category....Lisa Childress, nominated for Top New Female Performer by the Academy of Country Music, has recently signed with Curb Records, and with the McFadden Agency for booking....Southwing Publishing has announced the appointment of Lee Bach as professional manager, and Kay-Cee Dunn as office manager....BMI songwriter, Tim Nichols has recently signed with Milsap Music as a staff writer....Al Cooley has recently joined MCA Music as song plugger....The 14th annual Music City Tennis Invitational has been set for May 1, 2, & 3. The Invitational is a major music business sporting event which has contributed more than \$100,000 to local charities, and this year will benefit the Vanderbilt University Children's Hospital....The 1st Annual Benefit for Benton Hall High School in Nashville was a standing-room-only sell-out. The show opened with surprise guest star Emmylou Harris, and featured hit songwriter Roger Cook with Jim Rooney, Janet McLaughlin, Joe Green, Tim Bays, John Prine, and John Hartford....The Music Business Program at Belmont College in Nashville will feature a new international emphasis starting this fall with a "Semester in London" program.... Ampex Corporation has appointed Steve Smith as marketing manager for the Magnetic Tape Division's audio tape products....Leo Kottke has signed a management deal with Chuck Morris Entertainment who also guides the careers of Lyle Lovett, Highway 101, and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band....

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# Dollars & Sense

## Home Office Deductions

**I**t's March 15, 1987 and a beautiful spring day in Music City. Judy Songwriter is perfecting the hook on her latest song when she decides to take a break from her home studio to check the mail. Much to her chagrin, she finds that dreaded letter from the IRS beginning "Dear Taxpayer; Your return has been selected..." It seems they would like to examine her support for office-in-home deductions taken on her 1984 tax return.

Let's look at the issues Judy Songwriter will have to address with the IRS to protect her deduction. While the following discussion is presented in reference to Judy "Songwriter," home office deductions might be applicable for a musician, publisher, producer, or artist depending on the circumstances. The tax laws are not crystal clear on office-in-home deductions but there are four basic guidelines to follow:

1. **Exclusive use test**- "exclusive use" means that a specific portion of the residence, determined by square footage or number of rooms, must be used *solely* for business purposes. This can be a room, or a portion thereof, but cannot include areas that are used for both business and personal purposes such as a kitchen.
2. The use of the office-in-home must occur on a **regular basis**—the IRS is looking for Judy Songwriter to prove that she uses the office in her house more than just occasionally. Good records, such as a log of meetings with songwriters, publishers, and other business associates, should provide sufficient support. The log should contain dates, times, names, and the purpose of the meeting.
3. The office-in-home must be Judy's **principal place of business**. This is one of the most subjective areas attacked by the IRS and must be carefully examined.

One aspect that the IRS might consider is whether suitable office space might be provided elsewhere, for instance, by Judy's publisher. Beware of contract language presented in songwriter/publisher contracts that places her office at a location other than her home.

4. This leads to the final test as to whether or not the home office is **used regularly by business associates/clients** in meeting with Judy in the normal course of her business. If Judy seldom meets or works with other writers at her home office, in some cases, this could present a problem.

In addition to the above rules, the new tax reform laws have placed greater restrictions on the dollar amount of home office deductions allowed for certain taxpayers. Also, to the extent that a home office deduction might be disallowed by the IRS, other business deductions could be disallowed or limited such as an automobile deduction. In short, carefully review your situation with your tax advisor. This is an area that Congress and the IRS have clearly indicated that they are concerned about but you should not shy away from valid business deductions.

As always—take care and good planning.

Written by Alvin G. Hagaman, Partner  
O'Neil & Company, CPAs.



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New Faces Show performer, Adam Baker, on Avista meets with Cheryl Handy at the Compleat Records suite during the recent Country Radio Broadcasters seminar..





**DOLLY PARTON, LINDA RONSTADT, EMMYLOU HARRIS**

Trio

Warner Bros. 25491-1

Produced by George Massenburg

Score this potential fulfilled—well, mostly. After years of heightening our expectations by discussing their desire to finish this long-planned effort, this trio of peerless possibilities delivers a warm, understated collection filled largely with songs of quiet despair and heartbreak. It is beautiful work and is nearly strong enough to satisfy even the most lofty anticipations erected by their fans.

The main blemish comes with the unfortunate choice of including "To Know Him Is To Love Him," a 1958 song of naive teen dreams written by Phil Spector and originally taken to the top of the pops by the Teddy Bears. To sing it somber and straight mocks the emotional depth of this trio. The odd choice of making this the first single makes this a mistake of mountainous proportions. It now has the potential of scaring off many who might otherwise enjoy the rest of the collection.

Another, slighter misjudgement comes when Linda Ronstadt sings Jimmie Rodgers' "Hobo Meditation." It is a good song, and it is sung well. But Ronstadt trilling about her hopes that heaven includes a few boxcars asks for a leap of faith that is beyond even the most generous of imaginations.

All other songs settle much better. The best include "Making Plans," "Those Memories Of You," "Telling Me Lies," "Wildflowers," and "The Pain Of Loving You." The acoustic all-stars weaving their precisely played instruments behind these voices provide the support needed to make the top layer of vocal lace fall on the ears just right.

**STEVE WARINER**

*it's a crazy world*  
MCA-5926

Produced by Tony Brown and Jimmy Bowen

Steve Wariner defines his own ambitions pretty well. With songs like "Small Town Girl," lyrics like "the dog and the key and the white picket fence" and an ode explaining the important role an alarm clock plays in his life, Wariner obviously seeks the comfortable suburban listener. This lightweight pop with a dash of soft rock will sound just right for those station wagons tuned to urban middle-of-the-road stations that like to pass themselves off as country because it fits as well as any other term.

So maybe my bias is showing. Wariner has fashioned himself as the male Crystal Gayle from the beginning, and the only song he has created that I occasionally want to hear again is "Life's Highway," which really seemed to be about something consequential for a change. For fans of this music, though, the songs contain some nice details, the production is superb, and overall it is more appealing than the recent Alabama collection, which it sounds somewhat like.

For me, however, the LP's best moments come during Wariner's guitar playing on "When It Rains." Otherwise, the best cut is Mac McAnally's decade-old gem, "It's A Crazy World," which is fairly eloquent considering it is a detailed defense of political and social apathy. At least it takes a stand for something.

**JOHNNY PAYCHECK**

*Modern Times*

Mercury 830-404-4

Produced by Stan Cornelius, Steve Popovich, Hilka Maria Cornelius, and Johnny Paycheck

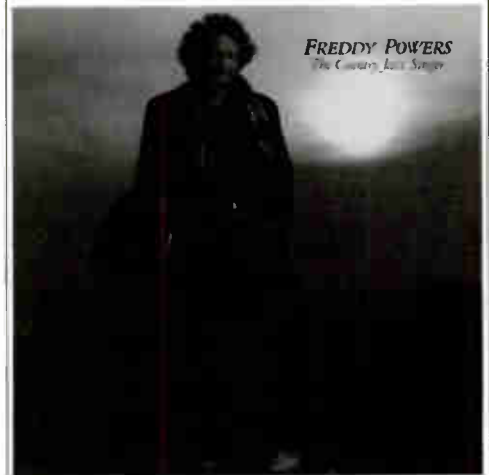
"Don't bury me 'til I'm ready," Paycheck sings in the title chorus of one of the few worthy songs of his first LP in five years. But in times recent and distant, Paycheck often dug his own grave, both personal and artistic. Polygram/Mercury courageously gives him another chance to redeem his musical life and spit the reaper in the eye, but overwrought production and poor song selections make Paycheck's return less than auspicious.

This is too bad, for his initial Mercury single, "Old Violin," was among the best songs not to make the Top 10 in 1986. As that songs proves, Paycheck can still explore a good lyric with a soulfulness that



exposes his inner pain. But he only sounds convincing here on the songs about losers trying to change their direction, such as the nicely done "I Grow Old Too Fast (And Smart Too Slow)." He does make an interesting choice for a duet partner, rocker Jimmy Hall, who helps create a compelling, modernized "Jole Blon."

Everything else fails, especially the wretched "Butterflies And Babies," where someone even mixed in a women's recitation of "Honey, when I die, I'll still be your butterfly" to qualify for the most hilariously corny line of the month. The synthesized french horn sounds in "Come To Me" are almost as funny.



**FREDDY POWERS**

*Country Jazz Singer*  
Inorbit-1000

Produced by Freddy Powers

Fans of Nelson, Jones and (especially) Haggard might recognize Powers' name from album credits—he has written hits for each, including such gems as "I Always Get Lucky With You," "Natural High" and "A Friend In California," all included here on the songwriter's first LP.

Powers aligns a nice backing trio, including young guitar wiz Clint Strong. This subtle combo plays jazz-tinged swing behind Power's thin, nasal vocals, achieving a setting similar to Nelson's *Stardust* LP.

But Powers does not have Nelson's vocal character or expressiveness. And the inevitable comparisons with Haggard or Jones does not help him. But the songs are good, the playing wonderful and

(Continued on page 11)



# Country Album Cuts TRACKS

• Indicates Tie

LW	TW	Artist	Song Title
1	①	The Judds	Turn It Loose
3	2	Bellamy Brothers	Country Rap
1	3	George Strait	All My Ex's Live In Texas
2	4	Restless Heart	Wheels
6	5	E. T. Conley	Right From The Start
7	6	Waylon Jennings	Baker Street
6	7	The Judds	Cow Cow Boogie
4	8	Dan Seals	Three Time Loser
4	9	Bellamy Brothers	D-D-D-D-Divorcee
10	10	Alabama	Let's Hear It For The Girl
9	•	Gatlin Brothers	Don't Blame Me For Colorado
8	11	Ricky Skaggs	Walkin' In Jerusalem
8	•	George Strait	Am I Blue
9	12	Nanci Griffith	Ford Econoline
7	•	Kathy Mattea	Train Of Memories
9	13	Dan Seals	Guitar Man Out Of Control
11	14	Ricky Van Shelton	Ultimately Fine
-	•	Steve Wariner	Lynda
9	•	Hank Williams Jr.	Montana Cafe
-	15	Waylon Jennings	Fallin' Out
10	•	Reba McEntire	Why Not Tonight
11	•	Oak Ridge Boys	This Crazy Love
5	16	Mel McDaniel	Just Can't Sit Down Music
11	•	Eddy Raven	Shine Shine Shine
11	•	George Strait	Hot Burning Flames
-	•	Randy Travis	Send My Body
-	•	Randy Travis	There'll Always Be A Honky Tonk
-	•	Steve Wariner	It's A Crazy World
9	•	Hank Williams Jr.	You Can't Judge A Book
-	17	Bellamy Brothers	Where The Light Comes From
9	•	E. T. Conley	Preservation Of The Wild Life
10	•	Gatlin Brothers	Changin' Partners
10	•	George Jones	These Old Eyes Have Seen It All
-	•	The Judds	Old Pictures
8	•	Reba McEntire	Take Me Back
11	•	O'Kanes	That's All Right Mama
-	•	Judy Rodman	I'll Be Your Baby Tonight
-	•	Judy Rodman	What's A Broken Heart
-	•	Sawyer Brown	Graveyard Shift
-	•	Dan Seals	Out On The Front Line
-	•	George Strait	My Heart Won't Wander Very Far
-	•	Randy Travis	My Heart Cracked
-	•	Trio	Telling Me Lies
-	•	Trio	The Pain Of Loving You
-	•	Trio	Those Memories
-	•	Steve Wariner	Hey Alarm Clock
-	•	Steve Wariner	When It Rains

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## ADDS:

KFAY, J. L. Fisk,  
Fayetteville, AK  
WUSQ, R. Woodward  
Winchester, VA.

## REPORTING STATION CHANGES

KYEZ, Mike Scott  
Salina, KS  
KYXE, Joe Langdon  
Selah, WA

WXCE, Elaine Morley  
Amery, WI  
KQUS, Michael Bailey  
Hot Springs, AK

## DROPS:

KICE, Auntie Nan  
Bend, OR  
WQBE, Bob Jones  
Charleston, WV

## Hillbilly Jukebox by Rob Rider

Okay Outlaws, we all know that country music is returning to the talents of the young and inspired, so slip those guns back into your hip holsters for a moment and Don't Shoot! Perhaps that's the essence of the latest and greatest country compilation (at least until the Sun Country Box Set comes along) to come by my ears in quite some time, simply titled *Don't Shoot..* Comprised of Los Angeles' other country scene (A Town North Of Bakersfield?), *Don't Shoot* captures members of bands like the Long Ryders, Green On Red, X, and others in what can only be called a Honky-Tonk-A-Billy frenzy.



Side One kicks off with "Bend In The Road", a wonderful highway lament by Danny & Dusty. This cut was an outtake from their 1985 *Lost Weekend* LP on A&M Records. Next up steps, or most likely stumbles, is L.A.'s favorite bar band Top Jimmy & The Rhythm Pigs, who lay down a version of Willie Nelson's "Hello Walls" that would leave even Willie and Faron Young talking to the walls! Showing his true appreciation of, and inspiration from Gram Parsons, Steve McCarthy (the country soul of the Long Ryders) exhibits his talent for simple country songwriting in "I'll Get Out Somehow." And in an attempt at sure fire rockabilly, John Doe serves up the "Call Of The Wrecking Ball." Certainly one of America's most overlooked songwriters (probably due to his hard core image with X), Doe has succeeded with recording a song in 1984 with a true 1957 feel.

In what is undoubtedly the sparkling gem of this LP, Julie Christensen's version of the classic "Almost Persuaded"

is, in a nutshell, what country music is all about. This lady's voice is certainly one to be reckoned with, and the steel guitar work on it is so fine it's frightening.

At the moment, *Don't Shoot* has just one catch to it. It is only out on Zippo Records, which is a division of Demon Records in England. So you'll have to look for it at your finer record stores that deal with imports. A domestic release is expected sometime soon, but don't hold your breath, seeing how it took three years for the import to arrive. But it was well worth the wait, and it's a shame that no major labels see the value of an album like this.


That's what's been spinning this week on the hillbilly jukebox...hopefully it'll be spinning on yours too.

### Album Reviews (Continued from page 9)

Powers doesn't try anything he shouldn't. Best cuts: "Little Hotel Room," "Riding High."

#### ALTERNATIVE TRACKS

"One Time, One Night," Los Lobos, from the Warners/Slash LP *By The Light Of The Moon*.

A well-sung, well-played song with folk and country edges that poignantly tells a new tale of American dreams and tragedies with each stanza. A marvel of song-writing, nicely sung in a sweet, wistful tenor by David Hildago. 

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### Country Album Cuts ALBUMS By Label

MCA: 6  
MCA/Curb: 2  
RCA: 4  
RCA/Curb: 1  
Columbia: 3  
Epic: 2

Warner Bros.: 3  
WB/Reprise: 1  
MTM: 2  
Capitol: 1  
EMI-America: 1  
Mercury: 1

## Country Album Cuts ALBUMS

• Indicates Tie

LW	TW	Artist • Album • Label • Preferred Cuts (in order)
1	1	<b>The Judds • <i>Heart Land</i> • RCA/Curb</b> (Turn It Loose; Cow Cow Boogie; Old Pictures)
2	2	<b>Bellamy Brothers • <i>Country Rap</i> • MCA/Curb</b> (Country Rap; D-D-D-D-Divorcee; Where The Light Comes From)
3	3	<b>George Strait • <i>Ocean Front Property</i> • MCA</b> (All My Ex's Live In Texas; Am I Blue; Hot Burning Flames)
4	4	<b>Restless Heart • <i>Wheels</i> • RCA</b> (Wheels; Hummingbird)
-	5	<b>Steve Wariner • <i>it's a crazy world</i> • MCA</b> (Lynda; It's A Crazy World; When It Rains)
6	6	<b>Earl Thomas Conley • <i>Too Many Times</i> • RCA</b> (Right From The Start; Preservation Of The Wild Life)
7	•	<b>Waylon Jennings • <i>Hangin' Tough</i> • MCA</b> (Baker Street; Fallin' Out; Chevy Van)
5	7	<b>Dan Seals • <i>On The Front Line</i> • EMI America</b> (Three Time Loser; Guitar Man...; Out On The Front Line)
11	8	<b>Randy Travis • <i>Storms Of Life</i> • Warner Bros.</b> (Send My Body; Always Be A Honky Tonk; My Heart Cracked)
-	9	<b>Dolly, Linda, Emmylou • <i>Trio</i> • Warner Bros.</b> (Telling Me Lies; Those Memories; The Pain Of Loving You)
9	10	<b>Gatlin Brothers • <i>Partners</i> • Columbia</b> (Don't Blame Me For Colorado; Changin' Partners)
5	11	<b>Reba McEntire • <i>What Am I Gonna' Do About You</i> • MCA</b> (Why Not Tonight; Take Me Back)
14	12	<b>Ricky Van Shelton • <i>Wild-Eyed Dream</i> • Columbia</b> (Ultimately Fine)
-	13	<b>Judy Rodman • <i>A Place Called Love</i> • MTM</b> (I'll Be Your Baby Tonight; What's A Broken Heart)
8	14	<b>Alabama • <i>The Touch</i> • RCA</b> (Let's Hear It For The Girl; Vacation; I Taught Her Everything)
8	•	<b>Eddy Raven • <i>Right Hand Man</i> • RCA</b> (Shine Shine Shine; Crime Of The Century)
6	15	<b>Mel McDaniel • <i>Just Can't Sit Down Music</i> • Capitol</b> (Just Can't Sit Down Music; '57 Chevy And You)
12	•	<b>Oak Ridge Boys • <i>Where The Fast Lane Ends</i> • MCA</b> (This Crazy Love; Looking For Love)
16	16	<b>Nanci Griffith • <i>Lone Star State Of Mind</i> • MCA</b> (Let It Shine On Me; Ford Econoline; Trouble In The Fields)
10	17	<b>Hank Williams, Jr. • <i>Montana Cafe</i> • Warner Bros.</b> (Montana Cafe; Can't Judge A Book)
13	18	<b>Ricky Skaggs • <i>Love's Gonna Get Ya!</i> • Epic</b> (Walkin' In Jerusalem; Raisin' The Dickens; I'm Beside Myself)
15	19	<b>Kathy Mattea • <i>Walk The Way The Wind Blows</i> • Mercury</b> (Train Of Memories; Evening)
15	•	<b>SKO • <i>Schuyler, Knobloch &amp; Overstreet</i> • MTM</b> (American Me; Trains Make Me Lonesome; Country Heart)
9	20	<b>The O'Kanes • <i>The O'Kanes</i> • Columbia</b> (Bluegrass Blues; That's All Right Mama; Oh Lonesome You)
13	•	<b>Dwight Yoakam • <i>Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc...</i> • WB/Reprise</b> (Ring Of Fire; Bury Me)
15	21	<b>George Jones • <i>Wine Colored Roses</i> • Epic</b> (These Old Eyes; The Very Best Of Me)
-	•	<b>The Whites • <i>Ain't No Binds</i> • MCA/Curb</b> (Run River Run; You Wouldn't Be My First Mistake)

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No question as to takes home the Label Excellence honor this issue: It's **MCA Records**, hands down, with peachy-keen releases by John Schneider, Moe Bandy, Patty Loveless, Ray Stevens and Desert Rose. The latter three competed against each other for this column's Singles Excellence accolades, as did Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Ricky Van Shelton and Lanier McKuhen. Stevens for inspired goofiness, Sweethearts for spirit and sound, and Van Shelton for songwriting craftsmanship.

In a tough call for the DISCOVERY award between Bonnie Gallie and Desert Rose, I cast my vote with the hillbilly sound of the California country-rockers. There's not just a record, it's something to Believe In, a Holy Crusade to restore the nobility of West Coast country. If there's a one of you out there who still needs an introduction to the long list of accomplishments by the members of this group, call me and I'll be more than glad to fill you in. **Desert Rose** may be DISCOVERIES, but they ain't exactly newcomers to this ballgame. In the words of Mr. Twitty: I've been "fallin' for you for years," Chris and Herb.

**BILLY WESTERN****"Daddy When Is Mommy Coming Home"**

Writers: Buddy Dyess; Producer: Billy Western & Doyle Grisham; Publisher: Law, BMI; Empire 16929.

Bouquets to the superb ting-a-ling '50s-style steel player (Is that you Doyle?). Brickbats to the ding-dong rote-rhyming songwriter.

**MOE BANDY****"Till I'm Too Old To Die Young"**

Writers: J. Hadley, K. Welch, S. Dooley; Producer: Jerry Kennedy; Publisher: Tree, BMI/ASCAP; MCA/Curb 53033.

Unless I'm very much mistaken, Moe's got himself a first-class comeback record here. Hallelujah.

**LANIER MCKUHEN****"Searching"**

Writer: Murphy M. Maddux, Jr.; Producer: Joe Gibson & Jimmy Payne; Publisher: Unichappell, BMI; Soundwaves/NSD 4785.

Echoes of golden oldies like Webb Pierce. Country music in the classic mode, eloquently produced by Gibson and Payne. Play it and see.

**BILLY MONTANA & THE LONG SHOTS****"Crazy Blue"**

Writers: Michael Clark, Tim Dubots; Producer: Paul Worley; Publisher: Warner/Flying Dutchman/Tim Dubots, BMI/ASCAP; Warner Bros. 7-28426.

Generic country-rock, but pleasant and promising.

**SOUTHERN REIGN****"Summer on the Mississippi"**

Writers: Don Goodman, David Winters, Billy Aerts; Producer: Don Goodman; Publisher: Write Road/Guyasuta/Log Jam/Boo/Lawyer's Daughter, BMI/ASCAP; Regal RRSR.

Too pop for my tastes. Go find yourselves a hillbilly lead vocalist.

**SWEETHEARTS OF THE RODEO****"Chains of Gold"**

Writers: P. Kennerley; Producer: Steve Buckingham & Hank DeVito; Publisher: Irving, BMI; Columbia 38-07023.

AT LAST! This was my choice from the LP for a single all along. This, my friends is a masterpiece. This, my friends is a HIT.

**JANA CASH****"Stranger In Your Eyes"**

Writers: Allen J. Morrell; Producer: Elmer Cole; Publisher: Little Bill/Little Amber/Talli Vic, BMI; L'il Bill 101 (615-227-3602).

Now here's a switch: Most newcomers sing flat, but this one is decidedly sharp. Also: Learn to sing on the beat, dear.

**RONNIE DOVE****"Heart"**

Writer: Jimmy Elledge; Producer: Dan Hoffman; Publisher: Jim Ron, BMI; Diamond/NSD 378 (301-843-8888).

I never understood why his earlier records were so big. This one's a different story: A fine melody given a yearning vocal treatment. Welcome back.

**DALE MCBRIDE****"Waking Up in the USA"**

Writer: Dale McBride; Producer: none listed; Pub: Dale McBride, BMI; Concorde 8701.

Toy piano melody. Simpleton lyric.

**THE DESERT ROSE BAND****"Ashes of Love"**

Writer: Jack Anglin, Jim Anglin, Johnny Wright; Producer: Paul Worley; Publisher: Acuff-Rose/Opryland, BMI; MCA/Curb 53048.

Gentleman, somewhere in heaven, the late, lamented Jim and Jack Anglin are dancing to this. I'm doing the same right here, right now. Joyous, thrilling country rock. Downright inspirational, guys: I can't begin to tell you how GOOD this record makes me feel.

**BOBBY BORCHERS****"Whiskey Was a River"**

Writer: Bobby Borchers; Producer: Charles E. Howard; Publisher: Tree, BMI; Longhorn 453003 (213-850-0986).

Good song and good vocal saddled with bland, unimaginative production.

**RICKY VAN SHELTON****"Crime of Passion"**

Writers: W. Aldridge, M. MacAnally; Producer: Steve Buckingham; Publisher: Rick Hall/Beginner, ASCAP/BMI; Columbia 38-07025.

Dark, dramatic story with a kick-ass delivery. Van Shelton tops his fine first effort with ease. Open the gate and let this pony run wild.

**TANYA TUCKER****"It's Only Over for You"**

Writers: M. Reid, R. M. Bourke; Producer: Jerry Crutchfield; Publisher: Lodge Hall/Chappell/RMB, ASCAP; Capitol 5694.

I suppose my devotion to this gal is by-now well-known. Need I add that I think this is yet another gem on her charm bracelet of hits?

**RAY STEVENS****"Can He Love You Half As Much As I?"**

Writer: C.W. Kalb, Jr.; Producer: Ray Stevens; Publisher: Ray Stevens, BMI; MCA 53007.

Enchanting, charming, light-hearted and perfectly silly. For my money, the humor record of the month, of the year, perhaps of the decade. You'll grin from ear to ear, and so will your listeners. Hooray for Ray.

**JAY BOOKER****"Hot Red Sweater"**

Writer: Jay Booker; Producer: Terry Choate; Pub: Screen Gems, BMI; EMI America 8379.

The guy's got vocal personality in spades, but the song's kind of a junky throw-away.

**RAMSEY ROYCE****"Brown Eyes Keep Calling Me"**

Writer: Ramsey Royce; Producer: Cliffie Stone; Publisher: Ramroy/Showdown, BMI; Showdown 119.

Warm, macho-tender stylist, somewhat in the mode of Ed Bruce. Royce wrote both sides of the single, illustrating a stirring composing ability. His producer, for those of you who don't know your country music history, is a Hall of Fame-caliber legend who definitely knows talent when he hears it.

**BONNIE GALLIE****"You Make It Hard to Say No"**

Writers: Bonnie Gallie, Pam Wolfe; Producer: Stan Cornelius; Publisher: Side Pocket, BMI; Smash 888 463-7.

It's midnight and the dance is ending. You think you're in love and all you need is that little extra evocative melody to gently nudge you into each others' arms. This is it.

**SEIDINA REED****"Flashfire"**

Writers: R. Hammond, B. Bute; Producer: Bill Mueller, Beth Mekos; Publisher: Eufaula, BMI; Southern Tracks 1076 (404-325-0832).

Smoky, sensuous vocalist gives it all she's got, but all for naught. Overblown production on an underblown song.

**EDDY RAVEN****"Never Too Old for Young Love"**

Writers: Rick Giles, Frank Myers; Producer: Don Gant, Eddy Raven; Publisher: DeJamus/Morgan Active/You and I, ASCAP; RCA 5128-7.

Let's face facts: There are few artists working on Music Row today who have a keener sense of how to make radio ear candy. Raven scores again with a playlist natural. And could I have a moment of silence for co-producer Gant, in remembrance of all the happy hours of listening he's given us? Goodbye, Don: I loved you and I thank you for all you taught me.

**HONORABLE MENTIONS:**

Bobby Pedilla/That It's All Over Feelin'/Westar.  
A.J. Masters/In It Again/Bermuda Dunes.  
Lisa Daye/When We Break Up/Centra.  
Rattlesnake Annie/Callin' Your Bluff/Columbia.  
Brenda Cole/But I Never Do/Melody Dawn.  
David Frizzell/Beautiful Body/Compleat.  
Daniel Paul/Stop Living on the Edge/Command.  
Jeanie/When the Devil/St. Simons.  
Nitty Gritty Dirt Band/Baby's Got a Hold On Me/Warners.  
Clay Blaker/South of the Border/Texas Musik.  
Gary McCullough/I'd Know a Lie/Soundwaves.  
Don Rogers/Anything Worth Knowing/A.V.  
Norm Schaffer/Thunder and Lightning/DSP.  
Indiana/Midnite Rock/Killer.  
Dale Christenson/Saturday Night In Dallas/CNW.  
Johnny Cash/The Night Hank Williams Came to Town/Mercury.  
P.J. Allman/Ain't No Use/Kansa.  
Dick Morris/Relive the American Dream/Progress.  
John Schneider/Love You Ain't Seen The Last/MCA  
Patty Loveless/I Did/MCA

# Gotham Gossip

**G**otham Gossip was in one of his rare cynical moods last night at Lincoln Center, when Marlboro Country Music brought "Opry to the Opera," to use the words of the emcee at a pre-concert press conference. There he was, having tossed down a pair of J.D.'s sitting next to WHN's Lee Arnold—the heart and soul of an otherwise vast wasteland—wondering why it is that it takes corporate sponsorship by a tobacco company to sell out a country show in the ritziest place in New York at \$50 and \$25 a head, when you can hardly fill the Lone Star with 200 people at less than half that.

I might have just sat back and enjoyed my drink had it not been for the obnoxious paparazzi getting in everyone's line of sight (way to go, Lee, in threatening to bop the one in front of us till he dropped!). And what's the big fuss for, anyway? So there's Randy Owen in a tux and Naomi and Wynonna in their newly streaked 'dos and Dolly looking like Dolly. We'll see the picture of them handing over a quarter-million dollar check to the local food bank in the tabloids tomorrow and that will be the end of country music here for another year or two.

They open the floor for questions and nobody has any, not even me. Whoops! I do so have one! Hey, Dolly, remember me? I'm the guy who used to chase you around Wisconsin...nope, I can't risk embarrassment again in front of all these fine folks! "Dolly! Is your first country album going to be Columbia? I mean, the other way around!"

"I don't think the first one, no. (She's looking right at me...no signs of recognition, but full eye contact.) But I'm very serious about doing a country album, hopefully with Alabama and The Judds. (She smiles at The Judds and Randy and then comes back to me.) I'm very honored to be with them."

Oh, well. She looks at me and I melt. And how can anyone stay cynical after The Judds come on stage? Not to take anything away from Wynonna, but Naomi is one of the best performing backup singers I've ever seen, dancing around her daughter with girlish ease of movement and addressing her band members and audience with a special grace.

Dolly followed with the first full set I've seen from her since my days in Wisco (she did a few solo numbers at the Meadows two years ago with Kenny). It was indeed a welcome treat seeing one of the most extraordinary talents ever, come back stronger than ever, but she must be taken to task for her incessant gab, which



Naomi and Wynonna Judd backstage at the Grammy Awards after winning an award for Best Country Performance, by a Group/Duo.

here included a comment about five weeks of playing Down Under before "ugly"-looking Australians (she hastily said she was just kidding) and a less palatable reference to her keyboard player's Jewishness. It was an offhand remark playing off the name of Kinky Friedman's former band, and there is no question that this delightful artist meant no harm by it. But rightly or wrongly, Jesse Jackson will never be mayor of New York for uttering similarly inexcusable witticisms.

One other noteworthy member of Dolly's band is brother-in-law Richard Dennison (Rachel's husband) who's been backup vocalist for Dolly a very long time now. As for Alabama, sorry guys, but I didn't stay for your set, having seen it in December. But I'm sure it was as good as it surely was predictable.

Meanwhile, Marlboro's parent company Philip Morris sponsored a more rewarding Gotham Gossip experience a week earlier with a performance of Shape Note Singing at its Park Avenue headquarters' "Music at the Crossroads" series. Shape Note music—formally called "Christian Harmony" or "Sacred

Harp"—involves pre-Civil War Christian hymns written in four-part harmony using simple geometric shapes to represent notes on a scale. This promotes easy sight-reading by the hundred and more participants who gather together at convention-style "singsings," which, judging by the demonstration-only quartet, must be as haunting as they are spiritually uplifting.

Elizabeth Shaw, who is a professional folk musician along with her husband Lynn, explained that Shape Note music is melodically based on classical sources like Mozart and Bach, but uses extensive and intricate "ornamentation" to make singing both interesting and fun. Instead of the "horizontal" harmonies of gospel, Shape Note's are "vertical," with each part independently going up or down or sliding around each other.

Elizabeth, who was enjoying her first trip to New York as well as her first airplane ride ("It was just a gas!"), said that the Shape Note tradition continues in the North Carolina/South Carolina/Georgia region, with annual conventions the first Sunday in May in Etowah, N.C., and the second Sunday of September in Canton, N.C. She grew up singing Shape Note, as did George Reynolds, who with his wife Carol made up the other half of the quartet here. George, by the way, is also a bluegrass musician and a professional folklorist who is the music advisor to the Foxfire folklore magazines published quarterly by Rabun County High School students in Clayton, Ga.



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# CD Spin-Offs

**R.J. Curtis, Music Director, KZLA/Burbank, CA. Reports to Billboard, R&R, Cashbox.**

**MR:** What percentage of your rotation consists of CD product?

**R.J.:** Approximately 30-35%.

**MR:** Do you receive any feedback from your listeners regarding an awareness of increased sound quality?

**R.J.:** We make it a point to inform our listeners when they are hearing the clarity of a CD. We also spotlight a compact disc from our library each week, with responses including noticeable quality increases, and the direct purchase of a CD due to radio awareness. Quite honestly, the "jocks" don't like them. They require more time to insert and cue than the carts we normally use. But, it's worth the extra time to obtain greater results.

**MR:** Was it expensive to begin airing CD's?

**R.J.:** Although our CD players were initially more expensive than consumer models, the biggest problem we had was obtaining an initial CD inventory. The record companies were very reserved about supplying promotional CDs. We generally paid a wholesale rate which is normally half the consumer list price. Therefore, to get on-line with compact discs, we initially had to buy 50-60 of these units at an average cost of \$6.00.

**MR:** Have you received any

promotional copies?

**R.J.:** We're just starting to receive certain promo discs. Warner Bros. and RCA have been very helpful, with other labels also starting to kick-in.

**MR:** From what artists are you currently featuring CD selections?

**R.J.:** To begin, it's nice that the record companies are re-releasing new product on the CD. We've received George Strait's #7, Reba's *Whoever's in New England*, and recently *Wheels* by Restless Heart. We're also featuring CD releases by Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam, and Hank Williams, Jr. The compilation CDs have also been a great help to us and our listeners.

**Bobby Yarborough, Music Director, WSM/Nashville, TN. Reports to Billboard and R&R.**

**MR:** How large is your CD library?

**BY:** Right now there's not enough CD product out, but would estimate we have approximately 25 CDs.

**MR:** Do you have any problems obtaining the compact discs?

**BY:** It is getting better every day. The labels have come a long way in the past 3 months.

**MR:** Are you required to pay for these copies?

**BY:** Normally, no, but if I have to order catalogue CD selections, the labels charge me an average price of \$6.50.

**MR:** Do you think that's reasonable?

**BY:** No. If the radio stations are playing their product, and trying to get the best sound possible, then I think the labels should supply CDs free of charge, if they continue to want their

product played.

**MR:** Have you noticed any listener reaction due to an awareness of increased sound quality or retailer feedback with regard to CD purchases in your area as a result of radio support?

**BY:** Very little.

**MR:** Is it cost effective to play CDs?

**BY:** It's a lot cheaper to play a CD than it is to cart. A 3-4 minute cart will cost us anywhere between \$7-\$9 each, allowing enough time for one song. A greatest hits CD, in comparison, can give us up to 15 singles on a single unit.

**MR:** Do your disc jockeys have any complaints about using the discs?

**BY:** It doesn't really matter to them.

**MR:** What label's CD product do you seem to be playing the most?

**BY:** RCA.

**Eric Marshall, Assistant Program Manager-Music Director, WSIX/Nashville, TN. Reports to Billboard and R&R.**

**MR:** What percent of your current rotation is comprised of CD selections?

**EM:** At this time it averages out to be approximately 50%.

**MR:** Are you receiving any feedback from your listening audience in support of the CD selections that you air?

**EM:** Although the reaction has slowed slightly since we first began using CDs, almost a year ago, it's been consistently good.

**MR:** Have the major labels been fairly supportive in allocating promotional CD copies to your station?

**EM:** All of them have been doing their best by us, we have no complaints.

**MR:** When you are required to pay for CDs, what prices are you normally charged?

**EM:** Anywhere between \$5-\$10.

**MR:** Do you think the bottom end of that is a fair price, or do you think radio should receive all new releases at no charge?

**EM:** I think that question should be directed to the record people, they're the ones with the budgets to meet. It's hard for radio to stand with open arms saying "gimme, gimme, gimme!"

**MR:** Is it as convenient to play the CD as it is an Lp or 45?

**EM:** Actually, no. Before we went to CDs, everything was on a cart, there wasn't the actual handling of the units.

**MR:** What kind of CD player are you using?

**EM:** We're currently using a Studer Revox.

**MR:** What artists seem to have the most frequent CD play?

**EM:** We seem to have more Alabama CDs than any other act. In regards to frequency of play, it depends on what is hot in our current rotation.

**MR:** Do you receive any feedback from the retailers in the area regarding CD sale increases due to increased radio exposure?

**EM:** No, but we don't look for that.

**MR:** Don't you think that information would be helpful?

**EM:** At the present time, compact discs are not that universal. But, in years to come I think it will be much more important.

**MR:** Would you like to see a country CD single?

**EM:** It couldn't hurt me!



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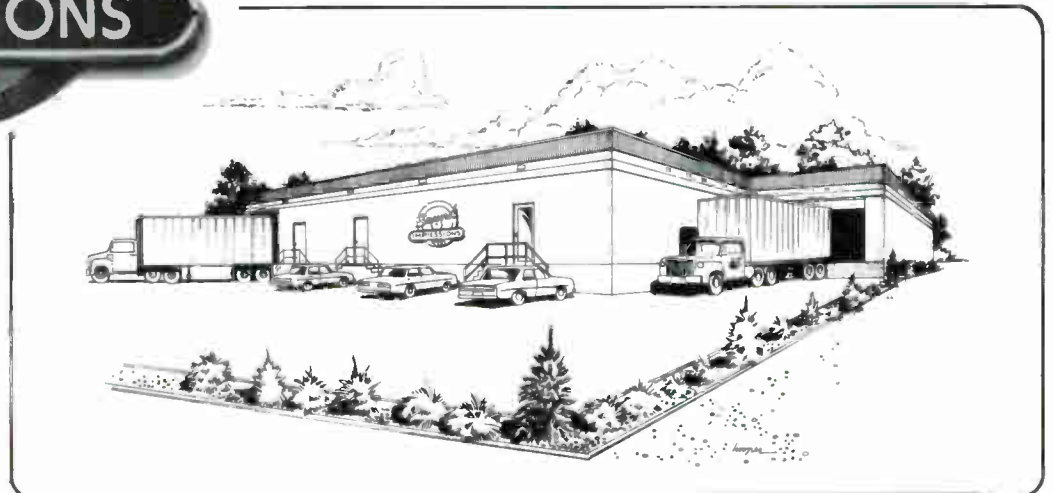
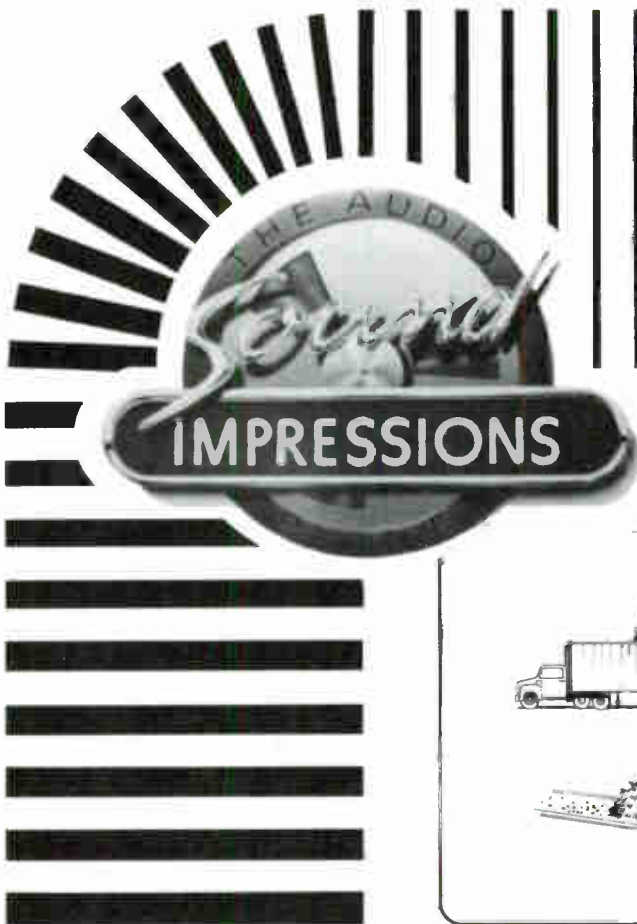
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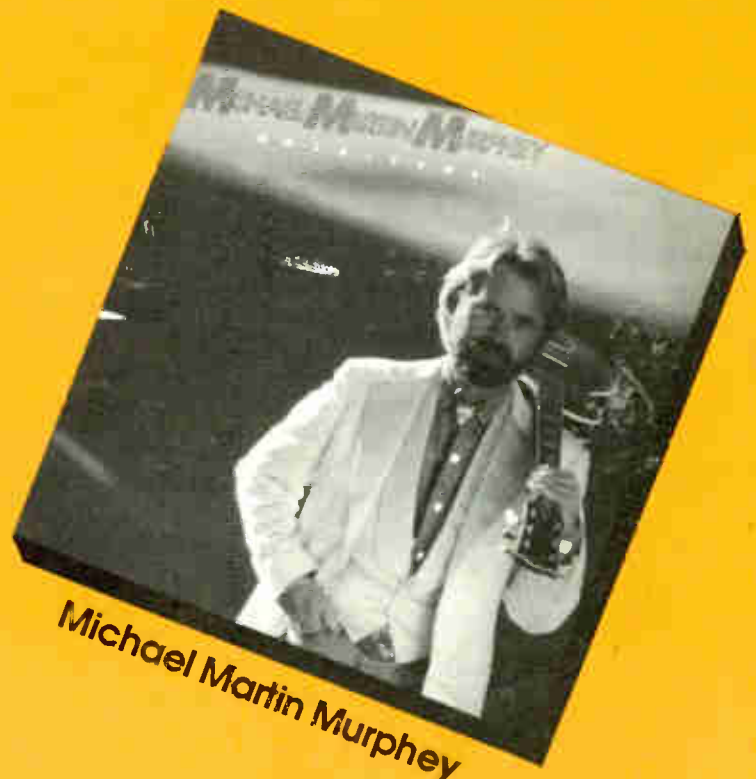


k.d. lang



Trio

# Continues



Michael Martin Murphey

