



**THE YEAR
IN MUSIC**

**TOP
STORIES
OF
2023**

**JASON
ALDEAN
THE INTERVIEW**

**CMA
RADIO
WINNERS!**



**COUNTRY
AIRCHECK**

DECEMBER
2023

LABBELL



★ ★ **OF THE** ★ ★
YEAR



H A P P Y

holidays

**FROM YOUR BBR MUSIC GROUP
AND BMG NASHVILLE FAMILY**

**THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH FOR
ALL YOUR SUPPORT. WE COULD NOT HAVE HAD
THE YEAR WE DID WITHOUT YOU.**



ALL THINGS AT A TIME

Every so often, country music seems to transcend itself – as an artform, as a business, in the media and across typical audience boundaries. By almost every metric imaginable, the genre and format did just that in 2023.

Start with the music, where **Morgan Wallen** landed an unprecedented three songs in the year's airplay top 10 (see page 11). In April, he posted two singles in the top 15, a feat not previously accomplished in modern chart history. The same month, **Luke Combs** claimed the top two spots on the Country Aircheck/Mediabase add board – also an historical first.

Country's surge isn't just about two artists, however. The No. 1 song of 2023 is only **Bailey Zimmerman's** second single. Five of the year's top airplay performers (see page 11) are making their debut on the list – **Lainey Wilson**, Zimmerman, **Jordan Davis**, **Tyler Hubbard** and **Jelly Roll**. The latter has the No. 2 Active Rock song of the year (see box page 4), joining Wallen, Combs and others in a country crossover show of force in multiple formats. Concurrently, music once decidedly outside of country's mainstream isn't quite so divergent, as artists including **Zach Bryan** and **Tyler Childers** are receiving airplay on reporting stations.

Unsurprisingly, country's recorded music market share and radio ratings ticked up (see Country By The Numbers, next page), and country dominated year-end charts from Spotify and Apple Music. Meanwhile, touring is booming. "In 26 years, I've never seen it healthier," WME/Nashville Co-Head **Jay Williams** said in Country Aircheck's live-music-focused July

issue. Even country's global presence was impacted, led by Combs' world tour, which brought 22 arena and stadium-level shows to Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

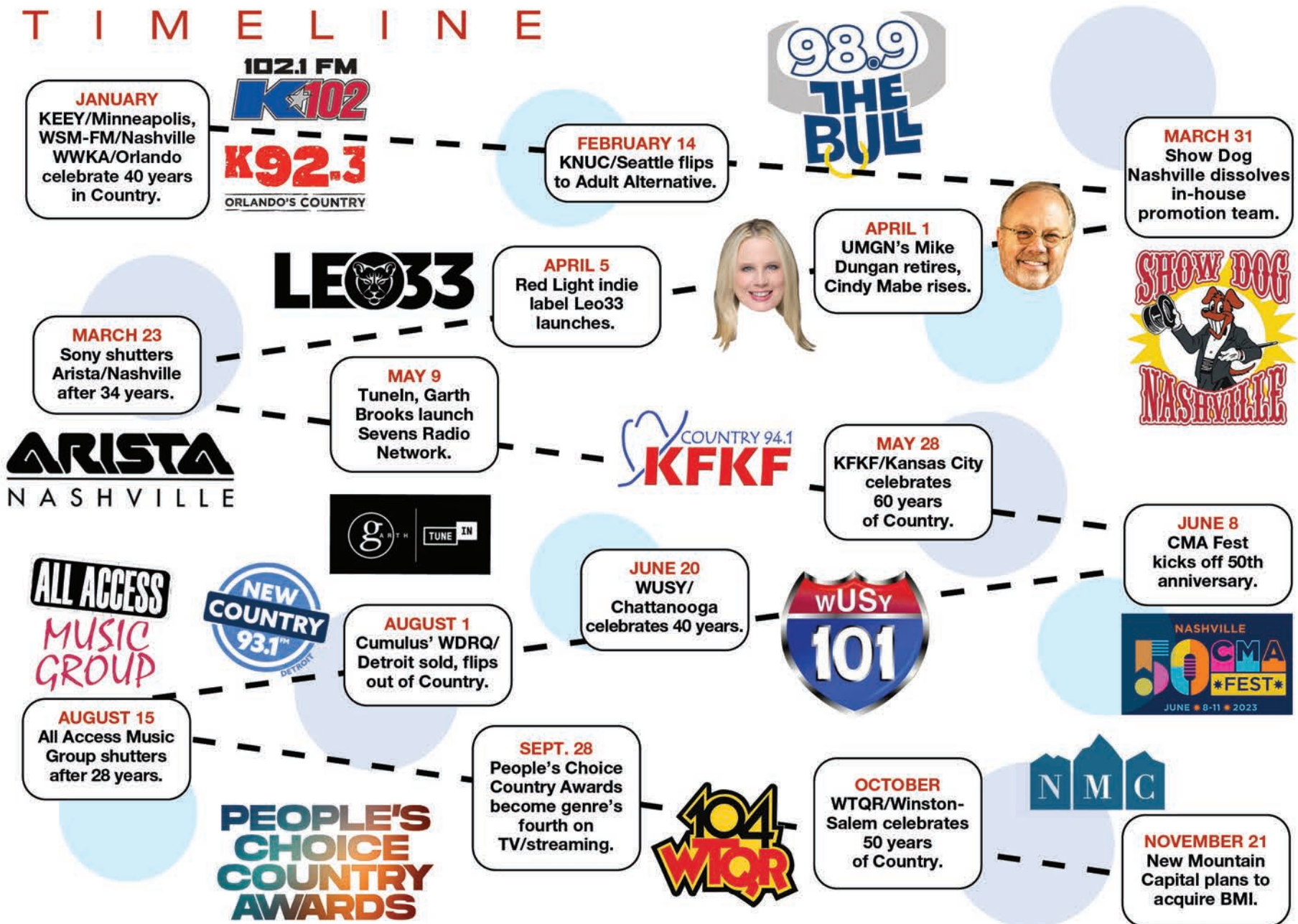
Mainstream media took notice of country on a new level, as well. **Oliver Anthony** became part of the zeitgeist so quickly that a question about his song "Rich Men North of Richmond" was the first one asked in a Republican presidential debate. He soon announced a world tour for 2024. **Jimmie Allen** lost his label deal and other professional affiliations when two women anonymously sued him for sexual assault; he later countersued both. **Maren Morris** made news when a *Los Angeles Times* headline claimed she was "getting the hell out of country music," something she walked back in subsequent interviews. And **Jason Aldean** found himself defending the song and video "Try That In A Small Town" when it incited controversy.

Like Aldean, **Toby Keith** was once painted into a media corner for a controversial song, but simplistic narratives don't hold over a 30-year career, which was examined at length in Country Aircheck's October issue. As for Aldean, he's the subject of The Interview at the back of this issue, where he discusses how his success bolstered the label now at the forefront of country's current successes. "It was kind of a mom-and-pop organization," he says of then-Broken Bow. "You look at what BMG and Broken Bow are today and it's nothing like that. The label is a much bigger player in the game with Jelly, Lainey, Dustin ... We were able to grow together – as a company and as an artist. It worked out for everybody."

TOP STORIES



TIMELINE



Two major market stations leaving the format – **KNUC/Seattle** and **WDRQ/Detroit** – were the most notable changes at Country radio. The addition of **Garth Brooks' partnership** with Tuneln, **Sevens Radio Network**, added another global dimension to country music's reach. But it was the record company world

READY, WILLING & LABEL

that saw significant movement. In March, consolidation at **Sony Music Nashville** led to the shuttering of the storied **Arista Nashville** imprint after 34 years in operation. **Dreamcatcher Artists** and **Show Dog Nashville** also laid off in-house promotion teams this year. On the upswing, Red Light launched **Leo33** and **Big**

Loud partnered with **Miranda Lambert** and **Jon Randall** for **Big Loud Texas**.

Also notable, the elevation of **Cindy Mabe** to Chair/CEO at UMG following **Mike Dungan's** retirement put two women at the helm of major Nashville labels for the first time in history. Mabe joined Warner Music Nashville Co-Chair/Co-Pres. **Cris Lacy**, who took on that role last year.

DON'T FORMAT ME, BRO

Top 100 2023 song ranks in non-Country formats by country or country-adjacent artists

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

- 13. LUKE COMBS/Fast Car
- 35. SHANIA TWAIN/Giddy Up!
- 37. MORGAN WALLEN/Last Night
- 40. SHANIA TWAIN/Waking Up Dreaming
- 54. FIREROSE & BILLY RAY CYRUS/Plans
- 88. JIMMY BUFFETT/Bubbles Up

ACTIVE ROCK

- 2. JELLY ROLL/Need A Favor
- 3. HARDY/Jack
- 33. HARDY/Sold Out
- 86. TIM MONTANA/Devil You Know
- 90. KOE WETZEL/Creeps

ALTERNATIVE

- 35. GIOVANNIE AND THE HIRED GUNS/Overrated
- 86. KOE WETZEL/Creeps

TOP STORIES

HOT AC

- 13. LUKE COMBS/Fast Car
- 21. MORGAN WALLEN/Last Night
- 31. PARMALEE/Take My Name
- 37. KANE BROWN & KATELYN BROWN/Thank God
- 39. JELLY ROLL/Need A Favor
- 78. MORGAN WALLEN/Wasted On You
- 87. CHARLIE PUTH f/DAN+SHAY/That's Not How This Works
- 90. KELSEA BALLERINI/Heartfirst

TOP 40

- 18. MORGAN WALLEN/Last Night
- 28. LUKE COMBS/Fast Car
- 52. KANE BROWN & KATELYN BROWN/Thank God
- 56. MORGAN WALLEN/Wasted On You
- 70. JELLY ROLL/Need A Favor

TRIPLE A

- 79. CHARLEY CROCKETT/Trinity River
- 99. CHRIS STAPLETON/White Horse
- 100. MARGO PRICE/Change Of Heart

Source: Mediabase

IN MEMORIAM

- Matt Alese
- Laura Lynn Aldrich
- Jerry Aulds
- James "Jim Casey" Barnhart
- Glenn Bell
- Eric "Bubba Bo" Boulanger
- Jerry Bradley
- Jimmy Buffett
- Pat Bunch
- Charlie Busch
- Mark Capps
- James "Moby" Carney
- Kerena Carr
- Dan Carson
- "Buddy Russ" Conrad
- "Jim Cody" Cotyk
- Mike Danvers
- Stuart Epperson
- Rebecca Falk
- Martha Fahnoe
- Dan "Foz" Fazio
- "John Michaels" Fleming
- Chuck Flood
- Dan Fritz
- Keith Gattis
- "Dave Michaels" Hagedorn
- Neil Haislop
- Craig Hayes
- Misha K. Hunke
- Margie Hunt
- Kyle Jacobs
- "Cowboy" Carl Kawasaki
- Gary Kline
- Jim Lago
- Richard Landis
- Bob Lima
- "Big Joe" Lombardi
- Bill Mayne
- Peter McCann
- Billy Joe "Red" McCombs
- Jim "Catfish" Metzger
- Charlie Mitchell
- George Moffett
- "Terry Diamond" Myers
- Bobby Osborne
- Ray Pillow
- Michael Rhodes
- Ray Rice
- Charlie Robison
- Gary Rossington
- Jeff Shaw
- Burt Sherwood
- Gary Shores
- Ken Squier
- David Stewart
- Ken "The Kenman" Stokes
- Abe Stoklasa
- Tom Stoner
- Liz Thiels
- Bob "Norton" Thompson
- Buck Trent
- Ivan Tribe
- Jim Vienneau
- Rosie Walsh
- Trish Williams Warren
- Walt Wilson
- Jan Woods

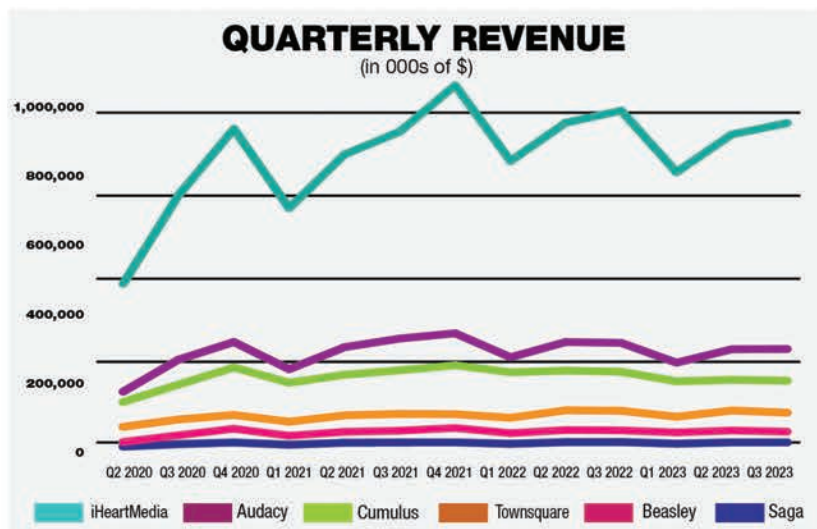
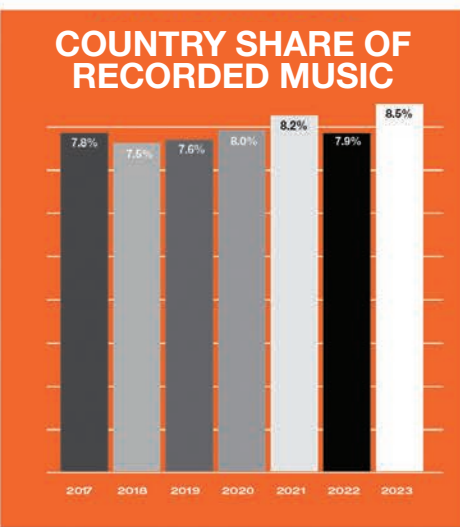
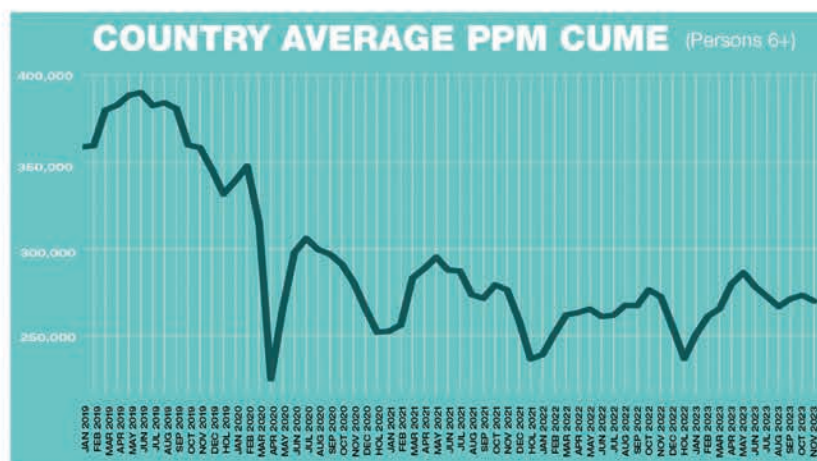
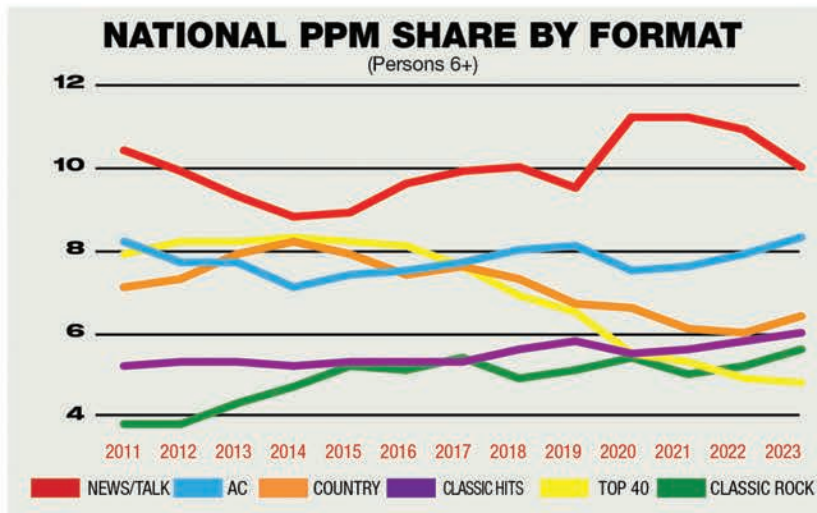
COUNTRY BY THE NUMBERS

The show-your-work section on country music's buzzworthy year confirms the premise. Here are the receipts: Country's Persons 6+ PPM national share was up to 6.4 from last year's worst-ever 6.0. News/Talk remained the top format with a 10.0 share, followed by Adult Contemporary, which was up from 7.9 to a record high 8.3. In demos, Country was up 7.1 to 7.5 among Persons 18-34 (tied with Top 40 behind AC) and 6.2 to 6.7 in P25-54, re-claiming second place behind AC.

Of course, share only tells part of the story. Country radio hasn't had a station come over a million since before the pandemic, but **KKBQ/Houston** came close with 998,400 persons in March, the largest country come since February 2020. The average come for Country stations in PPM markets in 2023 was 270,500, up from 2022's 261,700. It is worth noting, these increases came despite large market defections including **KNUC/Seattle** and **WDRQ/Detroit**.

Radio's largest companies continue to face revenue headwinds as the three largest all show less revenue for the first nine months of 2023, with the total among the three down more than 5% from the same time frame in 2022.

Country's share of total music consumption jumped from 7.9% last year to 8.5%, the largest in seven years of tracking, no doubt assisted by the increase in crossover hits over the past year. Sales of physical albums for country increased by 1 million to 7.3 million. Digital track sales were down from 17.6m to 16.9m, while on-demand streams jumped from 86 billion to 105b.



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ASCAP

CONGRATULATES OUR MEMBERS ON

72 SONGS

IN COUNTRY AIRCHECK'S

2023 TOP 100



JESSI ALEXANDER



TRACY CHAPMAN



MATT DRAGSTREM



DIERKS BENTLEY



JAREN JOHNSTON



JORDAN DAVIS



JOSH OSBORNE



ASHLEY GORLEY



JACOB HINDLIN



JOE RAGOSTA



AUSTIN NIVAREL



NATE SMITH



JON PARDI



HUNTER PHELPS



JORDAN SCHMIDT



COLE TAYLOR



LAINAY WILSON

CHEERS TO AN AWESOME 2023 FOR
SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE

COUNTRY AIRCHECK TOP NEW ARTIST

- 1 | COREY KENT**
- 2 | MEGAN MORONEY**

COUNTRY AIRCHECK TOP OVERALL ARTIST

- 2 | LUKE COMBS**

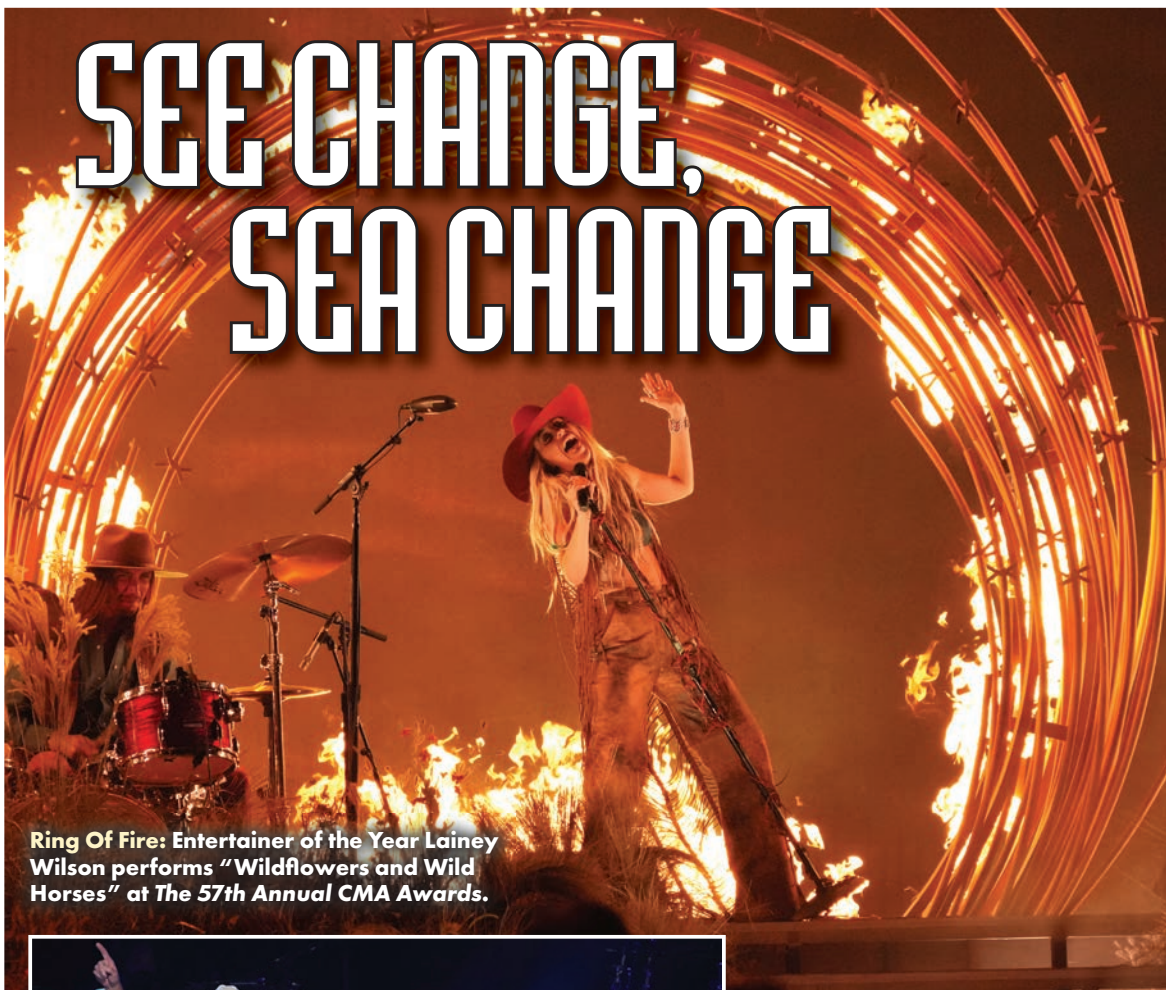
COUNTRY AIRCHECK BEST DUO/GROUP

- 3 | OLD DOMINION**

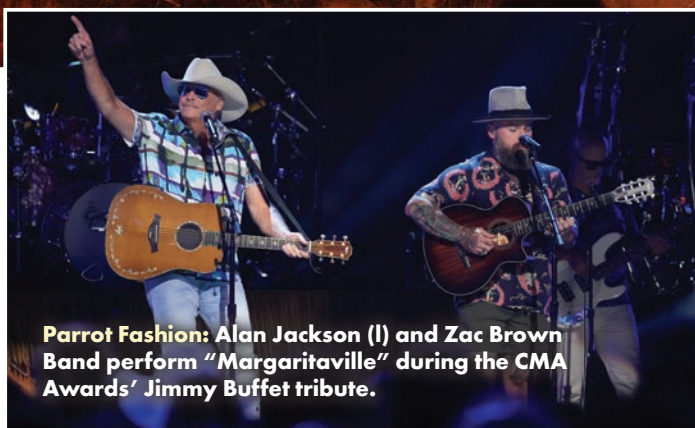


THANK YOU COUNTRY RADIO

SEE CHANGE, SEA CHANGE



Ring Of Fire: Entertainer of the Year Lainey Wilson performs "Wildflowers and Wild Horses" at The 57th Annual CMA Awards.



Parrot Fashion: Alan Jackson (l) and Zac Brown Band perform "Margaritaville" during the CMA Awards' Jimmy Buffet tribute.

The 57th CMA Awards crowned a new generation of artists while honoring the heritage upon which the show and the genre are built.



Half Hatted: Big Machine Label Group artists and staff party into the early morning. Pictured (back row l-r): Lecade, Chase McDaniel, Brett Young, Jackson Dean, Midland's Jess Carson, Chris Janson, Brian Kelley, Mae Estes, Riley Green, and Midland's Mark Wystrach. Front row (l-r): Tiera Kennedy, Carly Pearce, Scott Borchetta, Sandi Spika Borchetta and Mackenzie Carpenter.



Fortune Favors The Bowled: BBRMG hosts its annual CMA pre-party at Nashville's Brooklyn Bowl. Pictured (l-r) are the label group's Tim Reid, Jon Loba, JoJamie Hahr, Thomas Coesfeld, Johannes von Schwarzkopf, Katie Kerkhover and Dan Gill.



BLURR BABY
CMA Broadcast winners couldn't contain their excitement, as seen above: Grover Collins, Angie Ward, Gregg Swedberg, Brent Michaels, Wayne Danielson and Tay Hamilton (l-r) with presenting artist Hailey Whitters (c).

SEQUINS OF EVENTS

**Major Market Station
KEEY/Minneapolis**
SVP/Programming Gregg Swedberg on a "special" year.



Swedberg with the station's CMA trophy

I don't want this to come off like we're cocky, but we absolutely deserved to win. I've judged a lot of CMA entries [so] I know how hard it is to get the judges' attention. This was a great year for a station that has been pretty good for a long time. Glad to see they agreed.

The last station win was 18 years ago. I made the trip, but didn't get to accept. Being onstage, making an awkward speech and having people you admire slap you on the back is amazing. I'm so lucky to work with a great local staff and iHeartCountry team. Getting the big award? It's about the best feeling you can get doing this. There was an open bar for the winners, so I'm a little fuzzy on a lot of the details. I did learn to never attempt outdressing [WUBE/Cincinnati PD] Grover Collins.

HERDING CATS

**Large Market Station
WUBE/Cincinnati**
PD Grover Collins says trophies help them "show off" to listeners.



Collins and wife Holly with the station's trophy

WUBE continues to be a very consistent radio station. I am very fortunate to work with people who are all goal-oriented toward the same goal. Yes, we love ratings, but more than that, we love to entertain, have fun and think of new ways to be hyper local. We're all friends, we hang out outside of the station, and that's something the permeates through the airwaves.

CMA is such a well-run operation. They were herding cats, obviously. We're radio people, so we all are getting into conversations and getting our cocktails, but they made sure we didn't miss anything, from our photographs to being on the floor for the pre-telecast ceremony. I've got to give kudos to CMA, because they are just phenomenal at that.

JOB WELL DONE

**Medium Market Station
KUZZ Bakersfield**
PD Brent Michaels shares the award with the people of Bakersfield.



(l-r) Michaels' wife, Julie, Michaels, Cole Swindell and fiancée Courtney Little.

Unforgettable. I'll always remember the honor of walking on the CMA Awards stage and accepting from Hailey Whitters, one of our Class of 2023. I took a 5am flight out of Nashville immediately after the awards, and brought the trophy back to the station.

There are so many great medium market stations ... I am always in awe being nominated. Winning encouraged some reflection. Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day challenges and you don't stop to realize how much your station and team are making a difference in the community. I said it on stage that night - this award belongs to the listeners in Bakersfield. Their support is never taken for granted.

CONTINUING LEGACY

**Small Market Station
WXBQ/Johnson City, TN**
PD Nikki Thomas pushed owner Lisa Ninger-Bouldin to accept.



Lisa Ninger-Bouldin (l) and Nikki Thomas (photobombed by morning co-host Ben Walker)

She was ready to kill me at first. She was so nervous, but she was awesome. She was able to mention her late father, Tennessee Radio Hall of Famer "Mr. Pete" Ninger. He would have been so excited. Once we got home, we made sure to take staff pictures with the award. It's theirs [and] I wanted them to understand how important they are to the community, the company and country music.

We had been nominated four years straight and it was so frustrating. I felt like I was letting them down. Being able to ask Lisa to pick up that award meant the world to me. She's a great station owner. Having that CMA added to the legacy of what her dad and Bill Hagy built is incredible. Putting that in Bill's hands and seeing his eyes light up when he looked at our call letters engraved on that trophy was fantastic.



On A Roll: Jelly Roll shows off the card indicating his CMA New Artist of the Year win backstage at Bridgestone Arena.



Bolo Alert: Hardy (l), Post Malone (c) and Morgan Wallen meet up on the CMA Awards red carpet.



On Track: UMG Nashville celebrates with artists, staff, and industry friends at the Rutledge in downtown Nashville. Pictured (l-r) are Tyler Hubbard, Luke Bryan, Sam Williams, Jordan Davis, Nate Bargatze, Cindy Mabe, Boyd Muir, and Priscilla Block.



Neon Night: Warner Music Nashville artists and staff gather for the label's after party at The Twelve Thirty Club. Pictured (l-r) are Victoria Mason, Randall King, Chase Matthew and Ben Kline.

FAMILY TRADITION

Weekly National Personality
Lon Helton

Country Countdown USA, Compass Media Networks
Helton thanks family, new and old.

This year was very special, and that's saying a lot, considering I've been to every CMA since 1981 except one ... Game Seven of Cubs-Indians. For the very first time this year, my granddaughters were there to celebrate. It's such a thrill to experience that night with your family.



Helton with granddaughters Presley and Samantha.

Speaking of family, I'm proud to share this 12th CMA award with Talent Coordinator Jo Hunt and Producer/Writer George Achaves, both of whom have been with me for the almost 33 years *CCUSA* has been on the air. Our extended family also includes Jim Reyland, Chase Bencin and the Audio Productions team, as well as the Compass Media Networks family. Thanks to all the programmers who have ever put *CCUSA* on their airwaves, to the hundreds of artists who so graciously give us their time and the label people who have shepherded them through. So blessed; so humbled.

HAMBURGLAR ALERT

Daily National Personality
Angie Ward, iHeartMedia

Ward ends her "magical" night with smuggled chow.

I still tear up when I think about it – such a wonderful feeling to be recognized for the effort you put in. I am so proud to be part of the radio family at each station I am on. I thought I would be nervous, but so many of the other winners this year are longtime friends, so it was awesome to share such a special night.



After giving my speech, my dress got caught in my heel as I was still carrying the trophy and I thought "This is how my CMA moment will be remembered: Angie Ward does a face plant and shatters her award!" Instead, I smuggled Whataburger out of the BMLG party in my bag.

The CMA trophy tour has been to client businesses, family and friends' houses and the studio. After that I plan on sitting it on the fireplace mantle at home for a while.

GOLDEN STATUE, GOLDEN BACHELOR

Major Market Personality
Mark "Hawkeye" Louis and Michelle Rodriguez

Hawkeye In The Morning with Hawkeye and Michelle; KSCS Dallas

MHL: After 35 years in mornings at KSCS, to finally get to go to the CMA Awards was a big deal for us. The CMA made us feel very special. The moment that really made us laugh was getting to meet *Golden Bachelor* Gerry Turner, who was a presenter. Michelle joked that I pushed a fan out of the way to take my picture with him, but ... it was more of a photo bomb.



Louis and Rodriguez

MR: I've been in Country radio in Dallas for 19 years, and to win this award was a dream. I got to talk to Texas Rangers World Series MVP Corey Seager. The guys were too scared to talk to him. This award wouldn't have been possible without our listeners. It's because of them that we got to experience the dream of winning our first CMA Award.

DOG DAZE

Large Market Personality
"Wayne D" Danielson and Tay Hamilton

The Wayne D Show, WSIX/Nashville

TH: Being a country music fan since I was a kid and watching some of my favorite artists hold the same award as me still blows my mind. I dreamed of one day seeing my name on one, but since when I sing, dogs howl, I figured I never would.

WD: We pride ourselves in being real with our audience. Authenticity counts now more than ever. The CMA crew does such an amazing job celebrating Country radio; we were both so impressed. One of the coolest moments, outside of accepting our award, was running into different artists and getting congratulated by them. Now, the trophy sits on my desk in my home studio. Tay's is on her dresser. She currently rocks it to sleep every night.



Hamilton (l) and Danielson

HEAD OVER HEELS

Medium Market Personality
Melissa "Mo" Wagner and Greg "StyckMan" Owens

Mo & StyckMan, WUSY/Chattanooga

MW: Thankful, humbled and excited.

SM: I love this business, and to get a shiny from my peers for doing it well ... it's just humbling. The story I'll tell my grandkid is the beard kiss I got from Jackson Dean. And Mo managed to do all the night's walking in high heels – something that hasn't happened before.

MW: Definitely a miracle in itself, and I only had to put on one Band-Aid to survive the shoes all night.

SM: We are a community show. The work we do outside the studio is very important. We are *in* the community as much or even more than we talk about the community.

MW: We share our lives with our listeners and they, in turn, share theirs with us. Whatever the circumstance, we bring our true selves to the table when we turn on the microphone.



Wagner (l) admires the award while StyckMan plays with the box it came in.

PEER PRESSURE

Small Market Personality
Steve Stroud, Ben Walker and Nikki Thomas

Steve, Ben & Nikki, WXBQ/Johnson City, TN

SS: This was our second show win, and to know that our work is appreciated by such a prestigious organization is incredibly gratifying. To have it happen twice and our station win [in the same year] is a dream come true.

BW: Backstage was nerve wracking. The greats are all around you – people you admire and old friends. You're thinking "You've got two sentences, so make it count."

NT: We never thought it could happen a second time, but we are very community and listener focused.

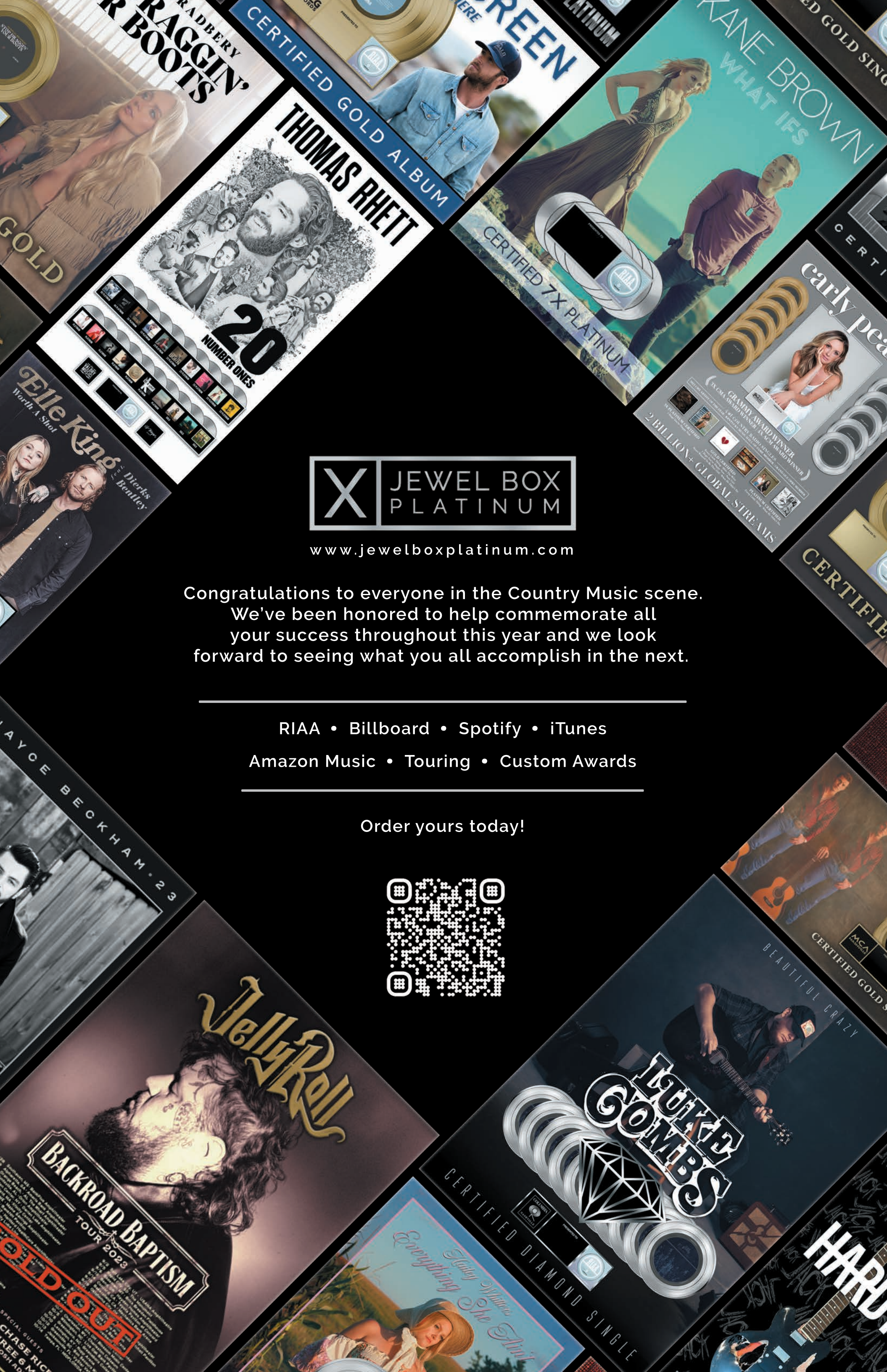
BW: Winning is about the team you play with. We're all just alike in a way, but we work wonderfully together ... we're totally prepared and focused.

NT: We work really hard. To have our show recognized by our industry peers is the highest compliment we could ever receive.



Stroud, Walker and Thomas (l-r)

CAC

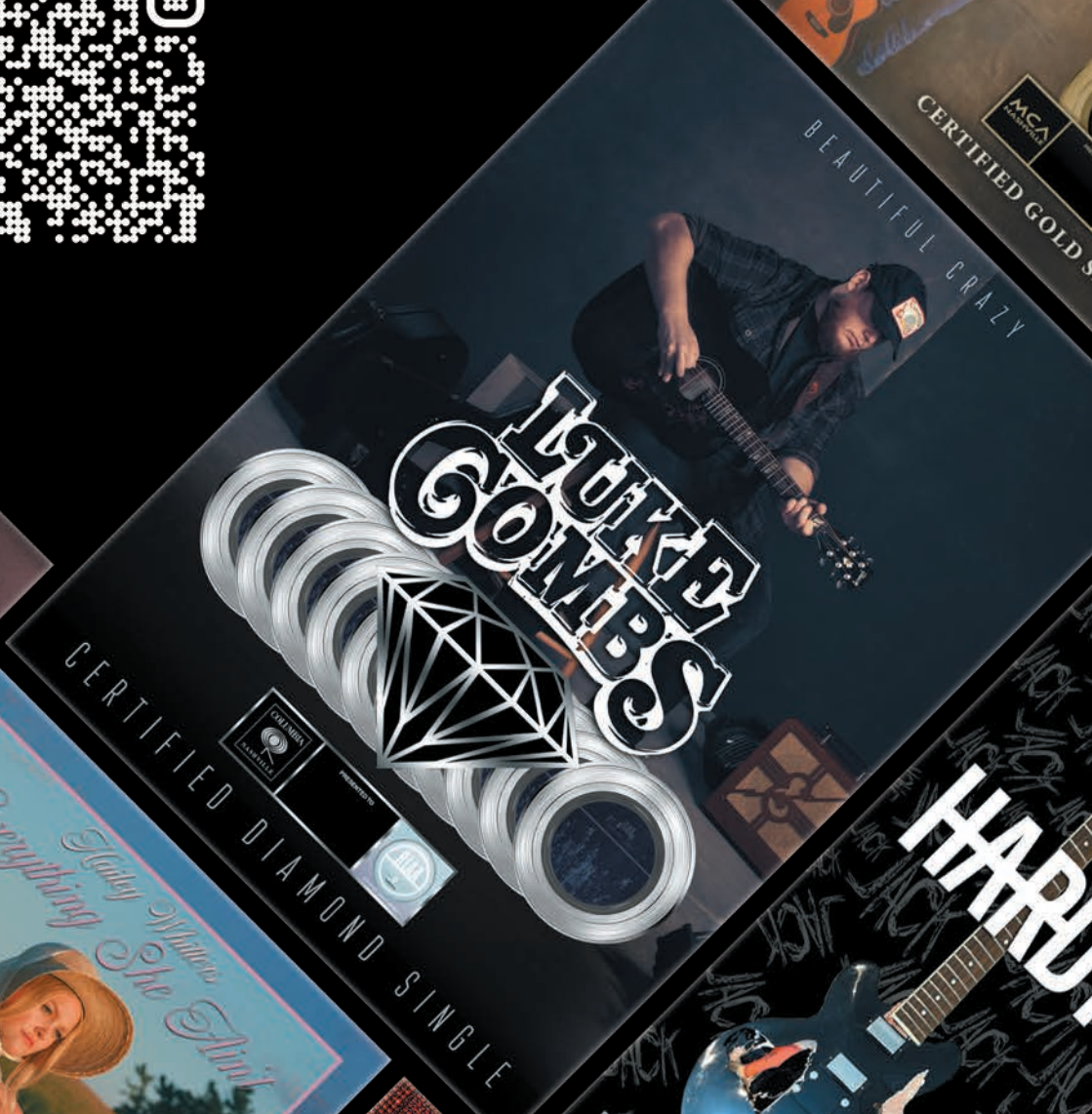


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Congratulations to everyone in the Country Music scene. We've been honored to help commemorate all your success throughout this year and we look forward to seeing what you all accomplish in the next.

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BAILEY ZIMMERMAN

ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

COUNTRY RADIO'S MOST PLAYED SONG OF 2023



BUT THAT'S NOT

WHERE IT ENDS

IMPACTING NOW



theYEAR
in MUSICTOP 100
OF 2023

MEDIABASE

1	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Rock And A Hard Place	Warner/WEA	51	CHRIS JANSON	All I Need Is You	BMLGR
2	TYLER HUBBARD	Dancin' In The Country	EMI Nashville	52	GABBY BARRETT	Pick Me Up	Warner/WAR
3	MORGAN WALLEN	Thought You Should Know	Big Loud	53	MORGAN WALLEN	Thinkin' Bout Me	Big Loud
4	MORGAN WALLEN	Last Night	Big Loud	54	MORGAN WALLEN	One Thing At A Time	Big Loud
5	KANE BROWN & KATELYN BROWN	Thank God	RCA	55	MITCHELL TENPENNY	We Got History	River House/Columbia
6	JORDAN DAVIS	What My World Spins Around	MCA	56	GEORGE BIRGE	Mind On You	Records Nashville
7	MORGAN WALLEN	You Proof	Big Loud	57	CHRIS YOUNG	Looking For You	RCA
8	JELLY ROLL	Need A Favor	BMG/Stoney Creek	58	INGRID ANDRESS w/SAM HUNT	Wishful Drinking	Atlantic/Warner/WEA
9	LAINIE WILSON	Heart Like A Truck	Broken Bow	59	SAM HUNT	Water Under The Bridge	MCA
10	LUKE COMBS	Fast Car	River House/Columbia	60	JOE NICHOLS	Good Day For Living	Quartz Hill
11	JORDAN DAVIS	Next Thing You Know	MCA	61	ZACH BRYAN	Something In The Orange	Belting Bronco/Warner/WAR
12	LUKE COMBS	Going, Going, Gone	River House/Columbia	62	ASHLEY MCBRYDE	Light On In The Kitchen	Warner/WMN
13	NATE SMITH	Whiskey On You	Arista	63	CONNER SMITH	Creek Will Rise	Valory
14	PARMALEE	Girl In Mine	Stoney Creek	64	CHAYCE BECKHAM	23	Wheelhouse
15	DIERKS BENTLEY	Gold	Capitol	65	JACKSON DEAN	Fearless	Big Machine
16	PARKER MCCOLLUM	Handle On You	MCA	66	DAN + SHAY	Save Me The Trouble	Warner/WAR
17	COREY KENT	Wild As Her	Combustion/RCA	67	BLAKE SHELTON	No Body	Warner/WMN
18	JON PARDI	Your Heart Or Mine	Capitol	68	RILEY GREEN f/LUKE COMBS	Different Round Here	BMLGR
19	TYLER HUBBARD	5 Foot 9	EMI Nashville	69	BROTHERS OSBORNE	Nobody's Nobody	EMI Nashville
20	LUKE COMBS	Love You Anyway	River House/Columbia	70	JACKSON DEAN	Don't Come Lookin'	Big Machine
21	JUSTIN MOORE & PRISCILLA BLOCK	You, Me, And Whiskey	Valory/InDent/Mercury	71	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Hate My Heart	Capitol
22	SCOTTY MCCREERY	It Matters To Her	Triple Tigers	72	LUKE BRYAN	Country On	Capitol
23	HARDY f/LAINIE WILSON	Wait In The Truck	Broken Bow/Big Loud	73	ZAC BROWN BAND	Out In The Middle	Home Grown/Warner/WAR
24	THOMAS RHETT	Angels	Valory	74	NATE SMITH	World On Fire	RCA
25	JELLY ROLL	Son Of A Sinner	BMG/Stoney Creek	75	JELLY ROLL w/ LAINIE WILSON	Save Me	BMG/Stoney Creek
26	TIM MCGRAW	Standing Room Only	Big Machine	76	CHRIS STAPLETON	White Horse	Mercury
27	RUSSELL DICKERSON	God Gave Me A Girl	Triple Tigers	77	BRIAN KELLEY	See You Next Summer	Big Machine
28	DYLAN SCOTT	Can't Have Mine (Find You A...)	Curb	78	RANDY HOUSER	Note To Self	Magnolia Music
29	DAN + SHAY	You	Warner/WAR	79	B. GILBERT & B. SHELTON f/V. GILL	Heaven By Then	Valory
30	KANE BROWN	Bury Me In Georgia	RCA	80	HARDY	Truck Bed	Big Loud
31	OLD DOMINION	Memory Lane	Columbia	81	GABBY BARRETT	Glory Days	Warner/WAR
32	CARLY PEARCE	What He Didn't Do	Big Machine	82	DILLON CARMICHAEL	Son Of A	Riser House
33	THOMAS RHETT f/RILEY GREEN	Half Of Me	Valory/BMLGR	83	WARREN ZEIDERS	Pretty Little Poison	Warner/WEA
34	DUSTIN LYNCH	Stars Like Confetti	Broken Bow	84	WALKER HAYES	Y'all Life	Monument
35	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Religiously	Warner/WEA	85	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Out Of That Truck	Capitol
36	CODY JOHNSON	Human	Warner/CoJo/WMN	86	DALTON DOVER	Giving Up On That	Mercury
37	JASON ALDEAN	Try That In A Small Town	Macon Music/Broken Bow	87	KYLIE MORGAN	If He Wanted To He Would	EMI Nashville
38	BRETT YOUNG	You Didn't	BMLGR	88	PARKER MCCOLLUM	Burn It Down	MCA
39	LAINIE WILSON	Watermelon Moonshine	Broken Bow	89	CARLY PEARCE f/ CHRIS STAPLETON	We Don't Fight...	Big Machine
40	MEGAN MORONEY	Tennessee Orange	Columbia	90	ELLE KING f/DIERKS BENTLEY	Worth A Shot	Columbia
41	JASON ALDEAN	That's What Tequila Does	Macon Music/Broken Bow	91	KASSI ASHTON	Drive You Out Of My Mind	MCA
42	LUKE BRYAN	But I Got A Beer In My Hand	Capitol	92	ERIC CHURCH	Doing Life With Me	EMI Nashville
43	KELSEA BALLERINI	If You Go Down (I'm Going...)	Black River	93	DARIUS RUCKER	Fires Don't Start Themselves	Capitol
44	HAILEY WHITTERS	Everything She Ain't	Pigasus/S&D/Big Loud	94	KOLBY COOPER	Excuses	Combustion/Wheelhouse
45	KEITH URBAN	Brown Eyes Baby	Capitol	95	CODY JOHNSON	The Painter	CoJo/Warner/WMN
46	COLE SWINDELL	Drinkaby	Warner/WMN	96	MORGAN EVANS	Over For You	Warner/WEA
47	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Fall In Love	Warner/WEA	97	DRAKE MILLIGAN	Sounds Like Something I'd Do	Stoney Creek
48	SHANE PROFITT	How It Oughta Be	BMLGR	98	EASTON CORBIN	Marry That Girl	Stone Country
49	JIMMIE ALLEN	Down Home	Stoney Creek	99	CHRIS STAPLETON	Joy Of My Life	Mercury
50	MORGAN WALLEN	Everything I Love	Big Loud	100	FRANK RAY	Somebody Else's Whiskey	Stoney Creek

TOP of 15^S 2023

the YEAR
in MUSIC



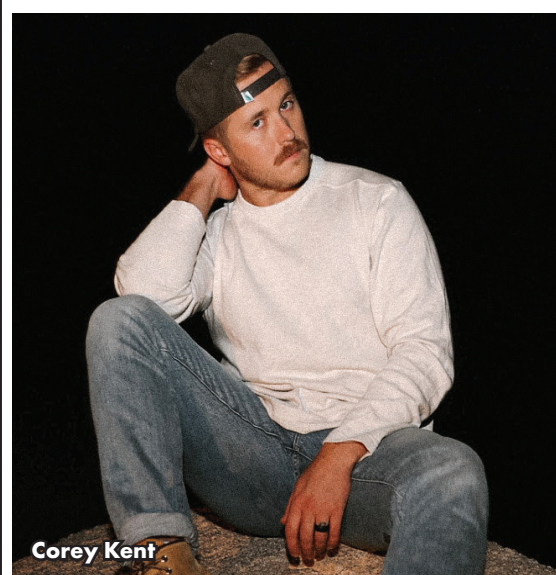
Luke Combs



Dan + Shay



Parmalee



Corey Kent

	Artist	Title	Label	Peak Position (wks. at No.1)	Peak Date	Wks. on Chart	2023 Rank
A	JASON ALDEAN	That's What Tequila Does	Macon Music/Broken Bow	4	3/13/23	20	41
	JASON ALDEAN	Try That In A Small Town	Macon Music/Broken Bow	1(1)	10/23/23	25	37
	JIMMIE ALLEN	Down Home	Stoney Creek	1(1)	1/3/23	10	49
	I. ADDRESS w/S. HUNT	Wishful Drinking	Atlantic/Warner/WEA	4	11/14/22	2	58
B	KELSEA BALLERINI	If You Go Down (I'm Going...)	Black River	14	10/16/23	45	43
	GABBY BARRETT	Pick Me Up	Warner/WAR	4	1/23/23	13	52
	DIERKS BENTLEY	Gold	Capitol	1(1)	5/1/23	27	15
	GEORGE BIRGE	Mind On You	Records Nashville	10	11/13/23	34	56
	K. BROWN & K. BROWN	Thank God	RCA	1(2)	2/21/23	17	5
	KANE BROWN	Bury Me In Georgia	RCA	1(1)	9/11/23	25	30
	LUKE BRYAN	Country On	Capitol	1(1)	12/12/22	8	72
LUKE BRYAN	But I Got A Beer In My Hand	Capitol	8	11/13/23	27	42	
C	LUKE COMBS	Going, Going, Gone	River House/Columbia	1(2)	3/20/23	21	12
	LUKE COMBS	Fast Car	River House/Columbia	1(2)	7/24/23	14	10
	LUKE COMBS	Love You Anyway	River House/Columbia	1(1)	9/5/23	22	20
D	DAN + SHAY	You	Warner/WAR	2	5/30/23	31	29
	DAN + SHAY	Save Me The Trouble	Warner/WAR	9	11/13/23	18	66
	JORDAN DAVIS	What My World Spins Around	MCA	1(2)	1/23/23	13	6
	JORDAN DAVIS	Next Thing You Know	MCA	1(2)	7/3/23	20	11
	JACKSON DEAN	Don't Come Lookin'	Big Machine	1(1)	11/28/22	7	70
	RUSSELL DICKERSON	God Gave Me A Girl	Triple Tigers	1(1)	11/6/23	40	27
G	R. GREEN f/L. COMBS	Different Round Here	BMLG Records	14	11/13/21	25	68
H	HARDY f/L. WILSON	Wait In The Truck	Broken Bow/Big Loud	1(1)	4/24/23	26	23
	TYLER HUBBARD	5 Foot 9	EMI Nashville	1(1)	11/14/22	3	19
	TYLER HUBBARD	Dancin' In The Country	EMI Nashville	1(1)	5/22/23	30	2
	SAM HUNT	Water Under The Bridge	MCA	14	4/3/23	25	59
J	CHRIS JANSON	All I Need Is You	BMLGR	12	11/13/23	36	51
	JELLY ROLL	Son Of A Sinner	BMG/Stoney Creek	1(1)	1/9/23	11	25
	JELLY ROLL	Need A Favor	BMG/Stoney Creek	1(3)	8/21/23	32	8
	JELLY ROLL w/L. WILSON	Save Me	BMG/Stoney Creek	4	11/13/23	10	75
	CODY JOHNSON	Human	CoJo/Warner/WMN	5	6/5/23	32	36
K	COREY KENT	Wild As Her	Combustion/RCA	1(1)	5/15/23	29	17
L	DUSTIN LYNCH	Stars Like Confetti	Broken Bow	1(1)	11/13/23	40	34
M	PARKER MCCOLLUM	Handle On You	MCA	1(1)	5/8/23	28	16
	SCOTTY MCCREERY	It Matters To Her	Triple Tigers	2	6/5/23	32	22
	TIM MCGRAW	Standing Room Only	Big Machine	5	11/13/23	36	26
	J. MOORE & P. BLOCK	You, Me, And Whiskey	Valory/InDent/Mercury	1(1)	8/7/23	39	21
	MEGAN MORONEY	Tennessee Orange	Columbia	1(1)	6/19/23	29	40
N	JOE NICHOLS	Good Day For Living	Quartz Hill	15	5/22/23	30	60
O	OLD DOMINION	Memory Lane	Columbia	1(1)	7/10/23	29	31
P	JON PARDI	Your Heart Or Mine	Capitol	1(1)	8/28/23	44	18
	PARMALEE	Girl In Mine	Stoney Creek	1(1)	10/2/23	49	14
	CARLY PEARCE	What He Didn't Do	Big Machine	1(1)	3/27/23	22	32
	SHANE PROFITT	How It Oughta Be	BMLG Records	15	6/12/23	33	48
R	T. RHETT f/R. GREEN	Half Of Me	Valory/BMLG Records	1(1)	11/21/22	4	33
	THOMAS RHETT	Angels	Valory	1(1)	9/18/23	34	24
S	DYLAN SCOTT	Can't Have Mine (Find You A...)	Curb	3	11/13/23	52	28
	NATE SMITH	Whiskey On You	Arista	1(2)	2/6/23	15	13
	NATE SMITH	World On Fire	RCA	11	11/13/23	20	74
	CHRIS STAPLETON	White Horse	Mercury	13	11/13/23	17	76
	COLE SWINDELL	Drinkaby	Warner/WMN	8	8/21/23	32	46
T	MITCHELL TENPENNY	We Got History	Riser House/Columbia	14	11/6/23	45	55
U	KEITH URBAN	Brown Eyes Baby	Capitol	10	5/30/23	31	45
W	MORGAN WALLEN	You Proof	Big Loud	3	11/14/22	1	7
	MORGAN WALLEN	Thought You Should Know	Big Loud	1(2)	3/6/23	19	3
	MORGAN WALLEN	Last Night	Big Loud	1(3)	6/12/23	22	4
	MORGAN WALLEN	One Thing At A Time	Big Loud	5	6/12/23	19	54
	MORGAN WALLEN	Thinkin' Bout Me	Big Loud	1(1)	10/30/23	16	53
	MORGAN WALLEN	Everything I Love	Big Loud	7	11/13/23	20	50
	HAILEY WHITTERS	Everything She Ain't	Pigasus/S&D/Big Loud	15	7/24/23	43	44
	LAINÉY WILSON	Heart Like A Truck	Broken Bow	1(1)	4/3/23	23	9
	LAINÉY WILSON	Watermelon Moonshine	Broken Bow	1(2)	10/16/23	22	39
	Y	BRETT YOUNG	You Didn't	BMLGR	6	5/1/23	27
CHRIS YOUNG		Looking For You	RCA	11	8/14/23	32	57
Z	ZAC BROWN BAND	Out In The Middle	Home Grown/Warner/WAR	10	12/12/22	12	73
	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Fall In Love	Warner/WEA	1(1)	12/5/22	8	47
	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Rock And A Hard Place	Warner/WEA	1(2)	4/17/23	21	1
	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN	Religiously	Warner/WEA	1(1)	9/25/23	24	35

SMACK CONGRATULATES ALL OUR WRITERS



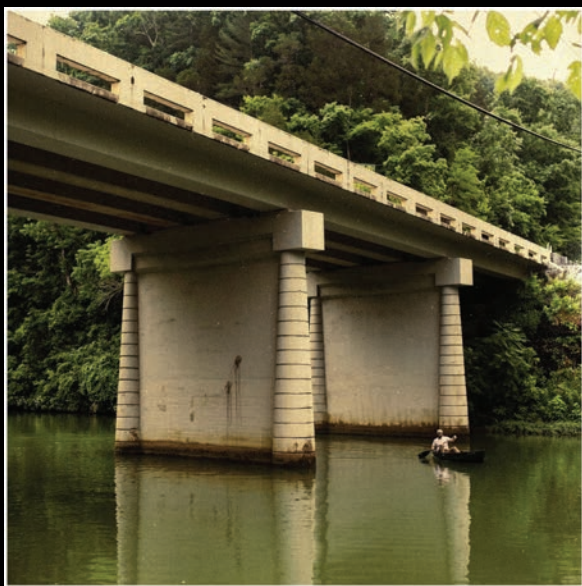
31
OLD DOMINION
"Memory Lane"



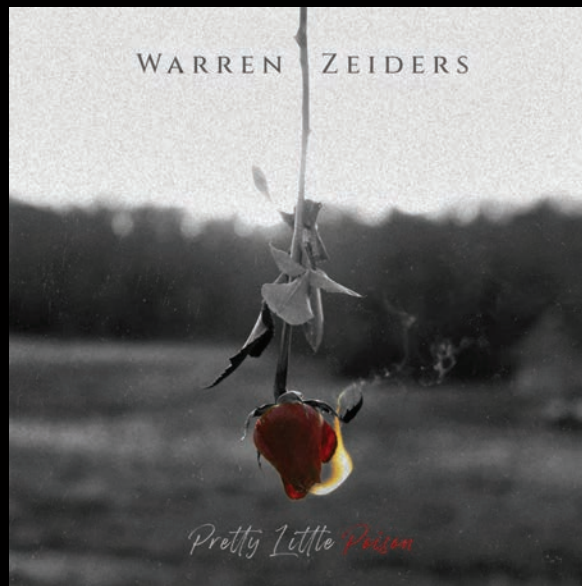
32
CARLY PEARCE
"What He Didn't Do"



43
KELSEA BALLERINI
"If You Go Down (I'm Goin' Down Too)"



59
SAM HUNT
"Water Under The Bridge"



83
WARREN ZEIDERS
"Pretty Little Poison"



84
WALKER HAYES
"Y'all Life"



87
KYLIE MORGAN
"If He Wanted To He Would"



89
CARLY PEARCE
"We Don't Fight Anymore"
featuring Chris Stapleton



90
ELLE KING
"Worth A Shot"
featuring Dierks Bentley

9 SONGS
IN THE
TOP 100

C O U N T R Y
A I R C H E C K
2023

SMACKSONGS.COM

MATT ALDERMAN • JARON BOYER • CASEY BROWN • ZAC BROWN • DILLON CARMICHAEL • PETE GOOD • JOSH HOGE
TATE HOWELL • JOSH JENKINS • JARED KEIM • CHRIS LaCORTE • MEGAN MORONEY • SETH MOSLEY • JOE NICHOLS
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SESAC CONGRATULATES

ALL OF OUR SONGWRITERS
IN COUNTRY AIRCHECK'S
TOP 100 OF 2023

JARED KEIM • CHRIS LaCORTE • MEGAN MORONEY • SETH MOSLEY • JOE NICHOLS • JON NITE • BEN SIMONETTI
CHRISTIAN STALNECKER • MICHAEL TYLER • DEREK WELLS • MATT ALDERMAN • JARON BOYER • CASEY BROWN
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MEGAN MORONEY • SETH MOSLEY • JOE NICHOLS • JON NITE • BEN SIMONETTI • CHRISTIAN STALNECKER • MICHAEL TYLER

Label Of The Year BIG LOUD

The airplay chart share crown moves again, this year to Big Loud. Leading a momentous year for country music (see page 3), the label powered to the top of the format with six top 15 singles from Morgan Wallen and one each from Hardy and Hailey Whitters. Launched in 2015, Big Loud has enjoyed a rapid rise to the airplay pinnacle. "It feels like the top of the mountain," says CEO/Partner Seth England. "When we started the team, this was a goal. Eight years is a short time, especially when you think about Capitol holding No. 1 for 13. They're probably looking at us right now going, 'That's cute.'"



Seth England

With an 11.2% chart share – more than two points ahead of second place Columbia – the win represents more than a number. "It's not just about being No. 1, but the time we all sacrificed," England says. "A lot of us have kids now. I just joined the club and I can feel it."

For SVP/Promotion Stacy Blythe, the eight-year climb is faster than she would have imagined when she joined the label. "But yes, I would have believed we'd get there," she says. "This wasn't just a promotion team goal, this was a company goal from the writers in the other building to Joey [Moi]'s studio to this whole building. With our processes and our people – everything and everyone contributed to this – we're all that hungry."



Stacy Blythe

Hope That's True

Belief has been a core tenet of the label from the beginning. "When Stacy and a few other people came with us at the time, it felt like they really believed, too," England says. "We were no different than any other publisher or manager who wants to sit back and armchair quarterback the record labels. When you're not doing it, it's easy to say how they should be doing it. The right or wrong single choice; I would've signed that or not. We were convicted, so getting there in year eight – I'm not surprised. I mean that with zero ego, but about the people we had at the table and the commitment from the artists. Our process and culture were vastly different from what was happening in Nashville, so I knew we could do it."



Patch Culbertson

"There was a reason I moved from New York to join this team," says SVP/GM Patch Culbertson. "Seeing the trajectory and the people involved was first and foremost. The song quality from the get-go was really exciting. We didn't have to sell so hard – the songs were doing the work for us. But there are also so many talented people on the staff who know what to do with great songs. Walking into that made perfect sense."

Big Loud's airplay successes go all the way back to their first single, Chris Lane's "Fix." "We set a record at that point for most adds on a solo male artist, then it went No. 1," Blythe recalls. "We crushed a series of goals, but this feels like the big one."

The business environment has changed substantially since then, but Big Loud has obviously kept up with or been ahead of that curve. "Country music in general was a two-lane highway pre-2014," England says. "Radio was the only way to get heard. Then streaming comes along and you've got an eight-lane interstate. There are so many entry points and ways to break, but the simplest way is building brick by brick."

"Patch got misquoted and taken out of context recently, but the point is we think of radio last because we want to make sure we're taking them as much of a sure thing as we can," England continues. "If we walk into a station and have to introduce a new artist, odds are we're going to lose. But if we walk in and the PD is taking their kid out of school because they're excited to meet Larry Fleet – who's sold out two nights at the Ryman – that's a big difference."

"We're very transparent about that in the dating process with these artists," Blythe adds. "We've lost some deals with artists we were passionate about because of it. But everyone on this roster has subscribed to that process. We're very up-front about that."

Me + All Your Reasons

Reflecting on the year, Culbertson points to "seeing Morgan hit the stratosphere on the live front – moving into ballparks and stadiums. I'm from Boston, so seeing him do three nights at Fenway was a career moment for me. Seeing how Hardy has absolutely elevated, as well, out on his own runs and building both a country and rock



Everything I Love: The Big Loud promo team (l-r) Stacy Blythe, Tyler Waugh, Aubrey Wilson, John D'Amico, Sarah Headley, Kelley Bradshaw, Nikki Wood, Ali Matkosky, Dave Kirth and Eliza Charette.

audience. The other big thing that we've been dreaming of for a while is Big Loud Texas with Jon Randall, Miranda Lambert and Dylan Gossett."

Similarly, Blythe points to venues packed with fans of Big Loud's artists. "Standing in the pit of these shows and watching our radio friends who have invested in these artists from day one seeing the artist and the audience – there's no feeling like that," she says. "Watching what Hailey Whitters has done this year with a big radio moment and the work she's invested in it. I couldn't be more proud of our artist development and signing choices."

And there's more to come. "I know our partners are pumped about what's happening with Morgan, Hardy and Hailey, and they should be," England says. "That's not going to change. But it's going to elevate yet. These [developing artists] are coming on so fast and carving out new territory musically. That's what I look to for having a chance to maintain this chart share position – making sure the roster doesn't look like an hourglass."

Increasing artist and single bandwidth brings the question: What about adding another promotion team? England's research and consultations peg that as an outdated approach. "Big Loud benefits on one for all," he says. "We're encouraging our radio promotion staff to go deeper in their relationships and learn how to talk about six to eight records with them."

"On the A&R and development side, we can't give promotion anything with empty calories," he continues. "The reactivity of songs is a massive component now. You can't hide. That's why we have a methodical process of choosing singles. Our goal is that [PDs] pick up our regionals' calls – not because we're bringing them guesswork, a hoax or prayer, but something that's factually happening in real time. No empty calories to the promo team."

"We're realistic," Blythe says. "We know what volume we're bringing and what real estate we're asking for, so we'll double down on relationships. If it's giving a team member 10 less stations, but four more records, our relationships with our radio partners are

our priority. Growing the staff rather than splitting it in two is how we protect that. We probably have the biggest regional staff in town, where others have been scaling down."

Thought You Should Know

Certainly, airplay success involves drive and commitment from the team. "We have two of the best promotion team leaders in Nashville in Ali Matkosky and Tyler Waugh," Blythe says. "The rest of the team share a huge respect for them and the trust level is high. The majority of our regionals have a radio background – it's in their DNA. They handle their stations with such care, and often that means being away from families and home. Everyone has spent more time on the road this year than

ever. I can say confidently that not one of us has thought about that time ... we have thought only about the feeling that we get when we get to watch our radio friends and their listeners experience these artists in a live space."

"The staff truly cares for each other like family," Blythe continues. "We challenge each other just as much as we celebrate each other. This year we have challenged each other to a new degree, learning from each others' struggles and wins equally."

"We don't take no for an answer. And we don't go in for the ask without the ammo. When we started this thing, it was a lot of, 'Hey, will you play

my record?' But we've gone from elementary school to the university. They're taking real information to these stations and they're not just asking them to play a song. It's, 'This is why your audience needs this specific record.'"

England is philosophical about what he'll hold onto from this year. "My college football coach would say, win or lose, 'You're not going to remember what that scoreboard said. You're going to remember the memories and relationships you made here.' I promise you, 10 years from now, I'll think back on this and remember the moments, the relationships, hanging with our artists and the high staff retention. We did this together and that's what we'll remember. We won't remember our chart share percentage."

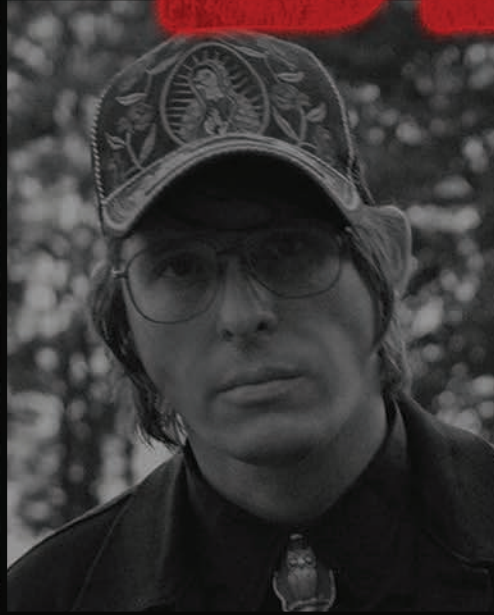
Blythe: "I'm getting it tattooed on me." **CAC**

CHART SHARE

1.	Big Loud	11.2
2.	Columbia	8.8
3.	Broken Bow	7.8
4.	MCA	7.7
5.	Capitol	6.7
6.	Stoney Creek	6.3
7.	RCA	6.2
8.	WEA	5.9
9.	Valory	4.8
10.	BMLG Records	4.6



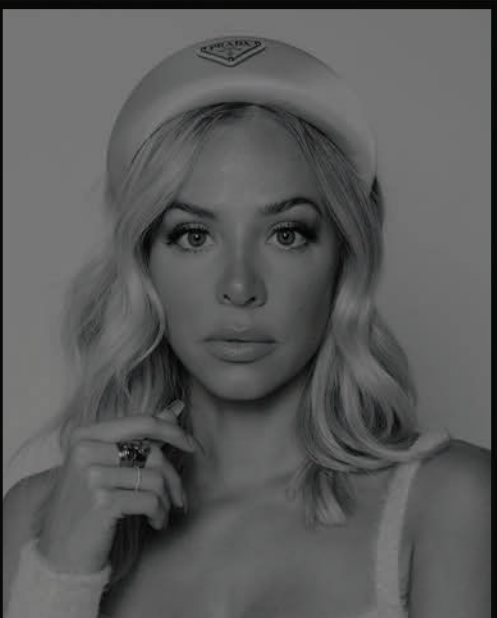
BIG LOUD



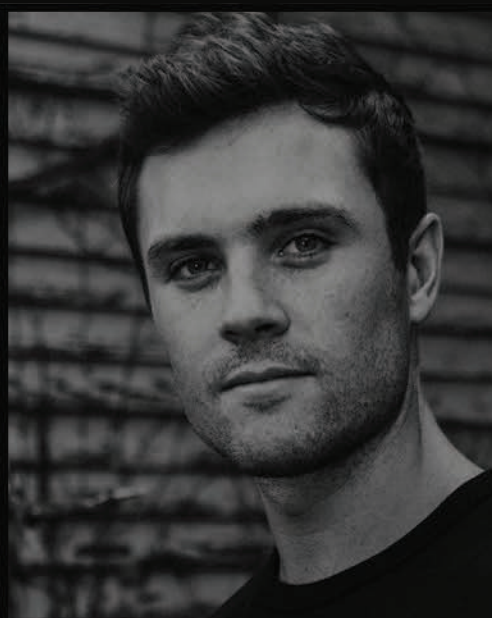
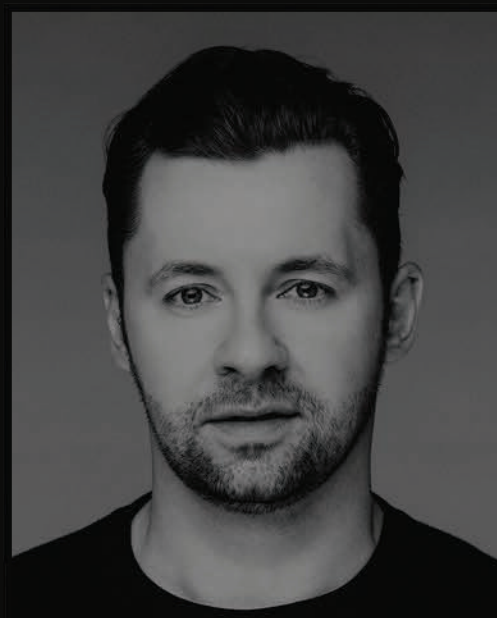


2023

**LABEL
OF THE
YEAR**



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FOR OUR BEST YEAR YET!**



WALLEN, COMBS + WILSON LEAD '23 AIRPLAY

For the second consecutive year, Morgan Wallen is the top airplay artist at Country radio, leading a surge of newer artists now dominating the airwaves. The Top Overall Performers list finds five of 10 artists making their debut – Lainey Wilson, Bailey Zimmerman, Jordan Davis, Tyler Hubbard and Jelly Roll. Of course, Wallen only cracked the top 10 for the first time in 2020, while Kane Brown (2018) and Luke Combs (2017) are also relatively recent airplay stalwarts. Thomas Rhett and Jason Aldean anchor the veterans' contingent.

Wallen and Combs had monster years in multiple formats (see page 4), and enjoyed simultaneous charted songs in Country along the way. A whopping six of Wallen's songs reached the Country Aircheck/Mediabase Top 10 during the year, three of which topped the chart for a total of six weeks (see Top 15s, page 12). Combs had three songs hit the pinnacle for a total of five weeks. Top Female Wilson spent three weeks at No. 1 with two songs. Dan + Shay celebrated two Top 10s, including one that was still advancing for the Top Duo/Group as the chart year ended. And Corey Kent debuted in as the Top New Artist with his debut No. 1 single.

Charted Songs, Top 15s

A total of 140 songs charted in the Top 50 in 2023, rising from last year's 136. Those 140 songs were delivered by 96 artists – 70 men, 19 women and seven duos or groups. Last year's 99 artists comprised 58 men, 15 women and 10 duos or groups. The 140 charted songs in 2023 saw 68 reach the Top 15. Those songs were authored by 37 men, nine women and four duos or groups (duets included).

Because the airplay year was 53 weeks this year to account for calendar slippage, 2023 had 51 chart weeks – one more than typical. There were 38 No. 1s across those 51 weeks, as nine songs spent two weeks at the top and two spent three – Wallen's "Last Night" and Mr. Roll's "Need A Favor." That leaves 27 songs that claimed the peak for a week.

As always, airplay information appearing anywhere in Country Aircheck comes from our friends and partners at Mediabase 24/7. Chart year statistics include singles that spent at least one week in the Top 50 between Nov. 6, 2022 and Nov. 11, 2023.

TOP 15 FIRST TIMERS

Five artists charted a Top 15 song for the first time in 2023, down from seven each of the last three years and substantially down from 2019's 10. Two reached the chart pinnacle – Corey Kent's "Wild As Her" and Megan Moroney's "Tennessee Orange," helping them to the top two new artist slots, respectively.

Shane Profitt's "How It Oughta Be" and Hailey Whitters' "Everything She Ain't" both peaked at No. 15, while George Birge's "Mind On You" was still on the current chart as the year drew to a close. Birge's song was at No. 10 when the chart year closed in mid-November.

GEORGE BIRGE
Records Nashville

COREY KENT
Combustion/RCA

MEGAN MORONEY
Columbia

JELLY ROLL
BMG/Stoney Creek

SHANE PROFITT
BMLG Records

HAILEY WHITTERS
Pigasus/S&D/Big Loud



COUNTRY RADIO'S TOP 2023 PERFORMERS

OVERALL

- 1 **MORGAN WALLEN** Big Loud
- 2 **LUKE COMBS** River House/Columbia
- 3 **LAINEY WILSON** Broken Bow
- 4 **BAILEY ZIMMERMAN** Warner/WEA
- 5 **JORDAN DAVIS** MCA
- 6 **TYLER HUBBARD** EMI Nashville
- 7 **JELLY ROLL** Stoney Creek/BMG
- 8 **KANE BROWN** RCA
- 9 **THOMAS RHETT** Valory
- 10 **JASON ALDEAN** Macon Music/Broken Bow



JORDAN DAVIS

MALE

- 1 **MORGAN WALLEN** Big Loud
- 2 **LUKE COMBS** River House/Columbia
- 3 **BAILEY ZIMMERMAN** Warner/WEA
- 4 **JORDAN DAVIS** MCA
- 5 **TYLER HUBBARD** EMI Nashville
- 6 **JELLY ROLL** Stoney Creek/BMG
- 7 **KANE BROWN** RCA
- 8 **THOMAS RHETT** Valory
- 9 **JASON ALDEAN** Macon Music/Broken Bow
- 10 **NATE SMITH** RCA



TYLER HUBBARD

FEMALE

- 1 **LAINEY WILSON** Broken Bow
- 2 **KATELYN BROWN** RCA
- 3 **CARLY PEARCE** Big Machine
- 4 **PRISCILLA BLOCK** InDent/Mercury
- 5 **MEGAN MORONEY** Columbia
- 6 **GABBY BARRETT** Warner/WAR
- 7 **KELSEA BALLERINI** Black River
- 8 **HAILEY WHITTERS** Pigasus/S&D/Big Loud
- 9 **CARRIE UNDERWOOD** Capitol
- 10 **INGRID ANDRESS** Atlantic/Warner/WEA



KATELYN BROWN

DUO/GROUP

- 1 **DAN + SHAY** Warner/WAR
- 2 **PARMALEE** Stoney Creek
- 3 **OLD DOMINION** Columbia
- 4 **BROTHERS OSBORNE** EMI Nashville
- 5 **ZAC BROWN BAND** Home Grown/Warner/WAR
- 6 **TIGIRLILY GOLD** Monument
- 7 **NEON UNION** Red Street



OLD DOMINION

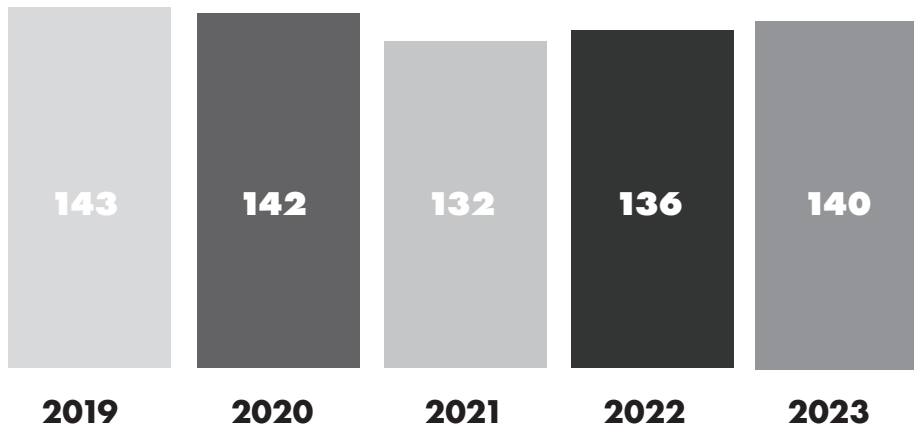
NEW ARTISTS

- 1 **COREY KENT** Combustion/RCA
- 4 **MEGAN MORONEY** Columbia
- 3 **HAILEY WHITTERS** Pigasus/S&D/Big Loud
- 5 **SHANE PROFITT** BMLGR
- 5 **ZACH BRYAN** Belting Bronco/Warner/WAR
- 9 **GEORGE BIRGE** Records Nashville
- 7 **CONNER SMITH** Valory
- 8 **CHAYCE BECKHAM** Wheelhouse
- 9 **DILLON CARMICHAEL** Riser House
- 10 **BRIAN KELLEY** Big Machine

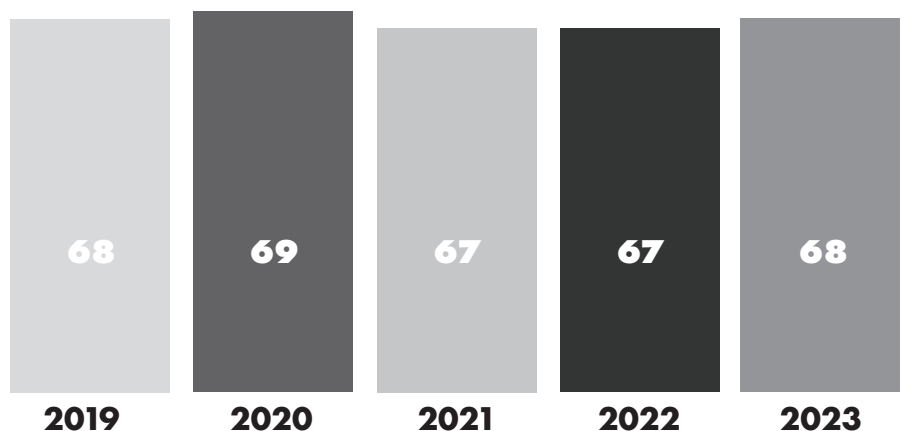


MEGAN MORONEY

NUMBER OF CHARTED SONGS



NUMBER OF CHARTED SONGS REACHING TOP 15



Source: Mediabase

Thank you to our songwriters for these

TOP 100
OF 2023

WISHFUL DRINKING



SHANE MINOR

YOU PROOF



ERNEST

GOING, GOING, GONE

Y'ALL LIFE



SAM HUNT

OUT IN THE MIDDLE

GOD GAVE ME A GIRL

CREEK WILL RISE



INGRID ANDRESS

LOVE YOU ANYWAY

NEXT THING YOU KNOW



JOHN PIERCE

DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY



BART BUTLER

SON OF A SINNER

EVERYTHING I LOVE



LUKE COMBS

5 FOOT 9



CHASE MCGILL

MEMORY LANE

ONE THING AT A TIME

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE



UNIVERSAL®

UNIVERSAL MUSIC
PUBLISHING GROUP



ZANDI HOLUP

BUT I GOT A BEER IN MY HAND

MARRY THAT GIRL



KEITH URBAN



GREYLAN JAMES



BRAD TURSKI



RAY FULCHER

SCOTTY MCCREERY

IF HE WANTED TO HE WOULD

IT MATTERS TO HER



NELLY

YOUR HEART OR MINE



LEE THOMAS MILLER

JOSH MELTON



CAN'T HAVE MINE



JAY E

JUSTIN EBACH

GIVING UP ON THAT

BIG MACHINE

L A B E L G R O U P



THOMAS RHETT

CELEBRATED 21 #1's IN 10 YEARS THIS YEAR
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



TIM MCGRAW

CELEBRATED 47 #1's WITH STANDING ROOM ONLY



CARLY PEARCE

"WE DON'T FIGHT ANYMORE FT. CHRIS STAPLETON" TOP 25!
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



JUSTIN MOORE

BIGGEST DEBUTING SINGLE "THIS IS MY DIRT" CURRENTLY CLIMBING THE CHARTS
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



BRANTLEY GILBERT

NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



CHRIS JANSON

"ALL I NEED IS YOU" TOP 10!



ELI YOUNG BAND

NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



BRIAN KELLEY

"SEE YOU NEXT SUMMER" TOP 25
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



JACKSON DEAN

"FEARLESS" TOP 20!
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024

NEW MUSIC IN 2024



MIDLAND



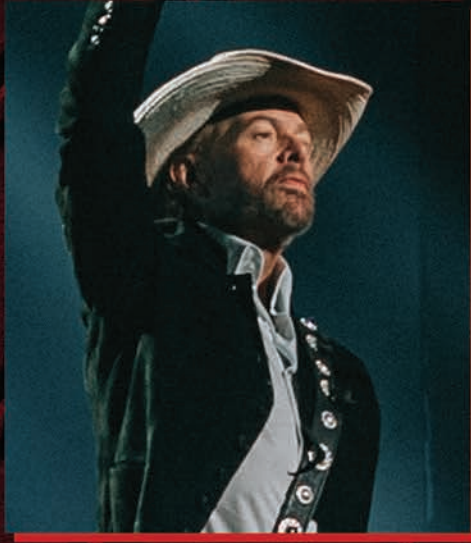
SHANE PROFITT



GREYLAN JAMES



GARTH BROOKS
"RODEO MAN" TOP 40!



TOBY KEITH
CLIMBING THE CHARTS
WITH #1 MOST ADDED SINGLE
"DON'T LET THE OLD MAN IN"



DOLLY PARTON
#1 ALBUM ROCKSTAR
OUT NOW!



AARON LEWIS
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024



BRETT YOUNG
"DANCE WITH YOU" TOP 50
WITH OVER 85M STREAMS LTD



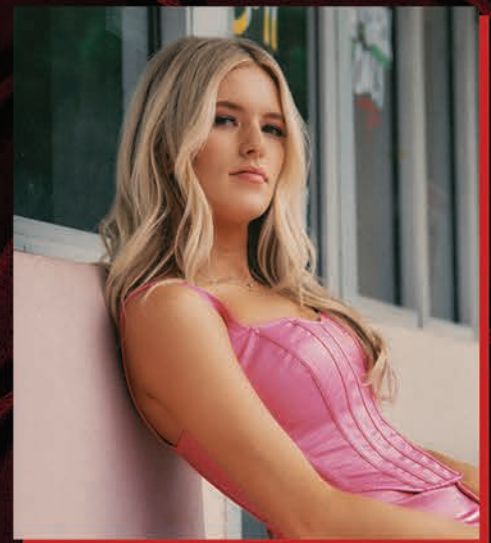
LADY A
NEW SINGLE "LOVE YOU
BACK" IMPACTING 12/11



CONNER SMITH
CURRENT SINGLE "CREEK WILL
RISE" CLOSING IN ON TOP 10
DEBUT ALBUM
SMOKY MOUNTAINS
COMING JANUARY 26TH



RILEY GREEN
"DIFFERENT ROUND HERE
FT. LUKE COMBS" TOP 10!



MACKENZIE CARPENTER
NEW MUSIC COMING IN 2024

INTRODUCING NEW ARTISTS



CHASE MCDANIEL



LECADE



MAE ESTES

M C G R A W



FOLLOW-UP TO
THE #1 SINGLE:
"STANDING ROOM ONLY"

NEW SINGLE:

"ONE BAD
HABIT"

IMPACTING: 1/22

FROM THE EP

P O E T ' S R E S U M É

AVAILABLE NOW!



FIFTY YEAR TOP 100



Tim McGraw



Toby Keith



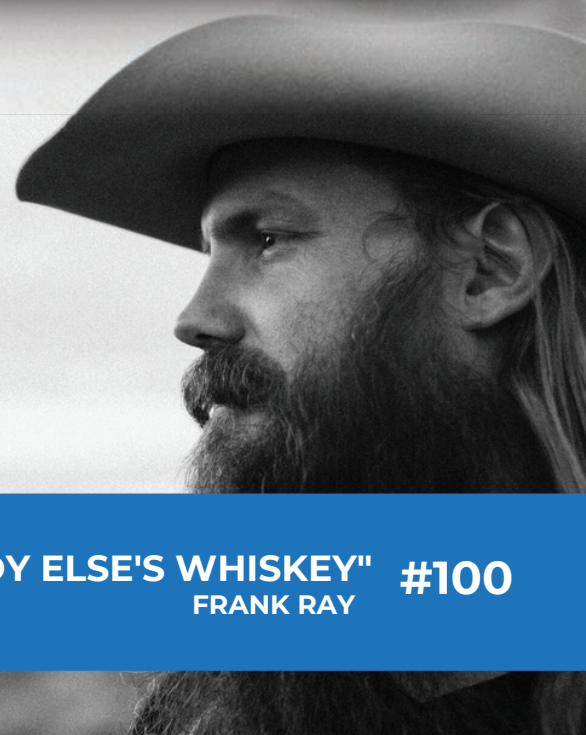
Lonestar

Weeks At No. 1

Weeks At No. 1

1	TIM MCGRAW	Live Like You Were Dying	2004	10	51	KEITH URBAN	Days Go By	2004	3
2	TOBY KEITH	I Love This Bar	2003	6	52	TIM MCGRAW	Angry All The Time	2001	3
3	LONESTAR	Amazed	1999	9	53	LUKE COMBS	Better Together	2021	3
4	KENNY CHESNEY	The Good Stuff	2002	6	54	KEITH URBAN	Better Life	2005	5
5	ALAN JACKSON & JIMMY BUFFETT	It's Five O'Clock Somewhere	2003	7	55	TOBY KEITH	American Soldier	2004	4
6	KEITH URBAN	Somebody Like You	2002	7	56	ALAN JACKSON	Remember When	2004	3
7	MORGAN WALLEN	Last Night	2023	3	57	KENNY ROGERS	Coward Of The County	1979	6
8	GEORGE STRAIT	She'll Leave You With A Smile	2003	3	58	KENNY CHESNEY f/UNCLE KRACKER	When The Sun Goes Down	2004	6
9	MARK WILLS	19 Somethin'	2003	6	59	TOBY KEITH	My List	2002	4
10	GEORGE STRAIT	The Best Day	2000	3	60	RASCAL FLATTS	Bless The Broken Road	2005	6
11	DOLLY PARTON	Here You Come Again	1977	6	61	BLAKE SHELTON	Austin	2001	5
12	RASCAL FLATTS	My Wish	2006	3	62	CRYSTAL GAYLE	Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue	1977	3
13	STEVE HOLY	Good Morning Beautiful	2002	5	63	TOBY KEITH f/WILLIE NELSON	Beer For My Horses	2003	5
14	TIM MCGRAW	My Next Thirty Years	2000	6	64	CRAIG MORGAN	That's What I Love About Sunday	2005	5
15	CHARLIE RICH	The Most Beautiful Girl	2073	5	65	BLAKE SHELTON	Some Beach	2004	4
16	TIM MCGRAW	My Best Friend	2000	3	66	LUKE BRYAN	Do I	2009	3
17	LUKE COMBS	Even Though I'm Leaving	2019	3	67	MORGAN WALLEN	Wasted On You	2022	3
18	LONESTAR	I'm Already There	19/01	6	68	THE JUDDS	Why Not Me	1984	4
19	DUSTIN LYNCH f/MACKENZIE PORTER	Thinking 'Bout You	2021	4	69	CONWAY TWITTY & LORETTA LYNN	As Soon As I Hang Up The Phone	1974	3
20	MARTINA MCBRIDE	I Love You	1999	5	70	MARIE OSMOND	Paper Roses	1973	3
21	FREDDY FENDER	Before The Next Teardrop Falls	1975	4	71	FAITH HILL	The Way You Love Me	2000	4
22	JO DEE MESSINA	That's The Way	2000	3	72	RASCAL FLATTS	Fast Cars And Freedom	2005	4
23	TOBY KEITH	As Good As I Once Was	2005	5	73	KENNY CHESNEY	Summertime	2006	3
24	FAITH HILL	Breathe	1999	6	74	RASCAL FLATTS	Why Wait	2010	4
25	LEE ANN WOMACK	I Hope You Dance	2000	6	75	WAYLON JENNINGS & WILLIE NELSON	Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow...	1978	5
26	RODNEY ATKINS	Watching You	2007	5	76	RODNEY ATKINS	If You're Going Through Hell	2006	3
27	WILLIE NELSON	Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain	1975	4	77	PARKER MCCOLLUM	Pretty Heart	2020	3
28	ALAN JACKSON	Drive (For Daddy Gene)	2002	5	78	JOHNNY DUNCAN	Thinkin' Of A Rendezvous	1976	3
29	TOBY KEITH	How Do You Like Me Now?!	2000	5	79	THE KENDALLS	Heaven's Just A Sin Away	1977	4
30	KENNY CHESNEY	There Goes My Life	2004	6	80	KENNY ROGERS	Morning Desire	1985	3
31	MORGAN WALLEN	You Proof	2022	3	81	DAN + SHAY	Speechless	2018	4
32	TOM T. HALL	I Love	1974	4	82	CRYSTAL GAYLE	Taking In Your Sleep	1978	3
33	BROOKS & DUNN	Ain't Nothing 'Bout You	2001	5	83	TAYLOR SWIFT	Our Song	2008	5
34	LONESTAR	What About Now	2000	4	84	RONNIE MILSAP	It Was Almost Like A Song	1977	5
35	RASCAL FLATTS	What Hurts The Most	2006	5	85	GEORGE STRAIT	Carrying Your Love With Me	1997	4
36	TOBY KEITH	I Wanna Talk About Me	2001	5	86	ALABAMA	Roll On (Eighteen Wheeler)	1984	5
37	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Jesus, Take The Wheel	2006	5	87	GARTH BROOKS	Good Ride Cowboy	2005	3
38	DIERKS BENTLEY	Come A Little Closer	2005	3	88	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Wasted	2007	3
39	LADY A	Need You Now	2009	4	89	LUKE BRYAN	Country On	2022	3
40	C.W. MCCALL	Convoy	1975	4	90	RANDY TRAVIS	Forever And Ever, Amen	1987	4
41	KENNY CHESNEY	Don't Blink	2007	6	91	TIM MCGRAW w/FAITH HILL	It's Your Love	1997	4
42	LUKE COMBS	Beautiful Crazy	2019	4	92	RASCAL FLATTS	Take Me There	2007	4
43	JESSICA ANDREWS	Who I Am	2001	4	93	BRAD PAISLEY	I'm Still A Guy	2008	4
44	WAYLON JENNINGS	Luckenbach, Texas	1977	4	94	TIM MCGRAW	Something Like That	1999	5
45	GEORGE STRAIT	Living And Living Well	2002	3	95	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Before He Cheats	2006	4
46	THOMAS RHETT	Remember You Young	2019	3	96	TOBY KEITH	You Shouldn't Kiss Me Like This	2001	4
47	GARTH BROOKS	That Ol' Wind	1996	3	97	CONWAY TWITTY	Touch The Hand	1975	3
48	THE CHICKS	Cowboy Take Me Away	2000	3	98	ALAN JACKSON	She's Got The Rhythm (And I Got...	1992	3
49	MONTGOMERY GENTRY	Roll With Me	2008	4	99	LUKE COMBS	Forever After All	2021	3
50	GRETCHEN WILSON	Redneck Woman	2004	5	100	GEORGE STRAIT	Write This Down	1999	4

Methodology and more in the Nov. 27, 2023 Country Aircheck Weekly.

11 SONGS IN THE TOP 100**CONGRATULATIONS SPIRIT MUSIC NASHVILLE WRITERS!****#16 "HANDLE ON YOU"**
PARKER MCCOLLUM**MONTY CRISWELL****ZACH CROWELL** "STARS LIKE CONFETTI" **#34**
DUSTIN LYNCH**#37 "TRY THAT IN A SMALL TOWN"** **NEIL THRASHER**
JASON ALDEAN**DAVE COHEN**
BOBBY HAMRICK**"GOOD DAY FOR LIVING"** **#60**
JOE NICHOLS**#68 "DIFFERENT ROUND HERE"**
RILEY GREEN FEAT. LUKE COMBS
#73 "OUT IN THE MIDDLE"
ZAC BROWN BAND**JONATHAN SINGLETON****DAVID GARCIA****"HATE MY HEART"** **#71**
CARRIE UNDERWOOD
"SEE YOU NEXT SUMMER" **#77**
BRIAN KELLEY
"OUT OF THAT TRUCK" **#85**
CARRIE UNDERWOOD**#76 "WHITE HORSE"**
CHRIS STAPLETON**CHRIS STAPLETON****DEREK GEORGE**
FRANK RAY
FRANK ROGERS**"SOMEBODY ELSE'S WHISKEY"** **#100**
FRANK RAY

NEW YEAR, NEW MUSIC

Labels Offer '24 Preview

AVERAGE JOES

★ **Sam Grow**, *Avalon Avenue*, Jan. 19. "Easily one of the most underrated artists in the game." – *Country Chord*

BIG LOUD

★ **Ashley Cooke**, "Your Place," going for adds Dec. 11. "Cooke deftly mixes stories of love, heartbreak and lessons learned along the way, and showcases a range of sonic styles – all underpinned by her powerful but accessible vocals." – *Billboard*

★ **Morgan Wallen**, "Man Made A Bar" f/ **Eric Church**, out now. "To close out a record year for **Morgan Wallen** is the seventh single from 2023's biggest album, *One Thing At A Time*, with additional singles to come in 2024." – *SVP Stacy Blythe*

★ **Hailey Whitters**, "I'm In Love," out now. No. 1 most-added upon impact at Country radio; "An eminently charming pop-country song" where "every little corner of the arrangement shines." – *Stereogum*

★ **Larry Fleet**, "Things I Take For Granted," impacting in 2024. "Three studio albums in with his latest offering, **Fleet** has laid the foundation as a flag-bearer for the traditional country sound, establishing himself as one of the genre's powerhouse male vocalists." – *Holler*

★ **MacKenzie Porter**, **Ernest**, **Dylan Gossett**, *Hixtape Vol. 3: Diftape*, **Lily Rose**, **Lauren Watkins**, **Maggie Rose**: new music soon.

BIG MACHINE

★ **Tim McGraw**, "One Bad Habit" from his new EP, *Poets Resumé*, ships to radio Jan. 2, impact date Jan. 22. "Follow-up to his 47th No. 1, 'Standing Room Only.'" – *VP Erik Powell*

★ **Jackson Dean**, "Fearless," "Inside the top 20 and continuing to climb. Dean will embark on his first headlining club tour in the beginning of 2024."

★ **Carly Pearce**, Grammy-nominated "We Don't Fight Anymore" f/ **Chris Stapleton**. "Inside the Top 25 and climbing. Look for a new full-length project from Pearce in the new year."

★ **Garth Brooks**, "Rodeo Man" f/ **Ronnie Dunn**, "Off to an amazing start with Country radio and already inside the top 40. Brooks will continue his sold-out residency at The Colosseum in Las Vegas in 2024."

★ **Brian Kelley**, "New, incredible music and a new project on the way next year. We couldn't be more excited to share what we have coming from this amazing artist. No doubt, 2024 will be Brian's year."



Zach Top
Leo 33

BIG SKY MUSIC GROUP

★ **Stephanie Quayle**, *On the Edge: Extended*, May. New tracks supporting 2022 album release, alongside Stephanie's debut as an author with her first book published by Harper Collins due April 2024.

BLACK RIVER

★ **Kelsea Ballerini**, new music in early spring from a new project. "After the success of her *Rolling Up The Welcome Mat* release (more than 370-million streams in 10 months), Kelsea is focused on continuing the momentum she's established in 2023. What a year! A sold-out tour, partnerships with Cover Girl, Pantene and Donut Shop Coffee, plus *Saturday Night Live* and *Today* show appearances." – *SVP Mike Wilson*

★ **MaRynn Taylor**, an acoustic version of her first charted record, "Make You Mine," out Jan. 12. Debut EP out May 31. "MaRynn Taylor is learning to harness her power as a vocalist and as a human being ... and her big voice ought to turn plenty of heads as she continues building her career." – *Billboard*

★ **Pryor Baird**, new single out in conjunction with Jan. 26 *Grand Ole Opry* debut. "His blending of sonic styles into one soulful fusion of relatable lyrics, addictive melodies and an amazingly smooth vocal, makes him one that you absolutely need to keep watch on." – *Jeffrey Kurtis, Today's Country*

★ **Scotty Hasting**, label's newest signing. An Afghanistan war veteran who was shot 10 times and survived. New song out Feb. 9 as a follow up to his debut single, "How Do You Choose." "Starting off driven primarily by acoustic guitar and Hasting's rough-hewn vocals, 'How Do You Choose' is escalated with electric guitar, understated fiddle and full-bodied percussion. A promising, impactful debut." – *Jessica Nicholson, Billboard*

BMLG RECORDS

★ **Chris Janson**, "All I Need is You." The first single from *Outlaw Side of Me* is a "major priority" and almost inside the Top 10. "As we move into the new year, expect more great music and maybe some surprise collaborations." – *VP Ryan Dokke*

★ **Riley Green**, "Different Round Here" f/ **Luke Combs**. On the verge of climbing into the Top 10 – another major priority. *Ain't My Last Rodeo* dropped in October and features the "already popular" title track, "Mississippi Or Me" and "Copenhagen And Cadillac" f/ **Jelly Roll**.

★ **Brett Young**, "Dance With You." From latest album, out this past August. "We continue to focus on our radio single while also exploring new music for 2024."

★ **Toby Keith**, "Don't Let The Old Man In." "Stunning. It's an acoustic ballad about facing old age gracefully, and it will hit you smack in the middle of your heart. Exquisitely written and performed, this is an illustration of country music greatness drawn by a master of the genre." – *Robert K. Oermann, MusicRow*

★ **Lady A**, "Love You Back." The first single from a project due in 2024, "Love You Back" impacts radio Dec. 11. "Lady A fans have been waiting since the summer of 2022 for new music to hit radio airwaves and the wait is finally over."

★ **Greylyn James**, "Young Man." "One of the newest and most talked about young artists to arrive at radio in 2024, Greylyn has already established himself as a hit songwriter, penning the massive No. 1 song 'Next Thing You Know' with Jordan Davis." – *Shane Proffit, new music next year.*

BROKEN BOW

★ **Lainey Wilson**, "2023 CMA Entertainer of the Year and five-time CMA Award winner. Uptempo single 'Wildflowers And Wild Horses' released in November with 80 first-week adds. Already galloping up the charts." – *VP Lee Adams, VP/Promo*

★ **Jason Aldean**, new single "Let Your Boys Be Country" is off 11th studio album, *Highway Desperado*, released in November. "Jason continues to reach new heights. He just celebrated his 28th No. 1 hit! The single kicked off strong and is moving fast."

★ **Dustin Lynch** f/ **Jelly Roll**. "A fun interpolation of 'Drift Away' called 'Chevrolet,' released Dec. 11." "If you're a fan of music classics, you'll instantly feel at home as that familiar melody kicks in. But, hold onto your cowboy hats, because this song brings a fresh twist in its lyrics." – *Circle All Access*

CAPITOL

★ **Luke Bryan**, "New music off the heels of the hit 'But I Got A Beer In My Hand,' as well as new **Keith Urban** music in Q1. **Carrie Underwood's** 'Out Of That Truck' is Top 30 and climbing, and **Jon Pardi** and **Bryan's** 'Cowboys And Plowboys' continues to climb the chart." – *VP Chris Schuler*

COLUMBIA

★ **Luke Combs**, "Where the Wild Things Are," out now. "On the heels of his Grammy-nominated/CMA Award-winning hit, this track is the follow up to Combs' 17th consecutive No. 1." – *VP Lauren Thomas*

★ **Old Dominion** w/ **Megan Moroney**, "Can't Break Up Now," out now. "Sonically, the track is classic Old Dominion with its well-constructed lyrics and semi-pop sheen. Lead singer Matthew Ramsey's voice is well-paired with Moroney's honey-hued vocals." – *Billboard*

★ **Megan Moroney**, "I'm Not Pretty," out now. "This clever, femme-centric ditty confirms her status as a first-class, off-center, wonderfully creative country artist." – *MusicRow*

★ **Dylan Marlowe** featuring **Dylan Scott**, "Boys Back Home," out now. "... the upbeat country song that we would expect from this collaboration. When these two get together, it is one hell of a party." – *Raised Rowdy*

★ **Mitchell Tenpenny**, new music soon. "Captivating sound and knack for storytelling" – *CMT*

CURB

★ **Dylan Scott**, "New music and a big tour announcement coming in January on the heels of the platinum, chart-topping hit 'Can't Have Mine.'" – *SVP RJ Meacham*

★ **Lee Brice**, "A new studio album and creative collaborations are what the new music from Lee is built on, and we are excited to start playing some new tracks from him by the time CRS rolls around."

★ **Hannah Ellis**, "Her long-awaited album, *That Girl*, drops in January and we can't wait for everyone to hear what that girl is all about."

★ **Kelsey Hart**, "A Kentucky native we've had in development this past year will surge into the forefront in 2024 as his song, 'Life With You,' blew up on socials and at DSPs. We'll start hitting the road with Kelsey immediately and will be looking to impact late January."

★ **Rodney Atkins**, "Faces are going to melt. Promise." – *Harper Grace and Tim Dugger, new music soon.*

EMI NASHVILLE

★ **Brothers Osborne**, "The Grammy-nominated debut single 'Nobody's Nobody' from your current CMA Duo of the Year



Hailey Whitters
Big Loud

is climbing toward the Top 20. From the current, self-titled album, the Brothers are getting ready to hit the road in 2024. Make sure you are somebody on this one." – *VP Jimmy Rector*

★ **Tyler Hubbard**, "Back Then Right Now." "Follow up to two monster No. 1s, Tyler delivers again from a brand-new album due in 2024. Top 30 and climbing."

★ **Anne Wilson**, "Rain In The Rearview." "This Grammy-nominated, platinum artist wrapped up a sold-out tour in 2023 and is making fans quickly with her country debut, 'Rain In The Rearview.' We will continue to grow Anne and her brand as we expect a strong first quarter as she goes on tour with **Scotty McCreery**."

★ "Looking forward to some exciting new things from **Kylie Morgan**, **Jon Langston** and **Eric Church**, with all of them on the road and in the studio early next year."

FORGE ENTERTAINMENT

★ **Lucas Hoge**, Q1 new music with album to follow. "When A Cowboy Prays," "Farm Hand" and "American Made" are just a few of the songs coming early 2024. Lucas' TV show, *Hoge Wild*, is now also on the Heartland Network, along with Sportsman Channel expanding now to 135 million homes.

LEO33

★ **Zach Top**, "Sounds Like The Radio," Jan. 8. "Zach Top is one of the most unique new artists I've heard and I'm thankful I've already seen him live! He's authentic and traditional, yet he still feels very today. I think this is a vital sound Country radio needs!" – *KSCS & KPLX/Dallas PD Mike Preston*

MAGNOLIA

★ **Randy Houser**, "Cancel." "If you think this song is about cancel culture then you haven't actually listened to this powerful message [that] digs into core values and a call to respect each other. The world sure could use more of that right now." – *VP Heather Propper*

MCA

★ **Parker McCollum**, **Jordan Davis**, and **Sam Hunt** will continue their ascent with their current singles and major tours kicking off in Q1. You can expect new music from the incomparable **Kassi Ashton** and more." – *VP David Friedman*

MERCURY

★ **Chris Stapleton**, "White Horse," lead single from fifth studio album sits firmly in the top 10 and rides toward the top of the radio and streaming charts. Expect more radio singles from this superstar's project in the new year." – *SVP Damon Moberly*

★ **Josh Ross**, new music at the top of the year. "His next radio single is a hit."

★ **Priscilla Block**, "Hey Jack." "Continues to build on the streaming charts as we head into the new year. Priscilla is working on her sophomore release."

★ **Maddie & Tae**, working in the studio on their next project. "They predict it's their best yet. Lead single 'Hearts They Didn't Break' continues to get major DSP support as we head into the new year."

★ **Dalton Dover** "spent early 2023 meeting radio on a country-wide promo tour, and he gets set to release the tempo hit 'Bury Me In This Bar' in early 2024."

★ **Travis Denning** has wrapped up studio work on his first full-length album on the label, set for 2024. "His current track, 'Going Places,' is on the move."

★ **Luke Grimes**, "Burn" and "Hold On" "are getting major DSP support. Luke is currently on tour in the U.S., and Mercury is preparing new tracks and a project for 2024."

MONUMENT

★ **Walker Hayes** "surprised fans with 'Fancy Like Christmas' just in time for the holidays. The re-imagined version of his smash hit gives audiences what they have come to love about the superstar – a first row seat to life at home with his wife

and kids. This song is the best Christmas gift we could receive – pure joy! And expect new music at radio in Q1.” –GM Katie McCartney

★ **Tigirlily Gold**, new single “I Tried A Ring On” out Jan. 5, going for adds Jan. 22. “After a Top 40 radio debut, a *Today* appearance, and their *Opry* debut this year, this is just the start for the hardest working duo in country music. As Kendra and Krista spent 2023 making new radio friends and fans, a common sentiment amongst both was the enthusiasm for ‘I Tried A Ring On.’ We are so excited to get this song heard by the masses.” –VP Luke Jensen

★ **Alex Hall** “has the credentials to take on Music City with his guitar chops, standout vocals, touring history and features including **Vince Gill** and **Brandy Clark**. Debut album *Side Effects Of The Heart* just released, and the ‘Fender Up Next’ artist has partnered with PBR and CMA Foundation for a tour to round out ‘23. Be on the lookout for an introduction to him in your city at the top of the year.”

★ **Pillbox Patti**, recently released deluxe version of *Florida* album. “Spent the last year opening for Jelly Roll, Koe Wetzel and Old Crow Medicine Show. There is nothing quiet about Pillbox Patti, and you will be hearing a lot more from the decorated singer/songwriter in 2024.”

★ **Brandon Ratcliff** “put out the critically acclaimed *Tale of Two Towns* last year, about which *MusicRow* said Ratcliff was ‘all heart and soul’ and *Billboard* noted that the singer/songwriter ‘makes a towering statement with the vulnerable [album].’ Ratcliff is in the studio working on his highly anticipated follow up.”

QUARTZ HILL

★ **Joe Nichols**, “Brokenhearted” out now. “Joe is a radio star and listeners love him. ‘Brokenhearted’ adds to the multitude of songs crowds sing back to Joe nightly.” –VP Will Robinson

★ **Runaway June**, “Make Me Wanna Smoke,” out now. “This dynamic trio brings a rockin’ fun song that provides an amazing texture to the airways.”

★ **Nate Barnes**, new music coming Q1. “Nate has been writing and recording hard to wrap up 2023, and we are very excited to bring you new music very soon.”

★ **Thompson Square**, new music coming Q1. “Keifer and Shawna have some amazing songs to share and we will be blowing your minds soon.”

RCA

★ **Chris Young**, “Young Love & Saturday Nights,” out now. “Country star Chris Young’s latest single, ‘Young Love & Saturday Nights,’ is a vivid love letter to summertime weekends, old trucks, dive bar bands and crushes.” –Associated Press

★ **Kane Brown**, “I Can Feel It,” out now. The follow up to Brown’s 10th No. 1, “Bury Me In Georgia,” “I Can Feel It” interpolates Phil Collins’ legendary drum solo and single “In the Air Tonight.”

★ **Corey Kent**, “Something’s Gonna Kill Me,” out now. “Country music needed a new carpe diem anthem and it gets it with ‘Something’s Gonna Kill Me.’ (One of the Best Country Songs of 2023.)” –*Rolling Stone*

★ **Nate Smith**, “World On Fire,” out now. “The metaphor for the video and song are woven throughout his album, which retells the age-old story of love, loss, and moving on through Smith’s heavy blend of rock grounded in country soul.” –*Rolling Stone*

RECORDS NASHVILLE

★ **Matt Stell**, “Breakin In Boots,” “Fresh off the Dec. 11 impact, Matt is poised for his next hit at Country radio in 2024.” –EVP Josh Easler

★ **George Birge**, “Cowboy Songs,” impacting radio late Q1. “Follow up to ‘Mind On You’ making a run for the top of the chart in January. Look for George on the Parker McCollum tour in the spring.”

REVIVER

★ **Ian Flanigan**, “Strong” and “Devil In My Hands” out now, “continue to bring Ian to the top of the list. Look for new music and a tour in Q2.” –Founder/Pres. David Ross

★ **Randall Fowler**, “Two Woman Man” and “New Thing Going On,” out now. “After only one year in Nashville, Randall has been rising to the top, writing with some of Nashville’s biggest writers and various artists cutting his material for 2024 releases. Look for Randall on tour in Q2.”

★ **Brooke Moriber**, “Summer” and “All I Want For Christmas Is You,” out now. “Brooke’s full album just dropped with more new music on the way and a tour in the works for Q1 and Q2 2024.”

RISER HOUSE

★ **Dillon Carmichael**, “Drinkin Problems’ is a force to be reckoned with, securing a spot in the top 5 most-added six consecutive weeks. Steadily climbing the charts after recently



Conner Smith Valory

hitting the top 40 milestone. On tour alongside Cody Johnson in Q1, and he’s set to take his show international with dates in support of Jon Pardi in April.” –ND Jeff Davis

★ **Meghan Patrick**, collaboration with WEA’s **Michael Ray**, “Spirits And Demons.” “Has now soared into the top 40, proving to be an unstoppable chart-climber [that] showcases the incredible talents of both artists and is a must-listen for Country radio. Meghan is gearing up for an extensive tour this year, promising fans an unforgettable live experience.”

★ **Lanco**, “Fresh off the *Run, Run, Baby Tour*, which wrapped up at the end of 2023. Gearing up for an exciting new year, diving into the creative process of writing and recording new music for a full album release in 2024.”

RIVER HOUSE

★ **Trey Lewis**, “Pretty Hungover.” “A surprise off-cycle Monday release coming New Year’s Day as we build towards a March 1 album, and he continues his headlining tour in California, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and Wyoming. Trey infuses his first River House LP, the 14-song *Troublemaker*, with country horsepower, refreshing honesty and a troubadour’s wit – taking his budding career to new heights.” –VP Lance Houston

★ **Reid Haughton**, “Man Made Money,” Jan. 12. First single from an album due in May. “Our favorite alt-country/Americana artist is immersed in an exciting new project reflecting his musical identity. Under new management with Eddie Kolesel (Why&How), and has an upcoming tour with Whiskey Myers and 49 Winchester that promises exposure to a broad fanbase.” “Reid Haughton’s brand of guitar-based country should satisfy a whole bunch, from Southern rock to mainstream country fans.” –*Rolling Stone*’s **Joe Hudak**

★ **Grant Gilbert** f/ **Ashland Craft**, “Turn It Down,” Jan. 19. “Following his recent No. 1 Texas radio single, ‘Six Pack State Of Mind,’ Grant’s duet version of ‘Turn It Down’ adds a fresh, sexy twist to the track written by Lainey Wilson, Arkady Gilman and Driver Williams.”

★ **Old Hickory**, March. “Soulful trio is set to revive a lost country essence with the follow up to their September debut, *Tuesday Nights At Scoreboard*. Their timeless, harmonious sound pays homage to the past while staying updated, distinguishing them in today’s country scene.”

★ *It’s A God Thing Volume 2*, March 29. “What started as a passion project for a family church but turned into a full album release, returns this year on Good Friday. Diverse artists contribute to a beautiful follow up Christian country album, delivering inspirational melodies and heartfelt messages.”



MaRynn Taylor Black River

STONE COUNTRY

★ **Annie Bosko**, “Neon Baby,” out now. “Debuted third most added. Annie will be in the *Tournament of Roses Parade* on New Year’s Day, and will perform ‘Neon Baby’ on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* Jan. 8. Her radio tour resumes Q1.” –VP Jim Malito

★ **Easton Corbin**, new single in 2024.

STONEY CREEK

★ **Jelly Roll**, “The CMA New Artist of the Year will roll into ‘24 with new single ‘Halfway To Hell’ impacting in January. The year looks to be a continued growth story for the artist who had three No. 1s in 2023. Jelly also won three CMT Awards, four People’s Choice Country Awards and was nominated for two Grammys and a *Pollstar* award. More award shows, more sold-out tour dates and new music will create a very exciting year for team SCR and Jelly.” –VP Adrian Michaels

★ **Parmalee** “will continue their streak as one of the most consistent hit makers for Country radio. They look to follow up three straight, back-to-back No. 1s with their new single, ‘Gonna Love You.’ You can see Parmalee live in 2024 on the Kane Brown tour.”

★ **Frank Ray**, **Drake Milligan** and **King Calaway**, new music next year.

TRIPLE TIGERS

★ **Scotty McCreery**, “Cab In A Solo.” “The new year is all about focus as we concentrate on our current track while releasing a couple additional tracks from his upcoming album.” –VP Raffaella Braun

★ **Russell Dickerson**, new radio single Q1. “Russell is hard at work on new music following his 2023 No. 1, ‘God Gave Me A Girl.’”

★ **Jordan Fletcher** “will be showing off his songwriting chops by releasing an EP showcasing his take on some of his favorite cuts.”

VALORY

★ **Conner Smith**, “Creek Will Rise,” out now; from his forthcoming debut album *Smoky Mountains*, out Jan. 26. “Conner Smith is an unstoppable force to be reckoned with.” –CMT

★ **Justin Moore**, “This Is My Dirt,” out now. New album forthcoming. Kicking off 2024 on tour with Cody Johnson. “The much anticipated follow up to 12 No. 1 songs!” –VP Ashley Sidoti



Kelsey Hart Curb

★ **Thomas Rhett**, in the studio working on new music to be released in 2024.

★ **Aaron Lewis**, new music in Q1.

★ **Sheryl Crow**, “The brand new Rock Hall of Famer announces new album *Evolution* coming March 29.”

★ **Eli Young Band**, **Tiera Kennedy** and **Mackenzie Carpenter**, new music in 2024.

WAR

★ **Chase Matthew**, “Love You Again,” at radio. “He checks all the boxes: impressive consumption story, sold-out headlining tour dates and more. Next year is already shaping up to be massive for Chase, who will join Jason Aldean on the road.” –ND Michael Chase

★ **Dan + Shay**, “Save Me The Trouble” from new album *Bigger Houses*, at radio. “The project is an emotional and spiritual reset for the duo ... but it also feels like a victory lap. They didn’t reinvent the wheel, they simply returned to what brought them to the dance.” –*Euphoria*

★ **Gabby Barrett**, “Glory Days,” at radio. New album *Chapter & Verse* due Feb. 2: “‘Glory Days’ is the perfect lead single, giving a sneak peek of Gabby’s upcoming album with tempo, an infectious hook and a relatable reminder to live in the moment.” –Dir. Shari Roth

★ **Zach Bryan**, “I Remember Everything” f/ **Kacey Musgraves**, at radio. “Bryan is bringing people together, and it’s not a fluke. Something honest and heartfelt is working on a mass scale, and it has taken me by surprise. This may be the American realism we need.” –GQ

WEA

★ **Bailey Zimmerman**, “Where It Ends,” at radio. New music in 2024. “The brightest new star in mainstream country music” –*New York Times*; “One of the most exciting new names in the music industry” –*Forbes*

★ **Ian Munsick**, “Long Live Cowgirls,” at radio. “Saddle in for a ride up the charts with Ian Munsick’s gold-certified anthem. Catch it on his *Boots, Buckles & Bolos Tour* in spring, followed by a summer run with CMA Entertainer of the Year **Lainey Wilson**.” –ND Stephanie Hagerty

★ **Kenny Chesney**, “Take Her Home,” at radio. New music in 2024: “Sets the stage for a new musical chapter – a heartfelt anthem urging action. Brace yourself for an epic journey through music during Kenny’s 2024 stadium tour.” –SVP Kristen Williams

★ **Michael Ray**, “Spirits and Demons” w/ **Meghan Patrick**, at radio. “Embrace this soul-stirring ballad. Watch as this track climbs the charts in early 2024, resonating deeply with Country radio’s core audience.” –Dir. James Marsh

★ **Warren Zeiders**, “Pretty Little Poison,” at radio. “On a meteoric rise with his debut single already nearing the Top 10. Following 56 of 60 sold-out headlining shows in 2023 and 100,000+ tickets sold, anticipate this unstoppable momentum to continue into 2024.” –Dir. Lou Ramirez

WHEELHOUSE

★ **Chayce Beckham**, “23.” “More than 300 million on-demand streams and strong research tells the story about his mass appeal single. An amazing new album is coming Q1.” –VP Ken Tucker

★ **HunterGirl**, “Ain’t About You,” “On *American Idol*, visiting key programmers, and most importantly, with listeners and consumers, HunterGirl always wins. She writes songs that the core relates to.”

★ **Dylan Schneider**, “Ain’t Missin’ You,” on tour with Nate Smith in 2024. “With more than 30 million on-demand streams, this single will only grow in popularity. Big things on the horizon.”

WMN

★ **Ashley McBryde**, “The Devil I Know,” at radio Q1. “McBryde still hasn’t lost her edge, showing off the country-rock chops that, if this industry were fair, would lead her to play this song in arenas just like fellow mavericks Chris Stapleton and Eric Church.” –*Variety*

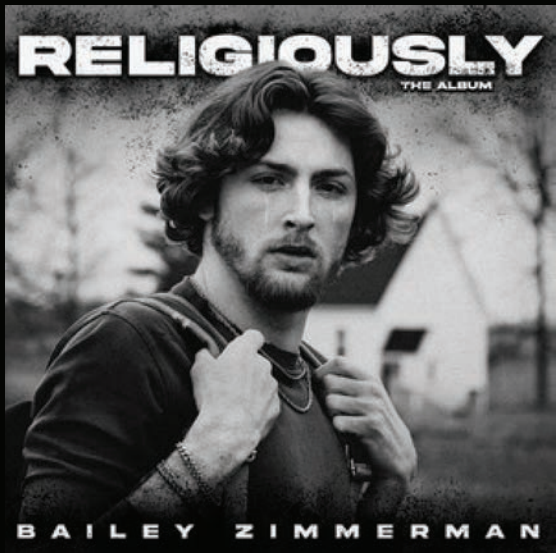
★ **Avery Anna**, radio debut in 2024. “It’s going to be a banner year for the newest member of team WMN! We were more than excited to welcome the rising country star to our imprint after witnessing her incredible early success, which includes 300 million career streams.” –ND Chris Fabiani

★ **Blake Shelton**, new music Q1, headlining tour continues in February. “For two hours, Shelton made [the] arena feel like a wild country bar, where just about anything could happen and he was the bartender, slinging out music instead of shots” –*Louisville Courier Journal*.

★ **Cody Johnson**, “The Painter” from new album *Leather*, at radio: “Every song on *Leather* is amazing. Johnson has definitely exceeded the look, feel, sound, smell and taste of country music with his newest album.” –*Men’s Journal*

★ **Cole Swindell**, new single Q1. “After an amazing 2023 – including a tour with Thomas Rhett, a headlining run, a deluxe album release and multiple weeks atop the radio charts – team WMN is excited to share the first music from Cole’s brand-new project ... stay tuned!” –VP Tom Martens

CAC



#1's Only!



WARM WISHES

from all of us
this holiday season!



JASON ALDEAN

Working It All Out

Independent labels didn't really break artists when Jason Aldean signed with Broken Bow, which had spent years struggling to compete in a major-dominated system. Debut single "Hicktown" reached the top 10 in 2005, but it was 2008's "She's Country" that kicked off a relentless streak of No. 1s – catapulting artist and label into the big time. Aldean's latest album *Highway Desperado* was released last month. He took a break from CMA radio remotes to sit down with Country Aircheck and discuss his career.

CA: How do you think about aspects of the business other than performing and recording – like radio remotes? Is there stuff you grudgingly accept having to do, or do you enjoy some of it?

JA: Obviously, the parts of it I enjoy the most are making the records and touring to promote those records. Funny enough, I've never been a huge fan of the music video system. I've done a lot of live-type videos instead. We did a storyline

video for "Tonight Looks Good On You" and I was like, "That's the cheesiest video I've ever shot." It just doesn't fit my brand or what I'm about. I would much rather go grab it live than shoot that kind of video. Touring and making records, definitely. And I'm doing the remotes because we just dropped an album and we want to promote it. That's all part of the deal.

And the media – morning shows and the like?

That just comes with the territory. Now, if we didn't have anything to promote, would I be here today? Maybe. Maybe not.

You came up in the pre-streaming world where Country radio was basically the only way to reach the audience. How much do you keep up with changes on the business side – technology or who the key gatekeepers are?

The team is probably more in touch with those kinds of things. We have a social media company that makes sure we're putting content out because I'm just not a guy who captures everything on my phone and posts it. I didn't come up doing that and I still can't get down with it. If I think something's cool, I'll put it on there, but for the most part, the team kind of stays on top of whatever the trends are.

Based on the photos we see, you still bring people backstage and make the rounds at remotes and other gatherings. Why have you continued to prioritize radio?

It's invaluable. As much as things are going towards streaming and people are finding their music over there, there's still something to be said for radio if you want to have a major, major hit. There's no better place to do that than radio. You can get a TikTok thing going for a minute and guys are now getting record deals off that stuff. It's a new day. But there's no better way to hit the fanbase than radio. Country radio has the target audience.

Are you a hands-on CEO with your business? How deep do you get into the balance sheet, headcount and other operational details?

I'm more of the creative mind behind it all. I don't dot the I's and cross the T's on the paperwork. That's not my thing. But when it comes down to decision-making on things I think are important to my career or business, ultimately, it's me.



Your team knows what they can handle and what they need to bring to you?

By now they kind of know. If they call about things I don't care about – should it be yellow, green or purple – hey, I don't care. Pick one. If it's what the next single is, wait a minute. Music, album artwork, images – those things are kind of important.

Any recent examples of a decision being made without you that surprised you?

We did vinyl for the new album and the actual disc was supposed to be solid white. I got a copy of it the other day, pulled it out and it was white with brown. It looks like somebody shit on a record ... and there it is. I'm like, who approved that? It wasn't me. Any other color would have been better than brown. That was a swing and a miss, but funny. I think we're doing another run to fix that.

Do you have a five-year plan? Career bucket list items you still want to hit?

I don't like looking too far down the road. I try to live and do things for right now; I'll attack the next thing when the time comes. We have a system. I tour for six months and then have six months off to write songs and record. That works for me. We just finished the tour and dropped the album. I've basically got six months off the road. We've got a few shows here and there, but for the most part, no tour. So we can start doing all the things toward getting back in the studio. I'll deal with plans for next year's tour when the time comes. I didn't even have a title for this tour until the damn day before the tickets went on sale. So when I say I'll get to that later, I'll get to it later.

You procrastinate?

A little bit. (Laughs) It depends. They called and said, "Tickets are going on sale and we don't have a tour title." Okay, give me a minute. *Highway Desperado* came out of that, and then we wrote the song afterward. Might be a backwards way to do it, but it worked.



Artists get asked about their musical influences, but I wonder if you were influenced by anyone in terms of building your business and career. Are there artists you watched as you were coming up and admired for how they ran their organizations?

One of the first big tours I went out on was Rascal Flatts. Those guys had an open door policy with their dressing room and about getting to know me. That was something I thought was really cool. I toured with Kenny Chesney even after I was already headlining and he runs his camp great. He treated us and his people well, and it was always a lot of fun. He's a real business guy. He put his own money into his Blue Chair Bay rum and made sure that took off. Toby Keith is a great business guy with his bars, race horses and a bit of everything. Luke Bryan, too. We are in a couple businesses together.

How involved are you in your other ventures?

The restaurant Luke and I have with Adam LaRoche – we put our own money in, so that's really important to us. We're pretty hands on. The bar downtown [Jason Aldean's Kitchen & Rooftop Bar] is kind of on cruise control – it's rocking. Buck Commander is actually how Luke and I met and became friends. We loved hunting and that came along right about the time "She's Country" hit for me. Willie Robertson hit with *Duck Dynasty*, then Luke did right after. It started as just a fun group of guys, but then we and it took off.

Would you ever do a Vegas residency or your own music festival somewhere? Are there other things you would consider?

Possibly. The residency idea has popped up the last couple years, but I don't know if I'm ready for that. Feels like something I may want to tackle later when I don't want to tour as much – years from now. We'll see.

Why did you write more for this album?

I moved to town as a writer in '98, signed with Warner Chappell and wrote there for years. Once we started touring it was like I didn't have to do that anymore. I wanted to focus on playing. And when you're playing 200 dates a year, the last thing you want to do when you get home is write on your days off. So I kind of phased out of it. Kurt [Allison] and Tully [Kennedy] from my band

It's a different deal these days trying to get songs picked up by radio. They want it to already be a hit, basically, before it's even delivered. It's hard because it's not like it was in the day where you could build an artist up over time. You almost have to do that on your own now. I want to get him up and running before we tackle anything else. But I definitely love the idea of helping younger artists get to the next level by putting to work some of the things I've learned over the years.

You were the CRB Artist Humanitarian a couple years ago for all the ways you help people, whether it's Susan G. Komen or the support you gave to folks after Route 91. You must get a lot of asks – how do you decide what fits?

It's just about things that mean something to you. I got involved with Susan G. Komen because one of my best friends at the time lost his wife to breast cancer. She was 30 years old with two young kids. I started working with a children's hospital in my hometown because there wasn't one in the area. You had to go to Atlanta. There are other things, too, like St. Jude. Anytime there are kids involved, I'm usually all over it.

You're not doing 200 dates a year anymore, but you probably get pulled in more directions now. How is your work-life balance?

I learned a long time ago you can't do everything and you can't please everybody. I pick things that really matter to me and I try to make it work. I try to do as much as possible and, if something extra comes in that I can make happen, I will. If I can't, I just can't. You can't do it all.

There have been swirls of controversy for you to deal with the last few months. What have you learned through this about the mainstream media?

Well, I've dealt with them my whole career. I've been the media darling, and then I've been the media devil. They're not going to throw anything at me that I'm not expecting or haven't heard before. I believe what I believe and I stand behind it. I'm not going to let somebody talk me out of what I think or how I feel. If they ask me the same question over and over they're going to get the same answer over and over. Some reporters and media people are great about reporting things the way they are. Some just want to twist things around for clickbait. It doesn't rattle me.

What's the best part of where you are in your career right now?

I'm settled. In the early days I was hungry and scared that it could all go away. I didn't know what my career would look like going forward. We were doing okay, but still, "Is this my last album? Will it be the next one?" You don't know, but now I do. I'm in a place where I love touring and doing all that stuff, but I also have a lot of time for my family, which is awesome. I'm not worried or feeling like I need to grind all the time or someone will take my spot. I can relax a little bit and enjoy it a little more.

What do you still find challenging or lose sleep over?

You still stress a little bit about dropping an album and hoping people dig it. I can think it's cool all day, but until it's out there, you don't know. I'm not worried about it from the standpoint of my livelihood. I've been smart with financial decisions, so if it all went away tomorrow, I'm okay. That puts me in a better frame of mind to make records, tour and have fun doing things the way that I want to do them.

That's the benefit of maturity.

For sure ... which I didn't always have, by the way. And I'm still working on it. But it's worked out, and it kind of feels like it's going to work out.

CAC

THE INTERVIEW

Most of your team has been with you for a long time. Safe to say you value that continuity?

For the most part, everyone's been around since the beginning. I've been playing with the guys in my band for about 25 years. I've been with the label for almost 20. [Producer Michael] Knox I've known for 25 or 26 years. I had an early manager I got rid of and then met Clarence Spalding. Chris Parr came on board right about that time, too. My mindset is, this is my team and we've had a hell of a run. I don't have any reason to change anything up at this point.

Speaking with Chris earlier, he noted that when you were starting out and the label was still an unproven independent, you all leaned into everything wanting to prove yourselves. Do still feel that way?

We're more stable now. At the time, the label didn't have a lot of star power and I wasn't the guy coming in with any either. It was kind of a mom-and-pop organization – me and Craig Morgan carrying the torch. You look at what BMG and Broken Bow are today and it's nothing like that. The label is a much bigger player in the game with Jelly, Lainey, Dustin ... We were able to grow together – as a company and as an artist. It worked out for everybody.

Do you take any pride in seeing what the label has become?

Oh, of course. I remember going to the first Broken Bow office, which looked like somebody's bedroom. It's come a long way and I know that I was a big part of that, as

“As much as things are going towards streaming and people are finding their music over there, there's still something to be said for radio if you want to have a major, major hit.”

was the label team. They've always been the best in the business as far as radio, promotion and all that stuff.

You mentioned being a torch carrier for the label, but you've also risen to the level of being a torch carrier for country music in general. Do you think about that and how you've influenced other artists just as you were influenced on your way up?

For sure. And I know that's been the case. I'm just now starting to meet guys who are telling me I was a huge influence. I had guys like that – Alabama, George Strait, Tracy Lawrence. I learned how to do music by playing their stuff. When you hear that from someone else, it's really cool. There are a lot of young and very talented artists who are hot right now – Morgan, Luke Combs, Bailey Zimmerman – I'm excited to see what they do.

really turned a corner with their writing over the last few years and kind of drove me out of songwriting retirement. We found a way to do it that works for me. We have a rig out on the road if we need to finish songs or cut demos. Because I'm in work mode, I can focus on writing more out there. Getting the creative mind flowing again was fun, but I'm still all about the best song winning. We had a couple songs I wrote that didn't make the cut. They're in the pile for the next record, so we'll see.

Do you see yourself adding more artists to your Night Train label, building careers from scratch and really becoming a label head at some point?

I would love to do that. John Morgan has written some big songs for us – "Trouble With A Heartbreak," "That's What Tequila Does" – and he's amazing as an artist, too.

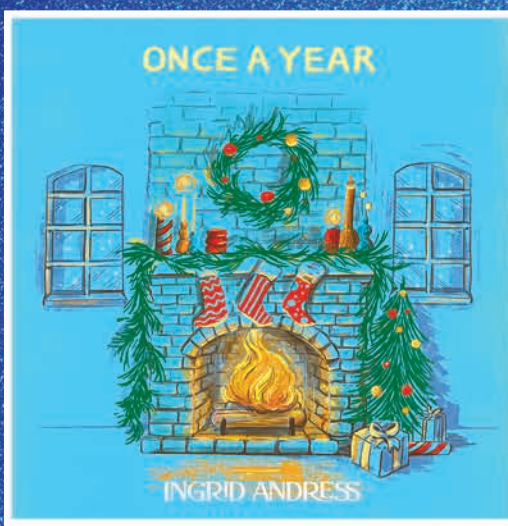
THANKS FOR ANOTHER
GREAT YEAR!



SEE YOU IN 2024!



WISHING YOU ALL THE JOY AND MORE FOR THE REST OF 2023 INTO 2024



SCAN NOW FOR YOUR
HOLIDAY PLAYLIST!

