

# billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD.COM/NEWSLETTERS

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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## Dann Huff's Country Production Principles At Play As He Reconnects With His Guitar Roots

In spring 1980, a makeshift group of students at what was then Nashville's Belmont College performed a version of **Boz Scaggs'** driving "Breakdown Dead Ahead," with the 19-year-old guitarist ripping through **Steve Lukather's** original solo like he did it in his sleep.

That 19-year-old was **Dann Huff**, who — before the decade was over — would become a significant Los Angeles session player, working on recordings by **Michael Jackson**, **Whitney Houston** and **Mariah Carey**. He would also become the frontman for rock band **Giant**, but ultimately returned to his native Nashville, where he emerged as one of the most significant country producers of the last 25 years, playing a key role in the careers of **Keith Urban**, **Rascal Flatts**, **Thomas Rhett** and **Kane Brown**, to name just a few.

On May 30, Huff quietly released an independent guitar album, *When Words Aren't Enough*, that returned him to his musical foundations. But the album — stripped entirely of any lyrical content — also provides an insightful guide into the skill set and core principles that vaulted him to his role in the country world, where he has been nominated 41 times for Country Music Association Awards, winning three musician of the year

trophies and two as producer of the single of the year, Rhett's "Die a Happy Man" and Urban's "Blue Ain't Your Color."

"I heard this great statement the other day," Huff says, looking back on the germination of *Words*. "In essence, the phrase was, 'You're trying to recognize your own soul through your art.' And I just thought, 'Oh, man.' I was trying to recognize myself again, to see if I *could* recognize myself again."

*When Words Aren't Enough* reconnected Huff to the spirit in a string of instrumental (or mostly instrumental) albums that spun regularly on his turntable during his teen years. There was **George Benson's** *Breezin'*, received as a Christmas gift; projects by Nashville-based **Barefoot Jerry** and Georgia fusion band **The Dixie Dregs**; and guitar albums by **Larry Carlton**, **Al DiMeola**, **Lee Ritenour** and **Jeff Beck**, whose mid-'70s releases *Blow by Blow* and *Wired* were must-haves for many

guitar wannabes in the era. Huff, of course, was the real deal, and he picked up a valuable lesson from Beck.

"What inspired me about him was that he wasn't writing music or recording music that basically was an excuse to play a solo," Huff explains. "It was predicated on melody. The melody



HUFF

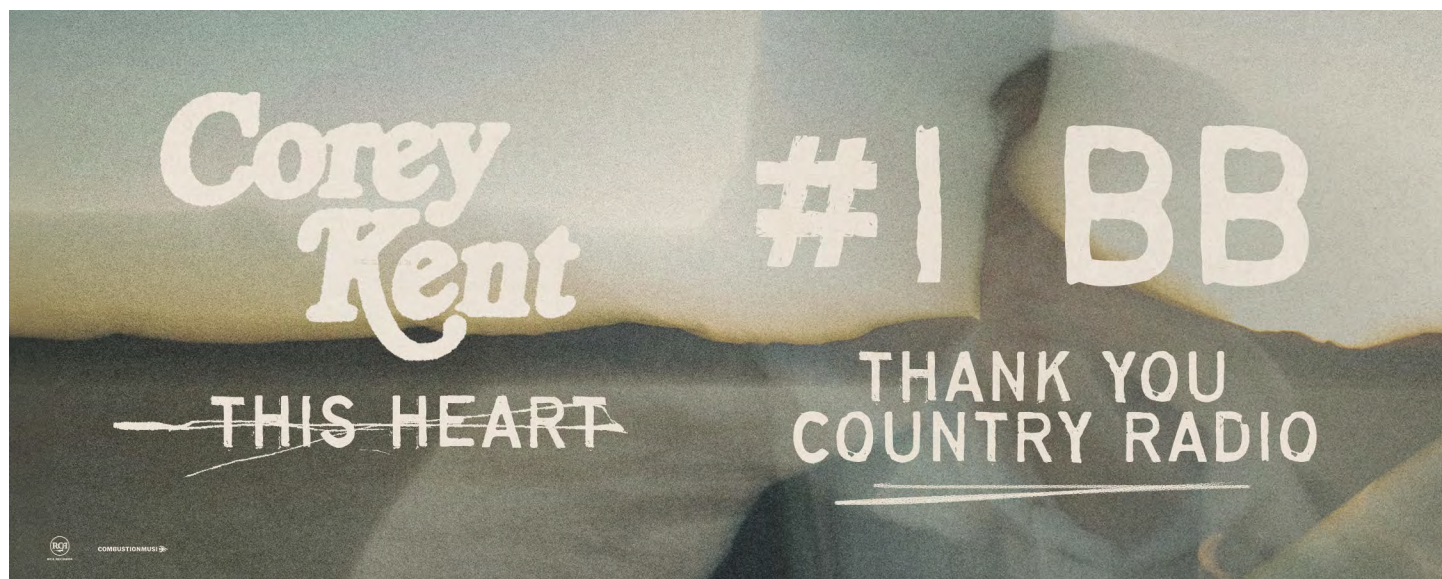
NATHAN CHAPMAN

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was everything. It wasn't an excuse to show off."

Huff launched into *Words* while testing an amp at his home studio in early 2024. He grabbed some grooves he had created on his computer and began playing to them. Over the course of a couple of hours, he would end up with a fully formed song that he would label No. 1, No. 2, etc., until he had a full album's worth of material. Initially, he planned to record them with a large cadre of session musicians he works with regularly, but drummer **Jerry Roe** and bassist **Mark Hill** connected with the material so deeply that they knocked out the core tracks in just a few days.

Huff renamed those files before their release, titling them with descriptors that fit the mood, such as "Colorado Creepin'," "Indefatigable Strut," "Giant Free Fall" or "Southern Synchronicity."

"Who the hell knows what you're ever really trying to say in music," he says rhetorically. "Especially with instrumental music."

That points to one of the key tenets in Huff's productions that's detectable in *When Words Aren't Enough*. He's a "music first" guy in a genre where lyrics often dominate. But because he picks up on the sound of a song before the story hits home, he's frequently connecting beneath the surface, recognizing the implicit feelings underneath the piece's verbal cues.

"That's the beauty of working with Dann," **Ashley Cooke** says. "He's such a 'feel' guy."

Some other basic Huff traits are also evident in his new project. Even when the songs become adventurous, he's careful to establish the basic melodic structure in the beginning, giving the listener a home base even as the music stretches out. The musicians are always working together as a unit — even though it's a guitar album, the instrument doesn't hog the spotlight. Additionally, there's always an element of surprise: an unexpected chord, a change in instrumental textures or even a whole new melodic section.

He is, as an instrumental soloist, the same guy who has overseen bundles of country hits and graced some old-school pop tracks.

"You can't get away from yourself," he says. "That's the thing. I'm the same person in the derivations of all this stuff."

When *Words Aren't Enough* comes at a time when Huff, 64, is contemplating how he wants to spend the rest of his life. He intends to keep producing as long as there's a market for his services, but returning to the spotlight is intriguing. At the urging of his musical peers, he expects to do some Nashville shows in the coming months, and he's open to touring, too, if the interest is there.

Ultimately, he seems intent on digging into music that connects at the soul level in whatever format makes sense. The future is wide open since he doesn't have much left to prove. But he does have a better understanding of what his 19-year-old self was intuiting from those Beck albums: His technique is only a tool to help convey something deeper, even if he lacks the words to explain it.

"I used to play 12 hours a day," he recalls. "That was it for decades, you know. For the last quarter of a century, I play guitar, but only in brief moments. I still know how to ride the bike." ●



HUNTER BERRY

Trace Adkins (left) and Blake Shelton sang "Hillbilly Bone" during *CMA Fest Presented by SoFi*, which debuted June 26 on ABC.



KWFI Idaho Falls, Idaho, PD Don Jarrett (left) got Tyler Hubbard to sign a guitar for charity in conjunction with a June 20 appearance at Shoshone-Bannock Casino Hotel in Fort Hall.



Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum writer-editor Jon Freeman (left) interviewed session fiddler Rob Hajacos on June 21 for the *Nashville Cats* series at the museum's Ford Theater.

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Expert insight and commentary by Tom Roland and Jim Asker





# BOTTLE ROCKETS

SCOTTY  
McCREERY

HOOTIE &  
the BLOWFISH



Brand new EP  
**SCOOTER & FRIENDS**  
coming July 18th  
featuring Hootie & the Blowfish,  
Charlie Wilson, and Lee Brice

AIRPOWER \*20  
Thank you,  
Country Radio!!

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Scotty McCreery, written on a piece of lined paper.



# billboardCountry Airplay

AIRPLAY  
MONITORED BY  
**LUMINATE**

ON THE CHARTS JIM ASKER [jim.asker@billboard.com](mailto:jim.asker@billboard.com)

## After 53 Weeks, Corey Kent Achieves His First Country Airplay Leader With ‘This Heart’

**Corey Kent’s** “This Heart” (Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville) becomes his first No. 1 on *Billboard’s* Country Airplay chart. The single by the 31-year-old from Bixby, Okla., ascends two spots to the top of the survey dated July 5 with 27.9 million audience impressions, up 16%, June 20-26, according to Luminate.

“This Heart” was co-authored by **Thomas Archer, Blake Bollinger, Jacob Hackworth** and **Michael Tyler**. **Chris Farren** produced it. The song is from Kent’s album *Black Bandana*, released last September.

Kent’s first of three Country Airplay entries, “Wild as Her,” hit No. 3 in May 2023. “Something’s Gonna Kill Me” reached No. 40 in January 2024.

“What a ride!” Kent tells *Billboard*. “I couldn’t be more proud of ‘This Heart.’ It is everything that I love about country music. It’s got soul, depth and makes you feel something. It’s meant so much to our fans since it came out. It’s helped people through heartbreak and the ups and downs of life, and I give all the credit to my friends who wrote this and trusted me to be the voice of it, as well as the radio team who put this in front of the fans and carried it all the way to the top.”

As “This Heart” reaches the Country Airplay pinnacle in its 53rd week, dating to its No. 60 arrival in June 2024, it completes the second-longest trip to No. 1 this year. **Dylan Scott’s** “This Town’s Been Too Good to Us” ruled the April 5 ranking in its 55th frame.

Kent, who was already fronting a Western swing band by age 11, moved to Nashville when he was 17. Billed as **Corey Kent White** (his full name), he competed on NBC’s *The Voice* in 2015, on coach **Blake Shelton’s** team, and charted three covers on Hot Country Songs during his run on the competition. He reached the top 40 with his take on **Bad English’s** **Diane Warren**-penned “When I See You Smile.”



DAYNA WHITE

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	+3.756	
JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+2.374	
PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	+1.690	
I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.678	
BOTTLE ROCKETS Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery & Hootie & The Blowfish	+1.520	
SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	+1.453	
GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	+1.294	
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+1.214	
COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	+1.146	
AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	+1.130	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	+1152	
I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+520	
BOTTLE ROCKETS Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery & Hootie & The Blowfish	+466	
JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+455	
AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	+388	
WEREN'T FOR THE WIND SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+356	
GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	+349	
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+346	
PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	+338	
SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	+334	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	16.601
2	LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	15.844
3	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	14.595
4	HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	14.349
5	LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	13.139
6	POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton	12.725
7	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	11.854
8	I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen	11.271
9	I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	7.729
10	I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	7.236

## TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING JUNE 26, 2025

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-
1	2	19	HURRICANE (CDX) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Sandee June	1731	212	11	12	9	GOD MADE A COWBOY (Independent)	Aaron Loy	1230	95
2	3	11	RUBY ANN (Independent)	Turnpike Troubadours	1511	-1	12	14	11	LAST COWBOY STANDING (Independent)	David Adam Byrnes	1173	125
3	6	12	BEER DON'T CARE (Independent)	Tilluride	1491	136	13	13	14	THE MOMENT (Independent)	Sundance Head	1116	29
4	4	23	WHAT I CAME TO DO (Independent)	Jesse Raub Jr.	1482	-23	14	16	18	I WASN'T BORN IN TEXAS (Independent)	Gary P. Nunn	1009	32
5	5	16	BREAK ITSELF (Tommy Jackson/Thirty Tigers)	Randy Rogers Band	1409	30	15	17	8	IT AINT THE WHISKEY (Big Loud)	Jake Worthington	1008	70
6	7	25	AIN'T THAT LOVE (Independent)	Bri Bagwell & Timber Wilde	1393	54	16	20	13	ARE YOU A REAL COWBOY (Independent)	Amanda Kate Ferris	956	47
7	9	20	WHO'S HANGING THE MOON (Independent)	Josh Weathers	1390	59	17	23	6	ONE NIGHT IN DALLAS (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	943	92
8	8	13	MY JOHN WAYNE (Independent)	Kylie Frey	1377	40	18	1	17	NOTHIN' BUT TEXAS (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	Wade Bowen	940	-687
9	10	11	FLAME (Get Joe)	Billie Jo Jones	1336	22	19	19	22	HOLD YOU TO IT (Independent)	Joey Green & Payton Howie	913	2
10	11	23	I DON'T APOLOGIZE (Independent)	James Lann	1253	43	20	18	21	HOME FOR A HOTEL (Independent)	Ghosts of Hill County	897	-36

Texas Regional Radio Report Top 100 is compiled from weekly online playlist reports from 86 radio stations located in Texas and surrounding states, including reports from specialty shows, internet and satellite radio outlets. Songs are ranked by total plays. For tracking, complete chart methodology and more information, visit [www.texasregionalradio.com](http://www.texasregionalradio.com), or contact Dave Smith at 972-252-8777. Copyright 2025, Texas Regional Radio Report



billboardCountry Airplay

AIRPLAY  
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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
1	3	53	THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville ★★ No. 1 (1 Week)/Most Increased Audience ★★	Corey Kent	27.882	+3.756	8407	1152	1
2	1	29	WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	25.630	-3.016	7181	-1274	2
3	5	14	JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	23.995	+2.374	6950	455	3
4	4	21	I'M THE PROBLEM Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	23.162	-0.386	5999	-85	9
5	2	34	BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	21.255	-4.717	6336	-1787	6
6	7	45	COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	21.122	+1.214	6554	346	5
7	6	26	WEREN'T FOR THE WIND SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	21.055	+0.917	6603	356	4
8	9	65	SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	20.555	+1.453	6159	329	7
9	8	33	FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	20.342	+1.020	6108	216	8
10	10	42	PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	19.522	+1.689	5779	338	10
11	11	32	COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	16.780	+1.146	5040	216	12
12	13	19	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	16.600	+1.130	5065	388	11
13	12	8	BACKUP PLAN Atlantic/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman & Luke Combs	15.831	+0.354	4915	188	13
14	14	22	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	14.646	+1.294	4319	349	14
15	15	15	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	13.226	+0.740	3968	205	15
16	16	42	FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Jon Pardi	11.257	+0.290	3621	-23	16
17	17	15	HANDS OF TIME BigEC/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Eric Church	9.590	+0.255	3385	116	17
18	19	14	BAR NONE MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	8.751	+0.525	3072	180	18
19	18	40	HEAVENS TO BETSY Big Machine	Jackson Dean	8.751	+0.371	2868	94	19
20	22	7	BOTTLE ROCKETS Triple Tigers ★★ Airpower ★★	Scotty McCreery & Hootie & The Blowfish	8.519	+1.519	2841	466	20
21	20	13	HEART OF STONE Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	7.836	+0.277	2619	87	21
22	21	24	STRAIGHT LINE Hit Red/Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Keith Urban	6.976	-0.061	2547	17	22
23	23	41	WHAT KINDA MAN MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	6.362	+0.233	2306	26	24
24	25	5	SOMEWHERE OVER LAREDO Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	6.293	+0.882	2345	334	23
25	24	16	3,2,1 Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/EMI Nashville/Mercury/Republic/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	5.911	+0.124	2295	140	25
26	26	14	HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Hudson Westbrook	5.349	+0.424	1903	160	27
27	28	21	I DARE YOU Big Machine	Rascal Flatts & Jonas Brothers	4.510	+0.200	1951	28	26
28	27	19	SHE HATES ME Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Dierks Bentley	4.236	-0.123	1806	-46	28
29	29	25	COWGIRL Stoney Creek	Parmalee	3.662	+0.370	1366	96	31
30	31	22	IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	3.364	+0.270	1641	109	29

COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART LEGEND

**RANKINGS**

Country Airplay is ranked by total audience impressions for the week ending Sunday based on monitored airplay by Mediabase of 145 stations by Luminate. Audience totals on the chart are derived, in part, using certain Nielsen Audio-copyrighted Persons 12+ audience estimates (under license © 2025, Nielsen Audio). The list of all Country Airplay chart reporters can be viewed in Luminate's online platform.

**TIES**

On Country Airplay, if two songs are tied in audience, the song with the larger increase in audience is placed first.

**BULLETS**

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles gaining audience or remaining flat from the previous week. A song will also receive a bullet if its percentage loss in audience does not exceed the percentage of monitored station downtime for the format. Titles that decline in audience but increase in detections will also receive a bullet if the total audience erosion for the week does not exceed 3%.

**RECURRENTS**

On Country Airplay, descending titles below No. 10 in either audience or detections are moved to recurrent after 20 weeks, provided that they are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or if they rank below No. 10 and post a third consecutive week of (non-bulleted) audience decline, regardless of total chart weeks. Plus, songs that ascend to a peak between Nos. 1 and 5 will remain on the chart for one additional week even if dropping below No. 10.

**HOT SHOT DEBUT**

Awarded to the highest-ranking new entry on Country Airplay.

**MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE**

Most Increased Audience on Country Airplay lists the songs with the greatest week-to-week increases in total audience.

**AIRPOWER**

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles ranking inside top 20 in plays and audience rankings for the first time, with increases in both plays and audience.

**BREAKER**

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles achieving airplay (at least one detection) at 60% of reporting stations for the first time.

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# billboard Country Airplay

 AIRPLAY  
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**LUMINATE**

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	35	30	DARLIN' Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	3.232	+0.365	1283	59	34
32	33	7	YOU HAD TO BETHERE Blue Chair/Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney & Kenny Chesney	3.209	+0.320	1311	126	32
33	38	3	GOOD TIMES & TAN LINES Leo33	Zach Top	3.124	+0.865	983	280	41
34	34	11	FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	HARDY	2.900	+0.028	1404	57	30
35	30	10	I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Post Malone	2.868	-0.226	914	-48	43
36	36	32	WOULD IF I COULD Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	ERNEST	2.785	+0.227	1290	61	33
37	39	5	STAY COUNTRY OR DIE TRYIN' Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	2.564	+0.339	1020	133	40
38	40	29	GOLDEN CHILD Riser House	Meghan Patrick	2.394	+0.174	1226	68	35
39	37	22	INDIGO Lockeland Springs/Atlantic/Magnolia Music	Sam Barber Featuring Avery Anna	2.296	-0.035	1124	18	36
40	NEW		I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	2.289	+1.677	712	520	50
41	42	27	TIME'S TICKING Valory	Justin Moore	2.177	+0.142	1111	62	37
42	41	11	HARD FOUGHT HALLELUJAH Brandon Lake/Essential/Lyric Ridge	Brandon Lake X Jelly Roll	2.173	+0.101	761	44	47
43	44	20	BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	1.979	+0.081	1076	58	39
44	45	9	WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb	Dylan Scott	1.949	+0.286	1092	106	38
45	43	17	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	1.915	-0.000	719	51	49
46	49	13	NOT AT THIS PARTY VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	1.574	+0.239	923	111	42
47	46	9	THE FALL CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson	1.501	-0.070	673	37	51
48	48	12	TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Boss Moves/Black River	Chris Young	1.498	+0.098	908	39	44
49	50	5	SAME MOON Riser House/Columbia Nashville	Mitchell Tenpenny	1.458	+0.130	611	26	52
50	51	6	PAPER UMBRELLAS McGraw/Big Machine	Tim McGraw Featuring Parker McCollum	1.432	+0.267	899	90	45
51	47	16	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	1.386	-0.016	810	-25	46
52	53	6	BURNED DOWN HEAVEN Big Machine	Chase McDaniel	1.231	+0.214	526	28	58
53	52	13	IF I DIE BEFORE YOU Red Street	Chris Lane	1.135	+0.115	571	64	54
54	55	3	DRINK WITH YOU Nashville Harbor	Brett Young	1.087	+0.187	585	-32	53
55	56	4	ME & A BEER Harpeth 60	Chris Janson	0.997	+0.106	719	81	48
56	54	5	BAGGAGE Black River	Kelsea Ballerini	0.976	+0.053	542	61	55
57	60	2	WRONG HEARTS BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	0.869	+0.094	529	21	57
58	58	4	AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	0.851	+0.018	287	27	-
59	NEW		WEAK Valory	Preston Cooper	0.783	+0.093	542	31	56
60	RE-ENTRY		WHAT I WANT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Tate McRae	0.780	+0.317	225	82	-



Megan Moroney connected with broadcasters when she performed June 20 at Stage AE in Pittsburgh. From left: WGTY York, Pa., operations manager Scott Donato; Audacy regional vp of programming Mark Anderson; Moroney; WPGH Pittsburgh PD/afternoon drive host Mike Kasper; and Sony Music Nashville director of radio marketing and promotion Dan Nelson.



While Riley Green was in Franklin, Tenn., on June 19 for a performance, he also received a Pandora Billionaire plaque after accumulating 1 billion streams on the platform. From left: Big Machine Label Group president/CEO Scott Borchetta, SiriusXM/Pandora artist and industry relations coordinator — country and Christian Victoria Alfonso, Green, SiriusXM/Pandora vp of music programming — country Johnny Chiang and Nashville Harbor president Jimmy Harnen.

SAMUEL CRABTREE



# 2025 billboard GRAMMY® FIRST LOOK

On July 19, *Billboard* will publish a GRAMMY First Look special feature showcasing the artists, producers and other creative professionals whose music was released during the eligibility period of Aug. 31, 2024, to Aug. 30, 2025. The issue will look at the early contenders for the **68th Annual GRAMMY Awards®** in the categories of Record Of The Year, Song Of The Year, Album Of The Year and Best New Artist.

**7/16:** ONLINE ENTRY PROCESS OPENS

**8/29:** ONLINE ENTRY PROCESS CLOSES

Take advantage of this early opportunity during the eligibility period to showcase accomplished work to members of the music industry as they prepare to cast their entries for **Music's Biggest Night®**.

## CONTACTS

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**AD CLOSE** 7/8

**MATERIALS DUE** 7/10



GRAMMY  
AWARDS®



NASHVILLE & NATIONAL TOM ROLAND [tom.roland@billboard.com](mailto:tom.roland@billboard.com)

Dierks Bentley spent time with local radio when he played the Talking Stick Resort Amphitheatre in Phoenix on June 20. From left: KNIX music director/midday host Lois Lewis, MCA Nashville director of Midwest promotion Donna Passuntino, Bentley, KNIX PD/afternoon talent Reid Spivey and Audacy regional vp of country programming Drew Bland.

## COUNTRY WORKS FOR FIREWORKS

When Independence Day arrives next week, country music will play a role in the annual celebration of the red, white and blue.

Dierks Bentley headlines Nashville's festivities, Willie Nelson continues his long-running Fourth of July Picnic, and a number of familiar voices will take part in annual TV specials.

Here's a look at some of what's on tap for the holiday in 2025:

- "Firecracker" singer **Josh Turner** and **LOCASH** appear in PBS' *A Capitol Fourth* from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, along with **Lauren Daigle**, **The Beach Boys**, **The Temptations** and the **National Symphony Orchestra**.

- **Eric Church** and **Trisha Yearwood** perform during *Macy's Fourth of July Fireworks*, airing from New York by NBC. Broadway star **Ariana DeBose** hosts, with contributions from **Lenny Kravitz**, **Keke Palmer** and **The Jonas Brothers**.

- Let Freedom Sing! Music City July 4th welcomes Bentley along with **Russell Dickerson**, **Niko Moon** and **Grace Bowers & The Hodge Podge** on the main stage at First and Broadway. An additional side stage includes music by **Charlie Worsham**, **Walker Montgomery** and **The Nashville Soul Experience**.

- **Lee Brice** and **Ashley McBryde** lead into the fireworks during the annual Freedom Over Texas celebration at Houston's Eleanor Tinsley Park.

- Bentley and McBryde guest on CNN's *The Fourth in America*, which checks in from celebrations across the nation. **Lainey Wilson**, **Noah Kahan** and **The War & Treaty** are also part of the multigenre lineup.

- **Rascal Flatts** tops the Stadium of Fire bill at LaVell Edwards Stadium in Provo, Utah.

- Nelson continues a Fourth of July tradition that began over 50 years ago, holding his Fourth of July Picnic at the Germania Insurance Amphitheater in Austin. His support includes **Bob Dylan**, **The Mavericks**, **The Avett Brothers** and **Asleep at the Wheel**.

## RADIO & RECORDS®

The reactivated Lost Highway imprint added two marketing executives to its ranks. **Casey Thomas** comes aboard as vp of marketing after seven years at Monument, where she was vp of marketing and commercial partnerships. **Vince Masino** joins as manager of audience development and content strategy, segueing from the former Universal Music Group Nashville (UMGN), where he was a digital specialist ... **Ailie Birchfield** joined MCA as a publicist, marking a return to the company. She served as director of media marketing when it was known as UMGN, prior to a 2021 move to New York. She most recently owned the Nashville-based independent PR firm The Birchfield Group ... Big Machine Label Group hired director of digital marketing **Sarah Bertrand**. She spent the last three years with UMGN, where she was a digital marketing manager ... Artist-writer **Blake Whiten** signed a recording deal with Enchntmnt/Warner Records ... Artist-writer **Trey Pendley** picked up a recording contract at Leo33 and tabbed Make Wake Artists for management ... RECORDS Nashville

and Sony Music Nashville announced a joint-venture recording deal for Texas-bred **Brendan Walter** ... JVC Broadcasting bought four stations in the Florida Panhandle, including classic country **WWLY** Panama City, RadioInsight.com reported. JVC/Fort Walton Beach director of programming **Matt Stone** is in charge of the station's on-air content ... Adams Radio Group/Fort Wayne, Ind., welcomes a new vp/GM, **Grant Thompson**, according to RadioInsight.com. He segues from Central Illinois Multimedia Group, where he was area vp and Champaign, Ill., market manager. His new territory includes country **WBTU** ... SiriusXM introduces a monthly series, *Prime Country With Scotty McCreery*, on July 5 ... Country Radio Broadcasters' June CRS360 webinar, "Are We Okay?," is available [here](#) ... Former Shamrock Broadcasting chairman/CEO **Bill Clark** died June 21. His tenure with the chain in the 1980s and 1990s included oversight of country stations **WWW/WCXI** Detroit and **KLAC/KZLA** Los Angeles.

## 'ROUND THE ROW

TKO Artist Management hired a new employee and promoted two existing staffers. **Eric Gundrum** rose to manager, handling day-to-day operations for **Mac McAnally** and **Scotty Emerick**, while **Jordan Bernal** took over Gundrum's previous management coordinator position, after serving as executive assistant to the president. Filling that role is **Ella Bare**, a May graduate of the University of Alabama who formerly handled social media for her grandfather, Country Music Hall of Fame member **Bobby Bare** ... Liz Rose Music signed **Adam Sanders** ("Hell of a Night," "Ain't Worth the Whiskey") to a publishing deal ... Artist-writer **Brianna Calhoun** agreed to a joint-venture publishing contract with Sony Music Publishing Nashville and **Kix Brooks** ... **Jay Webb** inked a songwriting agreement with Sony Music Publishing Nashville in advance of the July 25 release of his sophomore album, *Where To Find Me* ... The Canadian Country Music Association tapped comedian-actor **Tom Green** to host its awards on Sept. 13 in Kelowna, British Columbia ... Compass owner-artist **Alison Brown** will be recognized during the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's Louise Scruggs Memorial Forum on Aug. 13, with Museum writer-editor **Allison Moorer** conducting an in-depth interview ... **Koe Wetzel** held the grand opening for his second Riot Room on June 20 in Houston, featuring a jail cell and mechanical bull. The first Riot Room is located in Fort Worth, Texas ... R&B singer **Coco Jones** will make her Grand Ole Opry debut on June 2 ... **Keith Urban**, **Tim McGraw**, ASCAP and Mid-Atlantic Roofing Supply are sponsors of the Music Row Ladies Golf Tournament on Aug. 18. The event raises money for United Cerebral Palsy of Middle Tennessee ... The Toby Keith & Friends Gala and Golf Tournament, hosted by **Sammy Hagar**, raised \$1.4 million May 30-31 in Norman, Okla., for the OK Kids Korral, which provides lodging for pediatric patients and their families during treatment ... Black River launched a GoFundMe account, Framed With Love: For George Cheeves. The fund is to assist Cheeves, a carpenter who helped build the company's offices and studios, as he recovers from a stroke he suffered in June. Go [here](#) to donate. ●



**WLXV** Cadillac, Mich., PD/morning host **Dean Armstrong** (left) met with **Keith Urban** on June 22 at the Pine Knob Music Theatre in Clarkston, Mich.



**Dasha** caught up with **WCOL** Columbus, Ohio, PD **Dan Zuko** when she performed at Ohio Stadium on June 21.



# billboard



2025

## GLORIA ESTEFAN 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

International superstar Gloria Estefan, *Billboard's* most successful Latin crossover artist ever, celebrates 50 groundbreaking years in music with her 30th album, "Raíces" (Roots). With 100+ million records sold, nine Grammy Awards, an Oscar nomination, and status as the first Cuban-American honored at The Kennedy Center, Estefan's illustrious career includes the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2015) and Gershwin Prize (2019) shared with husband Emilio.

Beyond music, her humanitarian foundation, Emmy-winning Red Table Talk: The Estefans, Broadway musical ON YOUR FEET!, films, and bestselling books have reshaped cultural landscapes.

Her first all-Spanish studio album in 18 years, Raíces blends traditional tropical rhythms with contemporary

production, honoring Latin music's heritage while pushing boundaries forward. As Latin sounds dominate global charts, Estefan's latest work powerfully reminds the world of her pioneering role in proving cultural authenticity and international appeal could brilliantly coexist.

Join *Billboard* in congratulating Gloria Estefan on her remarkable career over the past 50 years.

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**ISSUE DATE 8/16 | AD CLOSE 8/05 | MATERIALS DUE 8/06**



# billboard Country Airplay Index

**TITLE** Publishing-Licensing Org.  
(Songwriter) **Chart Position**

**3,2,1** (Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Native Notes Music, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/SugarPlum Songs, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (J.Miller, S.Oberstreet, J.Reynolds) **25**

## A

### AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED

Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Be A Light Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/Songs By IOK HRS Publishing, BMI/1317 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Dragon Bunny Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (Thomas Rhett, J.C.Bunetta, J.Byron, J.Free, J.K.Hindlin) **12**

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**BACKSEAT DRIVER** Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs Of Back River Music, ASCAP/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Seeker From The Speaker Music, BMI/On Cor Music, BMI (D.Davis, J.Walker) **5**

**BACKUP PLAN** Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Worktape Tunes, BMI/Songs By The Bell, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (B.Beatard, J.Bell, J.Sherwood) **15**

**BAGGAGE** Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Feel Your Way Through Publishing, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Seif Made Entertainment, BMI/The Piano Room, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., BMI/C.Vandeezy Songs, SESAC/Songs Of Rhythm House Back, SESAC (K.Ballmer, J.J.Dillon, K.Fairchild, H.Lindsey, A.Vanderheyne) **56**

### BAR NONE

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### BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES)

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### BOTTLE ROCKETS

Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Dagum Music, BMI/Songs Of Spirit II Nashville, ASCAP/FluidTunes II, ASCAP/Beats By Baby Brent, ASCAP/Burley Bishop Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Spirit Nashville Three, SESAC/Songs Of Fluid II, SESAC/Hon On The Buss, SESAC/Spirit Nashville Two Crescendo, ASCAP/Fluid Tunes, ASCAP/Songs Of Spirit One Nashville, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid II, BMI/Heavy Lefty Music, BMI/Woah, ASCAP/Monica's Reluctance To Lob, ASCAP/EMI April Music, Inc., ASCAP (S.C.McCreary, B.Anderson, D.George, J.Busssey, F.Rogers, M.Criswell, B.Hamrick, D.Rucker, M.Bryan, D.Felber, J.Sonefeld) **20**

### BURNED DOWN HEAVEN

Nothing Like You Heard Sound, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Cuts Like A Nite Music, SESAC (C.Daniel, J.M.Nite, L.Rimes) **52**

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### COUNTRY SONG CAME ON

Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Songs Of Smack, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Party Of 3 Songs, ASCAP/Southern Kid Music, ASCAP (D.Ailey, R.Beaver, N.A.Medley) **11**

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Tilevart Music Publishing Ltd., PRS/Sentric Music Ltd., PRS/Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/NewMania Music North, SOCAN/VaughnCo Music Publishing Inc., PRS/Cooking Vinyl Publishing Ltd., PRS/Thomas Frank Ridley Horsley Publishing Designee, PRS/8936 Music, BMI/Parmalee Music Publishing, BMI (J.D.Lewis, D.Fanning, P.D.Newman, R.Jay, T.F.R.Horsley, M.Thomas, B.Knox, J.McSwain, S.Thomas) **29**

## D

**DARLIN'** Hunter Huff Publishing Designee, BMI/Ciaran Wilkie Publishing Designee, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Verse 2, BMI/Droptone Music, BMI/Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Kobalt Music Services Ltd., PRS (Chase Matthew, A.Marwell, H.Huff, C.Wilkie, Jake Angel) **31**

**DRINK WITH YOU** Super Big Music, ASCAP/Caliville Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Road, BMI/Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Off The Record, ASCAP/Sony Tunes, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (B.Young, J.Frasure, L.Lucca, E.L.Weisband) **54**

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**THE FALL** Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI/Bobby Pinson Publishing Designee, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Keep Choppin Publishing, BMI/Exit 183 Songs, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP (B.Pinson, R.Fulcher, J.S.Stover) **47**

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## G

**GOLDEN CHILD** Anthem Entertainment B, SOCAN/Iron Songbird Publishing B, BMI/Jackoby Songs II, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing I, BMI/Sweet Baby RuRu Songs, BMI/World For Aaron Esthuis Concord Alto CCI, ASCAP (M.Patrick, J.Hyde, A.Esnus) **38**

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Kreshendo, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/S2 Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/Essency Music Publishing, ASCAP/Torrey Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/BMG Rights Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/Paco Place Songs, BMI (C.O.Chibueze, N.Sastry, S.C.Cook, J.Torrey, M.R.Pollack, ROMANS) **14**

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Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Major Bob Productions, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Down What I Do, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, W.McCubbin) **33**

## H

### HANDS OF TIME

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### HARD FOUGHT HALLELUJAH

Brandon Lake Music, ASCAP/Music By Elevation Worship Publishing, BMI/Re Essential Songs, BMI/Also Also Industries, BMI/Bailee's Ballads, BMI (B.M.Lake, S.Furtick, B.W.Hastings, C.J.Brown, J.B.DeFord) **42**

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### HEAVENS TO BETSY

Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Well That Was Awkward Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Daddy's Home Music, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (J.Dean, B.Davis, D.Williams) **19**

### HOUSE AGAIN

Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Party Of 3 Songs, ASCAP/Southern Kid Music, ASCAP/Saxet HW Music, BMI (H.Westbrook, N.A.Medley, D.Ailey) **26**

## I

### I AIN'T COMING BACK

Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bell Ear Publishing, ASCAP/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Universal Music Works, GMR/Posty Publishing, GMR/Ern Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI (M.C.Wallen, L.B.Bell, M.W.Hardy, A.R.Post, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **35**

### I DARE YOU

Nick Jonas Publishing, BMI/PWZ Publishing House, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Seven Peaks Music, ASCAP/8Sixteen Music, ASCAP (N.Jonas, Tommy English, S.Mooney, D.Whitmore, J.C.) **27**

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Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Weslow, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Young Man Publishing, BMI/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/M & M College Fund, SESAC (E.L.Weisband, J.McNair, S.Mosley) **53**

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## J

### JUST IN CASE

Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Electric Feel Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Orange Music Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/1317 Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Ern Dog Music, BMI (M.C.Wallen, A.Y.Bak, J.Byron, J.K.Hindlin, B.Pendergrass, J.P.Thompson, Charlie Handsome, E.K.Smith) **3**

## M

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## N

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Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Dashville Publishing House, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI (A.D.Novotny, A.G.Gorley, B.J.Johnson) **46**

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### PAPER UMBRELLAS

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### PARK

T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For The Munch Music, BMI/Songs Of Influence, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Georgia Song VibeZ, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (T.R.Hubbard, J.Frasure, A.G.Gorley, C.Smith) **10**

## S

### SAME MOON

Sony CountrySide, BMI/Riser Ten Music, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Paulwood Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Chapter Blue, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Down Boogie Music, BMI (M.Tenpenney, P.D.Giovanni, D.Southerland, D.Wilson) **49**

### SHE HATES ME

Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/DudeTunes, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Music Of CMT Outlander Music LP, BMI/Smackshot Music, BMI/Katie In Paris, BMI/Stereo Supersonic Music, ASCAP/Jordan Rocks Music, ASCAP (D.Bentley, R.Copperman, A.G.Gorley, C.McGill, J.C.Allen, W.Scantling) **28**

### SINGLE AGAIN

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Sony CountrySide, BMI/Sony Farmer, BMI/Songs Of Wild Cat Well Music, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Down Boogie Music, BMI/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tacklebox Publishing, ASCAP/EMI Feist Catalog, Inc., ASCAP (L.Wilson, T.Anderson, D.Wilson, A.Albert, E.Harburg, H.Arien) **24**

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Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs By Silo, ASCAP/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/M & M College Fund, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI (B.Hayslip, S.Mosley, J.Walker) **48**

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### WEREN'T FOR THE WIND

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### WHAT KINDA MAN

Parkmarc Publishing, BMI/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Abundantiam Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/VRUCKENROLL MUSIC, BMI/Music Of CMT Outlander Music LP, BMI (P.McCollum, J.N.Spillman, N.Hembry) **23**

### WISH YOU WELL

Big Music Machine, BMI/Works By Range Music Partners, BMI/Warbranger Publishing, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI (G.Warburton, J.J.Dillon, B.Pendergrass, C.LaCorte) **51**

### WORST WAY

Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI (R.Green) **2**

### WOULD IF I COULD

Sony Acuff Rose Music, BMI (D.Dillon, S.Ewing) **36**

### WRONG HEARTS

BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Websinger Publishing, BMI/Lovelegend Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/Drag Drag Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP (P.C.Brust, C.Lucas, M.Dragstrem, J.Thompson) **57**

## Y

### YOU HAD TO BE THERE

Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Georgiano Music, SESAC/Major Bob Music, Inc., ASCAP/Warner-Lamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Redneck Resume Music, BMI/Tack Mack Tunes, BMI (M.Moroney, B.Williams, M.Carpenter, M.Carpenter) **52**



# billboard



## R&B/HIP-HOP POWER ISSUE

R&B/hip-hop dominates every other genre, claiming one-quarter of all music consumption.

On Aug. 30, *Billboard* will publish its R&B/Hip-Hop Power Players list showcasing the producers, creatives, executives and publishers who have made R&B/hip-hop the hottest genre on earth.

Advertise and congratulate the people who are driving this industry and reach an influential audience of decision-makers in music and pop culture.

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# Rascal Flatts Took A 'Fast' Trip To No. 1

On July 2, 2005, **Rascal Flatts**—the trio of **Gary LeVox**, his cousin **Jay DeMarcus** and **Joe Don Rooney**—turned the ignition on a three-week run at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs chart with "Fast Cars and Freedom." It became the band's fourth of 12 career leaders.

*Today*, which entered at No. 1 on Top Country Albums as the group's second of eight chart-toppers. The set concurrently led the all-genre Billboard 200, arriving as the act's first of four No. 1s.

the members would concentrate on individual projects.

Now reunited and back on the road, Rascal Flatts released its first album in eight years, *Life Is a Highway: Refueled Duets*, on June 6. The collection of nine of the group's hits reimagined as collaborations includes "Fast Cars and Freedom," with **Jason Aldean**.

—JIM ASKER



From left: Rascal Flatts' DeMarcus, LeVox and Rooney in 2005.

# REWINDING THE COUNTRY CHARTS

Rank	LP	W	AG	W	PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	IMPRINT & NUMBER / PROMOTION LABEL	W	Rank
1	2	2	15	#1 1 WK	<b>FAST CARS AND FREEDOM</b> M. BRIGHT, M. WILLIAMS, RASCAL FLATTS (G. LEVOX, N. THRASHER, W. MOBLEY)	Rascal Flatts LYRIC STREET		1
2	1	1	16		<b>MAKING MEMORIES OF US</b> D. HUFF, K. URBAN (R. CROWELL)	Keith Urban CAPITOL		1
3	3	3	22		<b>LOT OF LEAVIN' LEFT TO DO</b> B. BEAVERS (B. BEAVERS, D. RUTTAN, D. BENTLEY)	Dierks Bentley CAPITOL		3
4	6	7	7	<b>GREATEST GAINER</b>	<b>AS GOOD AS I ONCE WAS</b> J. STROUD, T. KEITH (T. KEITH, S. EMERICK)	Toby Keith DREAMWORKS		4
5	4	4	13		<b>YOU'LL BE THERE</b> T. BROWN (C. MAYO)	George Strait MCA NASHVILLE		4
6	5	5	12		<b>SOMETHING MORE</b>	Sugarland		