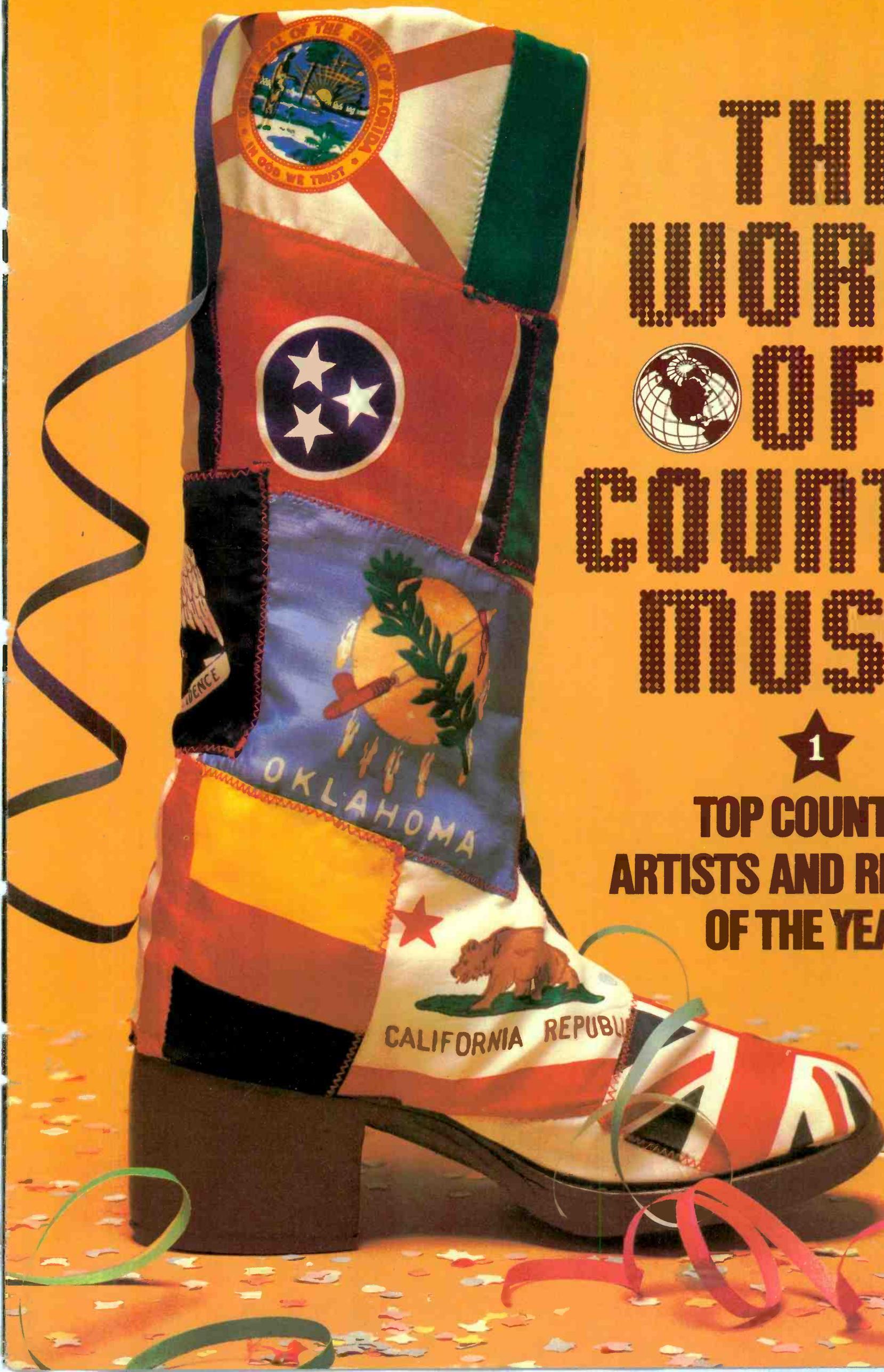


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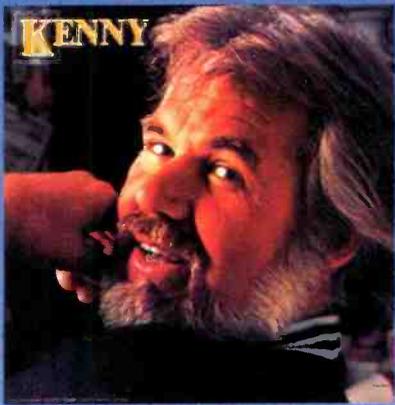
THE
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OF
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MUSIC



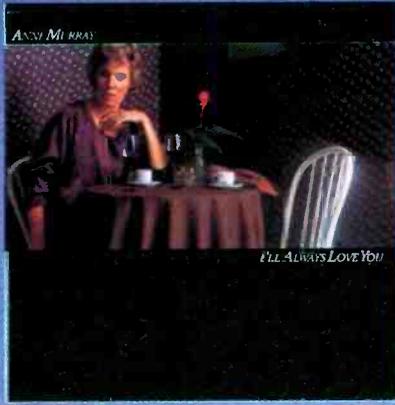
**TOP COUNTRY
ARTISTS AND RECORDS
OF THE YEAR**



WE'RE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY!



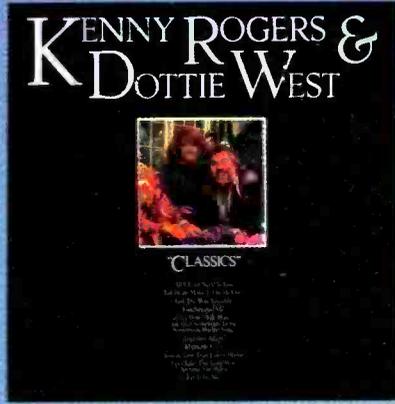
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LWAK-979-H



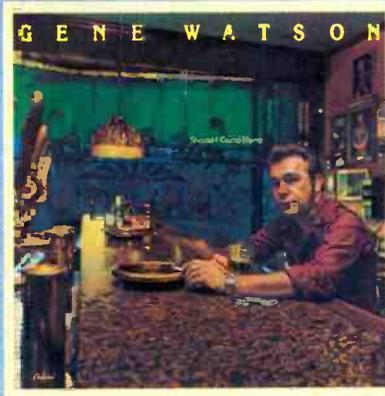
ANNE MURRAY / I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU SOO-12012



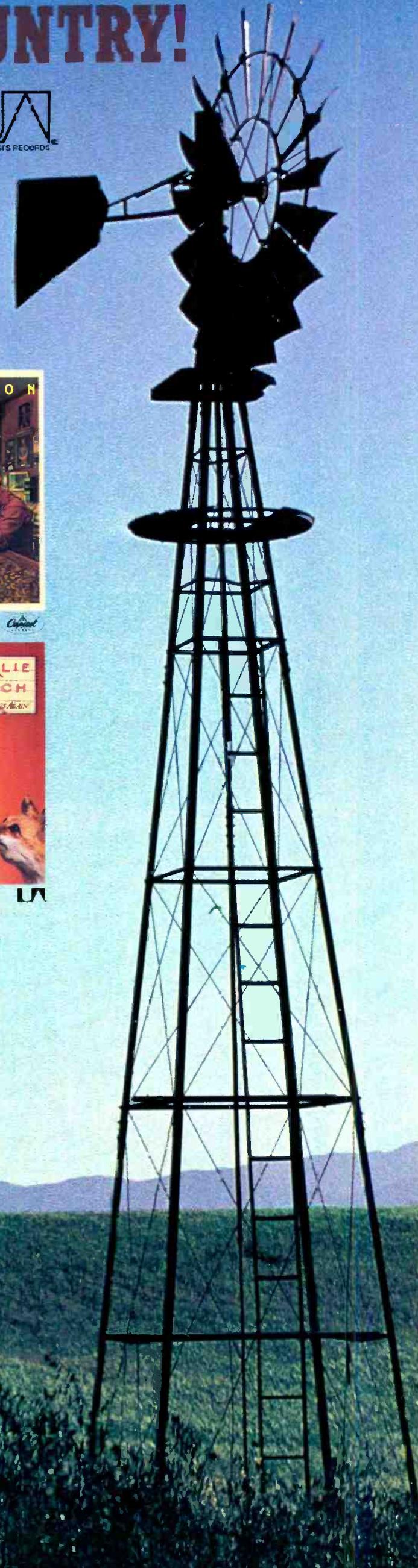
GLEN CAMPBELL / HIGHWAYMAN
SOO-12008



KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST / CLASSICS UALA-946-H



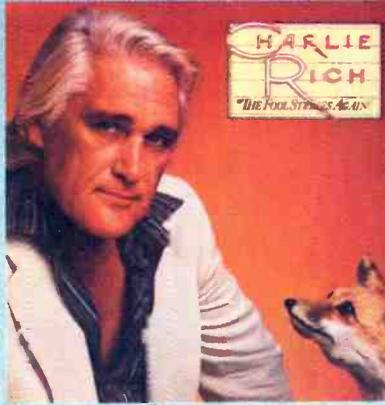
GENE WATSON / SHOULD I COME HOME ST-11947



BILLY "CRASH" CRADDOCK / LAUGHING AND CRYING / LIVING AND DYING ST-11946



BILLIE JO SPEARS / I WILL SURVIVE UALA-964-H



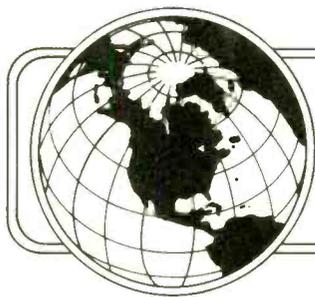
CHARLIE RICH / THE FOOL STRIKES AGAIN UALA-925-H



CHRISTY LANE / SIMPLE LITTLE WORDS UALA-978-H



**AND...ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL, JESSI COLTER,
KENNY DALE,
DR. HOOK, LaCOSTA, RICHARD LEIGH,
MEL McDANIEL,
JUICE NEWTON, SAUNDRA STEELE,
BOBBY SMITH, DAVID WILLS**



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

A Steady Port Prevails In A Stormy Year

By GERRY WOOD

1979. Not quite the year the music died, as Don McLean once sang about a couple decades earlier. But it was the year the music business stopped believing its own hype that it was a recession-proof industry.

The sliding profit picture produced some panic, some sense, and a hell of a lot of reflection.

Country music was caught up in a miniaturized version of the '79 slump, but it, along with religious music, seemed to persevere much better than other forms of music.

When CBS Records corporately cut some 300 heads, only one of those heads dropped in Nashville. RCA kayoed scores of positions nationally, but only a few in Nashville. The same with MCA and other labels.

Nashville wasn't immune to the recessionary falloff (a period which hopefully will end soon with an exclamation point), but it has weathered the storm thus far in great shape.

More worrisome than the economy has been the gas crisis which has kept many fans away from concerts, many buyers away from stores, and many car-radio listeners away from their cars.

Country music not only surviving, but prevailing, in such a hectic year has bolstered the confidence of its leaders who are looking beyond 1979 into the new decade of decision—the '80s.

The strength of country music has been across the board. Country radio stations have become one of the most successful, and ratings-favored, formats in the U.S. The success ranges from the tiny hamlets to large metropolitan markets such as New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Television continues to snuggle its tootsies as a fast bedfellow of country music. Industry leaders, in both tv and country, feel that 1980 could bring a record amount of country-oriented shows to network and syndicated tv. What's even more important has been the phenomenal ratings success of country shows.

Live talent, from the "Grand Ole Opry" to the grand venues of Vegas, maintains a strong country profile in a year that has seen some dips in attendance figures and some peaks in ingenious ways to counter the reversing trend. Jamboree In The Hills fights gas and pocketbook problems to lure some 39,000. Willie Nelson and his July 4 Picnic draws 17,000 deep in the heart of Texas. The Statlers, on the same day, attract an estimated 50,000 to Staunton, Va. for their talent-laden Independence Day spectacular. Apparently, someone has forgotten to inform those West Virginia, Texas and Virginia fans that there's a recession going on.

Retailing continues to improve as country forces its way into bigger bins, more prominently displayed, and backed by cleverly tailored in-store displays and promotions. As country product slips into more and more retail outlets, record labels are honing their country marketing procedures into more finely tuned operations.

Internationally, country music retains its title as the boom American music. Jim Halsey, the Tulsa talent titan, took his acts to MIDEM and to the Montreux Jazz Festival. Mervyn Conn saw the success of his Wembley Festival in England reach a peak in its 10th year, and he's planning to expand it to new areas such as France, Australia, New Zealand—with an eye toward Eastern European countries. Coveted airplay is being gained on foreign stations and equally rare displays space in stores is being secured by country acts.

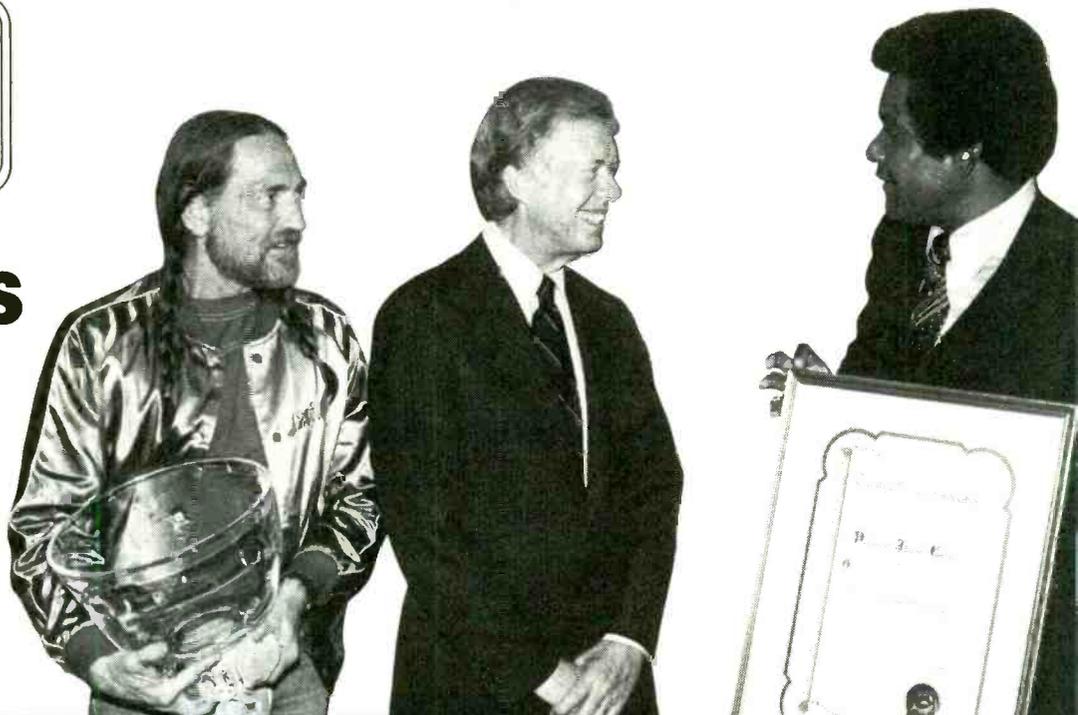
Helping the international thrust is the Country Music Assn., perhaps the most successful music business trade organization in the world. The CMA continues to lead the fight to establish country music in the forefront of record sales and airplay on an international basis. The Nashville Songwriters Assn. International maintains its battle to secure the rights (including copyrights) and recognition (including awards) for the backbone of the country music industry—the songwriter. The Nashville NARAS chapter—has been highly active, and the Federation of International Country Air Personalities grows in force and numbers as it represents those country deejays who spin the records.

BMI, ASCAP and SESAC—representing that backbone of the industry: writers and publishers—have played their key roles in Nashville's success. BMI—headed by Frances Preston—has nurtured not only the growth of its Southern country writers, but its pop, disco and soul creative forces. ASCAP, directed by Ed Shea, still falls behind BMI in numbers of writers, publishers and chart action, but is giving a college try to the chart chase. SESAC under its new leadership team of Dianne

(Continued on page WOCM-48)

Gerry Wood is Billboard's Nashville Bureau Chief.

Willie Nelson and Charley Pride lead representatives from the Country Music Assn. in presenting President Jimmy Carter with a special award for his support of country music.



Chet Atkins gives Tennessee Senator Howard Baker a quick lesson in guitar before entertaining at a function for Republican senators in Washington.



"Just Good Ol' Boys" Joe Stampley and Moe Bandy appear on "That Nashville Music."

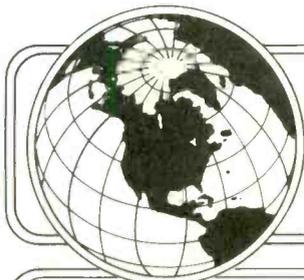
Below, a popular promotion the past year: Dolly Parton lookalike contests. This one is at KIKK in Houston.



RCA's Free Flight Records was launched this year, making RCA the first Nashville branch of a major U.S. label to start its own autonomous pop label. That's Captain Joe Galante with General Jerry Bradley.



OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

★ NUMBER ONE ★

Combined Albums And Singles



Kenny Rogers: No. 1 Overall Artist and No. 1 Overall Male Artist.

Top Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1.	KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	7
2.	WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	7
	RCA	3
	Lone Star	2
	United Artists	2
3.	WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	6
4.	DOLLY PARTON, RCA	7
5.	STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	9
6.	ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	5
7.	CRYSTAL GAYLE, United Artists	7
8.	DON WILLIAMS, MCA	4
	ABC	3
9.	EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	6
10.	OAK RIDGE BOYS, MCA	4
	ABC	3
11.	RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	7
12.	BARBARA MANDRELL, MCA	4
	ABC	1
13.	THE KENDALLS, Ovation	7
14.	KENNY ROGERS + DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	5
15.	DAVE AND SUGAR, RCA	4
16.	EMMYLOU HARRIS, Warner Bros.	6
17.	CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	7
18.	JOHN CONLEE, MCA	3
	ABC	2
19.	MEL TILLIS, MCA	6
20.	CHARLEY PRIDE, RCA	7
21.	MERLE HAGGARD, MCA	5
	Capitol	2
22.	GENE WATSON, Capitol	5
23.	JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS, RCA	5
24.	CHARLIE RICH, Epic	4
	United Artists	4
	Elektra	1
25.	MOE BANDY, Columbia	5
26.	TANYA TUCKER, MCA	3
27.	LARRY GATLIN, Monument	5
	Columbia	1
28.	T.G. SHEPPARD, Warner/Curb	5
29.	MARGO SMITH, Warner Bros.	5
30.	TAMMY WYNETTE, Epic	6
31.	ELVIS PRESLEY, RCA	8
32.	SUSIE ALLANSON, Elektra/Curb	3
	Warner/Curb	3
33.	RAZZY BAILEY, RCA	5
34.	RANDY BARLOW, Republic	6
35.	MICKEY GILLEY, Epic	5
36.	BILLY CRASH CRADDOCK, Capitol	5
	ABC	1
37.	BELLAMY BROTHERS, Warner/Curb	3
	Warner Bros.	2
38.	JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ, Epic	3
	Mercury	3
39.	JOE STAMPLEY, Epic	6
40.	CRISTY LANE, LS	3
	United Artists	2
41.	JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	5
	Little Darlin'	1
42.	DONNA FARGO, Warner Bros.	4
	ABC/Dot	1
43.	CON HUNLEY, Warner Bros.	4
44.	REX ALLEN JR., Warner Bros.	4
45.	TOM T. HALL, RCA	4
46.	GLEN CAMPBELL, Capitol	4
47.	BILLIE JO SPEARS, United Artists	5
48.	MARTY ROBBINS, Columbia	5
49.	LINDA RONSTADT, Asylum	6
50.	JACKY WARD, Mercury	4



The Statler Brothers: No. 1 Overall Group.

RCA: No. 1 Overall Label.



Dolly Parton: No. 1 Overall Female Artist.

Top Male Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1.	KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	7
2.	WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	7
	RCA	3
	Lone Star	2
	United Artists	2
3.	WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	6
4.	DON WILLIAMS, MCA	4
	ABC	3
5.	EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	6
6.	RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	7
7.	CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	7
8.	JOHN CONLEE, MCA	3
	ABC	2
9.	MEL TILLIS, MCA	6
10.	CHARLEY PRIDE, RCA	7
11.	MERLE HAGGARD, MCA	5
	Capitol	2
12.	GENE WATSON, Capitol	5
13.	CHARLIE RICH, Epic	4
	United Artists	3
	Elektra	1
	United Artists (CAP)	1
14.	MOE BANDY, Columbia	5
15.	LARRY GATLIN, Monument	5
	Columbia	1
16.	T.G. SHEPPARD, Warner/Curb	5
17.	ELVIS PRESLEY, RCA	8
18.	RAZZY BAILEY, RCA	5
19.	RANDY BARLOW, Republic	6
20.	MICKEY GILLEY, Epic	5
21.	BILLY CRASH CRADDOCK, Capitol	5
	ABC	1
22.	JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ, Epic	3
	Mercury	3
23.	JOE STAMPLEY, Epic	6
24.	JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	5
	Little Darlin'	1
25.	CON HUNLEY, Warner Bros.	4



The Kendalls: No. 1 Overall Duo.

Top Female Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1.	DOLLY PARTON, RCA	7
2.	ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	5
3.	CRYSTAL GAYLE, United Artists	7
4.	BARBARA MANDRELL, MCA	4
	ABC	1
5.	EMMYLOU HARRIS, Warner Bros.	6
6.	TANYA TUCKER, MCA	3
7.	MARGO SMITH, Warner Bros.	5
8.	TAMMY WYNETTE, Epic	6
9.	SUSIE ALLANSON, Elektra/Curb	3
	Warner/Curb	3
10.	CRISTY LANE, LS	3
	United Artists	2
11.	DONNA FARGO, Warner Bros.	4
	ABC/Dot	1
12.	BILLIE JO SPEARS, United Artists	5
13.	LINDA RONSTADT, Asylum	6
14.	LORETTA LYNN, RCA	3
15.	MARY K. MILLER, RCA	2
	Inergi	2
16.	LYNN ANDERSON, Columbia	4
17.	JANIE FRICKE, Columbia	3
18.	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN, MCA	4
	RSO	1
19.	ZELLA LEHR, RCA	4
20.	GAIL DAVIES, Lifesong/CBS	3
21.	DOTSY, RCA	3
22.	DEBBY BOONE, Warner/Curb	3
23.	STELLA PARTON, Elektra	3
24.	PEGGY SUE, Door Knob/Wig	4
25.	SAMMY SMITH, Cyclone (GRT)	2

Top Labels

Pos.	LABEL	No. Releases On Chart
1.	RCA	113
2.	MCA	89
3.	UNITED ARTISTS	38
4.	COLUMBIA	58
5.	EPIC	63
6.	WARNER BROS.	50
7.	CAPITOL	46
8.	ELEKTRA	35
9.	MERCURY	37
10.	ABC	31

Top Groups And Duos

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1.	STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	9
2.	OAK RIDGE BOYS, MCA	4
	ABC	3
	Columbia	1
3.	THE KENOALLS, Ovation	7
4.	KENNY ROGERS + DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	5
5.	DAVE AND SUGAR, RCA	4
6.	JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS, RCA	5
7.	BELLAMY BROTHERS, Warner/Curb	3
	Warner Bros.	2
8.	GEORGE JONES + JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	2
9.	CHARLIE DANIELS BAND, Epic	3
10.	WAYLON + WILLIE, RCA	1

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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

★ ALBUMS ★

Top Albums Of The Year

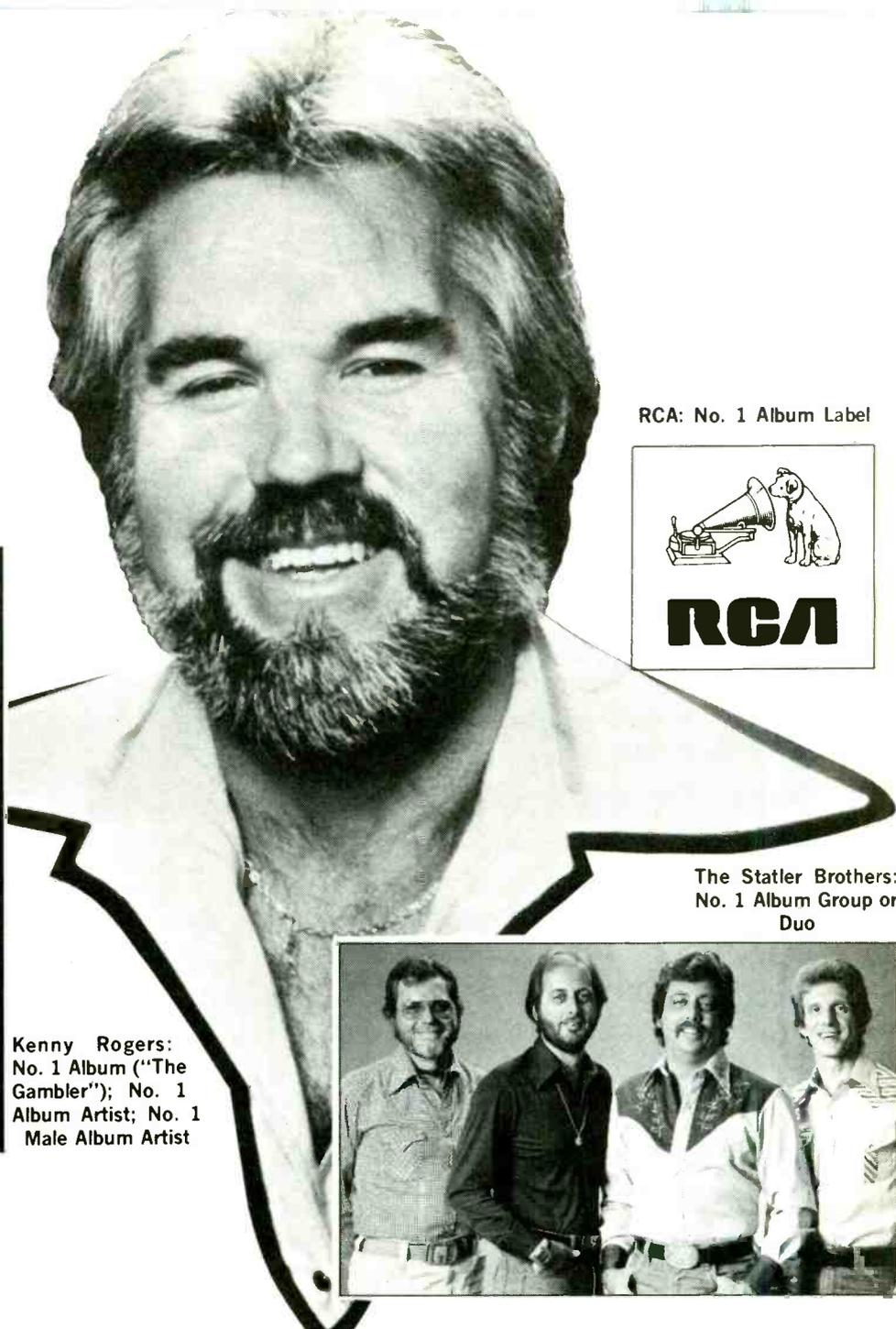
- | Pos. | TITLE, Artist, Label |
|------|--|
| 1. | THE GAMBLER , Kenny Rogers, United Artists |
| 2. | HEARTBREAKER, Dolly Parton, RCA |
| 3. | I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CRAZY, Waylon Jennings, RCA |
| 4. | GREATEST HITS, Waylon Jennings, RCA |
| 5. | STARDUST, Willie Nelson, Columbia |
| 6. | WHEN I DREAM, Crystal Gayle, United Artists |
| 7. | LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY, Anne Murray, Capitol |
| 8. | EXPRESSIONS, Don Williams, MCA |
| 9. | WILLIE & FAMILY LIVE, Willie Nelson, Columbia |
| 10. | TEN YEARS OF GOLD, Kenny Rogers, United Artists |
| 11. | THE BEST OF THE STATLER BROTHERS, Statler Brothers, Mercury |
| 12. | TNT, Tanya Tucker, MCA |
| 13. | ONLY ONE LOVE IN MY LIFE, Ronnie Milsap, RCA |
| 14. | MOODS, Barbara Mandrell, MCA |
| 15. | WAYLON & WILLIE, Waylon & Willie, RCA |
| 16. | TOTALLY HOT, Olivia Newton-John, MCA |
| 17. | NEW KIND OF FEELING, Anne Murray, Capitol |
| 18. | ROOM SERVICE, Oak Ridge Boys, MCA |
| 19. | PROFILE/BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS, Emmylou Harris, Warner Bros. |
| 20. | LARRY GATLIN'S GREATEST HITS, Larry Gatlin, Monument |
| 21. | ROSE COLORED GLASSES, John Conlee, MCA |
| 22. | EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE, Soundtrack, Elektra |
| 23. | ENTERTAINERS... ON AND OFF THE ROAD, Statler Brothers, Mercury |
| 24. | LOVE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT, Kenny Rogers, United Artists |
| 25. | VARIATIONS, Eddie Rabbitt, Elektra |
| 26. | TEAR TIME, Dave and Sugar, RCA |
| 27. | LIVING IN THE USA, Linda Ronstadt, Asylum |
| 28. | CLASSICS, Kenny Rogers & Dottie West, United Artists |
| 29. | THE BEST OF BARBARA MANDRELL, Barbara Mandrell, MCA |
| 30. | SWEET MEMORIES, Willie Nelson, RCA |
| 31. | THE OAK RIDGE BOYS HAVE ARRIVED, Oak Ridge Boys, MCA |
| 32. | BURGERS AND FRIES/WHEN I STOP LEAVING (I'LL BE GONE), Charley Pride, RCA |
| 33. | REDHEADED STRANGER, Willie Nelson, Columbia |
| 34. | BLUE KENTUCKY GIRL, Emmylou Harris, Warner Bros. |
| 35. | ARMED AND CRAZY, Johnny Paycheck, Epic |
| 36. | LEGEND, Poco, MCA |
| 37. | EVERYTIME TWO FOOLS COLLIDE, Kenny Rogers & Dottie West, United Artists |
| 38. | THE ORIGINALS, Statler Brothers, Mercury |
| 39. | OUR MEMORIES OF ELVIS, Elvis Presley, RCA |
| 40. | GREATEST HITS, Linda Ronstadt, Asylum |
| 41. | JUST LIKE REAL PEOPLE, The Kendalls, Ovation |
| 42. | THE BEST OF DON WILLIAMS, VOL. II, Don Williams, MCA |
| 43. | LOVE LINE, Eddie Rabbitt, Elektra |
| 44. | HEAVEN'S JUST A SIN AWAY, The Kendalls, Ovation |
| 45. | CONWAY, Conway Twitty, MCA |
| 46. | ELVIS: LEGENDARY PERFORMER, VOLUME 3, Elvis Presley, RCA |
| 47. | ELVIS: A CANADIAN TRIBUTE, Elvis Presley, RCA |
| 48. | MILLION MILE REFLECTIONS, Charlie Daniels Band, Epic |
| 49. | ONE FOR THE ROAD, Willie Nelson & Leon Russell, Columbia |
| 50. | ELVIS SINGS FOR CHILDREN & GROWNUPS TOO, Elvis Presley, RCA |



Dolly Parton: No. 1 Female Album Artist

Top Album Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. LPs On Chart
1.	KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	4
2.	WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	3
3.	WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	3
	RCA	1
	Lone Star	1
	United Artists	1
4.	DOLLY PARTON, RCA	4
5.	STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	5
6.	ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	2
7.	DON WILLIAMS, MCA	2
	ABC	1
8.	CRYSTAL GAYLE, United Artists	3
9.	OAK RIDGE BOYS, MCA	2
	ABC	1
10.	BARBARA MANDRELL, MCA	2
11.	EMMYLOU HARRIS, Warner Bros.	3
12.	ELVIS PRESLEY, RCA	5
13.	RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	3
14.	LINDA RONSTADT, Asylum	3
15.	LARRY GATLIN, Monument	3
16.	KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	2
17.	THE KENDALLS, Ovation	3
18.	EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	2
19.	TANYA TUCKER, MCA	1
20.	WAYLON & WILLIE, RCA	1
21.	JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	3
22.	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN, MCA	1
23.	JOHN CONLEE, MCA	1
24.	CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	3
25.	CHARLEY, PRIDE, RCA	3



Kenny Rogers: No. 1 Album ("The Gambler"); No. 1 Album Artist; No. 1 Male Album Artist

RCA: No. 1 Album Label



The Statler Brothers: No. 1 Album Group or Duo



Top Female Album Artist

Pos.	ARTISTS, Label	No. LPs On Chart
1.	DOLLY PARTON, RCA	4
2.	ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	2
3.	CRYSTAL GAYLE, United Artists	3
4.	BARBARA MANDRELL	2
5.	EMMYLOU HARRIS, Warner Bros.	3
6.	LINDA RONSTADT, Asylum	3
7.	TANYA TUCKER, MCA	1
8.	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN, MCA	1
9.	TAMMY WYNETTE, Epic	3
10.	SUSIE ALLANSON, Elektra/Curb	1
	Warner/Curb	1
11.	LORETTA LYNN, MCA	1
12.	BONNIE TYLER, RCA	2
13.	DONNA FARGO, Warner Bros.	1
	ABC/Dot	1
14.	LYNN ANDERSON, Columbia	1
15.	MARGO SMITH, Warner Bros.	2

Top Duo Or Group Album Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. LPs On Chart
1.	STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	5
2.	OAK RIDGE BOYS, MCA	2
	ABC	1
3.	KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	2
4.	THE KENDALLS, Ovation	3
5.	WAYLON & WILLIE, RCA	1
6.	DAVE AND SUGAR, RCA	1
7.	POCO, MCA	1
8.	CHARLIE DANIELS BAND, Epic	2
9.	WILLIE NELSON & LEON RUSSELL, Columbia	1
10.	DR. HOOK, Capitol	1
11.	LORETTA LYNN AND CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	2
12.	JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS, RCA	1
13.	MARSHALL TUCKER BAND, Capricorn	1
14.	KRIS KRISTOFFERSON & RITA COOLIDGE, A&M	1
15.	BELLAMY BROTHERS, Warner Bros.	1

Top Male Album Artists

Pos.	ARTIST, Label	No. LPs On Chart
1.	KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	4
2.	WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	3
3.	WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	3
	RCA	1
	Lone Star	1
	United Artists	1
4.	DON WILLIAMS, MCA	2
	ABC	1
5.	ELVIS PRESLEY, RCA	5
6.	RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	3
7.	LARRY GATLIN, Monument	3
8.	EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	2
9.	JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	3
10.	JOHN CONLEE, MCA	1
11.	CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	3
12.	CHARLEY PRIDE, RCA	3
13.	MERLE HAGGARD, MCA	2
	Capitol	1
14.	MEL TILLIS, MCA	3
15.	JERRY LEE LEWIS, Elektra	1
	Sun	1
	Mercury	1

Top Album Labels

Pos.	LABEL	No. LPs On Chart
1.	RCA	29
2.	UNITED ARTISTS	11
3.	MCA	27
4.	COLUMBIA	14
5.	CAPITOL	10
6.	MERCURY	8
7.	EPIC	17
8.	ELEKTRA	5
9.	WARNER BROS.	8
10.	ASYLUM	3

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EDDIE RABBITT • RED STEAGALL • MEL TILLIS • JIM WEATHERLY • STERLING WHIPPLE
HANK WILLIAMS, JR.* • DENNIS WILLIAM WILSON

Billboard's #1 New Country Album and Single Label of the Year. ELEKTRA/CURB.



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

★ SINGLES ★

Top Singles

- Pos., TITLE, Artist, Label
1. SLEEPING SINGLE IN A DOUBLE BED, Barbara Mandrell, ABC
 2. I JUST FALL IN LOVE AGAIN, Anne Murray, Capitol
 3. IF I SAID YOU HAD A BEAUTIFUL BODY WOULD YOU HOLD IT AGAINST ME, Bellamy Brothers, Warner/Curb
 4. AMANDA, Waylon Jennings, RCA
 5. EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE, Eddie Rabbitt, RCA
 6. GOLDEN TEARS, Dave And Sugar, RCA
 7. HEARTBREAKER, Dolly Parton, RCA
 8. SHE BELIEVES IN ME, Kenny Rogers, United Artists
 9. THE GAMBLER, Kenny Rogers, United Artists
 10. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE, Dolly Parton, RCA
 11. WHY HAVE YOU LEFT THE ONE YOU LEFT ME FOR, Crystal Gayle, United Artists
 12. NOBODY LIKES SAD SONGS, Ronnie Milsap, RCA
 13. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CRAZY, Waylon Jennings, RCA
 14. WHERE DO I PUT HER MEMORY, Charley Pride, RCA
 15. ALL I EVER NEED IS YOU, Kenny Rogers & Dottie West, United Artists
 16. BACKSIDE OF THIRTY, John Conlee, MCA
 17. LADY LAY DOWN, John Conlee, ABC
 18. SWEET DESIRE, The Kendalls, Ovation
 19. (IF LOVING YOU IS WRONG) I DON'T WANT TO BE RIGHT, Barbara Mandrell, MCA
 20. I JUST WANT TO LOVE YOU, Eddie Rabbitt, Elektra
 21. SHADOWS IN THE MOONLIGHT, Anne Murray, Capitol
 22. DON'T TAKE IT AWAY, Conway Twitty, MCA
 24. LAY DOWN BESIDE ME, Don Williams, MCA
 25. BACK ON MY MIND AGAIN/SANTA BARBARA, Ronnie Milsap, RCA
 26. FAREWELL PARTY, Gene Watson, Capitol
 27. ON MY KNEES, Charlie Rich W/Janie Fricke, Epic
 28. SEND ME DOWN TO TUSCON/CHARLIE'S ANGEL, Mel Tillis, MCA
 29. I REALLY GOT THE FEELING/BABY I'M BURNING, Dolly Parton, RCA
 30. (GHOST) RIDERS IN THE SKY, Johnny Cash, Columbia
 31. LET'S TAKE THE LONG WAY AROUND THE WORLD, Ronnie Milsap, RCA
 32. TEAR TIME, Dave and Sugar, RCA
 33. WHEN I DREAM, Crystal Gayle, United Artists
 34. SOMEBODY SPECIAL, Donna Fargo, United Artists
 35. ANYONE WHO ISN'T ME TONIGHT, Kenny Rogers & Dottie West, United Artists
 36. I HAD A LOVELY TIME, The Kendalls, Ovation
 37. LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT, Margo Smith, Warner Bros.
 38. SUSPICIONS, Eddie Rabbitt, Elektra
 40. SAIL AWAY, Oak Ridge Boys, MCA
 41. IT'S A CHEATIN' SITUATION, Moe Bandy, Columbia
 42. AIN'T NO CALIFORNIA, Mel Tillis, MCA
 43. CRYIN' AGAIN, Oak Ridge Boys, ABC
 44. IF I COULD WRITE A LOVE SONG AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU, Billy Crash Craddock, Capitol
 45. DO YOU EVER FOOL AROUND, Joe Stampley, Epic
 46. DOWN THE RIO GRANDE, Johnny Rodriguez, Epic
 47. YOU FEEL GOOD ALL OVER, T.G. Sheppard, Warner/Curb
 48. TEXAS (WHEN I DIE), Tanya Tucker, MCA
 49. LYING IN LOVE WITH YOU, Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius, RCA
 50. RED BANDANA/I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING BAD, Merle Haggard, MCA

Dolly Parton: No. 1 Female Singles Artist



Willie Nelson: No. 1 Singles Artist; No. 1 Male Singles Artist

Tree, BMI: No. 1 Singles Publisher



RCA: No. 1 Singles Label



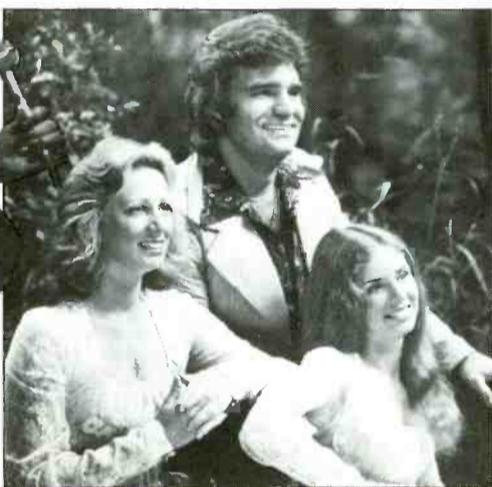
Barbara Mandrell: No. 1 Single, "Sleeping Single In A Double Bed"

Top Duo/Group Artists

Pos., ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1. DAVE AND SUGAR, RCA	3
2. STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	4
3. OAK RIDGE BOYS, ABC	2
MCA	2
Columbia	1
4. THE KENDALLS, Ovation	4
5. KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	3
6. JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS, RCA	4
7. BELLAMY BROTHERS, Warner/Curb	3
8. GEORGE JONES & JOHNNY PAYCHECK, Epic	2
9. CHARLIE RICH W/JANIE FRICKE, Epic	1
10. LOUISE MANDRELL & R.C. BANNON, Epic	2

Top Singles Artists

Pos., ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1. WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	4
RCA	2
Lone Star	1
United Artists	1
2. EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	4
3. DOLLY PARTON, RCA	3
4. WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	3
5. RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	4
6. DAVE AND SUGAR, RCA	3
7. STATLER BROTHERS, Mercury	4
8. CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	4
9. OAK RIDGE BOYS, ABC	2
MCA	2
Columbia	1
10. MEL TILLIS, MCA	3
11. BARBARA MANDRELL, ABC	1
MCA	2
12. THE KENDALLS, Ovation	4
13. CRYSTAL GAYLE, United Artists	4
14. CHARLIE RICH, United Artists	3
Elektra	1
Epic	2
15. CHARLEY PRIDE, RCA	4
16. ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	3
17. T.G. SHEPPARD, Warner/Curb	4
18. RAZZY BAILEY, RCA	4
19. KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST, United Artists	3
20. KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	3
21. GENE WATSON, Capitol	2
22. JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS, RCA	4
23. MARGO SMITH, Warner Bros	3
24. DON WILLIAMS, ABC	2
MCA	2
25. JOHN CONLEE, ABC	2
MCA	2
26. MICKEY GILLEY, Epic	4
27. MOE BANDY, Columbia	3
28. CRISTY LANE, LS	2
United Artists	2
29. MERLE HAGGARD, MCA	3
Capitol	1
30. RANDY BARLOW, Republic	4
31. BELLAMY BROTHERS, Warner/Curb	3
32. JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ, Epic	2
Mercury	2
33. BILLY CRASH CRADDOCK, Capitol	4
ABC	1
34. SUSIE ALLANSON, Elektra/Curb	2
Warner/Curb	2
35. CON HUNLEY, Warner Bros	3



Dave and Sugar: No. 1 Duo or Group Singles Artist

Top Female Artists

Pos., ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1. DOLLY PARTON, RCA	3
2. BARBARA MANDRELL, ABC	1
MCA	2
3. CRYSTAL GALE, United Artists	4
4. ANNE MURRAY, Capitol	3
5. MARGO SMITH, Warner Bros	3
6. CRISTY LANE, LS	2
7. SUSIE ALLANSON, Elektra/Curb	2
Warner/Curb	2
8. TAMMY WYNETTE, Epic	3
9. DONNA FARGO, Warner Bros	3
10. EMMYLOU HARRIS, Warner Bros	3
11. BILLIE JO SPEARS, United Artists	5
12. MARY K. MILLER, RCA	2
Inergi	2
13. LYNN ANDERSON, Columbia	3
14. JANIE FRICKE, Columbia	3
15. LORETTA LYNN, MCA	2

Top Male Artists

Pos., ARTIST, Label	No. Releases On Chart
1. WILLIE NELSON, Columbia	4
RCA	2
Lone Star	1
United Artists	1
2. EDDIE RABBITT, Elektra	4
3. WAYLON JENNINGS, RCA	3
4. RONNIE MILSAP, RCA	4
5. CONWAY TWITTY, MCA	4
6. MEL TILLIS, MCA	3
7. CHARLIE RICH, United Artists	4
Elektra	1
Epic	2
8. CHARLEY PRIDE, RCA	4
9. T.G. SHEPPARD, Warner/Curb	4
10. RAZZY BAILEY, RCA	4
11. KENNY ROGERS, United Artists	3
12. GENE WATSON, Capitol	3
13. DON WILLIAMS, ABC	2
MCA	2
14. JOHN CONLEE, ABC	2
MCA	3
15. MICKEY GILLEY, Epic	4

Top Label

Pos., LABEL	No. Singles On Chart
1. RCA	78
2. MCA	62
3. COLUMBIA	44
4. EPIC	46
5. WARNER BROS	42
6. CAPITOL	36
7. UNITED ARTISTS	27
8. ELEKTRA	30
9. ABC	26
10. MERCURY	29

Top Publishers

Pos., PUBLISHER, Licensee	No. Singles On Chart
1. TREE, BMI	54
2. HOUSE OF GOLD, BMI	19
3. PI-GEM, BMI	10
4. HALL-CLEMENT, BMI	19
5. MUSIC CITY, ASCAP	12
6. SCREEN GEMS-EMI, BMI	14
7. CROSS KEYS, ASCAP	13
8. ALGEE, BMI	9
9. ACUFF ROSE, BMI	14
10. BOBBY GOLDSBORO, ASCAP	7
11. AL-GALICO, BMI	12
12. CHESS, ASCAP	6
13. HALLNOTE, BMI	6
14. UNICHAPPELL, BMI	8
15. FREBAR, BMI	6
16. MILENE, ASCAP	10
17. WARNER-TAMERLANE, BMI	10
18. CHAPPELL, ASCAP	13
19. AMERICAN COWBOY, BMI	11
20. ATV, BMI	11
21. BOXER, BMI	3
22. SHADE TREE, BMI	5
23. WAYLON JENNINGS, BMI	2
24. MUSIC WEST OF THE PECOS, BMI	4
25. ROSE BRIDGE, BMI	4

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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

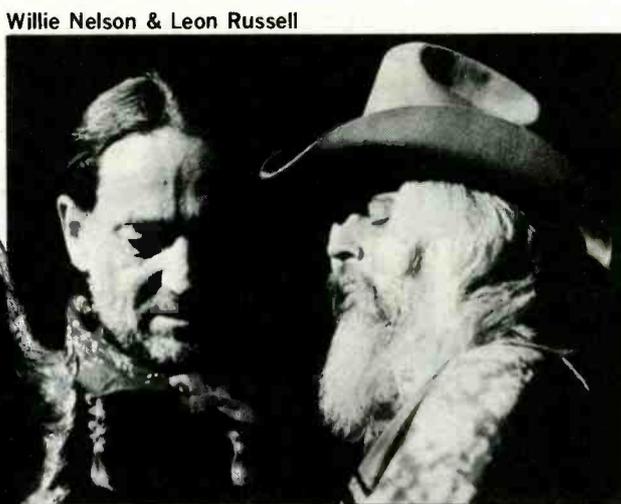
★ NEW ARTISTS ★

- No. 1 New Artist
BIG AL DOWNING
- No. 1 New Male Album Artist
JOHN CONLEE
- No. 1 New Female Album Artist
SUSIE ALLANSON
- No. 1 New Duo/Group Album Artist
WILLIE NELSON & LEON RUSSELL
- No. 1 New Male Singles Artist
BIG AL DOWNING
- No. 1 New Female Singles Artist
JEWELL BLANCH
- No. 1 New Duo/Group Singles Artist
GEORGE JONES & JOHNNY PAYCHECK
- No. 1 New Label
ELEKTRA/CURB

A Billboard Spotlight



Susie Allanson



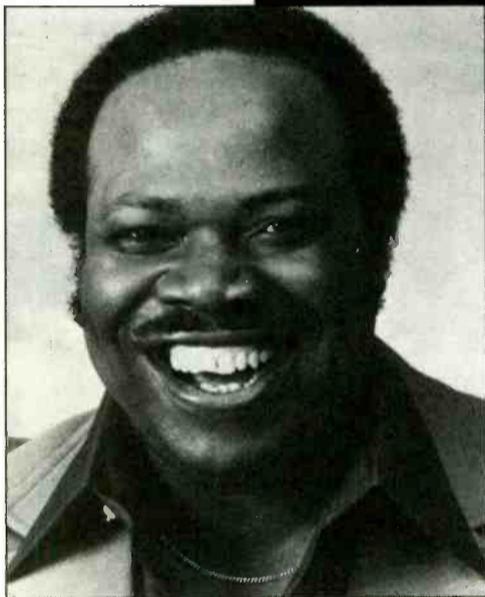
Willie Nelson & Leon Russell



Jewell Blanch

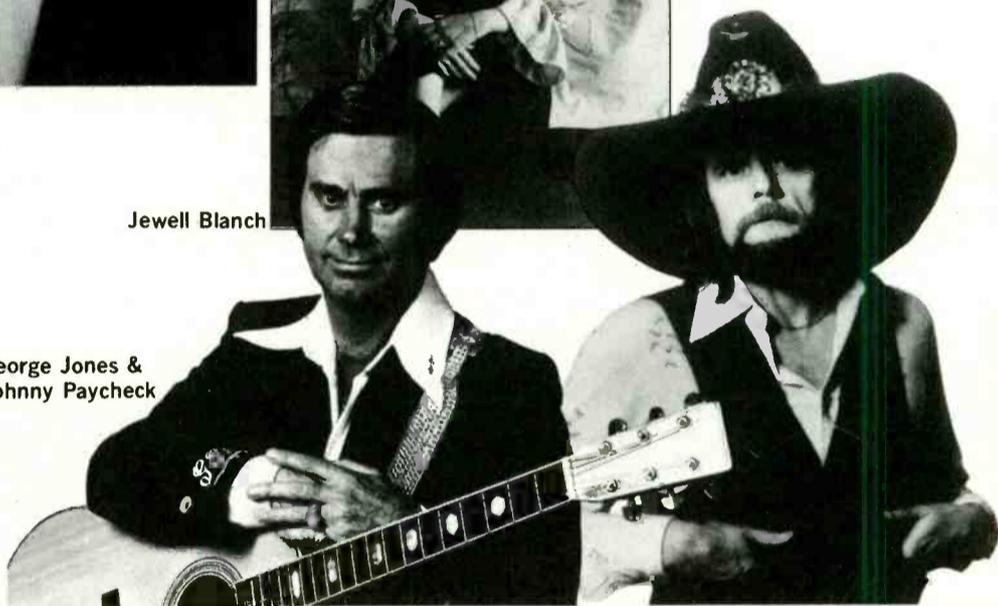


John Conlee



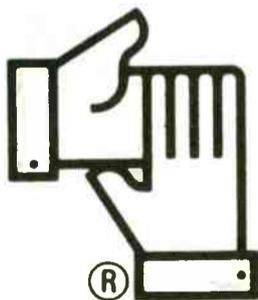
Big Al Downing

George Jones & Johnny Paycheck



OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD

THE KENDALLS Make the Ovation Hands Applaud



THE KENDALLS were last year's CMA WINNERS for Single of The Year with "Heaven's Just A Sin Away!" This year we congratulate them for being CMA nominees for Best Vocal Group and for winning this year's Billboard Award as Top Singles Vocal Duo.

We love you, Royce & Jeannie!
Ovation Records



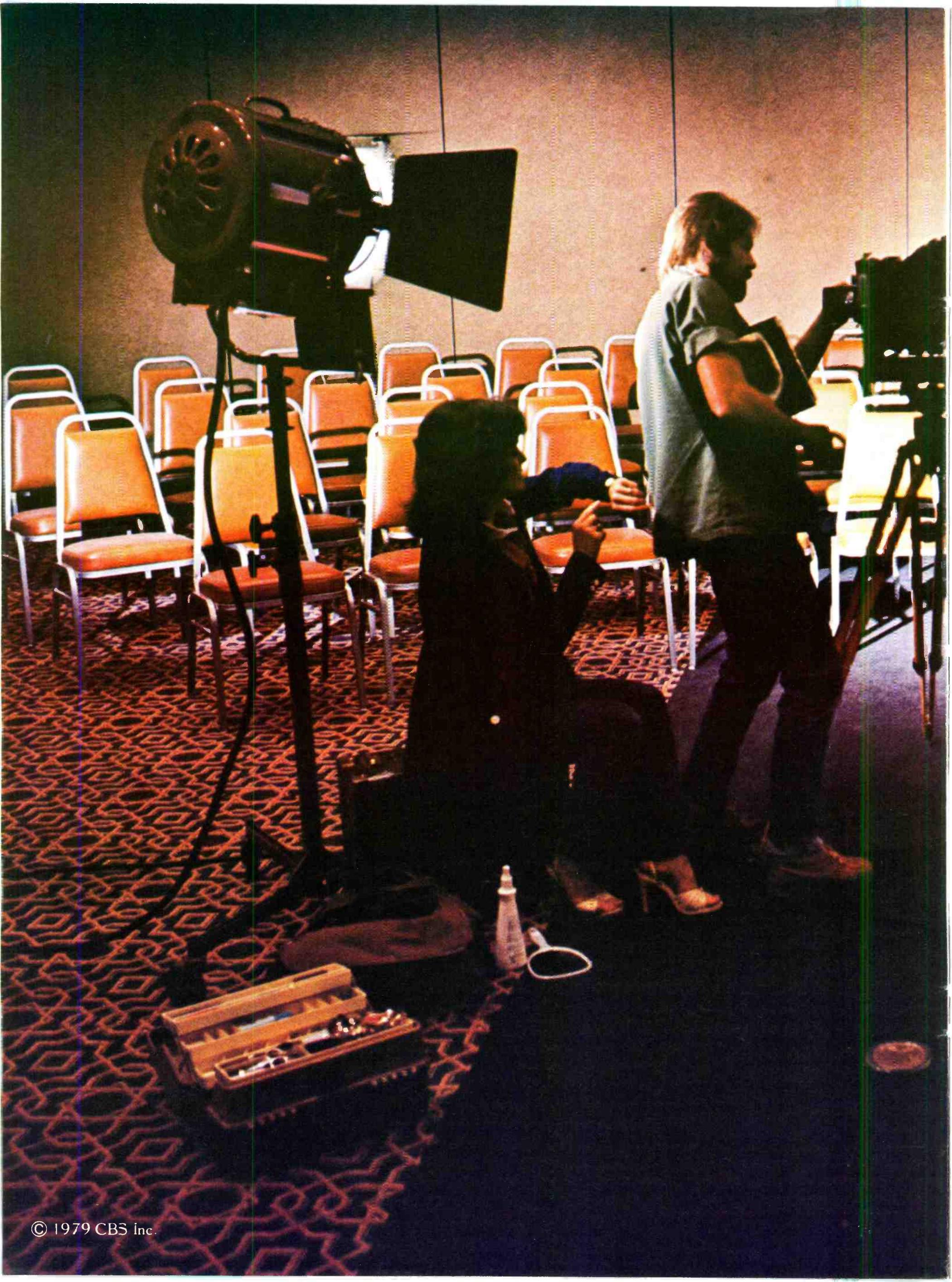
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803 18th Avenue, South
Nashville, TN 37203

THE GREATEST COUNTRY

IN THE WORLD

IS AT ASCAP

The American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers



CBS MEMORANDUM

TC: CBS Records' Nashville marketing staff
DATE: September 3, 1979

On Monday, September 17, at 10:00 a.m. sharp, the entire staff is expected to be present at a family portrait photo session.

There will be no exceptions other than those staff people involved in major promotion breakthrough situations, priority tour activities, crucial press developments, or album release deadlines.

The entire Nashville artist roster is expected to join us for this photo session unless otherwise involved in major market tours, taping of television specials, key radio and press interviews, or recording album product.

Keep this important date in mind and please be on time.

Regards,



cc: Lynn Anderson, Moe Bandy, R.C. Bannon, Bobby Bare, Bobby Borchers, Johnny Cash, Rosanne Cash, David Allan Coe, The Charlie Daniels Band, Lacy J. Dalton, Johnny Duncan, Freddy Fender, Janie Fricke, Larry Gatlin, Raymond Froggatt, Crystal Gayle, Mickey Gilley, George Jones, Kris Kristofferson, Audrey Landers, Louise McDowell, Charly McClain, Tommy McLain, O.B. McClinton, Ronnie McDowell, Willie Nelson, Johnny Paycheck, Marty Robbins, Johnny Rodriguez, Pam Rose, The Earl Scruggs Revue, Joe Stampley, Freddy Weller, Tammy Wynette



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

☆ SPECIAL AWARDS ☆

THE BILL WILLIAMS MEMORIAL AWARD: THE STATLER BROTHERS

Named for Billboard's late Southern editor who represented the finest qualities as a man and as a leader for Nashville's country music industry, the Bill Williams Memorial Award goes to an act which typifies the highest personal and professional qualities both onstage and off.

In 1976 the award went to Ronnie Milsap. Subsequent winners have been Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton.

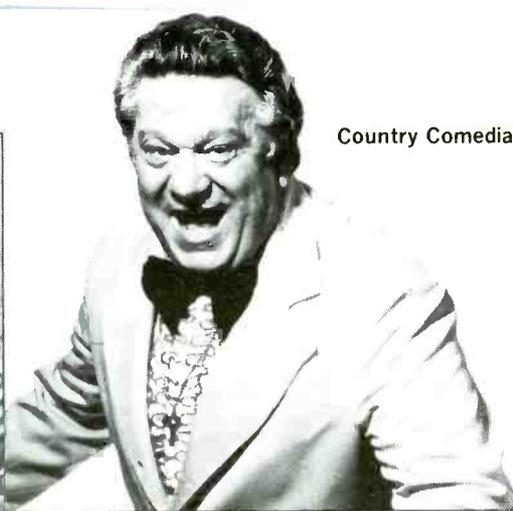
Many important awards are bestowed on country music acts, but few are as important as an honor that salutes not only far reaching success in the record business, but an equally powerful success in being artists at living.

Long-time favorites in the field of country music, the Statler Brothers are total entertainers with a repertoire that runs from comedy to classic country. Their contributions to country music, both onstage and off, make them fitting recipients for the Bill Williams Memorial Award.

Ernest Tubb



Country Comedian of the Year: Jerry Clower



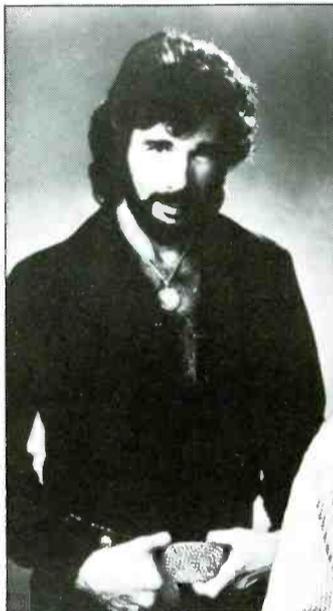
The Charlie Daniels Band



SPECIAL BREAKTHROUGH AWARDS EDDIE RABBITT—THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND

Country to Pop: Eddie Rabbitt spread his country music chart success into the pop arena with his Elektra singles and albums. His smooth balladeering crossed his audience over into new venues of sound.

Pop to Country: The Charlie Daniels Band hails from near Nashville, but the group's success has been mainly on the pop side, not country. "The Devil Went Down To Georgia" firmly established Daniels as a country, as well as pop, favorite.



Eddie Rabbitt



The Statler Brothers

ARTIST RESURGENCE: ERNEST TUBB

A favorite of country music fans for decades, Ernest Tubb rebounded strongly back into the charts this year with his Ca-chet Records LP "The Legend And The Legacy, Vol. 1." It's a triumphant return for this member of the Country Music Hall of Fame.

WHIN GIVES NEW YORKERS

MUSIC THEY WANNA HEAR.

• Vern Gosdin • Vern Gosdin & Emmylou Harris • Nate Har-Dottsy • Olivia Dalls • Cristy • R.C. Bannan • Charly • Anne Murray • Willie Nelson • Tommy Overstreet • Buck Owens & Emmylou Harris • Dolly Parton • Johnny Paycheck • Elvis Presley • Elvis Presley & Linda Ronstadt • Ray Price • Charley Pride • Poco • Eddie Rabbitt • Jerry Reed • Jim Reeves & Deborah Allen • Charlie Rich • Charlie Rich & Janie Frickie • Marty Robbins • Johnny Rodriguez • David Rogers • Kenny Rogers • Kenny Rogers & Dottie West • Linda Ronstadt • John Wesley Ryles • T. G. Sheppard • James Taylor & Carly Simon • Margo Smith • Sammi Smith • Joe Stampley • Statler Brothers • Rachel Sweet • Joe Sun • Mel Tillis • Tanya Tucker • Conway Twitty • Conway Twitty & Loretta Lynn • Bonnie Tyler • Randy Vanwarmer • Jacky Ward • Jennifer Warnes • Gene Watson • Dottie West • Don Williams • Hank Williams Jr. • Tammy Wynette • Susie Allanson • Rex Allen Jr. • Bill Anderson • Lynn Anderson • Eddy Arnold • Atlanta Rhythm Section • Hoyt Axton • Razy Bailey • Moe Bandy • Barbra & Neil • Bobby Bare • Randy Barlow • Bellamy Brothers • Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius • Debby Boone • Glen Campbell • Johnny Cash • Johnny Cash & Waylon Jennings • Rosanne Cash & Bobby Bare • Randy Barlow • Bellamy Brothers • Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius • Debby Boone • Glen Campbell • Johnny Cash •

Susie Allanson • Rex Allen Jr. • Bill Anderson • Lynn Anderson • Eddy Arnold • Atlanta Rhythm Section • Hoyt Axton • Razy Bailey • Moe Bandy • Barbra & Neil • Bobby Bare • Randy Barlow • Bellamy Brothers • Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius • Debby Boone • Glen Campbell • Johnny Cash • Johnny Cash & Waylon Jennings • Rosanne Cash & Bobby Bare • John Conlee • Billy Crash Craddock • Kenny Dale • Charlie Daniels Band • Dave & Sugar • Gail Davies • Big Al Downing • Dr. Hook • Johnny Duncan • Eagles • Paul Evans • Donna Fargo • Narvel Felts • Freddy Fender • Janie Frickie • Larry Gatlin • Crystal Gayle • Mickey Gilley • Robert Gordon •

Janie Frickie • Merle Haggard • Merle Haggard & Leona Williams • Tom T. Hall • Dr. Hook • Con Hunley • Sonny James • Waylon Jennings • Waylon Jennings & Newton-John • George Jones • George Jones & Johnny Paycheck • Ken-Lane • Jerry Lee Lewis • Loretta Lynn • Barbara Mandrell • Louise Man-McClain • Ronnie McDowell • Mary K. Miller • Frank Mills • Ronnie Milsap • Moe & Joe • Willie Nelson & Leon Russell • Olivia Newton-John • Oak Ridge Boys • Kenny O'Dell • Willie Nelson • Leon Russell • Olivia Newton-John • Oak Ridge Boys • Kenny O'Dell • Elvis Presley • Elvis Presley & Linda Ronstadt • Ray Price • Charley Pride • Poco • Eddie Rabbitt • Jerry Reed • Jim Reeves & Deborah Allen • Charlie Rich • Charlie Rich & Janie Frickie • Marty Robbins • Johnny Rodriguez • David Rogers • Kenny Rogers • Kenny Rogers & Dottie West • Linda Ronstadt • John Wesley Ryles • T. G. Sheppard • James Taylor & Carly Simon • Margo Smith • Sammi Smith • Joe Stampley • Statler Brothers • Rachel Sweet • Joe Sun • Mel Tillis • Tanya Tucker • Conway Twitty • Conway Twitty & Loretta Lynn • Bonnie Tyler • Randy Vanwarmer • Jacky Ward • Jennifer Warnes • Gene Watson • Dottie West • Don Williams • Hank Williams Jr. • Tammy Wynette • Susie Allanson • Rex Allen Jr. • Bill Anderson • Lynn Anderson • Eddy Arnold • Atlanta Rhythm Section • Hoyt Axton • Razy Bailey • Moe Bandy • Barbra & Neil • Bobby Bare • Randy Barlow • Bellamy Brothers • Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius • Debby Boone • Glen Campbell • Johnny Cash • Johnny Cash & Waylon Jennings • Rosanne Cash & Bobby Bare • Randy Barlow • Bellamy Brothers • Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius • Debby Boone • Glen Campbell • Johnny Cash •

WHIN 1050

Mercury artists light up country music.





THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Country Artists Break Loose—Every Which Way

Right, Epic artist Ronnie McDowell gives it his all on "That Nashville Music."



Below, singer T.G. Sheppard and producer Buddy Killen put the final touches to a new Warner Bros. LP.

Right, Ronnie Prophet, Cachet Records artist, with his new producer and publisher, Pete Drake.



Below, three biggies from RCA Nashville: Jerry Reed, Chet Atkins and Jerry Bradley, after the Nashville premier of "Hot Stuff."



Left, the Silver Fox, Charlie Rich takes his talents to United Artists Records.



Below, getting together in Nashville are, from left, Frank Leffel, national country promotion manager for Phonogram/Mercury, King Edward Smith IV of WSLC, Roanoke, Reba McEntire and Jacky Ward.



Left, potent new Lifesong artist Gail Davies debuts her new band and act in Nashville.



Left, at MCA/Nashville president Jim Foglesong's home are, from left, Foglesong, Don Williams and Bob Siner, president of MCA.



By KIP KIRBY

If 1973 went down as the Year of Disco, then 1979 will definitely be remembered as the year that saw country breaking loose everywhere.

From Montreux to Minneapolis, from Brussels to Birmingham, from London to Los Angeles, country music shot from the starting gate straight into the winner's circle of hefty sales, radio airplay and retail revenue.

From the silver screens of Hollywood to the television screens of millions of homes across the nation, country music's personalities blossomed, more in prime-time demand than ever.

Of course, 1979 will also be recalled as the year that forced the record industry as a whole to swallow the bitter pill of reality, recognizing that perhaps it wasn't as recession-proof as it once believed.

But country music held its own in the face of the general industry malaise. And Nashville's record labels reflected the shared glory, launching new artists (and even, in the case of RCA, a new label called Free Flight), concocting imaginative promotions, throwing their strengths behind massive marketing campaigns and racking up a most impressive 12 months.

The year was fraught with checkerboard activity within the labels. It was a year when label mergers seemed to occur at the drop of a cowboy hat, talent switched positions on the roster playing field, and there were times when it was hard to tell whether you were listening to country or to pop when you dialed in your favorite radio stations.

But country continued to make giant strides, both here and abroad, and perhaps the recession even contributed to the cause. People concerned with the gut-level basics of everyday living and wanting a return to the simpler roots of times gone by appeared to find more related to in the downhome sincerity of country music.

Either way, that was the year that was, and 1979 was a blue-ribbon year for country.

RCA Records' Nashville operation steamed ahead from its 1978 plaudits as Billboard's top album and singles label of the year. It continued its dominance in these categories by

snagging duplicate accolades again in 1979, earning itself an additional honor as this magazine's top country label of the year.

In the 52-week period from Sept. 3, 1978 through Aug. 31, 1979, releases from RCA Nashville occupied the No. 1 position on Billboard's "Hot Country Singles" chart for a total of 19 weeks, or 37% of the time. Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, Dave & Sugar, Ronnie Milsap and Charley Pride each topped the chart at least once, and Parton and Jennings contributed five No. 1 singles for a total of 12 weeks in the kingpin spot.

More roster support came from Eddy Arnold, Chet Atkins, Jim Ed Brown & Helen Cornelius, Floyd Cramer, Danny Davis & the Nashville Brass, Dottie, Tom T. Hall, Zella Lehr, Jerry Reed, Jim Reeves, Elvis Presley, Gary Stewart, Hank Snow, Porter Wagoner and Steve Wariner, who all helped RCA post a year-long average of 12% of the total available Billboard chart placings.

Along the album front, RCA managed to peak on the Billboard Country LPs chart for 24 out of 52 weeks, equalling a total of 46% for the year. Major factors in tallying up this track record were Parton's "Heartbreaker" LP which sat in the No. 1 slot for nine weeks—until it was nudged out by another RCA artist, Waylon Jennings, whose "I've Always Been Crazy" album spanned seven weeks in the top spot. (And later in the year, Jennings capped his own performance when his "Greatest Hits" package, spurred by the success of "Amanda," began an eight-week reign.)

Thus, RCA boasted a year-long average album chart figure of 18% of the total Billboard LP positions.

The label put its newly-realigned marketing team into high

gear during 1979 with special merchandising campaigns aimed directly at retail and radio accounts. It also utilized regional showcases to spotlight its talent and introduce it to various members of the press, radio and sales accounts.

Highlights on the tour circuit were RCA showcases in New York for Tom T. Hall at the Lone Star Cafe; at Chicago's Nashville North for Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius with a guest appearance by Razy Bailey; at a Dallas dude ranch highlighting Bailey, Randy Gurley and Steve Wariner; at Atlanta's Midnight Sun Dinner Theatre for Dave and Sugar; and a Denver showcase featuring the talents of Ronnie Milsap.

RCA also cast its corporate eye out for new talent, signing Cliff Cochran, Mary K. Miller, Randy Gurley and Sylvia, artists which the label will be working closely with in the next year and developing as future stars in its stable.

From being the first label to debut a country LP in the No. 1 position (Waylon Jennings' "I've Always Been Crazy") to being the label with the first RIAA-certified platinum country album, RCA Nashville has continued to be a leader in its field, even launching the first Nashville-based pop label, appropriately named Free Flight.

And how did RCA fare locally during the Great Recession of '79?

Says Joe Galante, division vice president of marketing for RCA Nashville, "Our systemization and organization has been tighter as a direct result of the economic situation, but there's

(Continued on page WOCM-50)

The Oak Ridge Boys



Thanks To The
COUNTRY MUSIC INDUSTRY
For Six Hit Singles, And
“DREAM ON” #7 This Week.

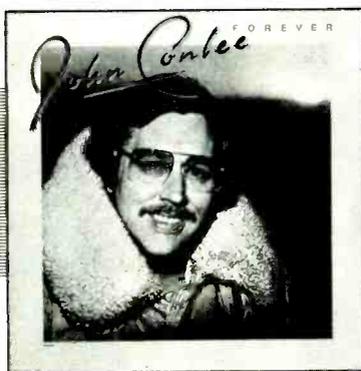


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MCA RECORDS

MCA Records Congratulates

JOHN CONLEE
New Male Album Artist



BARBARA MANDRELL
SLEEPING SINGLE IN A DOUBLE BED
Single of the Year

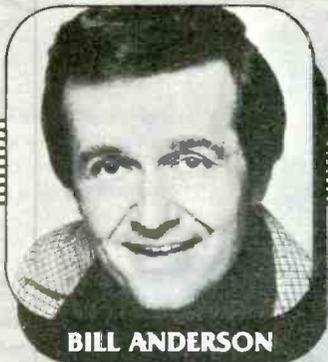


JERRY CLOWER
Country Comic of the Year

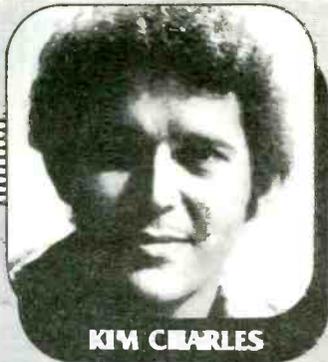


©MCA RECORDS

MCA'S WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC.



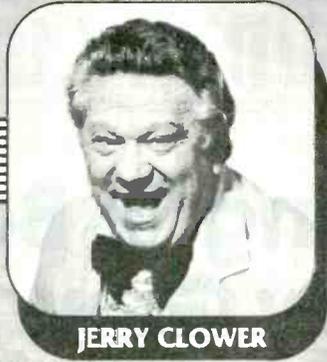
BILL ANDERSON



KIM CHARLES



ROY CLARK



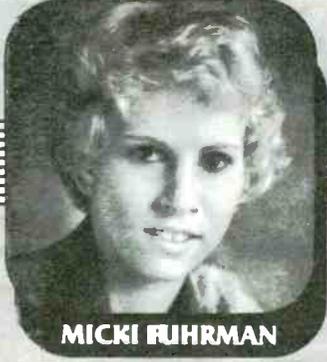
JERRY CLOWER



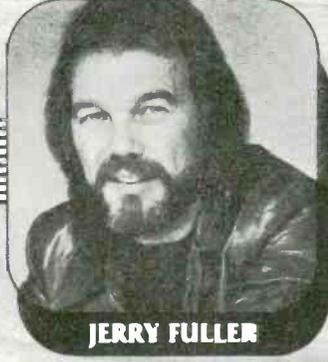
JOHN CONLEE



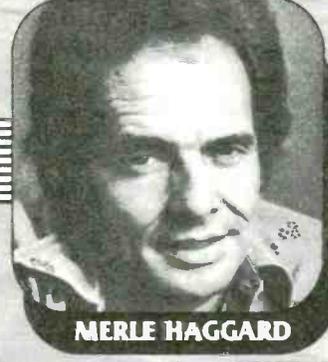
JOE ELY BAND



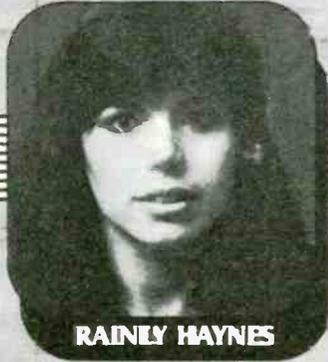
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JERRY FULLER



MERLE HAGGARD



RAINEY HAYNES



MELANIE JAYNE



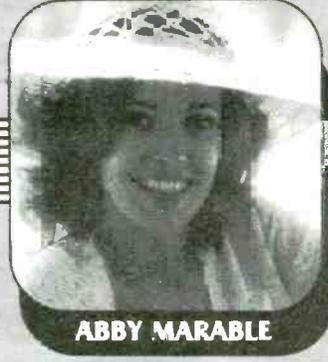
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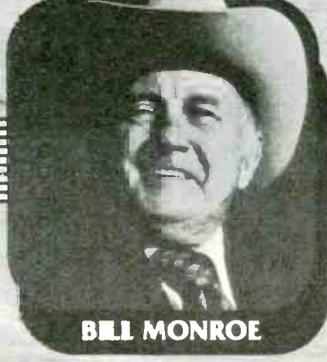
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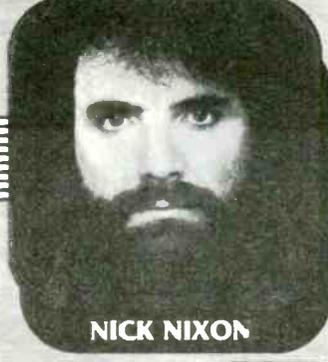
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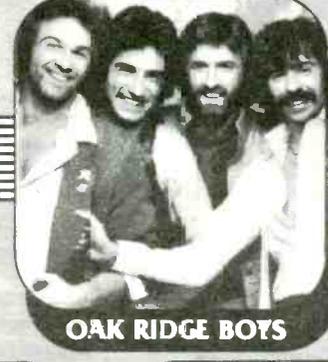
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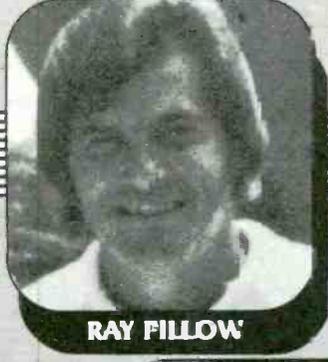
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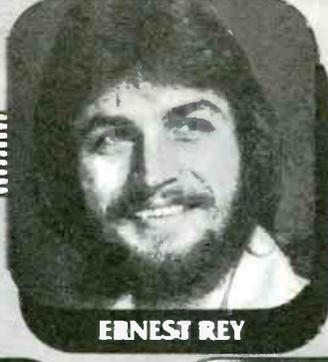
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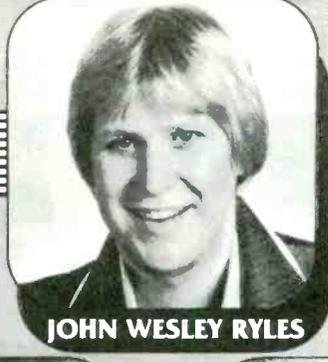
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RAY PILLOW



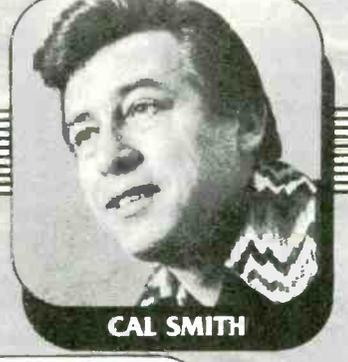
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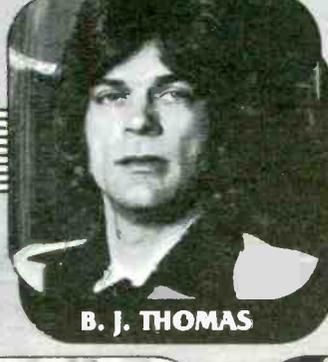
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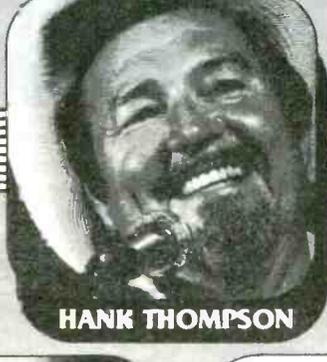
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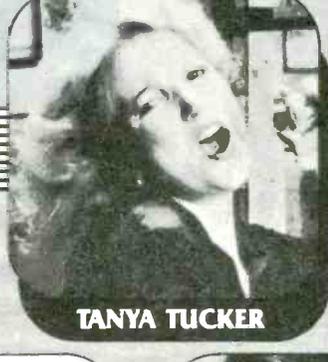
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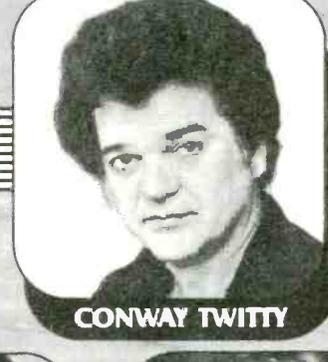
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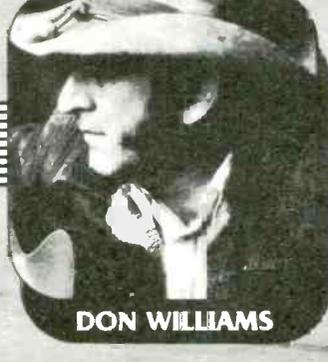
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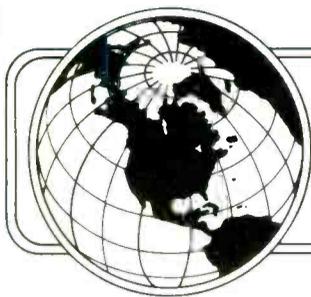
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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Continuing To Bask In A Steady Growth Trend

By EDWARD MORRIS

Sunny.

That's the continuing business-weather forecast for country music radio. The few clouds that do fleck the skies of programmers are small, transient, and apparently storm-free.

Toby Cannon, membership director of the Country Music Assn., reports a steady growth in the number of country stations in the U.S. and Canada. "Last year," says Cannon, "1,815 stations responded to our survey—this year, 2,289." (Not all country music stations, however, have CMA affiliation.)

To assist stations that want to switch to a country format, the CMA offers demographic information, record service assistance, and sales tools, Cannon says.

"Country music is the MOR of tomorrow," predicts Pete Porter, program director for KBOX, Dallas. "We're getting younger demographics. So I don't look for country music to peak in the near future." Porter's confidence was echoed by his counterparts at virtually all the other stations surveyed. All were asked about playlist size and makeup, number and quality of singles received, use of syndicated country music material, sponsorship of local concerts, successful station promotions, and general problems in programming a country format.

KBOX's playlist is built on a core of 35 charted hits, supplemented by 11 "hit bound" numbers and eight to 10 "limited plays" from albums or new singles. The station's 24-hour request line is looked upon basically as a listener-research tool, Porter explains, not as a way of adding specific songs to the playlist.

Porter says he gets as many as 200 singles a week to audition—but that he adds only four to seven new ones to his list. "Lately," he says, "there's been too much good product to air." Songs aimed at crossing over are welcomed at KBOX, Porter adds. "They make country music available to more people."

Like other stations, KBOX is active in promoting live country music locally. At the end of each March, the station presents the "KBOX Country Fair," for which it books both the state fairgrounds and the Cotton Bowl. The headliners for last year's event were Ronnie Milsap and Charlie Rich. In addition, the station co-sponsors the Walt Garrison Invitational Rodeo in May. This year's rodeo featured the Bellamy Brothers.

Besides the happy problem of having too much good music to air, Porter says he has difficulty finding good part-time announcers to do weekend work.

KBOX was one of the few stations surveyed that does not use any syndicated country music programs or features.

New York City's country giant, WHN, reports that it has enjoyed the highest listener ratings ever this year. Program director Ed Salamon estimates that the station's 24-hour request line gets up to 1,000 calls a day.

WHN's playlist, a model both in scope and flexibility, is made up through requests, phone-out research to "a structured sample of listeners," and surveys of area record sales.

Dale Pon, WHN's director of public relations, maintains that "we play more album cuts than any other major country station in America." Adds Salamon: "It's a way of exposing new artists and artists who are important but who don't have hit singles."

"We play songs people want to hear," Salamon continues, "whether albums or singles. And sometimes we play songs that aren't available on singles or albums. For instance, we had lots of requests for Bobby Borchers' version of Two Out of Three Ain't Bad—which was recorded at a concert."

The station has broadcast live country music shows from Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Bottom Line, Lone Star Cafe, Garden State Art Center, and the WHN studios.

Salamon says that New York is establishing a solid country connection through such local boys who made good as Robert Gordon, Eddie Rabbitt, Paul Evans, Chip Taylor, and Eric Weissberg.

WHN airs—or has recently aired—such syndicated material as "Jamboree USA" and "Elvis: Portrait of a Friend." The station itself has produced a series of interviews of country celebrities for NBC.

Toledo's WTOP, usually a monument to the Top 40 outlook, has lately taken to playing a lot of oldies from its library of more than 22,000 past hits. Program director Bill Manders says that Nashville's lust for crossovers accounts for this switch. "The trend in this area is for more traditional music. So we're forced to play a lot of oldies."



Dolly Parton visits with the staff of WAYS, Charlotte, N.C. From left are Marc McCain, Parton, Scott Slade and Robert Murphy.



Jacky Ward drops by WDAF, Kansas City while in town for the Jackson County Fair. From left are WDAF music director Moon Mullins, deejay Bozo and Ward.



More than 15,000 fans turn out for Roy Rogers, headlining the KLAC, Los Angeles, first annual ranch party.

WSM-AM, Nashville, broadcasts a live studio show during Fan Fair '79.



Danny Davis shows off the cockpit of his plane to Chris Taylor, music director of KYNN-AM, Omaha.

To accommodate both old and new tastes, the station has a playlist of from 60 to 85 songs. Specific requests are catered to intermittently throughout the daytime programming, but primarily in the 7 p.m. to sign-off slot, Manders says.

WTOD sponsors a series of shows by a number of local acts—collectively called "The Traveling Jamboree." The shows are held at the sites of selected station advertisers as crowd-builders. Sometimes WTOD lends its name and promotional services to big-name country concerts.

Manders says the station's most popular promotion is the Thanksgiving-oriented "Turkey Shoot" contest. It involves listeners calling in to guess how many sound-effect shots it will take to "hit" the sound-effect turkey. "We get so many calls that Bell threatens to take our phones out," Manders claims.

WTOD's lone syndicated feature is "The Ralph Emery Show."

Steve Lewis, program and music director for KBFW, Bellingham, Wash. sees continued demand for country music. But he senses a slight loss of momentum. "There was a time," says Lewis, "when it was overwhelming everybody. It's not now."

KBFW's playlist—formed with the assistance of a Dallas consulting firm—features the top 65 to 70 current hits. "We

take requests," Lewis explains, "but we don't let them dictate to us."

Unlike WTOD's Manders, Lewis believes there is a softening of the line between crossovers and traditionalists. "Old-timers are mellowing out," Lewis concludes. "They're seeing that country music is changing just by looking at television. They're learning that it's not the radio stations that are changing country music—but that country music is changing itself. And that gets them off our backs."

(Continued on page WOCM-52)

Vintage '79

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CRYSTAL GAYLE
WILLIE NELSON

Single Record of The Year

"THE DEVIL WENT
DOWN TO GEORGIA"
Charlie Daniels Band

Album of The Year

"ARMED AND CRAZY"
Johnny Paycheck
"ONE FOR THE ROAD"
Willie Nelson and Leon Russell

Female Vocalist of The Year

JANIE FRICKE
CRYSTAL GAYLE

Male Vocalist of The Year

WILLIE NELSON
LARRY GATLIN

Vocal Group of The Year

THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND

Vocal Duo of The Year

JOHNNY DUNCAN
and JANIE FRICKE

Instrumental Group of The Year

GATLIN FAMILY AND FRIENDS
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Instrumentalist of The Year

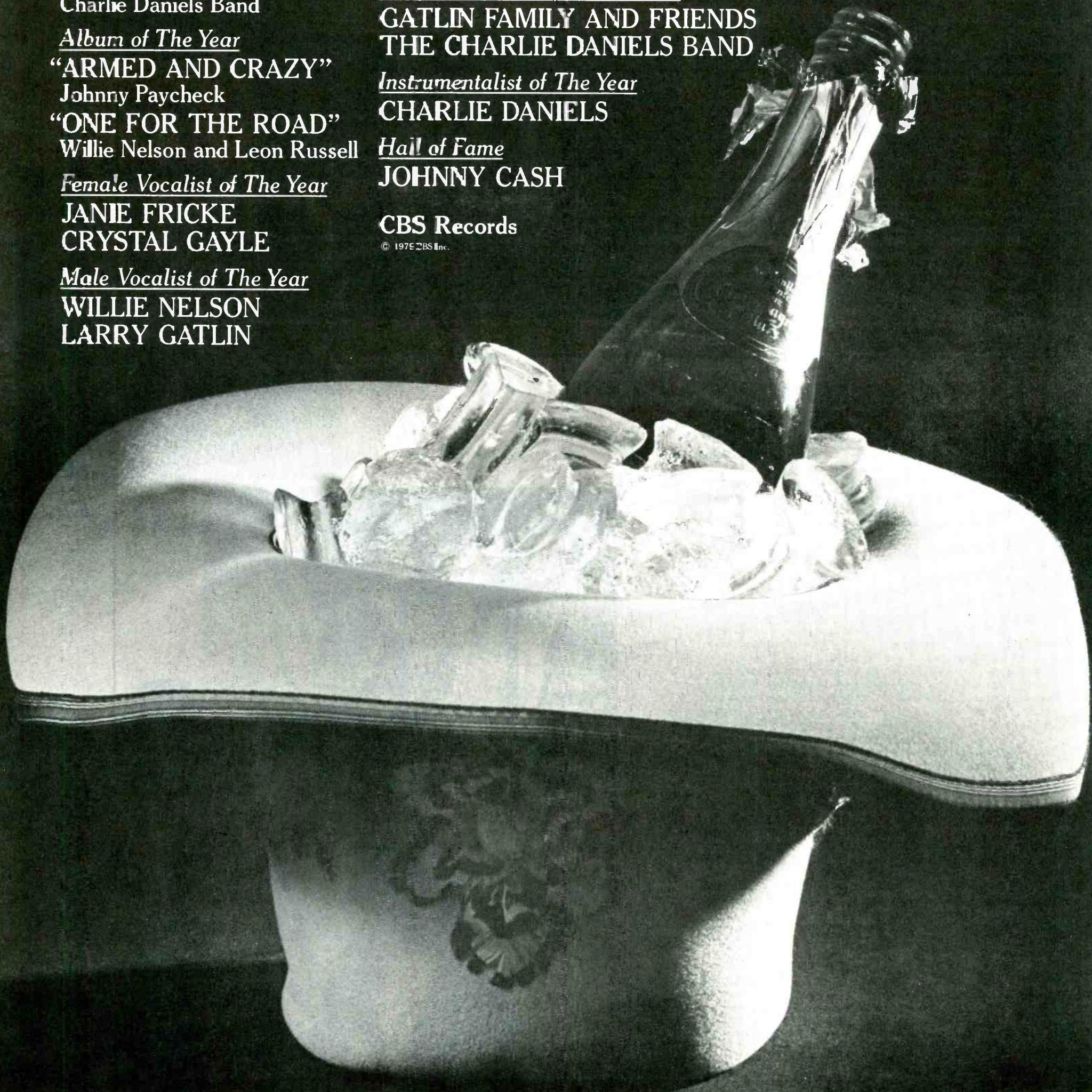
CHARLIE DANIELS

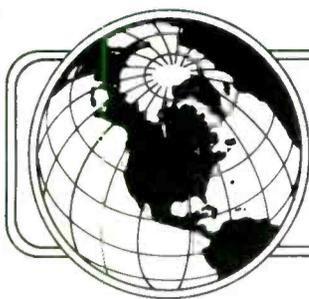
Hall of Fame

JOHNNY CASH

CBS Records

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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Cooperative Competition Boosts Country Music

By MIKE HYLAND

With Country Music week arriving, the various Nashville-based organizations are gearing up for what could turn out to be the most successful eight days in Nashville history. Banquets, cocktail parties, dinners and receptions are all planned and ready to happen. The President has declared the month of October as Country Music Month, and the culmination of almost a year's worth of work is about to take place.

During the week, each of the organizations will be holding its own awards ceremonies to honor its members who contributed to an outstanding year for country music. The biggest presentation is the CMA Awards which will be telecast by CBS-TV on Oct. 8. In addition to the television broadcast, CMA will present a post awards show to be aired over the NBC radio network hosted by Ralph Emery and Bill Anderson.

Despite the threat of a recession and a soft sales year throughout the record industry, all of the Nashville organizations have had a successful year due to the growth of country music throughout the nation, and its steady sales trend.

Tom Collins, CMA board chairman states, "Although the second half of 1979 has indicated a slump in record sales throughout the industry in general, country music has held its own, continuing to generate steady and healthy sales. One reason for this is the intense loyalty of country music fans, a strong foundation upon which the entire country music industry is built."

Country music reached several milestones during 1979, in addition to increased record sales. The annual CMA radio survey revealed that an additional 284 stations started programming country music full time since 1978—a significant increase.

The CMA also presented its first "Special Award" to President Carter for his consistent support of country music and for his sponsoring a country music night at the White House. Willie Nelson and Charley Pride led a CMA delegation to Washington to present the award to the President.

There are two major projects that involve CMA each year—Fan Fair and convention week. This year's Fan Fair, held June 4 through 9 drew more than 14,000 people. That event increases by at least 500 people each year.

In addition to its awards show and its post awards cocktail supper, the CMA will host a talent buyers seminar which will be held at the beginning of convention week. The seminar is for bookers of country music talent, and includes workshops, discussions and showcases. The attendance for the seminar, like Fan Fair, increases every year. This year's participants will also attend the awards show.

CMA has been involved with the U.S. government's Visitor Service Program. It hosted a breakfast for the National Copyright Tribunal that met in Nashville last spring, and it sponsored a dinner for the Black Music Assn.

"During 1979, CMA has continued its thrust to bring country music to nations around the world. As country continues to enjoy a great popularity here in the U.S., CMA's primary area of promotion lies abroad," says Ralph Peer, president of CMA.

It has retained a public relations firm to help promote itself and country music around the world. The firm, Hill and Knowlton, maintains offices in key cities all over the world.

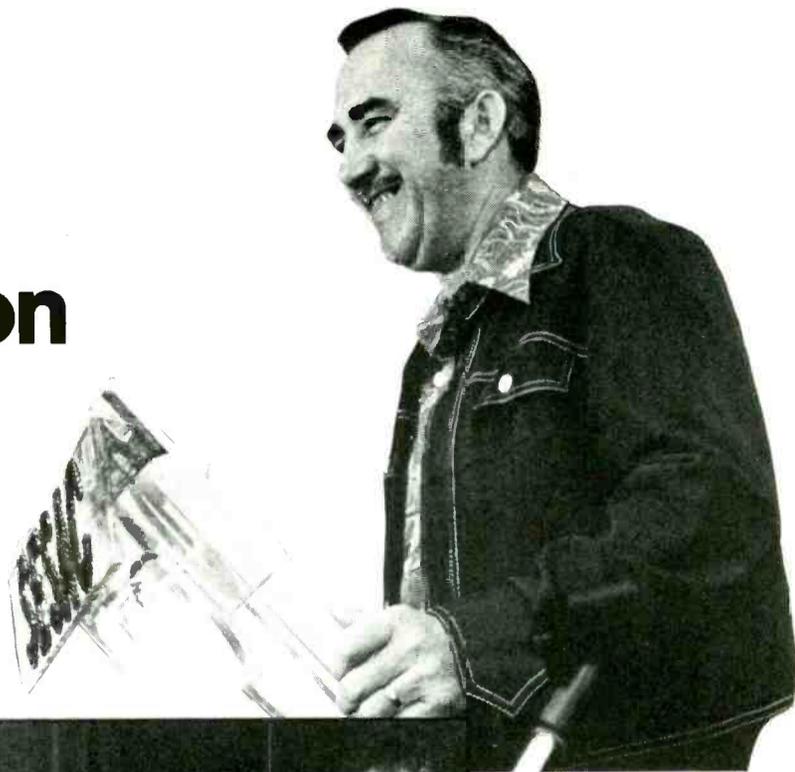
"A few years ago, recognizing the growing international scope of country music, CMA appointed development committee chairmen in several countries," states Peer. "During the past year, these committee chairmen met twice to redefine goals and plan promotional strategy." One meeting was held last May during the MIDEM conference in Cannes, France. The chairmen were also invited to attend CMA's third annual board meeting in Calgary, Alberta in July, marking the first time such an invitation was extended.

Another new development for CMA has been the appointment of Ed Benson as associate executive director. His responsibilities are to make sure all programs, plans and activities are progressing and to handle the day to day management and running of the office. This will enable Jo Walker, executive director, to spend more time outside the office with people in the industry in meetings and travel, and also to concentrate on the association's long range planning and goals.

The Nashville Songwriters Assn. International, chartered in 1967, boasts a membership of more than 1,300 from every state in the union as well as many foreign countries.

Headed by executive director Maggie Cavender, NSAI is a service organization helpful not only to established writers, but to new songwriters.

NSAI held its first songwriters symposium in March of this year. More than 250 writers and would be writers attended the day long event capped by Songwriter Achievement Night, the organizations awards ceremony. The awards included songwriter of the year, won by Sonny Throckmorton and the song of the year, "You Needed Me," written by Randy Goodrum. (Continued on page WOCM-54)



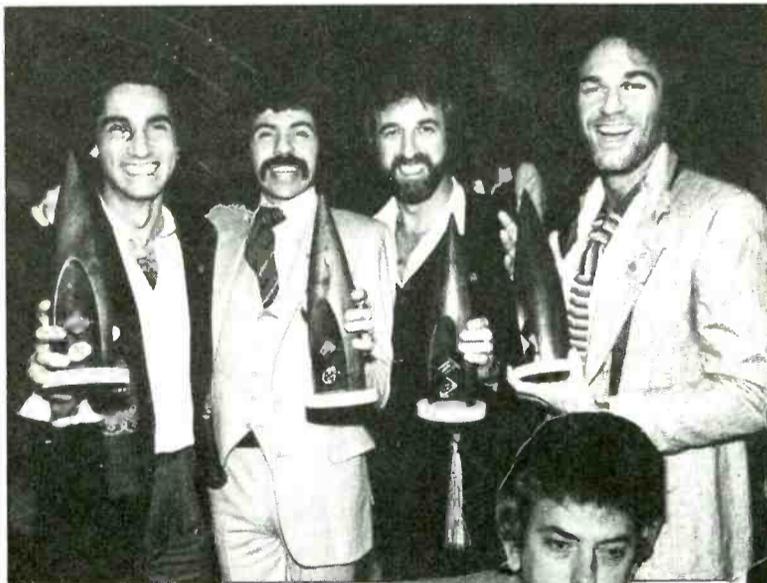
Left, at the BMI awards banquet, are Ed Cramer, Frances Preston, Tammy Wynette and George Richey



Tennessee Senator Jim Sasser tickles the ivories at ASCAP for Jack Stapp, Wesley Rose and Ed Shea.



The Oak Ridge Boys clutch their coveted CMA awards.



Conferring at the National AFTRA Convention held at the Opryland Hotel are Nashville delegates (from left) Louis Nunley, Tom Brannon (president of the Nashville local), Justin Tubb and Diane Tidwell.



Mike Hyland is a reporter in Billboard's Nashville office.

OCTOBER 13, 1979; BILLBOARD

A Billboard Spotlight

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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

The Ever-Evolving Sound Of Country

Tom Collins: "The name of the game is to always change and stay half a step ahead. If you're one step ahead, you get in trouble."



Larry Butler: "If a record doesn't make you happy or sad, the producer and artist haven't done their job."



Just as the face of country music has been changing in recent years, so has the style and substance of the product rendered by country music's top producers.

What are those changes? Why have they occurred? What makes country music unique from a producer's perspective? And what's ahead? Let's look and see.

The grandest perspective of all comes from Nashville's pioneer producer, the man who helped create Music City and helped Nashville keep that tag through the years with an incredible string of hits at Decca, MCA, and, now, independently. Owen Bradley.

A member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, Bradley has produced a wide range of acts—from Ernest Tubb to Loretta Lynn.

"It used to be a sign of weakness if you didn't cut four sides in a three-hour session," recalls Bradley. "In the older days, we went more for trying to get the artist to give a great performance and capture it on the spot. Now you try to manufacture it."

Nowadays, notes Bradley, a producer hopes to cut a couple songs in a three-hour session, and maybe will settle for just one.

Bradley has been responsible for many country music trends, including the use of strings. Though many feel the addition of strings to country sessions is relatively new, Bradley initiated the practice back in the early '50s with Red Foley. It wasn't a popular combination, he recalls, until Brenda Lee later managed to pull it off.

Patsy Cline, surprisingly, also benefitted from the addition of the early-year strings. "We used four strings," says Bradley, "and then applied the Peter Principle and increased it to 10—and were able to get away with it."

Bradley cites the song as the critical element for record success: "It's easier to find the great song than to out-sing everybody."

Other producers agree. And, in Nashville—a songwriting town if there ever was one—the emphasis is on the lyrics over the melody.

"If you have a great lyric, the melody is a breeze," advises CBS Records producer Billy Sherrill. "I've got 85 million melodies in my head right now, but finding a real unique idea is the hardest part of all. I can think of a half dozen country songs that went No. 1, and they all had the same melody."

Sherrill—producer of Tammy Wynette, George Jones, and many others—also feels that the only surprises left in the music business come, not from artists, but from writers. "You know how the artists sound and how the pickers sound, you know what the record company can do, so the only real surprise is somebody coming in and playing you the embryo of a platinum album and saying, 'This is it!'"

One of the brightest new producers on the Nashville scene is Brien Fisher, a vice president at Ovation Records, who di-

rects the sessions of such acts as Joe Sun and the Kendalls. "The song is still the barometer today," he echoes. "And it needs to be today's song."

He sees country music changing as it becomes more progressive and sophisticated, reflecting the tastes of the consumers. "We could use a flute in a record today, or cut a country record without a steel guitar, and it wouldn't draw that much attention."

What makes a hit country record? Fisher points to writer-singer Joe Sun. "It's a guy laying his gut feeling on the line."

Four Nashville producers have been equally adept at achieving chart success in both the country and pop arenas. Sometimes their acts—such singers as Barbara Mandrell, Crystal Gayle, Kenny Rogers and Bill Anderson—have been accused of being more pop than country. To a man, these producers will decry the use of labels, and instead urge listeners to think in terms of music, not categories.

"We created our own sound and style with Barbara Mandrell," advises her producer Tom Collins, who further advises, "She is country."

But she is selling in almost every market existing, having hit Billboard's Soul, Country, Pop and Easy Listening charts.

Though young, Collins sees some recent changes in country music, mainly the type of licks and rhythm patterns. "We're not limited by a three-chord song now. You can have five- or six-chord songs, and still be interpreted as country."

Collins claims country operates in cycles, and the music form could revert back to a more traditional approach. "The name of the game," confides Collins, "is to always change, and stay a half-step ahead. If you're one step ahead, you get in trouble."

Crystal Gayle has been the crossover success story cohort of Dolly Parton. Again, her producer, Allen Reynolds, doesn't want to put a pop label—or, for that matter, a country label on her. "She's just Crystal Gayle—a capable and good singer," proclaims Reynolds, who insists he just tries to "stick to the basics."

The technological advancement of country music impresses Reynolds. "We're taking more time to get a higher quality of recording."

He also voices a view shared by his fellow Nashville producers: "Country music is a lot more song-oriented than sound-oriented."

Leave it to Larry Butler to take it down to the dollar. And his sixth sense seeks the bottom line: "People have become more critical of what they spend their money for. There's more sophistication in their listening and more sound consciousness because of better sound equipment."

The producer of Kenny Rogers, Charlie Rich, Billie Jo Spears, Mac Davis, Roy Clark, Hank Thompson and the Earl Scruggs Review, Butler claims he's spending a lot more time

(Continued on page WOCM-56)

The New World Of



Salutes Country Music

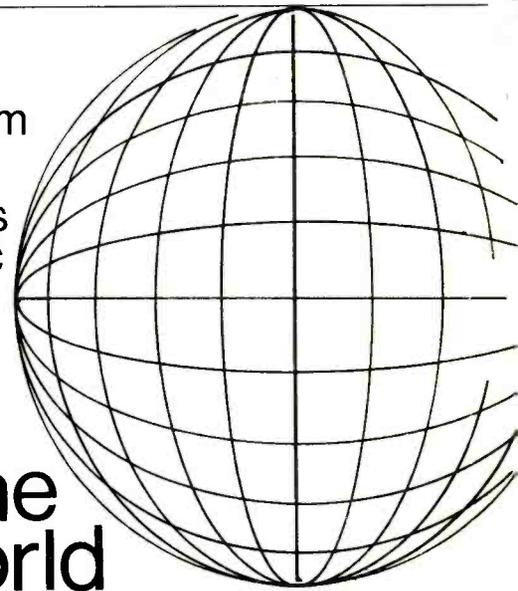
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Around The World
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- Sleeping Single
- In A Double Bed
- You're My Jamaica



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

At Nashville's Woodland Sound Studios, producer Ron Chancey receives help with his birthday cake.



Little Jimmy Dickens donates one of his small outfits to Diana Johnson, director of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.



Paths cross at Nashville International Raceway as singer Ruby Falls collides with Waylon Jennings.



Backstage with Roy Clark and Jimmy Dean.



Boxcar Willie, a Texas act who has built up a phenomenal following in the U.K. this past year, receives an award from Miss England, Carolyn Weaward.



Mickey Gilley appears on "That Nashville Music."

THE PICTURE

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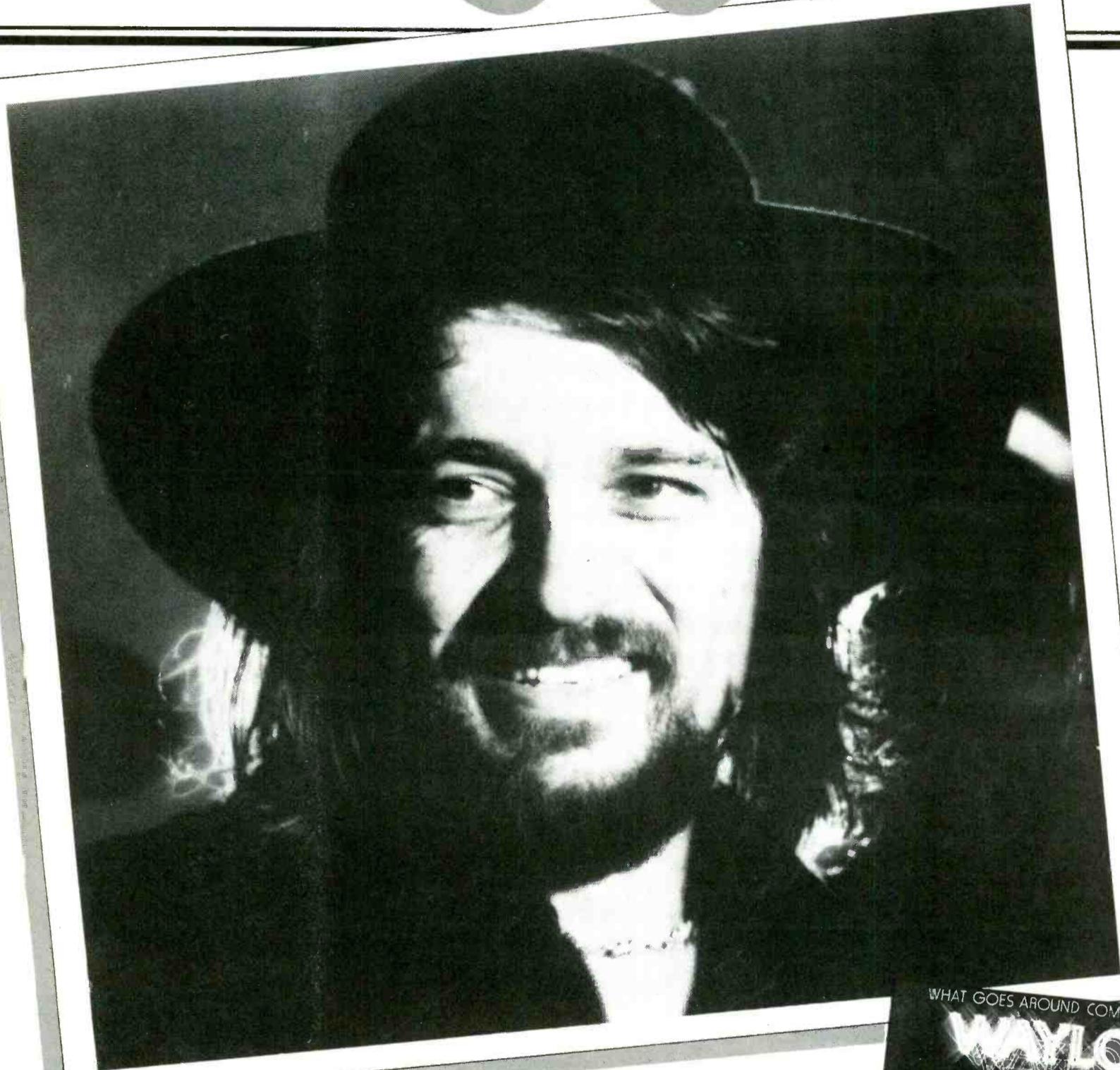
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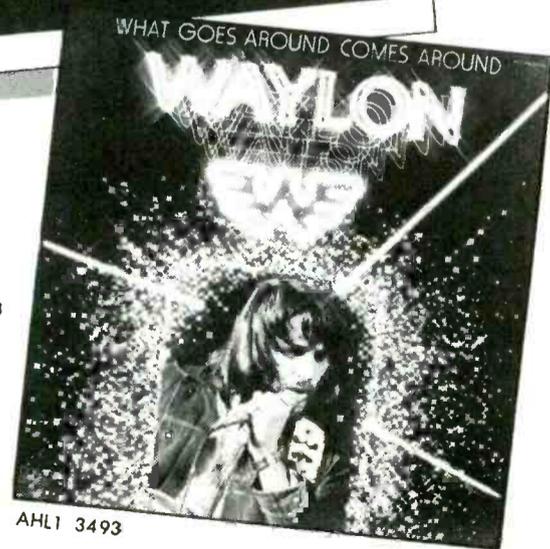


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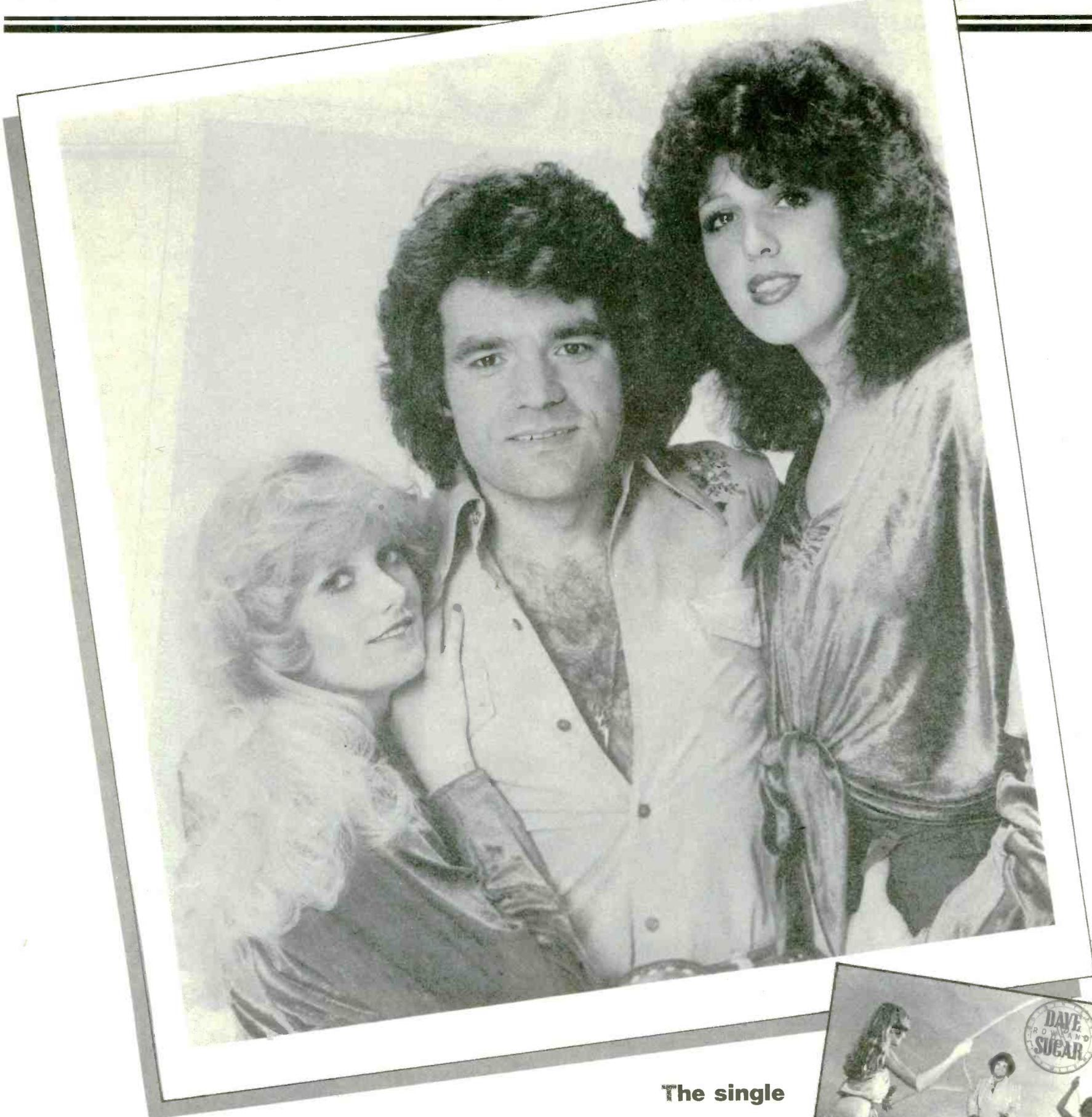
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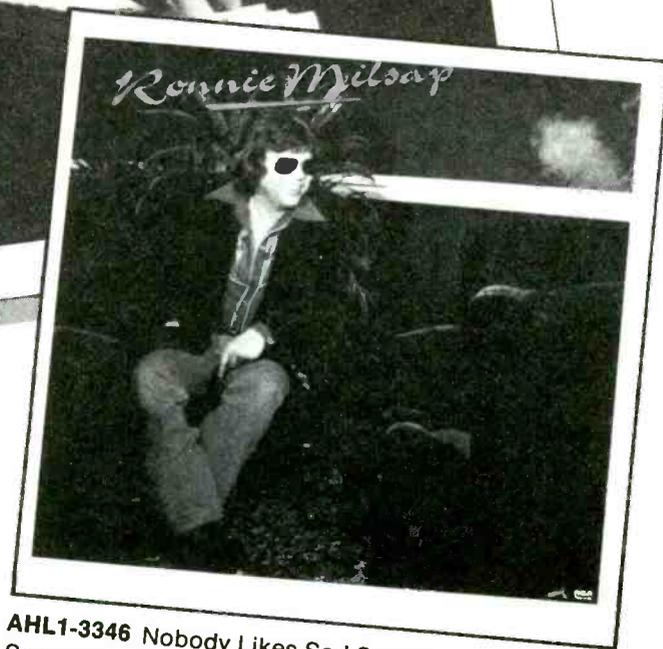


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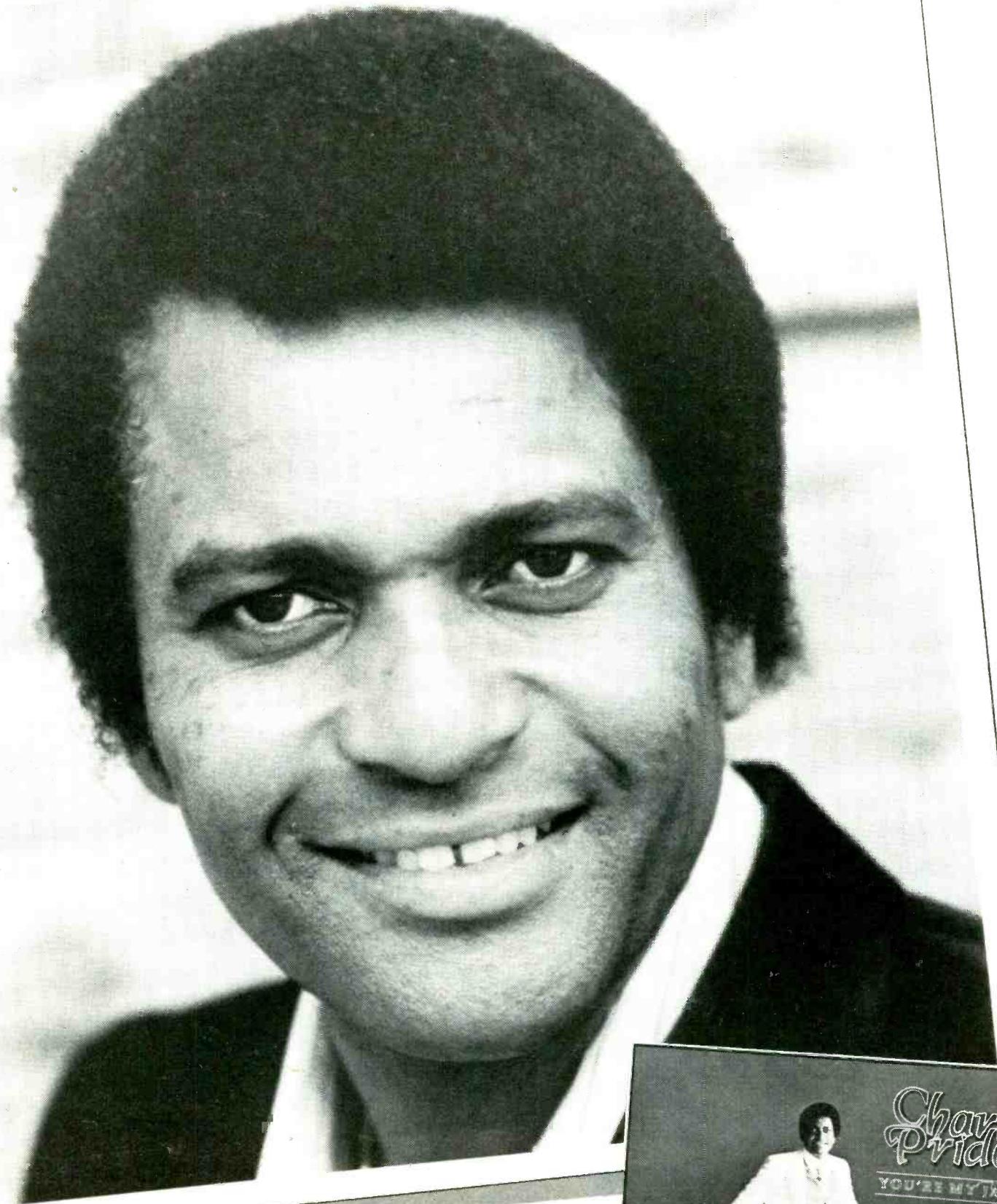


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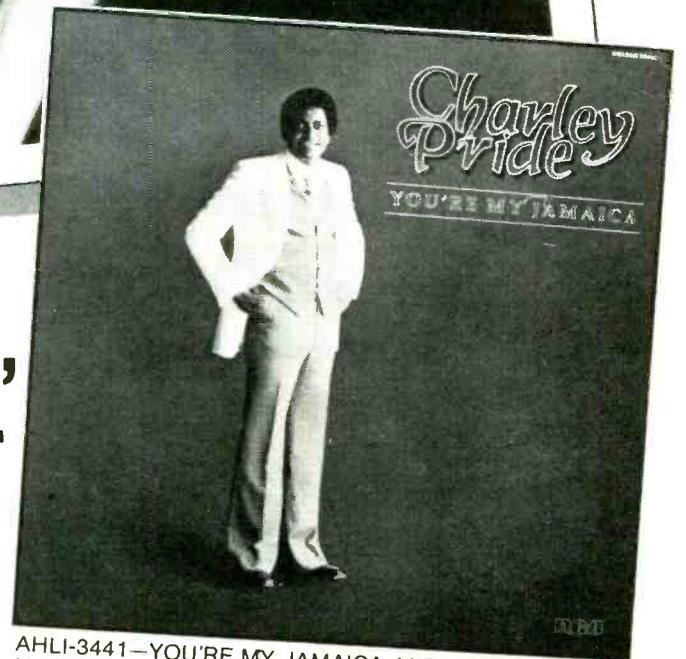
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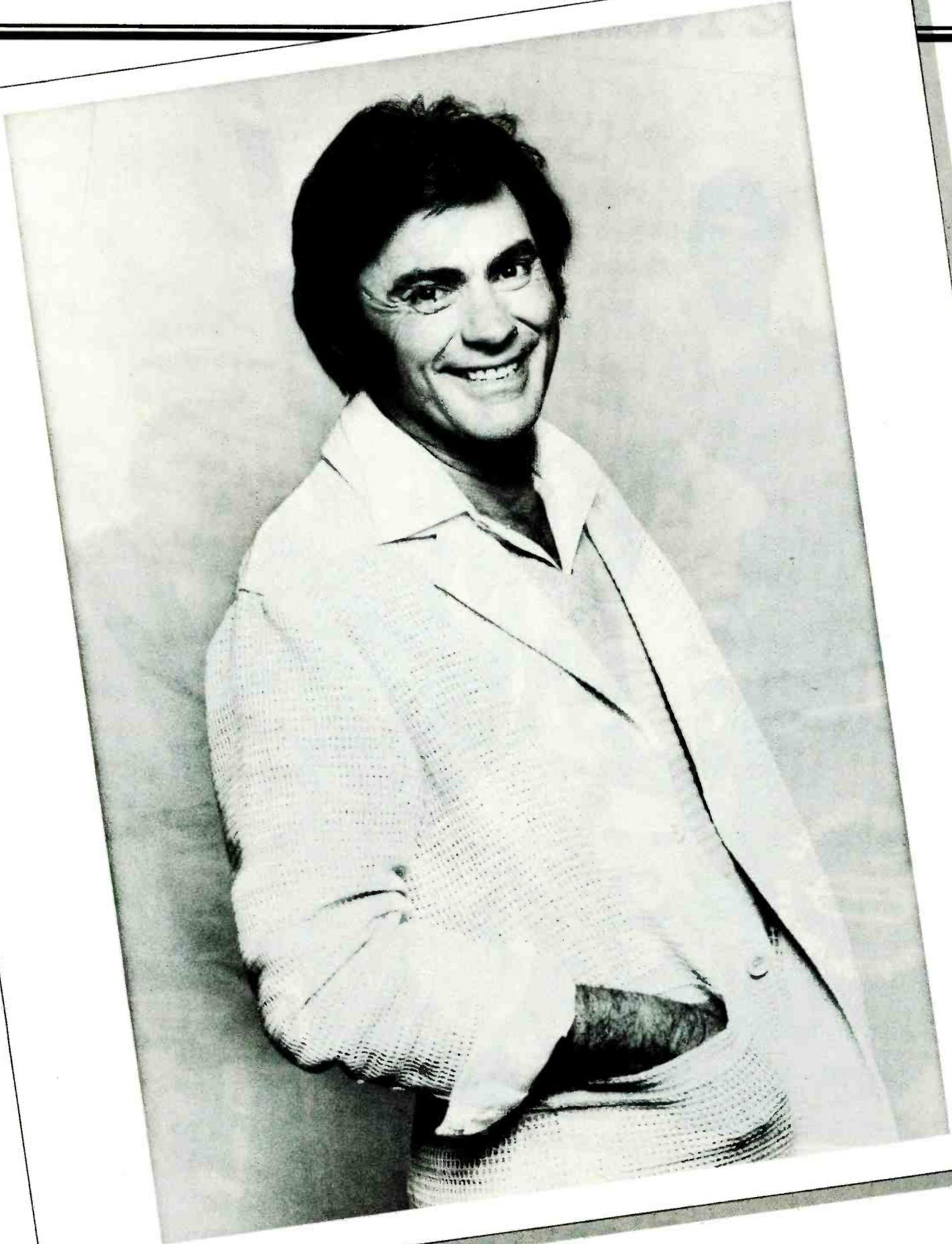
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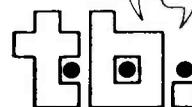
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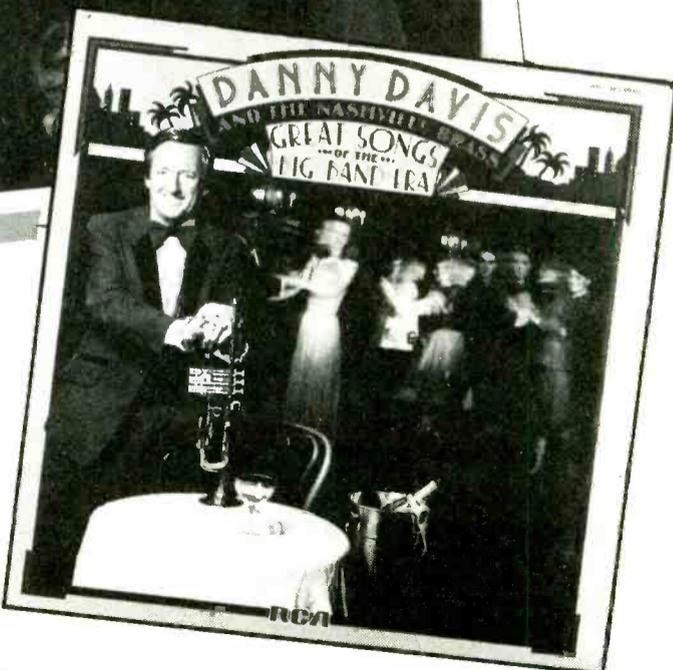
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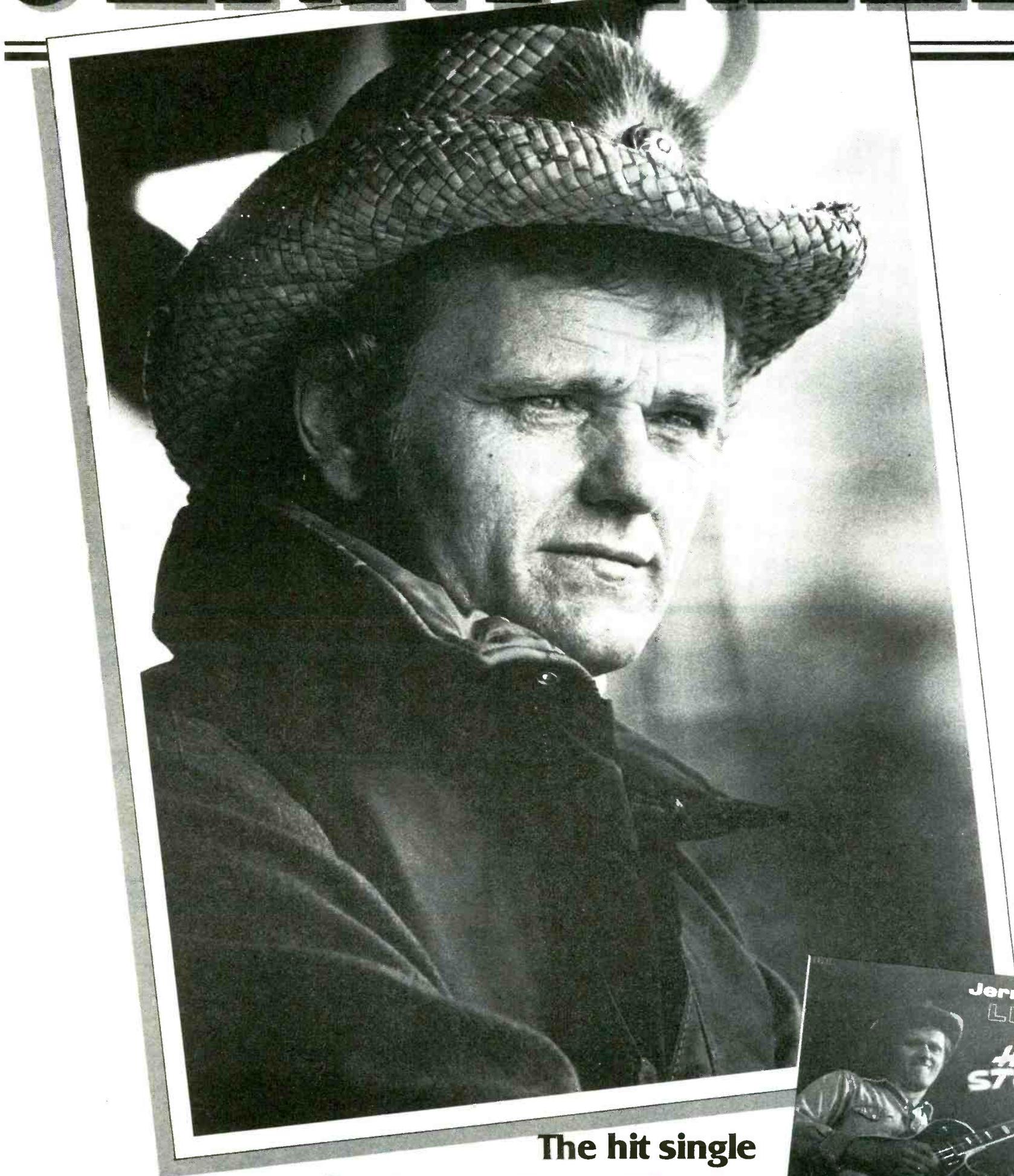
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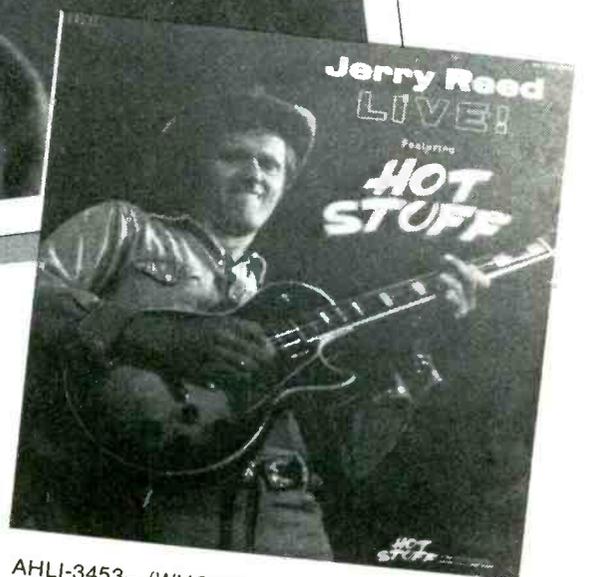
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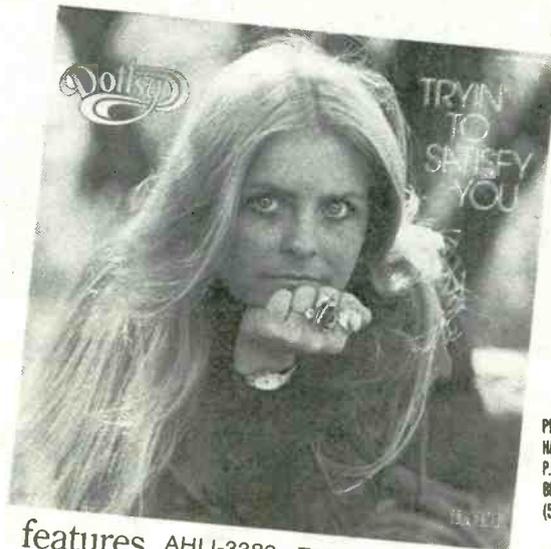
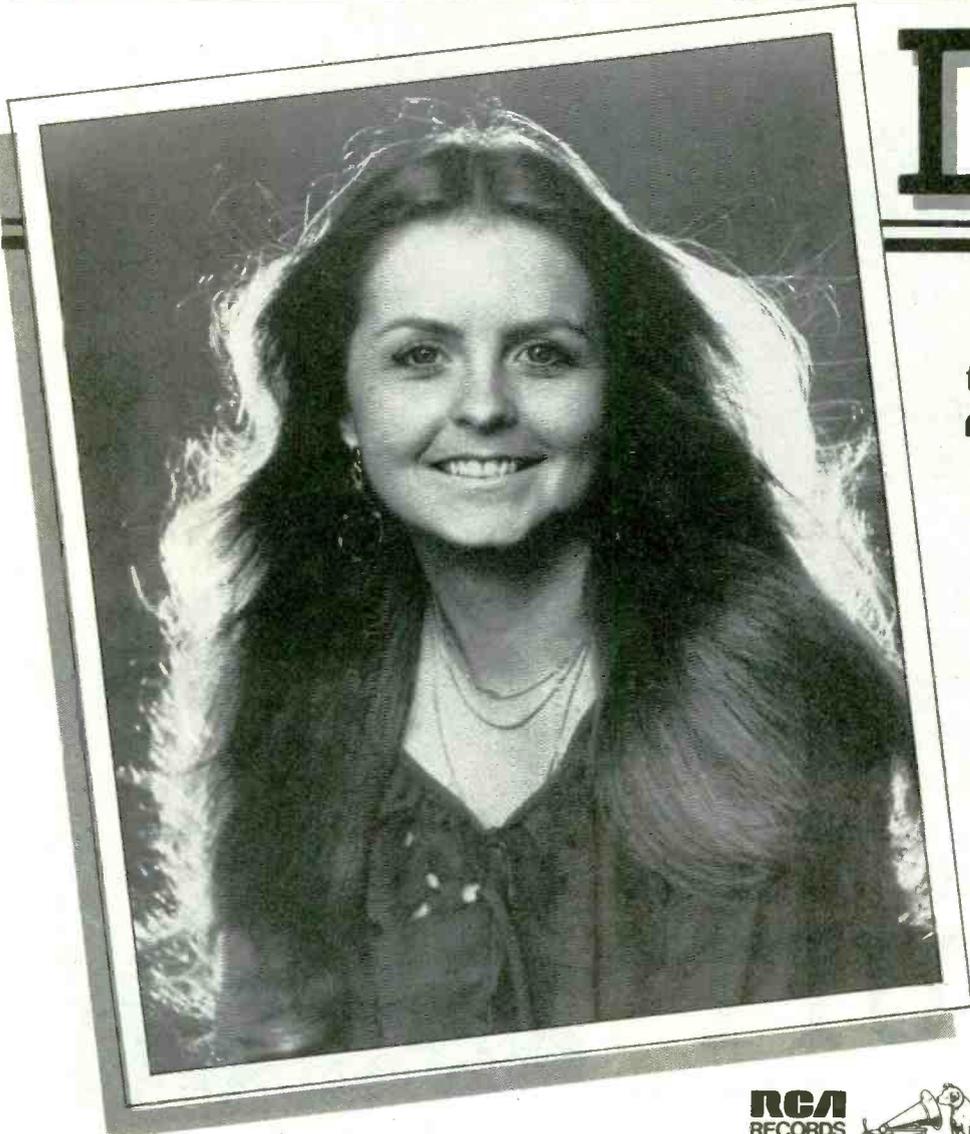


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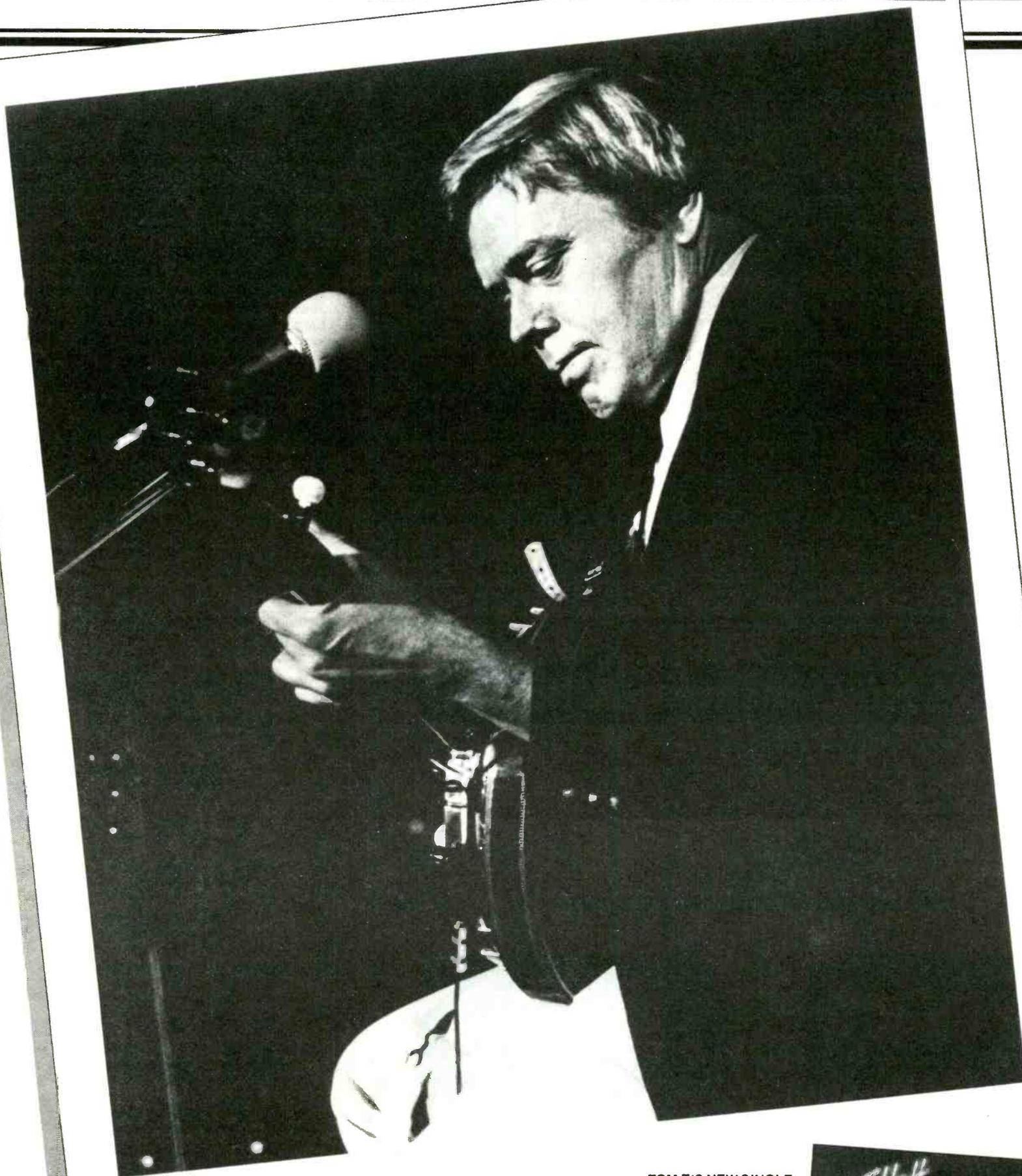
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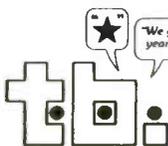
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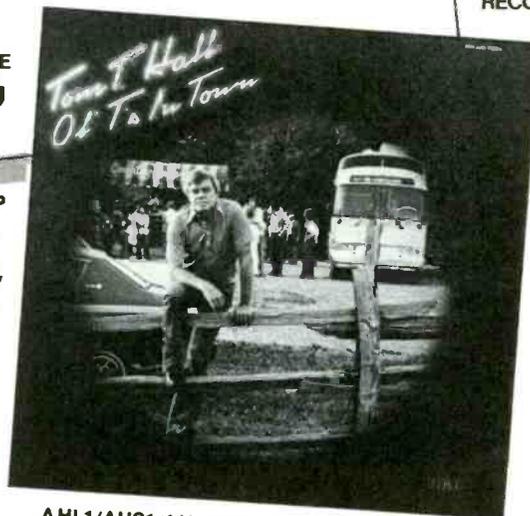
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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Razzy Bailey, writer-artist, meets with Academy Award film composer and ASCAP board member George Duning at the ASCAP awards banquet.



Buddy Killen, left, president of Tree International, shows the secret of his success to Epic's Louise Mandrell; Rick Blackburn, CBS vice president of marketing in Nashville; and artist Gene Cotton.

Publishers' Boom Reflects Growing Country Acceptance

By DOUGLAS B. GREEN

Recessions and rumors of recessions notwithstanding, the country music publishing community enjoyed a record year in 1979, in many cases due to increased use of country music in television and film scores.

"It was a fantastic year for us" says Buddy Killen of Tree International. "It's the biggest year we've ever had. Not only have we been consistently and heavily on the charts, but our production company has shown tremendous growth which has helped the overall picture."

Wesley Rose, at Acuff-Rose, is as enthusiastic in his own low-key manner: "We were up 20% from last year in profit and even more than that in revenue. Each year for many years now we've been very fortunate that things have just been getting bigger and bigger."

Likewise, Bill Denny of Cedarwood sees the upswing in business as part of an emerging pattern of steady country music growth: "Last year was a good one for us, and this one is shaping up nicely as well. It all reflects the growing national interest in and acceptance of country music."

Although record labels experienced some vicissitudes during the year, major publishers were, for a variety of reasons, exempt from the economy-induced turbulence. "The record companies had a bad quarter or two," says Killen, "but it did not affect us. I guess it has to do more with good material and good song pluggers, and we've been fortunate to have both. I really don't think the economy will effect us unless we happen to have a very long lasting recession. It seems to affect the pop music sector more quickly and more visibly than country; we in country music just don't seem to feel those downswings as much."

"The economy does of course have an effect on the music business, and it will doubtless affect publishing eventually, but for now we have enjoyed steady growth," adds Denny.

Rose amplifies this comment: "The economy will of course have an effect on overall publishing, but this is a peculiar busi-

ness: it depends on your songs. You can have a great year in a depression, or have a bad year in a boom. The songs are the key. This is why we at Acuff-Rose work our catalog songs as hard as we do our new ones: to insure a steadiness of interest in our songs, and to continue to develop hits from our catalog."

What of the smaller publishers, the newer, less vast firms without huge catalogs to fall back on? Maggie Cavendar, head of the Nashville Songwriters Associated International, admits that the economy might be having more of an effect on the smaller publisher, but feels that this situation actually worked out to the good of the majority of the songwriters in the NSAI: "I really can't say for sure, or specifically, but I think they may be hurting a little bit because of the economy. But still, there is a certain sense of eagerness now, a willingness to listen to new material that is refreshing and exciting. This is an outlet we haven't had recently, these are open doors that used to be closed, and I think it's great!"

Paul Craft, however, shared a somewhat more pessimistic view on the same subject. A singer and songwriter, Craft formed Black Sheep Music primarily for his own material, and Writer's Night Music for the works of other young songwriters, and has been in partnership with Audie Ashworth for some three years now. "We've done quite well the three years we've been open, and you really can't go by this year, because we had Don Schlitz' "The Gambler," which made it an exceptionally great year.



Joe Moscheo of BMI gifts Tony Joe White, writer of "Rainy Night in Georgia," and publisher Bob Beckham of Combine Music with a one million broadcast performance citation.



Kicking off the Show Biz Music Group are, from left, Ed Penney, general manager; Patricia Strawbridge, his assistant; and Reg Dunlap, president of Show Biz Inc.

Doug Green, formerly with the Country Music Foundation is now an entertainer.

(Continued on page WOCM-56)

A Billboard Spotlight

OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD

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Tanya Tucker jokes with MCA N.Y. staffers after her performance in the "Opry On Broadway" series at the St. James Theatre. At left is Barry Goodman, MCA local Promotion, Tucker, and at right, Mark Ryan, MCA disco coordinator.



Eddie Rabbitt and Marty Robbins share the mikes.

By CHUCK NEESE

1979 headlines brought news of incessant rains and flooding in the eastern part of the United States. Inflation moved at a rate of 17% and the ploy to up gasoline prices caused areas from Pennsylvania to California to be fuel-less. With such negative factors facing the sellers of live country entertainment, how would they withstand the fuel, weather and economic pitfalls of '79?

Billboard went to the ticket sellers and promoters of country shows and asked them what 1979 did to their pocket-books.

"Grand Ole Opry" manager Hal Durham states that his summer crowds were off 8% to 9%, a figure Durham attributes to the gas crunch. Most of his attendance losses were on Friday and Sunday matinees, which were only scheduled during summer vacation periods. Durham states that the bulk of his audiences drive 400 miles from states such as Ohio, Illinois and Michigan to reach the Nashville show. The 1979 attendance slowdown was a first for the traditional attraction.

Glenn Reeves, who runs the WWVA Jamboree at Wheeling, W. Va., says that his winter was the worst in eight years. The Jamboree's average ticket buyers travel 350 miles, and the fuel uncertainty did hurt his Saturday night shows. However, Reeves' outdoor promotion, called Jamboree in the Hills, drew 39,000 festival goers for the two-day event. Tickets were \$25 each for the July 14 and 15 show, which was held at the height of an Eastern independent gas retailers strike. Weather was no factor and Reeves' turnout broke a three-year attendance record. The Jamboree manager declined to name specific country artists who might have added to the success of the Jamboree in the Hills, stating, "I honestly feel the event itself draws the crowds."

Country talent sellers and promoters Dick Blake and Lon Varnell set 15 attendance records at the 18 fair dates they promoted on their package, which included country artists the Statler Brothers and Barbara Mandrell. Blake cites the Iowa State Fair at Des Moines, where 30,000 people attended the opening of the fair, and 20,000 paid to see the grandstand show which featured the Statlers and Mandrell. Blake did say, however, that rainy weather hurt overall fair attendance, even though all his dates were up. Blake added that he did business during the peak of the gas shortage and maintains that country superstars will draw even though fuel and weather conditions may be negative.

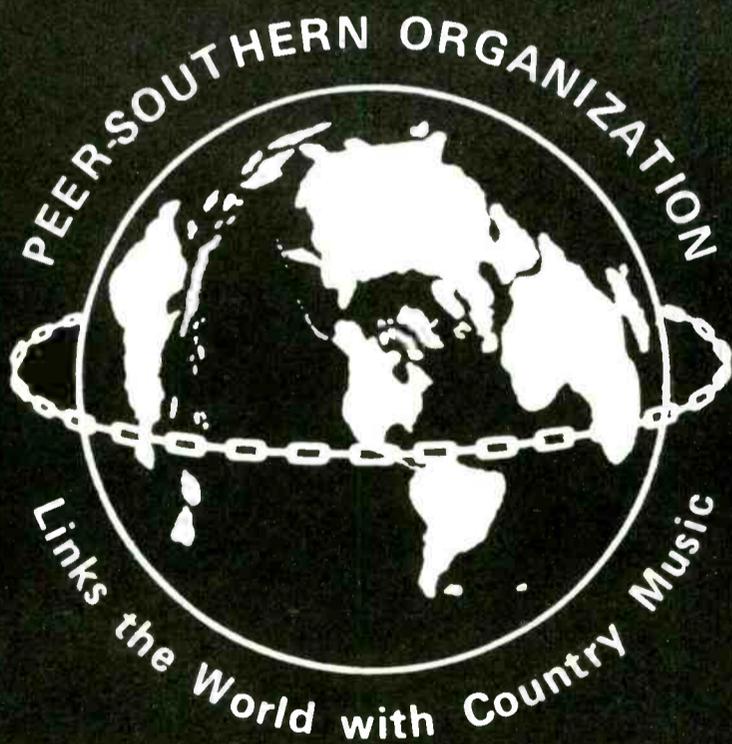
Country night club operator Mike Moss, who runs two large dinner clubs in suburban St. Louis, says that any excuse for non-attendance will hurt his contemporary acts but "the country audience is more supportive." Since talent agent

(Continued on page WOCM-56)

Chuck Neese is a freelance writer in Nashville, who has been a producer, publisher & songwriter there.

A Billboard Spotlight

OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD

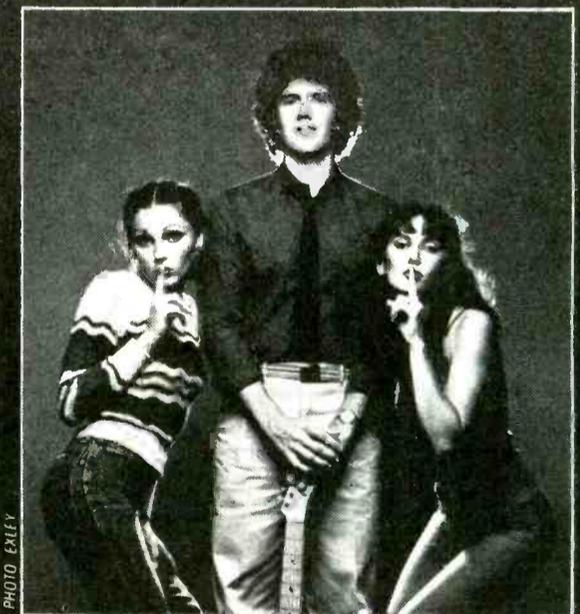


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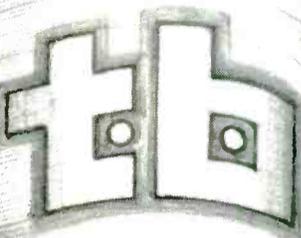
Lewis Anderson may be one of the best kept secrets in the songwriting business. But it's no secret that his songs are recorded and respected by some of the biggest artists in country and pop... like Kenny Rogers, Crystal Gayle, America, Seals And Crofts, The Carpenters, Tanya Tucker and Helen Reddy, to name a few.

Lewis Anderson — we can't keep him a secret much longer.

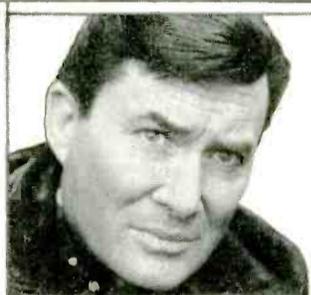


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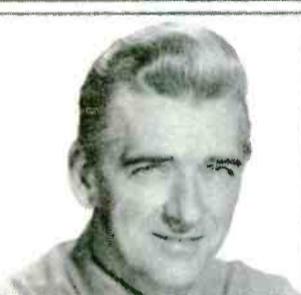
Don Gibson



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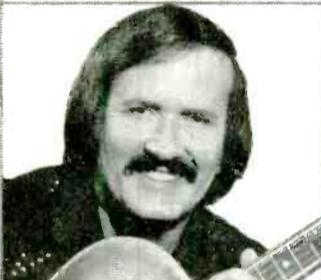
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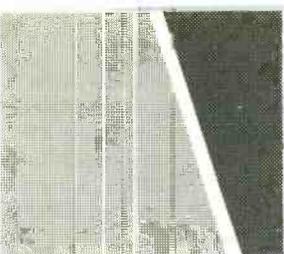


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Strong Folk Roots Anchor Country In Canada

By KATE ELLIOTT

Carroll Baker receives gold status from RCA Canada's country promotion and artists relations manager Barry Haugen.

A Billboard Spotlight

OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD



As the decade draws to a close, the Canadian country music industry is simultaneously running hot and cold. It's hot, with an unprecedented amount of internationally-competitive product being released, and with two-thirds of Canadian radio stations accessible to playing that product; and it's cold, with country music accounting for only 7% to 10% of total Canadian record sales.

Throughout the last several years, the maturing of the Canadian country music industry contributed to the positive end of the scale. While the industry had a more or less official birth in the 1930s with the signing of Wilf Carter (Montana Slim) and Hank Snow to RCA Victor, it didn't begin to accelerate until the latter half of the seventies. Several major factors contributed to the acceleration.

The establishment of Canada's annual Big Country Awards in 1975, and the formation of the Academy of Country Music Entertainment in 1976, gave the industry, for the first time, an identity. The yearly gathering surrounding ACME's meetings and the presentation of the awards has created a lucrative forum for artists and executives. At least one success story owes much to this new avenue of communication. In 1976, at the Big Country Awards in Edmonton, Dallas Harms' producer, Gary Buck, caught the ear of Frank Jones, attending from Capitol in Nashville. The end result of that meeting saw Harms' "Paper Rosie" recorded by Gene Watson, and nominated for song of the year at the Country Music Assn.'s 1978 awards show.

For the Canadian country music industry, positive repercussions following the enactment of the Cancon legislation in 1970 are finally being felt. Initially, the 30% mandatory airplay regulation for Canadian product had a detrimental effect on Canadian country music. Throughout the folk music boom of the sixties, Canadian country stations had enjoyed high-calibre product from country-oriented folk artists like Gordon Lightfoot and Ian and Sylvia. The enactment of the legislation attracted some inferior product. According to Bill Anderson, last year's winner of the Big Country country DJ of the year award, the "less than professional" product that got on the air created prejudices that were difficult to overcome. The problem has now all but disappeared, with an ever-increasing volume of product forcing a wide-open competition among Canadian artists. Walt Grealis, editor and publisher of RPM Weekly, notes that today there is more country product released in Canada than rock and pop combined. The heavy competition has vastly improved the quality of Canadian record production. Industry executives in Canada point out that recording facilities are now on a par with those located in Nashville, and that the best home-grown studio musicians are beginning to stay in Canada—between the recording and television industries, there's enough work to keep them busy.

Television in Canada continues to be a springboard for big-

name talent. Both Anne Murray and Carroll Baker were first introduced to the Canadian public via tv. Country artists, both Canadian and American, are making maximum use of a flourishing number of country-oriented tv shows—most of which have emerged in the latter part of the seventies. A loyal audience for country music shows finds its roots in a 60% rural population—CBC's "Tommy Hunter Country" is living proof as it heads into its 15th straight season.

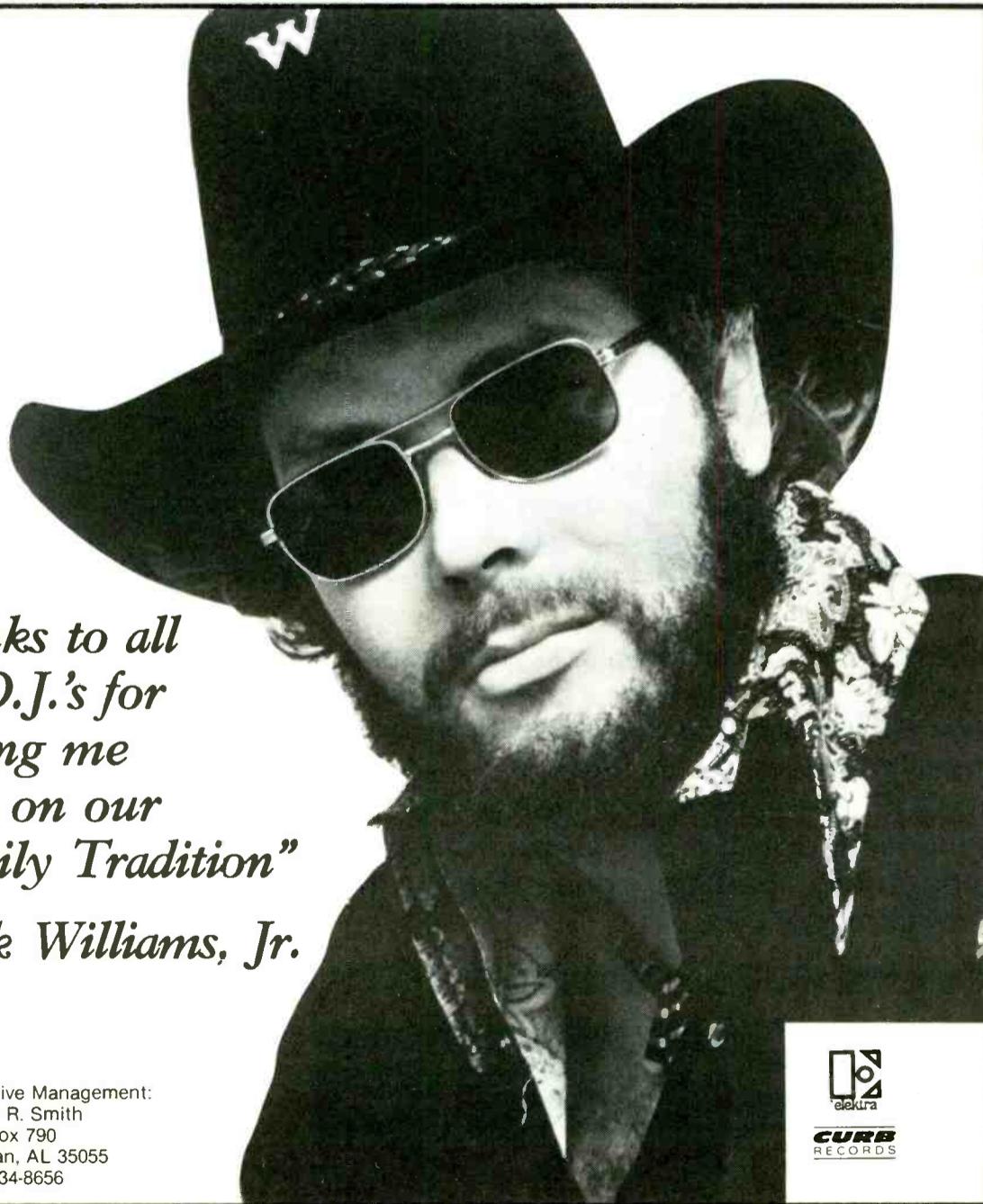
On an international level, success stories being written by country-oriented Canadian performers are helping to open doors for more talent at home. Anne Murray further established her crossover stardom with "You Needed Me" and "Shadows in the Moonlight." Carroll Baker and Dick Damron, both at the top of their profession as singer/songwriters at home, are gaining new fans as they tour overseas. The mobility is applauded by Dave Charles, President of ACME. According to Charles, many country artists have been in danger of "dying of attrition" through their reluctance to venture beyond provincial borders. The regional attitudes are beginning to fade, however, partly due to the impact of new endeavors like Bill Anderson's syndicated "Big Country" radio show, which has given a common stage to artists from the Maritimes to B.C. The show, broadcast on an equal number of MOR and full-time country stations, has attracted both confirmed country fans and people pleasantly surprised to discover that they like country music.

While the listening audience for Canadian country music is growing, the fact remains that the buying audience isn't. In some cases, an intensive marketing approach on the part of record companies is lacking, and in others, the major stumbling block is that many Canadian rackjobbers are influenced primarily by American trade charts. With publishing royalties the lifeblood of the industry, independent country-oriented labels that have evolved in the past few years rely on steady airplay for survival. But one notable breakthrough in sales of Canadian country product was achieved by the Tee Vee International label. Heavy tv and radio advertising, along with direct distribution to retailers resulted in gold albums for Al Cherny and the late Maurice Bolyer, while RCA's Carroll Baker became the first Canadian country artist to reach platinum status through her "20 Country Classics" album released on Tee Vee. Ed LaBuick, former president of Tee Vee International, and now president of the newly-formed Cachet Records, is applying Tee Vee's success formula to Cachet. Within three months of the label's formation, Cachet's Ronnie Prophet had earned a Canadian gold record.

For Canadian country performers like Prophet, Carroll Baker and Dallas Harms, the next step is a concentrated ef-

(Continued on page WOCM-52)

Kate Elliott is a freelance writer in Toronto.

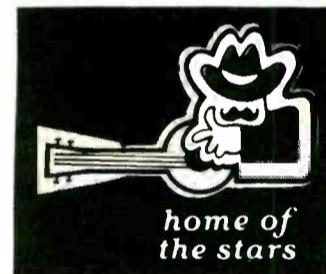


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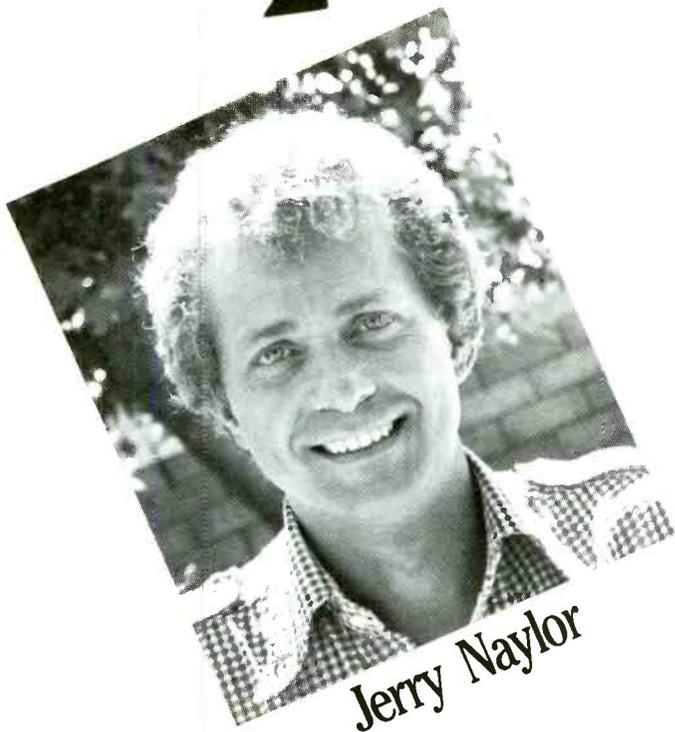
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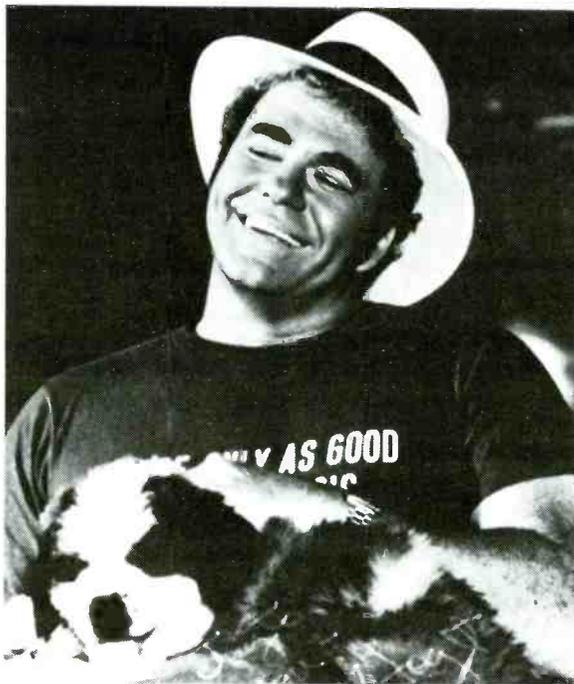
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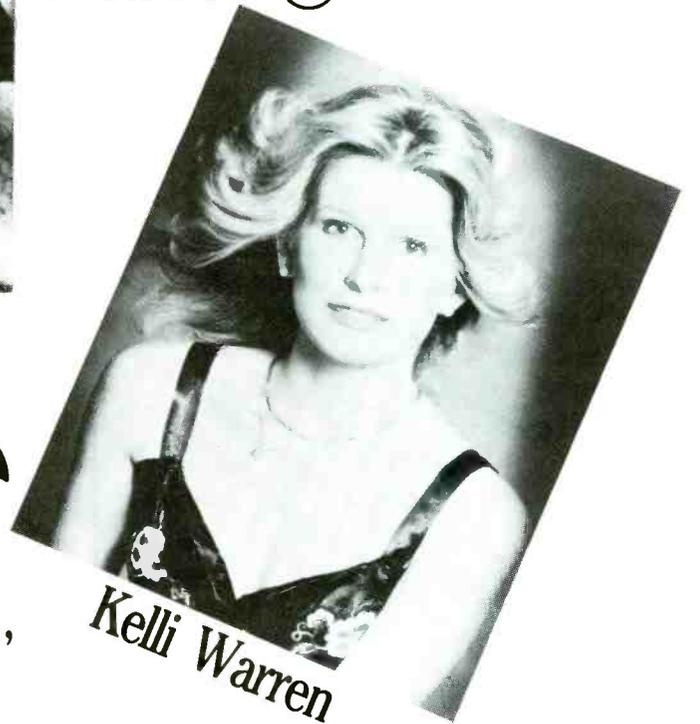
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Michael Bauer
Elroy Kahanek
Mae B. Axton

Louise Harrell
Frank McDonald
Jerry Naylor

John T. Axton
Donald Whitaker
Kelli Warren



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Slim Dusty, Australia's biggest ever record seller and a legend in his own time. He has 50 gold albums.

Out Of The Backyard And Onto The Front Porch

By GLENN A. BAKER

The current state of country music in Australia is, in the words of its most vociferous champion Nick Erby, "terrific." Erby, general manager of top rated Canberra pop station 2CC, hosts a two hour weekly "National Country Music Jamboree" show, which is syndicated to 54 Australian and seven Asian stations, with an average estimated audience of 500,000.

"We are at the beginning of something great," predicts Erby. "For years Australian country music has been downtrodden and just shrugged off as hillbilly music. Now credibility is being built up and talented people are moving out of their backyards onto the front porch of country music."

Erby is also the chairman of Country Music Australia, an association set up on the basis of Nashville's CMA, to promote and encourage the growth of indigenous country music. With 200 financial members, drawn from all areas of the Australian music/recording industry, CMA is the catalyst behind the annual gathering of the tribes—the Australian Country Music Awards staged at Tarnworth, New South Wales.

This year the award celebrations ran for 11 days, drawing 10,000 visitors to the rural center and generating more than \$1 million turnover for Tamworth's booming tourist industry. The awards were broadcast live over 57 Australian, 22 New Zealand, six Papua/New Guinea and one Malaysian radio station. Radio Australia sent out a condensed version to the world, in three languages—English, pidgin English and Japanese.

Country music currently accounts for a little over 5% of the total \$200 million Australian music marketplace, though the enthusiasm of its protagonists makes it appear much larger. Local country recording is currently in the middle of a vibrant boom, with small labels and studios opening up all over the



Second only to Slim Dusty, Victorian group The Hawking Brothers are the biggest country record sellers.

country. Bushland Records (Kilsyth, Victoria), Candle Records (Hobart, Tasmania), Battyman Records (Bathurst, New South Wales) and Kurrajong Records (Lightning Ridge, New South Wales) are just some of the scores of independent companies which have sprung up in what can be fairly described

as a boom. Currently there are three recording studios in Tarnworth—a city which aspires to be Australia's Nashville—two are adequate 8-track facilities while the other is a modern 16-track studio run by Hadley Records, a company in existence for 18 years under husband and wife team Eric and Hilary Scott.

Eric Scott, a man concerned with preserving the indigenous nature of Australian country music, sees not a boom but a "strong growth state" and reports an annual company turnover growth of 20%. Scott has 50 to 60 albums in his catalog with many 10 to 12 year old albums holding their own against titles added over the past few years. Hadley issues few singles because, according to Scott, "Country fans are not casual buyers."

The major companies, with the exception of RCA and Astor, dabble only lightly in country recording or marketing; while EMI, once the home of virtually every major local country artist, has recently purged its entire roster with the exception of Slim Dusty and daughter Anne Kirkpatrick. A&R manager John Kerr says "Country is not an area that I am particularly interested in," and indicates that, for the time being, no country artists will be signed. "They just don't sell enough records," he explains.

Such a comment does not, however, apply to the legendary Slim Dusty. Recording since 1943, Dusty has racked up a staggering tally of 50 gold albums, for more than 1 million sales—twice as many as his nearest rivals. Once scorned by city buyers, Dusty now sells 30% of his albums in metropolitan areas and is soon to embark, for the first time in 25 years, on an almost entirely metropolitan concert tour. With 33 albums currently in the EMI catalog, Dusty can be relied upon to go gold with every new album and, in instances where tv advertising is applied (50/50 rural and metropolitan) has sold up to 150,000 (triple platinum).

Behind Dusty, in sales, comes RCA group The Hawking Bros., who have recently moved 30,000 of their second album. "Great sales for a country album," exudes a&r man John Eggington. The group is making strong inroads into city markets and actually hit top 20 in Melbourne with its latest single. The Hawking Bros. head an RCA country roster which includes Buddy Williams, Trevor Knight, Johnny Ashcroft, John Laws and Moose Malone & The Country Playboys.

Astor, handling independent Image Records, also has a strong local country lineup, including the Bushwackers, Johnny Chester, Lee & Christine Conway and David Pincombe. While PolyGram, a company traditionally concerned

(Continued on page WOCM-57)

Glenn Baker is Billboard's correspondent in Australia.

A Billboard Spotlight

OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD

The LITTLE GIANT Record Company

Jerri Kelly

Kelly & Lloyd

Dee Dee Upchurch

Bobbe Seymour
The Nashville Rhythm Section

Mick Lloyd

Bill Hanks

1014 16th Avenue South
Nashville, Tennessee 37212

Steady Port

• Continued from page WOCM-3

Petty (in charge of country) and Jim Black (coralling pop and religious music), should be even more competitive in the future with its relatively new president, Norm Weiser.

Nashville studios continue to thrive. Norm Anderson reports a record year at Columbia. Glenn Snoddy sees Woodland go gold, and platinum. Other Nashville studios, and those in the fringe areas such as Owen Bradley's Barn in Mt. Juliet and Young 'Un in Murfreesboro, have seen sessions booked into the wee hours to accommodate the demand.

Along with writers, producers have been responsible for much of the success of the country sound. Their creative endeavors have implanted country music not only with credibility, but crossover—and controversy. When is a country record not a country record? What is the magic ethereal boundary that makes a country song go pop? Is Barbara Mandrell country? How about Dolly Parton? Even Hank Snow is suspect nowadays. Lord know, if it keeps up, we'll be seeing Gene Watson wearing Kiss makeup with a flaming guitar and Ernest Tubbs singing "Waltz Across Texas" backed by the Muzak Strings.

It has been a big year for a lot of artists—old and new. Kenny Rogers, the Statler Brothers, Dolly Parton, the Kendalls, Dave & Sugar, the Oak Ridge Boys, Willie Nelson. And new acts such as Big Al Downing, Joe Sun, John Conlee, Susie Allanson and Peggy Sue. They insure that country is a music of the future as well as the past.

Nashville, not content with the past, is looking to new horizons. RCA Records became the first Nashville branch of a major U.S. label to start its own autonomous pop label. Jerry Bradley, Joe Galante and other RCA leaders launched the Free Flight Records trial balloon that has been soaring successfully on the charts. ABC is long gone, and now calls itself MCA. MCA's leader, at this time last year, was Jimmy Bowen, who is long gone to Elektra.

Movies soaked up country music themes, artists and music with Jerry Reed in the forefront in such flicks as the ultra-high-grossing "Smokey And The Bandit" and his new "Hot Stuff." Hollywood is into Nashville as never before.

In a time when the world has gone beyond the moon, beyond Mars, beyond, and through, the rings of Saturn, mankind is looking for something simple, something laidback, something pleasant.

In many cases, that something has turned out to be country music. And that simplicity could be the magic that helps country music make it through the night of American recessionary woes, and lays the groundwork for its coming day in the sun.

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WOCM-50 Artists Break Loose

• Continued from page WOCM-16

been no loss overall as a label. In fact, we're in better shape now to break new artists . . . you tend to get comfortably settled in when times are good and maybe don't push quite as hard or expend quite as much effort as you could to work an act.

"After all, we're in show business," he points out, "and sometimes there's a little too much show and not enough business attached to our industry."

Galante views the advent of the 1980s as exciting and stimulating. "Nashville is producing a generation of new country artists who are capable of doing more than just standing on stage and singing into a mike. You'll see the spirit and morale of country higher than ever."

MCA Records, which began the year in rather rocky fashion, took on a dramatically different facelift in March of 1979 when it merged with ABC Records. ABC's country operation, under the skillful guidance and executive expertise of its Nashville chief, Jim Foglesong, had carefully nurtured a stellar country roster which spanned such artists as Barbara Mandrell, the Oak Ridge Boys, Don Williams, John Conlee and Roy Clark.

While the five-month period from October 1978 until the merger in March saw no MCA No. 1 country singles, that same time frame found ABC chalking up five weeks' worth of chart-topping country singles. And with the combined labels' roster showing a total of four No. 1 records just since the merger, along with a powerhouse total of 32 acts, MCA expects to be stronger than ever in the coming months.

Among the headliners stacked up on the MCA roster are Bill Anderson, Jerry Clower, Merle Haggard, Loretta Lynn, Olivia Newton-John, Hank Thompson, John Wesley Ryles, Conway Twitty, Tanya Tucker, Faron Young, Don Williams, Barbara Mandrell, the Oak Ridge Boys, John Conlee and Roy Clark.

And as a special feather in its cap, MCA recently welcomed back Brenda Lee, whose first single, produced by Ron Chancey, is due out this fall.

The impressive MCA hit parade of talent not only received more Country Music Assn. awards and Academy of Country Music honors last year than any other labels, but has also snared nine nominations in this year's CMA categories.

MCA artists were highly visible on tv in 1979. In fact, it was hard to find a program which *didn't* have an MCA act on board at some time during the year.

From John Conlee, who won best new male vocalist honors on the live telecast of the Academy of Country Music awards show in May, to Barbara Mandrell, who hosted and performed on the same show, the MCA roster turned up on tv screens everywhere.

Bill Anderson was on "Password," Loretta Lynn was on the "Tonight" show, the Oak Ridge Boys rubbed noses (figuratively) with Susan Anton on her summer series (as well as performing on 21 other programs), Tanya Tucker showed up on "Hollywood Squares,"—even Mr. Low Profile himself, Merle Haggard, taped both an "Austin City Limits" and a "Good Morning America" show for viewing.

And on the movie front, Universal Pictures' forthcoming spring release of "Coal Miner's Daughter," the multimillion-dollar film based on the life of Loretta Lynn, is expected to trigger sales activity on her catalog and soundtrack LP.

Foglesong, who became the president of MCA's revamped Nashville operation, estimates sales for the division have more than doubled in the last year resulting from improved marketing, promotion and a&r efforts gained from the merger. Tape sales of country product also increased when MCA purchased GRT Tapes.

A major month-long marketing campaign titled "I Love Country Yours And Mine" promoted 65 album selections that included new releases, current product and strong catalog items featuring 34 different artists. Special advertising budgets were assigned to each of the MCA branches to boost this promotion.

And topping off a fine year for the label, MCA Records sent Roy Clark, Barbara Mandrell, the Oaks and B.B. King on a first-time-ever tour through Europe, marking the debut of country music at the famed Montreux International Jazz Festival in July and continuing into Belgium, Switzerland and England.

Reflecting on the industry picture as a whole and on MCA specifically, Foglesong says, "The purchase of ABC's Nashville division by MCA brought some momentum and solidarity to an operation that had seemingly been experiencing constant change. Bob Siner, president of MCA Records, gives us total support, and the results are showing increased activity and sales on almost every artist, even in a period when overall industry sales have been down."

Looking ahead, Foglesong is optimistic for the 1980s. "The future looks bright. We plan to do everything within reason to develop our artists' careers and sell lots of records. MCA's international division . . . feels that our artists and product offer unlimited potential for worldwide activity. The whole prospect is very exciting."

The CBS Nashville family of labels also recorded an excellent year, bulleting past its original sales projections, scooping up gold and platinum albums and watching a number of its artists topping the Billboard country charts in the past 12 months.

The impressive roster strength of its associated labels received extra sparkle from CBS' addition of Crystal Gayle, Larry Gatlin, Rosanne Cash, Ronnie McDowell and Johnny Rodriguez, among others. This brings the total number of artists on Columbia to 15, while Epic acts total 13 and Starflite, Huey Meaux's new label which CBS distributes, has two artists.

The company released 98 singles over the past year, with 70 reaching the charts in various positions, while LP activity found 46 albums issued. Artists showing exceptional drawing power for singles and LP airplay and sales included Moe Bandy, Lynn Anderson, Johnny Cash, Jaine Fricke, Marty Robbins, Freddy Weller, Charly McClain, Mickey Gilley, Johnny Paycheck, George Jones, Joe Stampley, Tammy Wynette, McDowell, Rodriguez, Bobby Bare and David Allan Coe—not to mention the sensational year had by both Willie Nelson and Charlie Daniels.

Nelson again proved himself the leader in Columbia's team lineup. He sailed into 1979 on the top-five single success of "All Of Me" from his platinum "Stardust" LP, then followed with "Whiskey River," "September Song," and the swiftly-moving "One For The Road" double-pocket duet album he recorded with Leon Russell. This album spun off a No. 1 single, "Heartbreak Hotel."

The label awarded its Epic mainstay LP blockbuster of the year honors to Charlie Daniels whose "Million Mile Reflections" album skyrocketed to platinum status as well as capturing the No. 1 position on the country charts (both album and singles). The album's initial release, "The Devil Went Down To Georgia," surpassed the million mark in sales and captured dual airplay on pop and country formats.

Obviously the two major signings stories of the year for CBS were Crystal Gayle and Larry Gatlin. Gayle's first single for her new label, "Half The Way," paved the path for her "Miss The Mississippi" album, while Gatlin scored results with "All The Gold In California," taken from his debut Columbia LP, "Straight Ahead."

The additions of Rosanne Cash (Johnny's daughter), Ronnie McDowell, Johnny Rodriguez and Lacy J. Dalton underlined the label's desire to develop talent in a strong image-marketing campaign.

Other CBS highlights of the year were the 25th recording anniversary of Johnny Cash, which the label celebrated by releasing a "Silver" commemorative LP package; the duet teaming of Moe Bandy and Joe Stampley, two honkytonk heroes who paired up for "Just Good Ol' Boys," a concept which eventually spawned a single, an album and an entire stagershow; and the matching up on vinyl (and in marriage) of Louise Mandrell and R.C. Bannon, who both record separately as well for the label family.

Under the leadership of Billy Sherrill, who sports dual hats as both producer and vice president of a&r for Columbia, and the combined talents of the Nashville staff, the label found 1979 one of its best years.

Says Rick Blackburn, vice president of marketing/Nashville, "We're bullish on the '80s. . . Country's appealing to increasing numbers of young people and gaining mass acceptance. Retail sales picked up substantially by the end of the third quarter, and we think we're headed for a new growth in country."

Major CBS campaigns included "We've Got The Hits," which closed out the fourth quarter of 1978, "Person To Person Music Program," covering the first and second quarters of 1979, and "Hit Wave," its third-quarter package, all of which drew heavily on audio/visual usage and various marketing and merchandising approaches. Radio, tv, print and touring was used in unprecedented numbers this year to enhance the CBS roster's media exposure.

The Columbia/Epic roster has earned 14 CMA nominations for its 1978-79 creative efforts, while Willie Nelson scored two Grammys this year for best country vocal performance ("Georgia On My Mind") and best country vocal performance by a group or duo (for "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys").

Warner Bros.' Nashville division, proud of what turned out to be its brightest and strongest year in country ever, saw the rise of several of its new artists to new heights of popularity.

In fact, comments Andy Wickham, president of Warner Bros. country operation, "We are trying very hard to bring our country acts into other avenues of media at the same time we bring them more closely into the mainstream of our WEA family."

With an emphasis on more total commitment to country product at top-level management positions, Warner Bros. has displayed its talents in signings, marketing, development and merchandising of talent.

1979 saw the Bellamy Bros., a soft-rock act which scored a few years ago with a Top 40 hit, "Let Your Love Flow," returned to its country roots on Warner Bros. and racked up a fast-selling single under the unlikely title of, "If I Said You Had A Beautiful Body Would You Hold It Against Me." The song crowned the Billboard Hot Country Singles chart in the No. 1 spot for three weeks in a row and also crossed over onto the pop chart.

The Bellamy's first LP release on Warner's, "The Two And Only," brought them active sales figures and impressive radio airplay, spawning the second single, "Ain't Just Whistlin' Dixie."

Another artist on the label who had a spectacular year in terms of career development was T.G. Sheppard. With producer Buddy Killen calling the shots, Sheppard's "¾ Lonely" album immediately outsold his previous two LPs within weeks of delivery to store accounts. Singles from the album, "You Feel Good All Over" and "Last Cheater's Waltz," went top five on the country charts, while Sheppard toured constantly and made concentrated appearances around the U.S., even opening several dates with Dolly Parton.

Con Hunley's career was shifted into high gear in 1979 with solid label support, showcases and tv shots to increase his exposure. Hunley's records went consistently top 10, and he reinforced his vinyl activity with guestings on shows such as "Merv Griffin," "The Mike Douglas Show" and "Dinah!"

Rex Allen, Jr. found his career considerably brightened when he chose the same producer as Sheppard. Killen's first single with Allen, "Me And My Broken Heart," took the singer into the top 10 region of the charts, a feat duplicated with "If I Fell In Love With You," his follow-up.

Other encouraging chart results for Warner Bros. artists brought names like Donna Fargo, Margo Smith, John Anderson and Earl Thomas Conley to the forefront.

And who can overlook the re-emergence of country talent Buck Owens back to the charts after a period of relative inactivity. His duet with Emmylou Harris, "Play Together Again, Again," was a highlight for the label, and his next single, released in late summer, "Hangin' In And Hangin' On," promised additional impact.

Speaking of Harris, she surfaced in 1979 with a beautifully-produced-and-pure-honest-country album that seemed to carry across-the-board appeal. Called "Blue Kentucky Girl," the LP put her in the top of the country charts with "Save The Last Dance For Me," as well as the title cut itself.

While Harris satisfied a long-harbored wish to cut a straight-ahead country album (and did so successfully), she also managed to receive her third consecutive CMA nomination for best female vocalist of the year.

"We've become more aware from an a&r point of view now that we need to be signing artists who can perform and appeal on multi-levels," asserts Wickham. And following this strategy, Warner Bros. selected Big Al Downing and Gail Davies as its major acquisitions for this year. Both will commandeer powerful support through development efforts coupled with marketing and merchandising campaigns for maximum thrust.

And how does Wickham view the country industry as it approaches the coming decade?

"It will be great!" he says emphatically. "We have the emergence of singer/songwriters as artists, the rise of independent producers, the Hollywood-goes-country phenomenon, more tv exposure, better demographics and a growing younger market for country. How can we miss?"

With the guidance of Wickham and the addition as general manager and liaison of Bob Kirsch, communications have never been better between Warner Bros. Burbank and its Nashville division.

Another label merger was effected this year when EMI (which owns Capitol Industries) acquired United Artists Records in February, joining the label to EMI/America Records.

Although United Artists suffered the loss of one of its primary strengths when Crystal Gayle left, it rallied quickly, drawing from the talents of Kenny Rogers and Dottie West—and replaced Gayle and Cristy Lane whose chart success, "I Just Can't Stay Married To You" and "Simple Little Words" won her the Academy of Country Music's best new female vocalist of the year award in May.

Rogers proved his "most valuable player" status on the UA team by earning three gold, one platinum and one double-platinum album for the past year and scoring across-the-board pop, country and MOR airplay in multiple markets.

After the success of "The Gambler," Rogers released "She Believes In Me," another No. 1 single, and "You Decorated My Life," with his album, "The Gambler," a chart-topper as well. Rogers made a succession of tv appearances in the last 12 months, including hosting the "Tonight" show, and numerous live concert appearances across the U.S.

An integral part of Rogers' live stagershows is Dottie West. A duet team for two years, the pair released "Everytime Two Fools Collide" and "Classics," both of which zoomed to the top-five grouping on the Billboard Country LP chart, remaining there for months. Singles for the duo saw "Till I Can Make It On My Own," "All I Ever Need Is You," and "Everytime Two Fools Collide" major country releases for the year.

West's bright media visibility on tv and on record has earned her a strong career resurgence this year and her new solo album, due in the fall, is expected to explore different directions that will increase her versatility and audience.

This album will also be a focal point of EMI/UA's coordinated marketing program designed to spotlight LPs by Rogers, Billy Jo Spears and Crystal Gayle (a "greatest hits" package).

1979 was a year of increased touring activity for Spears as she headlined at Wembley Music Festival in England and toured Europe. She released "I Will Survive," both a single and album, and her "best of" package will be released in early fall.

Other artists on the UA roster include Charlie Rich, whose career will be focused this year on more concentrated tv and touring and the release of an LP to reinforce his singles turntable play.

UA's continued country success stems from the strength of its catalog items, the addition to its roster of David Wills, and the teamwork of national country promotion director/director of operations Jerry Sebolt and his staff.

"We streamlined our label in 1978 and went through a period of executive realignment," Sebolt says, "so we feel that we're in a solid position going into the '80s. Country will continue strong . . . performances and production are more polished and people's tastes are changing. Country reflects life and life is changing."

When Lynn Shults, former head of UA's country operation, joined Capitol Records in the fall of 1978, he took over a label with a consistently on-target country roster. Artists such as Anne Murray, Gene Watson, Billy "Crash" Craddock, Glen Campbell, Kenny Dale, Mel McDaniel, Asleep At The Wheel, Juice Newton, Dr. Hook and Don Schlitz kept Capitol's recording picture busy and its marketing and promotion staff active through the year.

Murray continued her string of No. 1 singles with "I Just

(Continued on page WOCM-57)

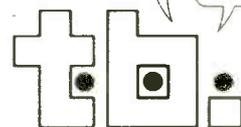


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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Michael Murphy plants his palm in soft cement at Peaches retail store in Tulsa.



The Grandpa Jones exhibit in the Country Music Foundation's Hall of Fame opens, from left are Dick Blake; Diana Johnson, museum director; Jones; Mrs. Grandpa, Ramona; and Bill Ivey, executive director of the CMF.



Another successful year for Johnny Cash.



Stella Parton takes advantage of her cornbread and buttermilk tv watching party to hand feed her agent, Dick Blake. Jo Walker, executive director of the CMA and Parton's producer Jim Malloy look on.

Anne Kirkpatrick, daughter of Slim Dusty, is doing much in Australia to fuse traditional Australian country music with contemporary rock.



Hee Haw producer Sam Luvollo, left, and director Bob Boatman give Freddy Fender some words of advice during a recent taping of the show.



MCA's Nashville staff congratulates John Conlee on his second No. 1, "Backside of Thirty."

A Billboard Spotlight

OCTOBER 13, 1979, BILLBOARD

Radio Growth

• Continued from page WOCM-20

Periodically, Lewis says, his station sponsors local concerts. Recent ones have starred the Earl Scruggs Revue and Hank Thompson. KBFW also co-sponsored a Johnny Paycheck show with Western Washington Univ.

"T M Country" and "Country Crossroads" are KBFW's syndicated selections.

From the viewpoint of Terry Collins, music director of WCAW, Charleston, W. VA, country music "keeps getting bigger and bigger." Collins says he thinks fans can "handle it" when new and upcoming artists shoot for a crossover. But he believes there is still considerable resistance toward long-established stars who update their sound.

WCAW's playlist is basically the Top 40 hits plus 10 additions. Album cuts, says Collins, are seldom played. "But sometimes we'll go to a star's current album when his or her single starts to drop off the charts."

According to Collins, WCAW doesn't "totally" sponsor any concerts. "But," he adds, "we'll help promote any concert if we get cooperation from the artist's label." In April, the station held a contest for listeners to write an additional verse to the Statler Bros. hit, "How to be a Country Star." Prizes included concert tickets, albums, belt buckles, and invitations to a post-concert backstage party with the Statlers.

WCAW produces and airs two special Sunday shows. "Country Countdown" is a live broadcast of the week's Top 40 hits as determined by national charts and local surveys. "RFD 680" is a prerecorded bluegrass show, hosted by morning drive personality Michael Fincham. "Country Crossroads" is the station's only syndicated offering.

Collins says WCAW has had some problems in getting singles before they show up on the charts. Album service has been slow, too, he adds.

Cyril G. Brennan, program director for WBAM-AM and WBAM-FM, Montgomery, Ala. predicts continued growth in country music interest. "It's going to replace easy listening," he maintains.

Playlists for the two stations are based mainly on the charts, requests, and staff appraisal. "We've also learned that we can trust some record promoters," Brennan says, "when they tell us a certain record is doing well in another area." Brennan estimates his music director receives about 30 new records a week for consideration.

"We transfer all the records we play to stereo carts—even those we use on AM," Brennan explains. "And we think the album cuts have a better quality generally than the singles. So we transfer from them when we can."

About 25% of the FM playlist is made up of album cuts.

Each Wednesday night in the 9:00 to 10:00 slot, the station features an entire album, presented without commercial interruption, Brennan says. Beginning this fall, the FM side will be using the syndicated "Live from the Lone Star Cafe."

Brennan says his stations are not heavily involved in sponsoring concerts, "but we often front them for promoters." WBAM did sponsor the "Moe (Bandy) and Joe (Stamper) Show" when the duo played Montgomery.

One of the AM's hottest promotions, Brennan reports, is transferring the whole operation 180 miles to Panama City Beach, Fla., for "a long weekend." This summer, 19 staffers made the trip and did the remote broadcasts. Listeners are also given a chance to win a vacation at the resort via a drawing. But that's just the drum-beating part of the stations' promotional activities. "We have something going on all the time," Brennan says.

Heading up the music programming for Tulsa's KVOO is award-winning disk jockey Billy Parker. He dismisses any thought that country music might be on the wane: "It changes so much and there's such a difference of sounds that I think it's a long way from peaking."

Parker says KVOO has "one of the largest playlists in the country"—sometimes as many as 96 records. Requests "very definitely" help shape the list, he says, as well as record availability in the Tulsa market. He estimates that he gets 90 records a week for consideration. And cuts from "eight or 10 feature albums" wind up on the weekly list, Parker adds.

As a rule, KVOO doesn't front concerts. "We don't put our name on shows just to promote our name," Parker emphasizes. However, the station spotlights national and local talent in the WVOO Big Country Picnic held in mid-August. More than 30,000 attended the most recent picnic, Parker says. Reba McEntire headlined.

The syndicated programs used by KVOO are "Closeup Country" and "Inside Nashville."

Parker concedes that he has some problems with record quality and content. "I get a lot of records that are warped and out-of-round," he says. "The vinyl's not good." And there is the occasional "vulgar record" to contend with. "Some are suggestive to a great extent," Parker laments. "They can cause us problems with our religious listeners." He cites the album version of Charlie Daniels' "The Devil Went Down to Georgia"—which has the term "son-of-a-bitch" in it—as the kind of lyrics he has to keep a sensitive eye on. "Content," he admits, "will help determine whether we play a record."

"Country music is filling the MOR void," concludes Gary Kines, program director for WSUN, St. Petersburg, Fla. He says that even though his station has a substantial number of retirees among its listeners, there is virtually no outcry against the modernization of country music.

WSUN has a tight playlist of about 45, arrived at, according to Kines, by "sales, requests, and personal feelings." The sta-

tion receives between 60 and 100 singles each week. It programs few album cuts.

As with many other stations, WSUN's sponsorship of concerts is more supportive than substantial. "We do front shows from a publicity standpoint," Kines says.

KSUN doesn't use syndicated country music material, Kines reports, but it is considering the addition of "Live from the Lone Star Cafe." "Our only problem," Kines says, "is one that's common to the industry—not just to country music stations. It's a scarcity of announcers who can relate to an audience."

KLAC in Los Angeles makes up its playlist from national charts, local sales, and call-out research, explains Cathy Hahn, music director. Hahn says she makes her add-on selections from the 50 to 100 singles she receives weekly. The playlist is designed to include at least one album cut an hour. Every other hour there is a cut played from one of the current top 15 albums in Los Angeles.

Requests figure significantly in the station's programming through the "Top 10 Countdown" of songs most asked for, aired six days a week. This feature, in turn, is tied to a popular promotion which invites listeners to name the top 10 for prizes.

KLAC's only syndicated country music offering is "Jamboree USA," Hahn reports.

Scientifically—and promotionally—the sunniest event in country music radio this year occurred on August 29, when WBNO, in Bryan, Ohio, became the world's first solar-powered station.

That's the best kind of country sunshine.

Billboard

Canada Roots

• Continued from page WOCM-46

fort on breaking the U.S. market. Baker's manager, Don Grashy, is banking on the impact of Baker's live performances—her recent tour of England multiplied British sales "one hundred to one." For Dallas Harms, though he is recognized as a successful songwriter in the U.S., he finds that, as a performer, "it's like starting all over again."

There is a general optimism for the future of country music in Canada. A potential audience is growing as the median age advances and members of the post-war "baby boom" crest thirty. Many "over-thirties" are becoming interested in country-oriented records through the fusion of MOR and country sounds. And that fusion doesn't seem to be causing as much concern in the industry in Canada as it has in Nashville where a fear of the loss of a "traditional" country sound exists. In Canada, there is hope that strong folk roots for many country artists will keep the "country" in Canadian country music for years to come.

Billboard

Tree, the place to be!

Number One Country Music Publisher in the World again in 1979.



Tree International's officers are all smiles over the greatest year in the 27 year history of the company. Shown left to right: Don Gant, Senior Vice President; Donna Hilley, Vice President; Jack Stapp, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer; Buddy Killen, President. Sales continued to climb for the world's largest country music publisher and all indications point to just getting better, better and better for all the folks at Tree.



Tree opened its West Coast office with a big bash at Chasen's in Hollywood. They are now open for business at 6255 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 708, Phone 213-465-5588. Just give Beverly Hills (Administrative Assistant) a call, she'll be happy to assist you with hits.

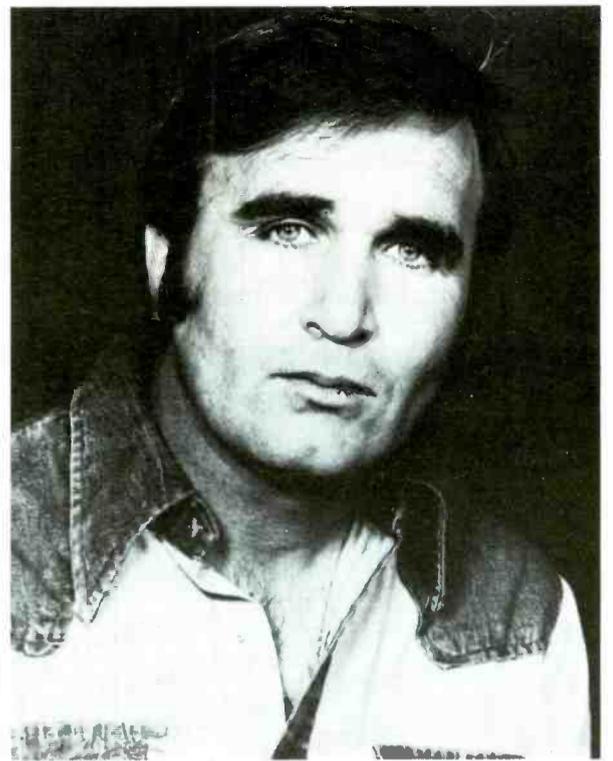


Harriane Condra Promoted to head Copyright Administration.

Tree's Into Movies: Betty Fowler, heading royalty division & rates for Tree, reports that Tree songs have gone to the movies: with *Tattletale Eyes* being in "The Deer Hunter," *I Can't Stand It* being in "Summer Aifair," *The Good Ole Days*, being in "Americathon," *Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys* in "The Electric Horseman," & "Steel," *Rockin' My Life Away* & *Honkey Tonk Wine* being in "Urban Cowboy," *Texas When I Die* being in "Resurrection," *Middle Age Crazy* being chosen for the title song in "Middle Age Crazy," and *King Of The Road* in "Hollywood Knights".



Dan Wilson promoted to Professional Manager, Terry Choate & Chris Dodson added to the staff of professionals assisting him. Together with Gant & Killen, they had a banner year for Tree. Tree is again number one, controlling the charts in all three trades.



Sonny Throckmorton chosen "Songwriter of the Year" by NSA



BMI Publisher of the Year. Tree is not only EMI's largest country music publisher, it is BMI's largest publisher overall. Quite an accomplishment.



Tree Productions, under the directorship of its president & producer, Buddy Killen, saw many of their artists hitting the top of the charts. Bill Anderson, O. B. McClinton, Louise Mandrell, R. C. Bannon, Rex Allen, Jr., T. G. Sheppard, Joe Tex, Sonny Throckmorton, Bobby Wright, Rafe Van Hoy, Rock Kil-lough, Billy Earl McClelland, Alan Rhody, Jay Patten, Del Reeves, Bobby Braddock, Kieran Kane, Sterling Whipple, Dennis Wilson and Angela Wilson, are just a few of the writers to either record under the production company or through the company for major labels.



Big Returns! Three writers who have just recently come back home to Tree: Mike Kossler, Wayne Kemp, and Dave Kirby. Also not pictured: Glenn Martin, Jeannie Seely, and Hank Cochran. Tree welcomed all three with open arms.



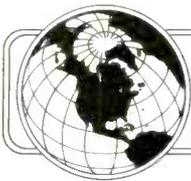
New writers signed to Tree this year are: Jay Patten, Kieran Kane, Rick Carnes, Robin Green, Lathan Hudson, David Womack, Chip Hardy and back: Bucky Jones. Not pictured: Billy Earl McClelland, Sparky Lawrence.



Tree International

8 Music Square, West P.O. Box 1273 Nashville, Tennessee 37202
 JACK STAPP, Chairman of the Board-Chief Executive Officer BUDDY KILLEN, President DON GANT, Senior Vice President
 DONNA HILLEY, Vice President

TREE PUBLISHING (BMI) · CROSS KEYS MUSIC (ASCAP) ·
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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Below, Janie Fricke chats with a deejay at the DJ Tapings at Municipal Auditorium in Nashville.

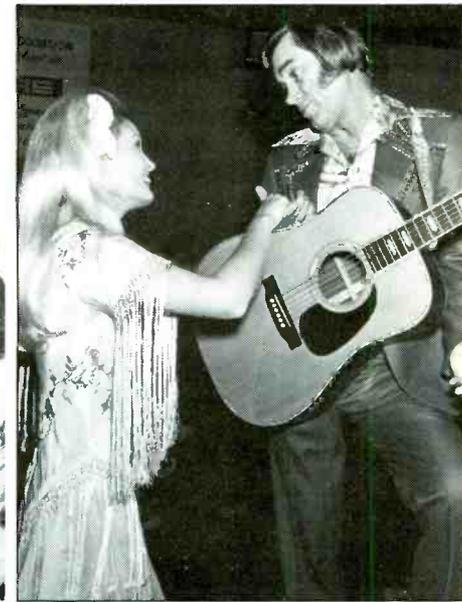


A Billboard Spotlight

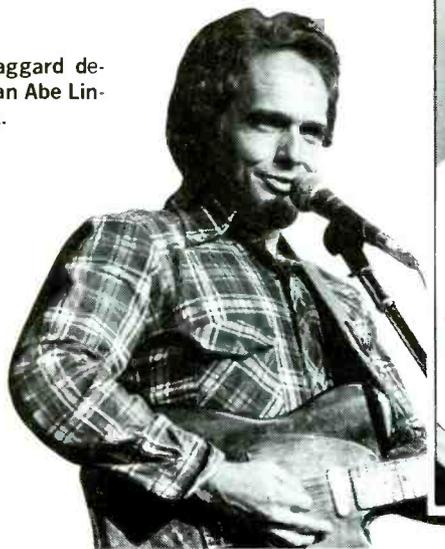
Duane Allen, lead singer for the Oak Ridge Boys, goes over lead sheets in the studio with newly signed to MCA Oak Ridge Band.



Below, prior to his opening performance at the CBS Records show, George Jones talks with Lynn Anderson.



Merle Haggard developed an Abe Lincoln look.



Left, Buckskin, one of the young country bands which are helping to broaden the market appeal of Australian country music.

Above, happy over Grammy song of the year honors for writer Billy Joel, April/Blackwood's Nashville leaders—Charlie Monk, Judy Harris and Bob Mather—hoist a banner.

Organizations Boost

• Continued from page WOCM-22

The symposium was called "Songwriting From A To Z" and consisted of five panels, "The Songwriter," "Publishing," "The Psychology Of Songwriting," "Royalties," and "Copyrights." A second symposium has already been scheduled for Feb. 29 and March 1, 1980.

NSAI participates in Fan Fair with its own booth and a show which features performances by NSAI writers. This year's show was videotaped by PBS for broadcast later in the year. The show featured songwriters performing their own songs that became hits. Hosted by Ed Bruce, the show was produced by Linda Hargrove. Some of the performers included Don Schlitz singing "The Gambler," Randy Goodrum performing "You Needed Me" and Bobby Wood singing "Talkin' In Your Sleep."

In addition, NSAI hosts four monthly workshops for writers to have their new material critiqued by other writers. This began earlier this year and has grown to become one of the most successful aspects of the organization.

It has been a very good year for the three Nashville performance rights organizations, BMI, ASCAP and SESAC.

Frances Preston, vice president of BMI, is bullish on the prospects of Nashville being a major music center. "We concentrate on building Nashville as a music center and we are involved in everything that we think draws attention to Nashville," says Preston.

"I don't like to just think of country music," continues Preston. "I like to think of Nashville as a total music center. We feel that by getting involved with the various organizations, by working with the government and by keeping in touch with what's going on all over the world musically, we are building Nashville into a bigger music center and therefore drawing more attention to our writers and publishers."

Preston, along with other members of the Nashville BMI staff, serves and often heads key committees and organizations in Music City and has become a national music figure. All of her involvement doesn't keep her from her daily activities, overseeing the Nashville operation. She is able to keep abreast of the activity on Music Row, spend time with new writers and publishers, and remain visible at all music functions in almost any location.

"I believe that our Nashville office should have everyone involved in everything," enthuses Preston. "We're everywhere. We go to Las Vegas, Washington, Muscle Shoals, Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles. We all live and breathe music. We're always somewhere listening to music, constantly on the move."

Preston is chairman of the board of the Gospel Music Assn. She is currently heading a project along with the CMA to take

country music to China, and she has been named by Rosalyn Carter to the commission that will help select new recordings for the White House library.

"We don't just work nine to five, we're totally involved with every publisher and every record company and all of their functions," reports Preston. "Consequently, the people in the BMI office are up on trends before anyone else in town because we're out there listening. We're getting an overall view of the entire music industry, and it's exciting."

Being able to keep up with all that goes on in the record industry and how it functions, is what makes Preston tick. "The record industry in Nashville, and wherever country music is made, reflects the stability of the country market. It is a market-audience that remains devoted to its artists. Therefore, within the industry itself, there is less turmoil in a tough economic period—fewer layoffs."

Over the past year, BMI Nashville has remained involved with the country music community, while reaching out and cementing lasting relationships with various other segments of the American community.

"While helping to develop the Southern area as a cornerstone of the music industry, we at BMI have not only sought the writers and publishers of today and the future, but we have placed ourselves in the position where we can enhance the thrust of all music in America," says Preston.

In addition to Preston, the BMI Nashville executives include Del Bryant, director of performing rights relations; Jerry Smith, assistant director of writer relations; Joe Moscheo, director of affiliate relations; and Patsy Bradley, director of publisher administration.

All this activity—local, regional and national will continue on an escalated level. Preston insists that the future for BMI in Nashville, and the entire industry, depends on involvement in music of all kinds and in interaction with other organizations, writers, publishers, lawyers, agents, accountants and bankers, the academic community, local, state and federal governments all working together to promote music.

It was a busy year for the ASCAP executives as many of their writers were awarded by various organizations for their efforts.

"The record breaking growth which began in ASCAP's Nashville Southern offices in the late '60s has again produced an unprecedented success as reflected by the Society's 18 No. 1 country songs in the trade charts this year," commented ASCAP southern regional executive director Ed Shea. "Our total involvement in Nashville, as the pivot, and the surrounding territories in the past decade has mushroomed to the point where 1979 has truly been our greatest year ever."

ASCAP members' recent success in the Academy Of Country Music awards highlight the extraordinary growth of ASCAP music in today's country market. At the ACM awards, Randy Goodrum's "You Needed Me" was chosen the song of the

year and Kenny Rogers was named both entertainer of the year and top male vocalist.

ASCAP writers also figured prominently in other 1979 award presentations. Don Schlitz won a Grammy earlier this year for the best country song of the year, "The Gambler." The Nashville Songwriters Assn. award for best song went to Goodrum's "You Needed Me" and for best songwriter of the year, they chose Sonny Throckmorton.

ASCAP's impact on the country scene has mounted significantly over the past several years with the presence of ASCAP licensed material on the country charts having more than tripled.

"Our current success in the country market is attributed to a culmination of years of concentrated membership activity as well as the fact that more and more writers and publishers than ever before are not better aware of the advantages of ASCAP membership," observes Shea. "In 1969, 27 songs earned ASCAP country awards. With the many ASCAP songs currently on the charts, our number of 1979 award winners is over 100 and still growing. It is a great way to end a decade."

In celebration of the 1979 year, ASCAP's country award presentation will be held in the Opryland Hotel ballroom.

Among the many award winners to be honored will be Don Schlitz, Eddy Raven, the team of Foster and Rice, Steve Gibb, John Schweers, Don Cook, Rory Bourke, Archie Jordan, Richard Leigh, Bob Morrison, Johnny MacRae, Hal David, Gerald Marks and Burt Bacharach.

The new members who have joined ASCAP include Glen Barber, Charlie Black, Dewayne Orender, Blake Mevis, Charly McClain, Don Williams, Earl Conley, Cristy Lane, Jeff Silbar, Sam Lorber, Porter Wagoner and Kent Westbury among others.

"1979 was certainly our big year," concludes Shea, "but the challenge of the '80s looms boldly and importantly and we are all looking forward to conquering new creative horizons."

ASCAP staffers who helped produce a record year were assistant directors, Merlin Littlefield and Connie Bradley; director of writer/publisher administration, Judy Gregory; and southern director of public relations, Rusty Jones. Additional efforts to the ASCAP success of 1979 were added by Charline Wilhite, Jean Wallace, Gabriella Chrostowski and Ronala Russell.

For SESAC, 1979 was both a reorganization and a rejuvenation period. The Nashville staff was bolstered earlier this year by Dianne Petty as director of the country music division and Dave DeBolt as public relations coordinator for the Nashville division. Jim Black, who serves as director of gospel music for SESAC has been with the organization for more than five years.

SESAC is the second oldest performing rights organization and the fact that it has remained conservative and small is by

(Continued on page WOCM-58)

Country Sales Hold their Own

By MICHAEL KIRK

It seems that while country music is taking a lickin', it keeps on kickin'. Sales for country music, like sales for all music, are down; however, country does not seem to have taken the plunge in sales that pop records have.

Retailers and one stops were nearly unanimous in citing the recent price increases on albums and singles as a major factor in decreased sales. However, the truth is that the price increase came at the most inopportune time. A sagging economy, rising food and gasoline prices and runaway inflation have left consumers seeking the essentials rather than entertainment via records. The result is a drop in sales that has forced the record labels to tighten their belts and cut some personnel. (It may be noted here that another form of home entertainment—books, have shown a decrease in sales recently.)

Retailers and wholesalers alike stated that they could see nothing in the way of special promotions or deals to combat the recession. The distribution of merchandising tools such as posters and cut-outs continues but nothing out of the standard fare for doing business seems to be occurring at the labels. They have opted instead to try and cut corners within their organizations—letting employes go, watching expenses and trimming down on new projects.

Several labels, including UA and CBS have noted growth in country sales during this supposedly down time. The heads of the country labels in Nashville generally feel comfortable with their sales—at least more so than their pop counterparts who have experienced a sharp decline.

Steve Marmaduke of Western Merchandisers states that his country sales are about equal to 5% less than last year while pop sales are approximately half of what they were a year ago. He notes that the country consumer is a "calmer, steadier and more loyal" consumer, adding that he was "thankful for country sales" the past several months. Marmaduke does not see the smaller or marginal acts suffering while the big acts get bigger although he notes he is buying "a little tighter" and watching trade charts a little closer before making decisions.

In San Antonio, Pete Ustamante of E & R One Stop says his sales have been cut "considerably." He notes that the sales drop is affecting all artists—big superstars as well as newer acts.

In Chicago, Gus Tartol of Singer One Stop states that country accounted for about 30% of his sales before the economic slump and that percentage is still holding. He also complained of recent covers by country artists of pop hits, stating that single sales are exhausted with the pop hit so there are no buyers for the country cover records.

Buddy Robinson of Music Operators in Los Angeles said that the 30-40% of total sales that goes to country has held and that the singles business has picked up recently. Regarding the record labels, Robinson states "I think some are doing everything to decrease sales. For instance, CBS won't let you call an order in collect anymore." Although he has a disdain for the major labels, stating, "they should concentrate more on what the public wants to hear," Robinson had nothing but praise for Nashville. "I have more cooperation from Nashville than anywhere, and the people there are the most realistic."

Overall, the country sales picture seems a bit muddy with the sales decrease hard to pinpoint. Some conclusions stand out though: sales have suffered and it's been primarily in the major markets with the secondaries showing that the economic crunch affects them less; overall, sales have not suffered as much as pop sales; and price increases have not helped the sales picture.

In answer to the query "when will it all end?" only a few answered the obvious, "I don't know." Almost everyone else answered a hopeful "soon" and cited the fall back-to-school buying surge that usually occurs, Christmas buying in the near future and a host of new releases by major proven selling acts from the big labels. If that projection proves true, the winter may not be as cold as it will be if the sales continue to drop.

Billboard



THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

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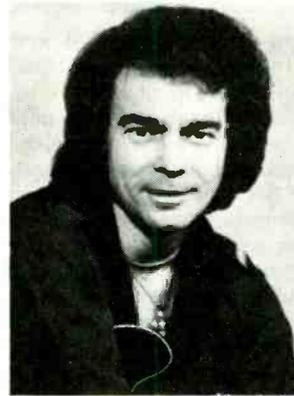
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THE WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC

Right, Barbara Mandrell chats with Sonny Bono during taping of the made-for-tv movie "Murder In Music City." Mandrell played herself in the movie, a murder mystery with a country music setting.

Charlie Fach, former Phonogram/Mercury vice president and now head of his own Musiverse firm in Nashville, meets with singer Rayburn Anthony.



Bill Monroe.

Grassroots, a British bluegrass band makes its appearance in Nashville on the International Show staged during Fan Fair.



The Kendalls receive a special proclamation at their "Coming Home" celebration, benefitting the St. Louis University Hospitals. At right is hospital director Richard Stensrud.



Rick Blackburn takes to the mound at the CBS Records night at the Nashville Sounds baseball game, aided by Larry Schmittour, president of the baseball club.

Publisher Boom

• Continued from page WOCM-40

"Still, it's getting tougher to get songs cut, particularly for the smaller publishers. It can still be done, but it's harder, and I should add more expensive as well. The day of a work-tape demo is over; you need the best demo you can get now to submit. It's like the auto business: if you're not selling a lot of cars, you'd better have the ones on your lot awfully well shined up."

An interesting phenomenon immediately noticeable in the overview is that while the publishers all seem to share a rosy vision for the future, for 1980 and beyond, they seem to be looking to different sources for that continued growth.

"Our foreign markets have been very big for us," says Wesley Rose, "and in the coming years the publishing industries should go way up because of the inroads country music is now making in foreign markets.

"I see country music publishing growing by bigger and bigger strides overseas, because barriers are breaking down in places like Germany and Holland and England, Australia, and Japan."

Bill Denny, on the other hand, sees motion picture and television as big areas of expansion for Cedarwood, "'Teddy Bear' is now being made into a movie—our first movie title—and we are increasingly pursuing soundtracks. This is a natural, following the success of the music itself. Nashville music is increasingly more widely accepted, and the next plateau we can reach is obviously movies. I honestly believe much more music on tv and in the movies will be music from Nashville in the future.

"We've only just begun to tap this yet. It is an available market if you have the songs and the talent, and Nashville does."

Rose was likewise sanguine on the influx of movie industry interest in country music: "The movie industry had recently shown a great deal of interest in country music, and the same is true of television, including commercials. This is a big plus, because they've used little of our material in the past."

Buddy Killen is similarly enthusiastic about film and tv, but is as concerned with the day to day growth of Tree as well: "We're still trying to do all we can in placing our material in tv and films, and as usual we're just going to continue to pursue that great volume of recordings that we've been having.

"Our biggest recent emphasis is in Tree Productions, producing records as well as publishing songs. We've got some seven songs in the charts right now produced by us, and we're trying to build this end of Tree International to include all fields: pop, blues, and country."

Rose painted the brightest picture of the future, however, for he sees country music publishing riding the coattails of an

increasing national surge of interest in country music. "Within the next year or two I think country music will be the major music used in all media. It is, simply, commercial with the public, it is the music of the public. For all the geniuses in our business, it is the public which makes or breaks records and songs, and increasingly country music has become the music of the majority of the American public."

Rose seems to sum up the feelings of most song publishers, who have come out of a difficult year virtually unscathed, when he looks to the future: "For all these reasons country music publishers have a great deal to look forward to in the coming months and years. It is really an exciting, challenging time for us."

Billboard

Country Sound

• Continued from page WOCM-24

nowadays in selecting material: "We're not looking for a good song, but for a great song."

Instrumentation, also, has changed, says Butler. He recalls the time when he wouldn't use a soprano saxophone or flute on a session. Now he does. "I don't have any barriers."

The compounding competition of country music has brought the cream to the top, believes Butler. "A record is not just plastic anymore—it's got to have heart and soul."

Heart, soul, emotion. That's what Butler, and his artists, are selling.

"The song is emotional, and the singer gets emotional," he says. "If a record doesn't make you happy or sad, the producer and artist haven't done their job."

From Bradley to Buddy. Killen, that is. He's president of Tree International, the giant Nashville publishing firm, and he's one of the best producers of pop, country and soul songs on earth. Buddy Killen agrees with Owen Bradley that it takes much longer to cut a song now than it did back in the '50s. "There was a time when we got four to six songs in three hours. Now it might take a week to do one song because everybody wants to put everything in the world on the tracks."

Killen believes some of the Nashville producers are taking more chances, referring to his own disco-oriented sessions with Bill Anderson. He also is one of the few country-flavored producers who credits pop music with having an effect on country music. "You can bombard country music with all kinds of sounds, and it keeps moving on and it keeps fresh."

He observes that country music is in a constant state of evolution: "Today's music is yesterday's music with a touch of something new."

If that's true, and the other producers believe it is, then tomorrow's music will be today's music with a touch of something new . . . and old.

GERRY WOOD

Billboard

Live Stands Up

• Continued from page WOCM-42

Dean Raymen talked Moss into trying country acts in his then-dinner theatres four years ago, he has noted that his country crowds have been the most consistent of any. "Business in general is the worst in four years, but it's been my best for country." Moss has sold out his Plantation Club (900 seats) and the Barn (600 seats) mostly running two shows per event, with acts like Marty Robbins, Conway Twitty, Crash Craddock, Crystal Gayle and Mickey Gilley.

Fair promoter Hap Peebles, out of Kansas City, says that 90% of his fairs have had attendance cuts that range from 10 to 50% of former years. Weather has been the factor in one-third of these cuts. Peebles cited the Lions Bluegrass State Fair in Lexington, KY., where, of the eight days the grandstand show ran, six days were rained out. Gasoline uncertainty knocked a 10% chunk out of last year's attendance records at the Calgary Stampede. Peebles, who works 300 fairs, says the conditions of 1979 hit the marginal country acts the most. The big acts like Johnny Cash, Charley Pride, Kenny Rogers, the Statlers, Roy Clark, Mel Tillis and Larry Gatlin continued to pull at the boxoffice.

Mac Wiseman, who runs the Annual Renfro Valley Bluegrass Festival in Eastern Kentucky, anticipated his best year, with advance ticket requests running at an all-time high. But come show days, July 12, 13 and 14, hurricane Bob hit Mac in the pocketbook. The tail end of hurricane Bob poured rain on all three days, killing gate sales and prompting no shows. Wiseman has a covered stage allowing the bluegrass entertainment to go as scheduled, but the promotion was Mac's worst. Wiseman, who is also a popular bluegrass artist, played several other festivals and notes that "Bluegrass festivals held their own even though showers threatened. I don't know of anyone who bombed out. But the gas availability kept attendance local this year."

Nancy Doty, who is boxoffice supervisor at Sea World in Orlando, notes that the marine attraction had a five show country series spread over as many months. Doty says that even though inflation caused ticket price increases, the 5,000 seat facility had one show that sold 1,500 "blanket room only" tickets. Kenny Rogers filled the outdoor grandstand and promoters let people spread blankets on grassy areas and attend the sellout at a reduced fee. Doty feels the country concept is a success which will be continued. "We're considering adding a series of soft rock concerts to complement the country series."

Sea World was blessed with clear weather. Gas shortages were no problem and higher ticket prices didn't curtail attendance for country music shows in '79. Talent choices included

(Continued on page WOCM-58)

Artists Break Loose

• Continued from page WOCM-50

Fall In Love Again" and "Shadows In The Moonlight," both of which were from albums that accelerated to the number two position on the Billboard Country LP charts.

Besides the strength of the Grammy award-winning songstress, the label also benefited from the talents of Gene Watson, another top five artist whose album, "Reflections," reached number 23 on the LP chart, and Glen Campbell, whose "Basics" went to number 17 on the same chart.

Murray's two No. 1 singles, combined with Watson's two top-five singles, ("Farewell Party" and "Pick The Wildwood Flower") a top 10 entry by Kenny Dale titled "Only Love Can Break A Heart," and "Crash" Craddock's top 20 single, "If I Could Write A Song As Beautiful As You," all earned ribbons and kudos for Capitol in 1979.

In the marketing realm, the label used media extensively for merchandising its product. The acquisition of UA allowed Capitol to unveil its multifaceted program involving four artists: Kenny Rogers, Crystal Gayle, Anne Murray and Glen Campbell. The cross-merchandising ploy incorporated radio, tv and print, as well as in-store promotions at the retail level. The campaign led to two gold and two platinum albums.

Casting an eye toward the future, Capitol's vice president of a&r, Lynn Shults, comments, "Not only Nashville, but the entire world of music is about to embark on one of the most exciting eras the entertainment world has known. . . . The combination of recorded music and video, the reality of AM stereo radio and the availability of stereo to television makes for unlimited possibilities. We at Capitol have an open door policy and are fully committed to helping our artists reach their goals."

Developing unknown talent and cultivating new artists seems to be the name of the game at Elektra/Asylum, which this year added Jimmy Bowen as its vice president and general manager for Nashville operations.

"I operate on the theory that 'today's new talent is tomorrow's new business,'" says Bowen, adding that, "as a label, we've probably signed more new talent than anyone else in Nashville."

Included in these ranks are Bobby Braddock, Sonny Curtis, Rock Killough, Troy Seals, Sterling Whipple, Diana, Wood Newton and Dennis William Wilson.

Also newly-signed to E/A in the past 12 months were Susie Allanson, Tommy Overstreet, Jerry Lee Lewis, Hank Williams Jr., Mel Tillis and Red Steagall, thus joining already-established label acts Eddie Rabbitt, Stella Parton and Vern Gosdin.

The year saw strong charted successes by Lewis, Allanson, Williams and Tillis, who were consistently at the top of the Billboard charts, while Rabbitt, fresh from his success with "Every Which Way But Loose" blazed new territory in the pop field with "Suspicious," his title cut from the album. He continued his streak of 10 No. 1 consecutive country singles throughout 1979, while also showing that he is just as marketable outside country.

Allanson's "Words" and "Two Steps forward, Three Steps Back" were both top-five singles, and her album, "Heart To Heart," was a solid country package on the LP side of the fence. More top 10 activity resulted from releases by Gosdin and Parton, while Williams bounced back with "Family Tradition" that answered once and for all how he views his famous name.

Bowen stayed busy in the studio producing many of the acts that he signed, and the label stayed busy bringing home a long string of successes. A two-month marketing campaign saw a massive release schedule featuring 10 new albums by separate E/A artists and, for the first time, used billboards in Nashville to spark the campaign.

The economic shortfalls produced by the year's relentless financial squeeze affected Elektra, but, notes Bowen, "What's happening now is that record companies are putting their bottom lines where they belong—and that's on showing a profit."

Phonogram/Mercury saw some changes this year as it ceased distributing Monument Records and the now-defunct Lone Star label. It also scaled its own roster down to a comfortable 10 artists, allowing the company to concentrate on breaking new talent.

"1980 will be as strong a year as we make it for ourselves," says label vice president for Nashville, Jerry Kennedy. "If we continue to cut great records, I believe people will continue to buy them. After all, quality always sells."

On the Phonogram/Mercury roster now are the ever-popular Statler Bros.—winners of this year's Billboard honors for top vocal group, top album group and the Bill Williams Memorial Award—as well as Johnny Russell, Jacky Ward, Reba McEntire, Dickey Lee, Sonny Throckmorton, Glenn Sutton, Rayburn Anthony and Cletus Maggard.

And with Kennedy's decided emphasis on developing new talent, the label this year added Becky Hobbs and Billy Larkin to its stable.

Chart activity saw the Statlers' "Entertainers On And Off The Record" album turn gold, while the group's "Best Of" LP is now nearly double platinum. Singles that scored well included "Who Am I To Say," "How To Be A Country Star," and "Here We Are Again."

Throckmorton, a successful songwriter, watched as his "Middle Aged Crazy," recorded by Jerry Lee Lewis, became the title for a full-length motion picture, meanwhile releasing another two singles for Mercury in 1979, both of which charted.

Glenn Sutton's "The Football Card" turned into last fall's runaway novelty hit, prodding the label into showcasing Sut-

ton's unique talents on stage. "Red Neck Disco," his follow-up, is also a novelty record.

Jacky Ward and Reba McEntire maintain separate recording careers on Phonogram/Mercury as well as teaming up for duet projects, with Kennedy producing. Both had successful strings of charted hits in 1979, solo albums and one LP recorded together.

The label is now headed by Bob Sherwood who became president of Mercury/Phonogram in Chicago this year and is encouraging tighter communication and more reinforcement for its Nashville base. With a new promotional and sales staff, the company expects 1980 to be stronger than ever.

Though small and an independent, Ovation Records logged a most impressive 12 months as it not only continued the hot streak for the Kendalls but also launched Joe Sun and the Gates and is developing Sheila Andrews.

Under the direction of Brien Fisher, who doubles as both vice president of operations for Ovation Nashville and as producer for its acts, "I don't think country music has even scratched the surface yet. It's just in its infancy."

With this in mind, Fisher has kept the roster to a minimum in order to devote his attention to getting Ovation product out in the field and onto the charts.

The Kendalls, who again captured Billboard's top duo title this year went with Top Billing, Inc. and made a big splash with "Just Like Real People," which was both an album and single for the father-daughter team. Following its successful "I Don't Do Like That No More," the duo plans a "best of" album, expected to continue the Kendalls' sales pattern of more than 200,000 units per release.

Joe Sun, former Ovation promotion man-turned-label-artist, also scored exceptionally strong results this year with a minimum of touring and virtually no tv exposure at all. Following up "Old Flames Can't Hold A Candle To You," Sun released "High And Dry," "Blue Ribbon Blues/I Came On Business For The King," and "I'd Rather Go On Hurting," all of which nabbed very respectable chart numbers and won him popularity on both radio and consumer levels.

The Cates, formerly known as the Cates Sisters, unveiled a new, more sophisticated image during 1979, signed with William Morris for booking, and released a new album titled "Steppin' Out," supported by additional tour dates.

Fisher predicts that Ovation will be looking toward expansion in the coming months, pointing out that the label managed to remain strong this year despite unfavorable economic winds that blew through the record industry and saw other small labels slip down the drain.

"Country," says Fisher firmly, "is just beginning to gear up for what will be its biggest decade yet."

Over at Con Brio Records, the roster held steady at a total of five; although Don King did leave during 1979, the label signed Scott Summer and Chester Lester, added to mainstays Dale McBride, Reg Lindsay and Terri Hollowell.

Con Brio continued to grow in its fourth year of operation. Hollowell appeared at Wembley in England in April, and received such response that she returned to tour Europe later in the year. McBride and Hollowell made numerous tv and radio appearances in country markets, while King continued to sell catalog product.

A balanced release pattern of singles and albums, coupled with a strong network of independent distributors and promotion teams brought marginal sales gains to Con Brio in the past 12 months and stimulated consumer response in revenue. This was supplemented most recently by direct contact with retail accounts through mail orders.

And Con Brio's international ties were beefed up throughout the year, with product now released in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and Europe. Billboard

Australia Front

• Continued from page WOCM-48

(here) with jazz and classics, has recently signed three country acts, John Williamson & Crow, Allan Caswell and Goldrush. Hilary Melick, New South Wales promotion manager for Astor says, "Country music has truly elevated itself and consumer acceptance in Australia has definitely been broadened. The only thing lacking is sufficient radio exposure."

A major factor in bringing country music to city airwaves and city buyers, is the emergence of a new wave of young, progressive country groups which are not so removed from the traditional strain to be actually dubbed country rock. Buckskin (Festival), Goldrush (Polygram), Anne Kirkpatrick Band (EMI), The Bushwackers (Image) and Saltbush are the fore-runners of a new movement in Australian country music which will eventually increase its market share. Yet the backlash is evident already; Erby, whose radio show is carried by a Sydney and Melbourne city station admits, "I cop all sorts of flak when I play Crystal Gayle, or Kenny Rogers. A lot of people don't consider that as country music."

Terry Wescombe, an ex-EMI executive and now publicity chief for CMA boasts, "While other forms of music are suffering a slump, country is continually expanding. Record companies are now realizing what potential there is in Tamworth. Next January both Astor and RCA will be staging live concerts to showcase their artists and later the Australasian Performing Rights Assn. will be staging a seminar here. The 8th annual awards in 1980 will run for 14 days and small record labels from all over Australia will congregate here with their product for sale to visitors. By then the new \$250,000 Music Farm Studio at Nimbin (on the north New South Wales coast, not far from Tamworth) may be complete, giving us five studios in the area (another is at the rural town of Dubbo). A 10% market share is not far away now." Billboard



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Organizations Boost

• Continued from page WOCM-54

choice. The overall concept behind SESAC is that it is an incentive program and in addition to being a performance rights organization, it is a personal service organization.

There have been many changes at SESAC this year and according to Petty, "we're becoming aggressive, which we've never been before, we're being public image-minded on the street, and we're seeking new writers and publishers in a way to help develop them.

"SESAC for its writers and publishers not only handles the collection of performance dollars on radio, tv, films and any other area where music may be used, we're also involved in all aspects of the working of that copyright in the publisher's company," says Petty. "We handle our own mechanical licensing and we use that as a form of checks and balances. Everything is an incentive so you have ways of seeing the control of the copyright and the song's activity."

SESAC was formed by Paul Heinecke 48 years ago as an alternative to ASCAP. It's a privately owned company now run by Heinecke's daughter, Alice Prager, who serves as chairman of the board, SESAC's president is Norman Weiser, who was once the board of directors of ASCAP and president of Chappell Music.

"Since we're privately owned," says DeBolt, "we don't take everybody who walks in off the street. We're very selective about who we sign to SESAC."

According to Petty, "when you can be selective as to who you sign, you can maintain quality control."

"1979 for SESAC was more or less like the year of our birth, even though we're 48 years old," relates DeBolt. "This year is when SESAC's board of directors realized that they needed some young people that knew the music business to groom for the future. We never had a public relations department in Nashville and we never had a full-time director of country music, even though we've had some really qualified people here in the past." The Nashville office has been in existence since 1964.

There is a totally new image and vitality blossoming at SESAC. It's a total team effort, and according to Petty, "There is no room at SESAC for anyone's ego. There's too much work to be done."

All of the Nashville office staff are involved with the various organizations including CMA, GMA, NSAI, NARAS and other groups. They realize the importance of being involved in the music community and they try to serve in as many organizations as possible.

"The feeling at SESAC is like being a member of a large family," says Petty. "We feed off each other and learn from each other. We used our individual expertise to teach one another and propel the organization to grow. It's a great feeling that will continue in the years to come."

The staff of SESAC has established a five year projection. All the things that are being done within the corporate structure are positive changes which will afford the organization continued expansion and growth.

The Nashville Chapter of the National Academy Of Recording Arts and Sciences continues to expand its scope of activities to include several projects of both local and national significance.

In May of this year, the Nashville chapter of NARAS paid tribute to Music City's most valuable musicians, background vocalists and engineers at an awards banquet held at the Richland Country Club.

In addition, the Nashville chapter continued its series of showcases with local artists and record labels with the proceeds providing supplemental revenue to further develop and expand the chapter's activities and membership benefits.

Under the leadership of president Bill Justis, who was re-elected to a second term, the Nashville chapter held the following showcases during the past year: a gospel showcase in conjunction with the Gospel Music Assn., a disco music showcase in conjunction with Dillard and Boyce Productions, a country music showcase in cooperation with Ovation Records, and the annual W.O.R.S.T. (World's Oldest Rock Stars Together) showcase, which features many of the Nashville chapter's members who were once (and in some cases still are) performers.

The chapter's scholarship fund was activated in January, 1979. The fund was established to lend financial aid to talented and deserving students presently studying the music business. Belmont College, Middle Tennessee State Univ., and Fisk Univ. were the recipients of \$1,000 scholarships.

Another high point of the year was the membership increase which enabled the Nashville chapter to elect an additional national trustee to represent the chapter on a national basis. The chapter's national trustees include Bill Justis, Buzz Cason, John Sturdivant, Roger Sovine and Glenn Snoddy. Don Butler was elected national vice president representing the Nashville chapter.

The chapter's future plans include seminars covering the different facets of the recording industry, more scholarships, the continuing series of showcases and the membership drive.

Formed in 1964, with the first awards presented in '65, the Academy of Country Music had its biggest and best year in 1979. Its awards presentation this year was aired in prime time on NBC-TV. With excellent ratings for its time slot, NBC has renewed its option and will air the ACM awards on May 1, 1980.

A West Coast based organization, ACM is faced with a radio dilemma in that area. "We lost KGBS-FM as a country outlet," states Bill Boyd, president of ACM. "With both KGBS-FM and

KFOX-AM changing formats, the only country station in the Los Angeles area is KLAC-AM."

Boyd further states, "With record sales being a problem, and with only one station to play them on, it really limits this market for country music, particularly new country music."

The ACM has more than 2,000 members including artists, producers, record company personnel and fans. The fans are allowed to participate in the voting, but are not allowed to serve on the board of directors or hold an office in the organization.

Country music is rapidly expanding its base and according to Boyd, "I don't think there is a limit as to where country music can go. Some of the best writers in music overall are country writers."

For the future, Boyd relates that the ACM is interested in establishing chapters across the country. A new award will be presented during their show next year, and it will go to the movie that has done the most to promote country music. With a plethora of country-oriented films about to be released (Billboard, Aug. 25, 1979) that category could become as important as the song of the year category.

In addition, "a few years down the line," according to Boyd, the ACM would like to establish a museum for the West Coast to showcase the accomplishments of its talent. Although not trying to compete with the museum in Nashville, the ACM museum could spotlight the talents of artists such as the Sons of the Pioneers, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Merle Haggard, Buck Owens, and others.

The Federation of International Country Air Personalities was formed in 1976 and contains a membership of more than 450 men and women. FICAP is not a union, but rather an organization of on-air country music radio personalities whose prime objective is to provide security for its members. The organization is aware that country DJs usually have no savings, no insurance and the longevity of their job is relatively short.

Already in effect is a job bank, which is a form of an employment agency that can put DJs together with the stations. There are no fees paid for the service and FICAP does not get involved in salary negotiations. According to executive director Georgia Twitty, "We just put the two together and let them negotiate their own terms.

There are two types of memberships to FICAP, the current air personalities, who must be on the air full time, and are able to vote, hold an office and serve on the board of directors. There is also an associate membership which consists of all related industries such as record companies and recording artists. These members cannot serve on the board, hold an office or vote.

The FICAP mini-seminar titled "Lets Put The Personality Back Into Country Radio" will take place on Tues. (9) at Opryland. The panel will include Charlie Douglas, WWL-AM; King Edward Smith IV, WSLC-AM and the current president of FICAP; Arch Yancy, KNUZ-AM; Ralph Emery, WSM-AM; Biff Collier, the 1978 country music DJ hall of fame inductee; and Paul Kallinger, XERF-AM.

To complete its participation during country music week, FICAP will hold its fourth annual banquet on Friday (12) at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Highlighting the banquet will be the presentation of the 1979 country music DJ hall of fame winners.

With all the activities scheduled for Nashville during convention week, and all the organizations getting ready, one thing stands out in talking with all the various organizations. They all care about Nashville and are proud of its heritage and musical background.

Although many of the organizations are in competition with each other, the common goal for all is to make Nashville and country music succeed, with Music City maintaining its status as a major music center of the world. **Billboard**

Live Stands Up

• Continued from page WOCM-56

Conway Twitty, Barbara Mandrell, Charlie Rich, Kenny Rogers, Loretta Lynn, Eddie Rabbitt, Larry Gatlin and Marty Robbins.

West Coast concert promoter Jack Roberts in Seattle sees the "honest-to-god country music tour promoter" as a thing of the past. "The concert business is definitely down. The gas crunch isn't helping, but I don't know that it's the major reason for the slowdown." Roberts nails inflationary pricing as one cause of massive changes in country touring. "Now you have to have a major name to bring the people out. Two or three years ago, I could charge \$4.50 to \$5.50 for tickets . . . now it's \$8 and up. Prices for talent have gone crazy."

Another factor that baffles the country tour promoter is the musical direction that country radio is taking. "I'm confused," Roberts said. "Things that worked before are not working now. Country radio programming has become so pop-oriented, it's hard to tell what's country and what's pop. I liked the old days better."

So there's 1979—it gave country music every opportunity to disappear completely. Marginal Nashville acts couldn't get work as touring promoters failed to package medium-priced acts. They stuck strictly to the biggies, and the biggies cost more money, so ticket prices went up. Country record companies emerged as the exclusive makers of stars. Old-time live radio shows and even television could no longer break a major touring act.

Country acts sought institutional stages for their performances. Bookers pushed their acts to theme parks, fairs and festivals, where only the superstars turned the heads of entertainment buyers.

Water was everywhere, gas was nowhere and ticket prices were soaring who knows where. **Billboard**

U.K. Leads Europe

• Continued from page WOCM-44

ing U.S. artists such as Roy Clark, Glen Campbell, Tammy Wynette, Larry Gatlin, Joe Ely, Ronnie Prophet and Barbara Fairchild as well as the local acts already mentioned.

In addition, a number of the commercial (ITV) television stations transmitted their own series—headlined by local acts like Sydney Devine, Frank Yonco and the Kelvin Henderson Band—while George Hamilton IV (surely the most successful of all U.S. country entertainers in Britain) was seen in his own Canadian series in most of the ITV regions.

On radio there's still only one network BBC radio show—"Country Club," a weekly two-hour program presented by David Allan and Wally Whyton, and produced by Colin Chandler—although there are over 40 regional shows originating from BBC and commercial stations.

In Ireland, country music continues to gather far wider appeal, with the music being responsible for some 60% of record sales and many local acts attracting crowds in the thousands wherever they appear. Among the most successful of the Irish acts are Philomena Begley, Ray Lynam, Gloria, Gene Stuart—all of whom have recorded in Nashville—Roly Daniels, Margo, Brendan Shine and Two's Company.

Outside of the British Isles, the above mentioned International Festivals created the greatest commercial interest although Tulsa based agent/manager Jim Halsey is fast becoming an important contender in the international market stakes.

This past year, Halsey presented Roy Clark, Don Williams and the Oak Ridge Boys on the first country shows at MIDEM (Cannes, France) and in Monaco during January. Then six months later, in association with MCA Records, he returned with Clark, the Oaks, Barbara Mandrell, Buck Trent, Jana Jae and Gatemouth Brown to stage the first country show at the Montreux Jazz Festival as well as presenting one night stands in London and Brussels. Gatemouth Brown subsequently traveled east to commence a six-week concert tour of the Soviet Union.

In Europe, the acceptability of the music varies from country to country.

The popularity of country music continues in Sweden although it has not increased substantially, reports agent/promoter Peter Lundin. "Here the greatest interest lies towards contemporary acts like Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and Linda Ronstadt, although the local artists—such as Mats Radberg and Rankarna and Country Road—still gather the greatest sales. Mats Radberg generally sells between 25,000 and 30,000 units per album release."

Lundin adds that the following in the other Scandinavian countries is more limited, with Country Snakes and Country Express being the most well known of the local acts in Norway and Finland respectively.

There has been a growing interest in country in Germany—an interest which first started off with the establishment of the U.S. Military bases. Today, more U.S. acts play public dates in addition to appearances before the military as Johnny Cash, Emmylou Harris, Glen Campbell, Waylon Jennings and Don Williams are the most popular of the American artists.

"The International Festival of Country Music in Frankfurt this past April attracted a near capacity crowd," says Juergen Kramer, chairman of the German CMA, "and this September, Marlboro has spent more than \$500,000 in promoting its 11-city country tour which is headlined by the Kendalls, the Osbourne Bros. and Tommy Overstreet."

Presently, there are approximately 30 known country acts on the German scene, the most successful being the group Truck Stop, international acts Tina Rainford and Freddy Quinn, and singer-songwriter Gunter Gabriel.

Similar mounting activity can be found in Holland, another country that favors electric bands and the contemporary side of the music.

"Besides the International Festival in Rotterdam, TROS radio and tv have been staging an annual festival for the past eight years and, this year, there's another new festival in Nyerecht," says Dutch promoter Cor Sanne. Among the most popular of the local acts are the Tumbleweeds, Saskia and Serge (who have a U.S. recording deal with Hickory Records), the Rudd Hermans Band and the Major Dundee Band.

In the remaining European countries, the country music following is far more limited and the liking is generally towards the traditional end of the spectrum. Belgium and Switzerland have a preference for old Timey and bluegrass music, and support a number of bands playing these sounds, while France appears to have only one local country act, Long Distance, a bluegrass band.

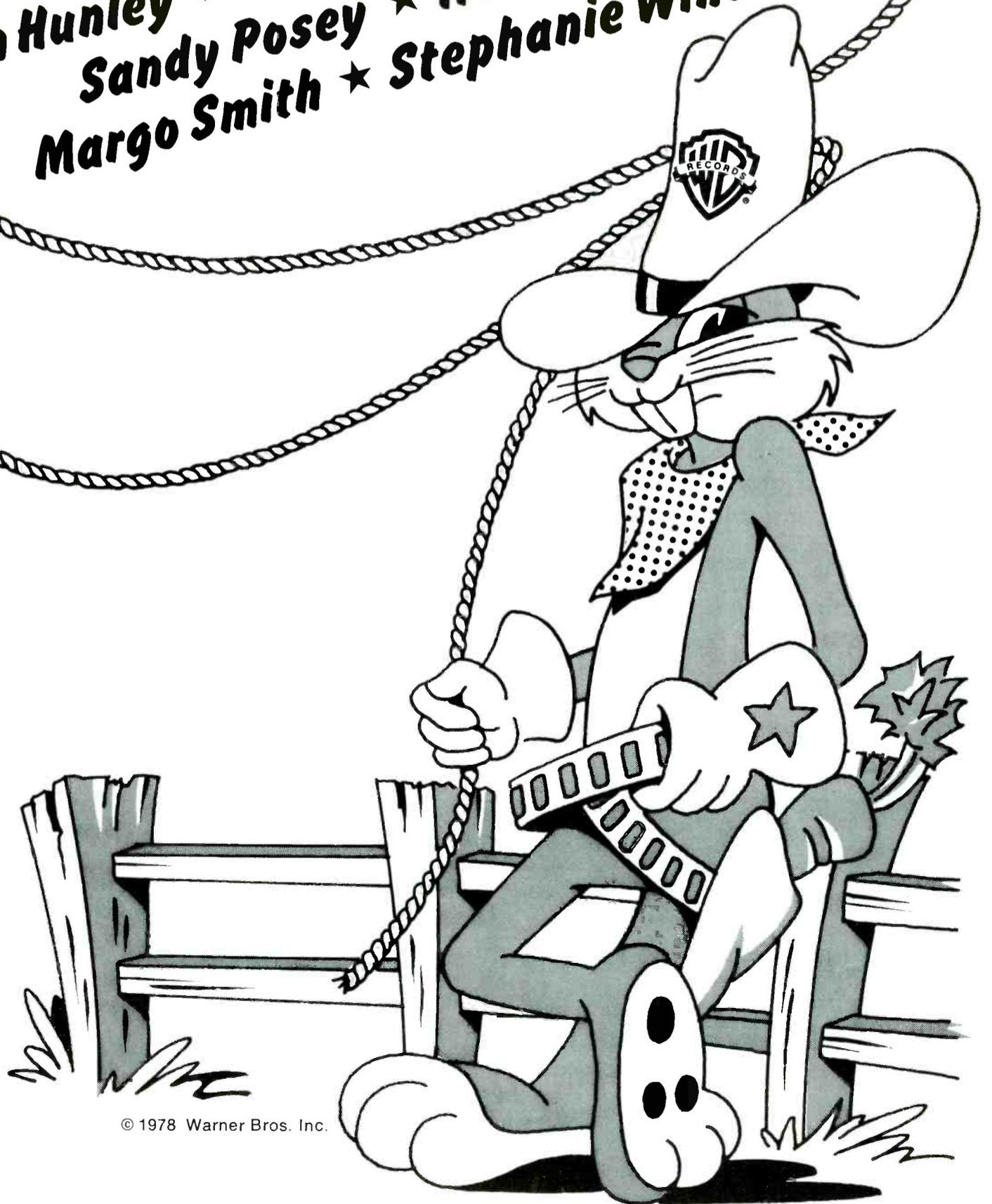
But the British Isles remains the most important center for country music, both for U.S. and local acts. Perhaps even more important though is that Britain is regarded by many as a stepping stone into Europe—a launching pad for artists to begin truly international careers. **Billboard**



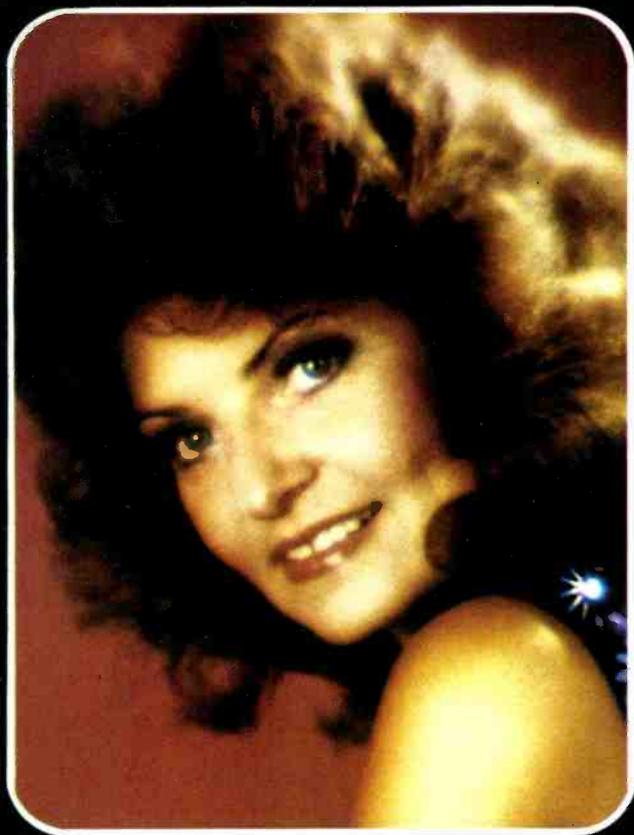
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