

billboard Country Update

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JANUARY 30, 2026 | PAGE 1 OF 13

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Country Gets More Love From The Grammys; “Unique Timing” Spurs A False Narrative

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**HARDY Remains A
‘Favorite’**
>page 4

**Nashville Weathers
The Storm**
>page 8

**Country Coda:
Shania Twain’s
‘Outta’-Sight No. 1**
>page 12

Margo Price and **Kelsea Ballerini** will find out on Feb. 1 if they win a Grammy for best country album.

They could both win, since a new awards lineup means they’re not actually competing against each other.

This year marks the first time that the country album category has been split into two separate styles. Thus, Price is in the running for best traditional country album for *Hard Headed Woman*, while Ballerini is among the final five with *Patterns* in the parallel best contemporary country album list.

“Other genres have subgenres; I don’t know why we can’t,” says songwriter **Trannie Anderson**, up for best country song as one of four writers on **Lainey Wilson**’s “Somewhere Over Laredo.” “I think it really just broadens the reach in celebration of our genre. Country’s cool again.”

The size of the total Grammy slate seemingly evolves on an annual basis — in the most dramatic example it shrunk by 31 categories in 2011 — but this year, that country album alteration is the only change on the ballot, which currently features 95 total awards. That made the topic ripe for a conspiracy theory, and one emerged that suggests that the Recording Academy reacted to anger over **Beyoncé**’s best country album win a year ago with *Cowboy Carter*, a project that engendered significant debate over what does and does not fit the definition of country music.

“Not knocking Beyoncé,” says **Jenee Fleenor**, an in-demand fiddler who’s up for best country song as a co-writer on the **Miranda Lambert/Chris Stapleton** collaboration “A Song to Sing.” “I think we’re all trying to find our footing with all of that. [The extra category] seems appropriate. There’s so much country music to celebrate, I think there’s room for all.”

Fleenor essentially put her finger on the Academy’s thinking, though *Cowboy Carter*’s 2025 victory, which came just four months before the category’s update was announced, created some “unique timing,” as Grammy Trustee **Fletcher Foster** puts it.

“When something like this passes in the same year that an artist wins in that category, there’s going to be questions,” Academy CEO **Harvey Mason Jr.** allows. “But I can assure you, from where I sit, and the conversations that I’ve been a part of and the discussions in the board room with our elected leadership, that this is by no means a reaction to that. It’s something that’s been in the works.”

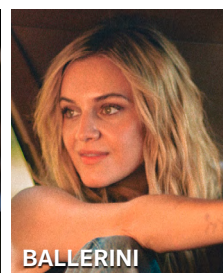
In reality, the country album split is a development that’s taken more than 15 years to come to fruition. The Academy first established an award for best Americana album in 2010, at a time when that genre was weighted more heavily toward traditional country acts. Americana has since widened, while modern, main-



PRICE



MASON



BALLERINI

PRICE: YANA YATSUK; MASON: MICHAEL KOVAC; BALLERINI: NYK ALLEN

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stream country has increasingly embraced other music genres. **Florida Georgia Line** successfully incorporated hip-hop elements as far back as 2012, and other acts have similarly blended country with other styles: **HARDY** paired it with hard rock, **Dan + Shay** mixed it with complex pop sounds, and **Jelly Roll**'s used lyrical messaging — plus his duet with **Brandon Lake** — to fuse country with Christian music.

All of those changes left “a space between country music and Americana,” Foster says.

As a result, the Academy's country constituents became more vocal three to five years ago, lobbying for an additional country category. The Academy has procedures for those efforts — proposals are written, votes are held, and several rounds of super-majorities are required to institute a new category.

Other genres already made distinctions between traditional and contemporary/progressive categories, including pop, R&B and blues. So realistically, separating traditional and contemporary country albums wasn't particularly a stretch. It actually reflected the increasing fungibility between styles of every stripe.

“Genres are changing so quickly,” Mason says. “Things are coming together, genres are blending, new things are cropping up, global music is happening. So we're going to have to be very diligent about our awards and our categories, because of all the change and evolution happening in the way music is made, the way people are creating it and collaboratively, the way it's coming out from different places around the globe.”

The best way to understand the effect of the category change is to compare last year's country album menu to this year's offerings. Beyoncé's competition in 2025 included **Post Malone's** *F-1 Trillion*, **Kacey Musgraves' Deeper Well**, **Chris Stapleton's Higher** and Wilson's *Whirlwind*. It was basically two non-country artists experimenting with the genre alongside three of country's well-established figures.

This year's traditional country album category makes room for **Charley Crockett's** *Dollar a Day*, **Lukas Nelson's American Romance**, **Willie Nelson's Oh What a Beautiful World**, Price's *Hard Headed Woman* and **Zach Top's Ain't it for my Health.**

Best contemporary country album offers Ballerini's *Patterns*, **Tyler Childers' Snipe Hunter**, **Eric Church's Evangeline vs. the Machine**, Jelly Roll's *Beautifully Broken* and Lambert's *Postcards from Texas*.

Combined, those 10 finalists do a much better job of spanning the stylistic breadth of country than the five releases on the list a year ago.

“Certainly, as a listener, you'd have to be silly to not notice that there's a difference in the sounds,” says songwriter of the year nominee **Laura Veltz**, supporting this year's expansion.

Ultimately, the Beyoncé conspiracy theory is intriguing at first glance, but not particularly plausible, given the pace at which the Academy's decisions get made. But even if the Academy had split the country album category in reaction to Beyoncé, it's still a victory for artists moving forward.

“A new category means five new people get nominated,” Mason says. “How is that a bad thing?” ●



BRAYN KELLY SMITH

The back catalog of Miranda Lambert (center) was acquired by Sony Music Publishing Nashville (SMPN) and Domain Capital Group in a deal announced Jan. 27. She's flanked by Domain managing director Pete Chiappetta (left) and SMPN CEO Rusty Gaston.



BRANDON RAY

iHeartRadio host Bobby Bones (left) welcomed Kenny Chesney as the initial guest when *Bobby Bones Presents: The BobbyCast* debuted on Netflix on Jan. 26.



SAM KERRIGAN

Randy Owen performed Jan. 25 during the opening night of the Country Music Cruise, produced by StarVista LIVE for Holland America. From left: StarVista LIVE president Mike Jason, Owen, Country Music Cruise executive producer Mike Robertson and Conway Entertainment Group president Tony Conway.

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ON THE CHARTS RUSS PENUELL rpenuell@billboard.com

HARDY To Beat: ‘Favorite Country Song’ Holds At No. 1

HARDY secures a third total and consecutive week at No. 1 on *Billboard’s* Country Airplay chart (dated Feb. 7), as “Favorite Country Song” (Mercury/Republic/Big Loud) drew 31.6 million audience impressions (down 1%) Jan. 23-29, according to Luminate.

The track marks **HARDY**’s fourth Country Airplay No. 1 as a recording artist and his first to reign for multiple weeks. It’s also his longest-leading hit overall, encompassing both leaders as a performer and those as a co-writer for other artists, surpassing the two-week chart-toppers “Single Saturday Night,” by **Cole Swindell** (2021), and “God’s Country,” by **Blake Shelton** (2019). In total, “Favorite Country Song” is the Mississippi native’s 15th career Country Airplay No. 1 as an author. **Kenny Chesney**, **Florida Georgia Line** and **Morgan Wallen**, among others, have also led with **HARDY** co-writes.



TANNER GALLAGHER

Meanwhile, reigns of three weeks or more on Country Airplay remain in the minority. Of the 166 No. 1s from 2020 to the present, just 31 have held the summit for at least three weeks. Five did so in 2024, following seven in 2023, five each in 2022 and 2021 and two in 2020.

THAT’S ‘BETTER’ **Max McNown** lands his first Country Airplay top 10 with “Better Me for You (Brown Eyes)” (Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music), up 13-10 with 15.5 million in audience (up 8%). It also reached No. 10 on Adult Pop Airplay in December.

‘GARY’ GETS IT DONE **Stephen Wilson Jr.** makes his Country Airplay debut with “Gary” (Mercury/Big Loud) at No. 55 (829,000, up 32%). *Inspired*, in part, by his blue-collar upbringing — his father was a boxer who ran a body shop — the self-penned song traces back to a church marquee that Wilson spotted while driving, listing memorial details for a man named Gary. The name stuck, becoming a vessel for an imagined life shaped by the kind of working-class figures that Wilson observed growing up. A former MARS&D scientist — he helmed the launch of dog chew **DENTASTIX** — Wilson has a history of building things designed to stick around. 🍌

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	+3.944	
AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	+2.327	
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+2.082	
20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.537	
AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	+1.222	
BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	+1.149	
CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+1.139	
BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+1.121	
THE FALL CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	+0.982	
CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+0.972	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	+1181	
AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	+717	
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+639	
HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+505	
20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+453	
CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+382	
THE FALL CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	+324	
ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent & Koe Wetzel	+319	
TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+300	
DAYS LIKE THESE Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	+299	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	COWGIRL Stoney Creek	Parmalee	18.035
2	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	17.370
3	DARLIN' Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	17.307
4	I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	16.424
5	6 MONTHS LATER Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	13.552
6	STAY COUNTRY OR DIE TRYIN' Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	12.984
7	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	11.663
8	JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	11.379
9	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	11.033
10	HEART OF STONE Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	10.695



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 29, 2026

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	16	PONTIAC (SO TELL ME MOMMA) (Aduh New Revolution) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Aaron Watson	1827	203	11	11	19	PRETTY WOMAN OF MINE (Independent)	Lee Thomas	1362	12
2	3	25	DIED AND GONE COUNTRY (Independent)	Curtis Grimes	1660	60	12	12	26	THE OLDER I GET (MORE COUNTRY I'M GETTING TO BE) (Fool Hearted)	Jon Wolfe	1308	27
3	4	15	FLYIN' (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	Wade Bowen	1576	32	13	14	18	HONKY TONK HEART (Independent)	David Lewis feat. Randall King	1295	63
4	6	18	TURQUOISE AND SILVER (Get Joe)	Billie Jo Jones	1573	86	14	16	11	STEADY (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1248	110
5	5	24	I WAS WRONG (Independent)	Mike Ryan	1559	36	15	1	19	EVEN GIRLS LIKE YOU (Pretty Damn Tough)	Josh Abbott Band	1195	-543
6	7	17	ROUGH SPOT (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1539	94	16	15	19	IS THIS THING WORKIN' (Tommy Jackson/Thirty Tigers)	Randy Rogers Band feat. Parker McCollum	1169	0
7	9	14	SOUTHERN KING (CDX)	Sandee June	1453	96	17	17	21	.30-30 (Independent)	Deryl Dodd	1101	107
8	10	19	WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE (Bill Grease Rec)	William Clark Green	1439	86	18	18	16	RATHER BE ALONE (Broken Angel)	Love & Chaos	1095	129
9	8	21	TEXAS STRONG (Independent)	Aaron Loy	1436	52	19	19	19	WHITE DRESS DIRECTION (Write On)	Adysen Malek	1028	85
10	13	5	FORT WORTH (Independent)	Kylie Frey feat. Randall King	1387	153	20	20	22	HEARTBREAK QUEEN (Fame Records)	Kensie Coppin	960	62

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, or contact Dave Smith at 972-252-8777. Copyright 2026, Texas Regional Radio Report

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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	1	42	FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Mercury/Republic/Big Loud ★★ No. 1 (3 Weeks) ★★	HARDY	31.618	-0.345	8697	30	1
2	2	15	CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	28.580	+0.972	7566	178	2
3	6	53	IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★	George Birge	26.619	+3.944	7485	1181	3
4	3	20	HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	25.980	+0.965	7261	505	4
5	4	17	20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	25.743	+1.537	6957	453	5
6	5	30	AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	25.459	+2.327	6818	717	6
7	10	20	AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	19.209	+1.222	5244	266	8
8	9	58	TIME'S TICKING Valory	Justin Moore	18.378	+0.358	4998	76	9
9	11	45	HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	17.804	+0.018	5577	-18	7
10	13	51	BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	15.473	+1.149	4554	255	10
11	12	12	DAYS LIKE THESE Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	15.203	+0.878	4321	299	11
12	14	40	WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb	Dylan Scott	14.753	+0.691	4284	251	12
13	15	40	THE FALL CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	14.017	+0.982	3911	324	14
14	16	41	I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Post Malone	12.375	+0.187	3208	137	16
15	18	48	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	12.083	+0.745	3370	163	15
16	17	52	I DARE YOU Big Machine	Rascal Flatts & Jonas Brothers	12.010	-0.069	3928	115	13
17	19	29	A SONG TO SING Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert & Chris Stapleton	8.789	-0.051	2854	-66	18
18	20	60	GOLDEN CHILD Riser House ★★ Airpower ★★	Meghan Patrick	8.748	+0.210	2636	79	20
19	21	14	TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND MCA Nashville ★★ Airpower ★★	Jordan Davis	8.635	+0.837	2947	300	17
20	23	35	ME & A BEER Harpeth 60 ★★ Airpower ★★	Chris Janson	7.850	+0.809	2689	204	19
21	22	47	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	7.524	+0.433	2616	89	21
22	25	5	CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	6.517	+1.139	2133	382	24
23	24	25	MAKING GOOD TIME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	6.273	+0.136	2184	131	23
24	29	7	BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	6.046	+1.121	1836	283	29
25	26	14	BEAUTIFUL THINGS Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	5.741	+0.471	2051	227	26
26	36	3	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Luke Combs	5.662	+2.082	1505	639	32
27	27	43	TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Boss Moves/Black River	Chris Young	5.417	+0.197	2209	60	22
28	30	8	ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent & Koe Wetzell	5.328	+0.708	1946	319	28
29	28	32	WEAK Valory	Preston Cooper	5.234	+0.204	2074	34	25
30	32	33	WRONG HEARTS BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	4.698	+0.473	1764	116	30

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 © 2026, 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. 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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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	31	11	AFTER MIDNIGHT RCA Nashville	Nate Smith & Tyler Hubbard	4.559	+0.132	1394	59	34
32	33	16	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	4.474	+0.469	1729	130	31
33	35	36	BAGGAGE Black River	Kelsea Ballerini	4.350	+0.618	1949	172	27
34	34	27	NEVER CALL AGAIN Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Gavin Adcock	3.834	-0.093	1497	-15	33
35	38	7	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33 ★★ Breaker ★★	Zach Top	3.530	+0.644	1071	147	38
36	39	19	HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	2.921	+0.233	1274	45	35
37	40	21	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	2.913	+0.328	1148	97	37
38	37	30	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	2.889	-0.013	1261	-17	36
39	42	18	LONG LIVE COUNTRY Triple Tigers	Shane Profitt	1.998	-0.040	1002	8	41
40	46	11	TRAVELIN' SOLDIER CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	1.771	+0.111	344	-12	60
41	53	2	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Jon Pardi	1.712	+0.536	658	215	50
42	45	37	BURNED DOWN HEAVEN Chase McDaniel/Big Machine	Chase McDaniel	1.691	+0.012	919	8	43
43	47	11	STRAIGHT FORTHE HEART Alexandra Kay/Wheelhouse	Alexandra Kay	1.676	+0.185	943	66	42
44	43	14	THE HELL YOU ARE Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	1.631	-0.144	787	-30	45
45	44	29	EASY TO LOVE Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch	1.593	-0.108	1006	-15	40
46	51	6	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greytan James	1.514	+0.172	723	60	47
47	48	15	FIREWORKS Curb	Kelsey Hart	1.460	-0.000	1010	3	39
48	50	20	HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH Bossier City/Thirty Tigers/Akando	Tumpike Troubadours	1.404	+0.034	456	2	57
49	49	12	KILLED THE MAN Curb	Lee Brice	1.372	-0.019	759	62	46
50	54	10	DREAM COME TRUE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	1.277	+0.216	874	42	44
51	60	2	MAKE A LIAR Big Machine	Jackson Dean	1.114	+0.441	511	201	54
52	52	27	I WISH YOU WOULD Valory	Mackenzie Carpenter Featuring Midland	1.075	-0.122	690	-62	49
53	55	5	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.035	-0.010	697	36	48
54	56	8	DEVIL AIN'T DONE Stoney Creek	Atlas	0.989	-0.027	620	14	51
55	NEW		GARY Mercury/Big Loud ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★	Stephen Wilson Jr.	0.829	+0.202	492	113	56
56	59	3	HIGHS & LOWS Quartz Hill	Matt Cooper	0.798	+0.054	606	-12	52
57	NEW		NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	0.764	+0.200	245	66	-
58	58	3	REBEL Patoka Sounds/Stoney Creek	Drew Baldrige	0.764	-0.024	575	-11	53
59	NEW		HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	0.653	+0.020	494	204	55
60	NEW		KEEPS ME SANE Tyler Nance/Santa Anna	Tyler Nance	0.554	-0.001	405	13	59



Parker McCollum welcomed Phoenix radio staff when he played the Desert Diamond Arena in Glendale, Ariz., on Jan. 24. From left: Audacy regional vp of country programming Drew Bland, McCollum, MCA Nashville director of Midwest promotion Donna Jo Passuntino and KNIX PD/afternoon talent Reid Spivey.



Josh Ross (center) was among the artists attending when The Core Entertainment threw a Grammy Week party Jan. 26 at the Peppermint Club in West Hollywood, Calif. With him: The Core CEO/co-founders Chief Zaruk (left) and Simon Tikhman.

JON KOPALOFF GETTY IMAGES

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2026

SXSW 2026



This issue features cover stories on the stars headlining *Billboard's* The Stage at SXSW and a preview of other festival highlights.

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ISSUE DATE 3/7 | AD CLOSE 2/24 | MATERIALS DUE 2/26

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ERIC MCCANDLESS/Disney

Brad Paisley made a surprise appearance on the Jan. 26 season premiere of ABC's *American Idol*, two days before he was announced as a guest mentor for the season. From left: judges Luke Bryan and Carrie Underwood, Paisley and judge Lionel Richie.

NASHVILLE DIGS OUT FROM ICE

The last week in Nashville's modern era may go down as the "Ice Age."

That's the description **Jon Pardi** applied to the frozen conditions that dogged Nashville since Winter Storm Fern invaded Jan. 24. Reached on Jan. 29 at his home north of the city, Pardi was rationing generator power and keeping good spirits, despite adverse conditions with no end in sight.

"We got generators and everything," he said. "It's just 'we'll survive' mode, but we're surviving."

Music City was not the lone community overrun by Fern, but where northern cities were pummeled by snow, Nashville was hit hard by ice, which clung to the trees, creating glassy prisms on the landscape. But those prisms turned into prisons for much of the population — as the ice weighed on trees, branches snapped, damaging vehicles, knocking holes in roofs and downing power lines, in turn blocking roads and cutting off electricity.

More than 230,000 lost power, and as of noon on Jan. 30, more than 70,000 were still in the dark. A Nashville Electric Service map showed outages remaining across the city. Many music-related workers still lack power, while some others have power restored but are operating without internet.

Numerous managers, songwriters and publicists sought refuge in hotels. In one instance, songwriter **Bob Regan** ("Thinkin' About You," "Everytime I Cry") was among the temporary tenants who got a free concert when Warner Records Nashville act **The Creekers** — their recording session scrapped by the studio's loss of power — played an impromptu show in the Best Western Plus Music Row lobby.

Grand Ole Opry executive producer/senior vp **Dan Rogers** has stayed at the Opry House since the storm hit on Jan. 24. That night's show ran live on Opry platforms without an audience. The show reopens to the public Jan. 30 with tickets priced at \$10. Meanwhile, Rogers believes they succeeded in their goals to make the workplace almost residential.

"This does feel like home," he says. Although "we never meant it to feel like home for someone who was going to stay here for seven nights."

RADIO & RECORDS®

Big Loud hired VP of marketing **Jamie Younger**, the label announced on Jan. 29. She arrives from The Core, where she served as VP of artist development ... Concord promoted **Andy Serrao** to Concord Label Group chief creative officer from co-president ... **Ian Munsick** partnered with Triple Tigers, releasing music in conjunction with his newly formed label, West to the Rest. The first music under the agreement, "Geronimo," was released Jan. 30 ... Artist-writer **Sicily Rose** agreed to a recording deal with Off Road, founded by writer-producer **David Fanning** ("Cowgirl," "Tennessee Orange"). Rose issued a new single, "Annabella Mae," in conjunction with the Jan. 30 announcement ... Townsquare Media hired corporate counsel **Valerie Snow**, formerly senior corporate counsel for Kärcher North America ... **Garret Doll** joined **WOKQ** Portsmouth, N.H., as brand manager and morning host. He was previously **WKHK** Richmond, Va., PD/music director/afternoon host ... The Library of American Broadcasting Foundation tapped retired executive **Daniel Finn** as director of philanthropy and strategic partnerships. He was most recently employed as Beasley Media/New Jersey senior VP/market manager ... The Country Radio Seminar will un-

veil new research projects on each of its three days, March 18-20, at the Omni Nashville Hotel. NuVoodoo will unveil results from a 400-song auditorium music test on March 18, a Strategic Solutions Research perceptual study of country fans' relationship with radio gets screened on March 19, and a Country Music Association dive into teen engagement with music rolls out on March 20. Additionally, the seminar will explore three titles in its "Cycle of a Song" series, breaking down the creation and marketing of **Josh Ross**' "Single Again," **Chase Matthew**'s "Darlin'" and **Koe Wetzel**'s "High Road."

'ROUND THE ROW

Curb | Word Music Publishing made a trio of staff moves, promoting **Sarah Schumacher** to country publishing head of creative from senior creative director and lifting **Calista Miller** to country publishing creative director from creative coordinator. Additionally, **Zachary Anderson** took Miller's coordinator role after serving as a booker for The Listening Room ... The Kirby Organization welcomed booking agent **Chris Burke**, who previously held a similar role at Reliant Talent ... **Mollie Marshall** was promoted to WME Nashville tour marketing agent, one of seven staff members in four cities who were elevated to agent roles through the company's trainee program ... **Dolly Parton**'s Life of Many Colors Museum named three executives in anticipation of its planned opening in June. Executive director **Rebecca Seaver** previously established the Dolly Parton Archive; events & group sales manager **Jen Molyneux** segues from Scarlett Entertainment, where she was an account manager; and marketing operations coordinator **Shannon Carpenter** rolls into the post after a decade in media management, most recently as an independent contractor ... **Pam Schoenfeld** joined BMI as New York-based senior VP and chief legal officer, succeeding senior VP/senior legal advisor **Stuart Rosen** upon his planned retirement on June 30. Schoenfeld previously served as TouchTunes senior VP/general counsel ... Milestone Collective promoted **Maggie Coyle** to publicist from associate publicist ... **Miranda Lambert**'s existing songwriting catalog was acquired by Sony Music Publishing Nashville and Domain Capital Group. It includes a go-forward publishing deal with Lambert ... Prescription Songs partnered with 7Hills Music to sign Nashville-based artist-writer-producer **Seth Michael**, who's landed cuts with **Ashley Cooke**, **Alana Springsteen** and **Dylan Scott** ... Leo33 artist-writer **Jenna Paulette** signed a management agreement with The Erv Woolsey Company ahead of the Jan. 30 release of her album *Horseback (Deluxe)* ... The Mechanical Licensing Collective added Concord senior VP of copyright, royalties and licensing operations **Kelly Baden** to its operations advisory committee ... Rock Nashville, a 55-acre concert rehearsal and production facility, opened in Nashville with Soundcheck in place as an anchor tenant ... The eighth Live in the Vineyard Goes Country is slated for April 21-23 in California's Napa Valley with appearances by headliner **The Marcus King Band**, plus **Zach John King**, **Tiera Kennedy**, **Will Bundy**, **Lauren Watkins** and others ... Music industry mental wellness agency Backline launched a 24/7 crisis line, B-LINE, reachable via phone at 1-855-BLINE99 or via text at BLINE9 ... **Nancy Seltzer**, 79, died Jan. 28 in Los Angeles. The founder of her own PR agency, Nancy Seltzer & Associates, she represented **Garth Brooks** for more than two decades. During a career of nearly 50 years, she also handled **Whitney Houston** and a slew of actors, including **Nicole Kidman**, **Sean Connery** and **Robert Downey Jr.** ●



Curb | Word Music Publishing announced that it extended its agreement with songwriter **Rose Falcon** ("Friday Night") (left) on Jan. 22. She's joined by Curb | Word Country head of creative **Sarah Schumacher**.

Global Power Players

On March 7, *Billboard* will publish its annual Global Power Players Issue. This issue will profile leaders in the music industry outside the United States who are executives at record labels, music publishers, talent agencies and in live entertainment to recognize their achievements.

Advertise and congratulate this year's Global Power Players to reach an influential audience of decision-makers worldwide.

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billboard Country Airplay Index

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

20 CIGARETTES Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI (C.LaCorte, R.C.McGill, J.L.Miller, B.Pendergrass) **5**

A

AFTER MIDNIGHT W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Track & Feels Publishing Designee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vibez From Tree Vibez Music, ASCAP/Concord Alto CCL, ASCAP/Five Docks Down Music Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/T Tree Music, BMI (C.Brown, C.Crowder, T.R.Hubbard) **31**

AIN'T A BAD LIFE Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Be A Light Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain Tunes, ASCAP/Mark Trussell Pub Designee, ASCAP (Thomas Rhett, J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, B.Pendergrass, M.Trussell) **7**

ALL MY EXES lylas Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/These Are Pulse Songs, BMI/PASSTHEBEAT Publishing, BMI/Only Legends Music, BMI/Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Hoops Don't Lie Publishing, BMI/Modern Arts Songs, BMI/Music By Work Of Art, BMI (Lauren Alaina, J.A.Gut, B.C.Johnson, W.Phillips) **37**

AMEN Poorchoice Music Publishing, BMI/Songs Into Poems, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Crazy Baby Songs, BMI/Jordan Gray Publishing Designee, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/Essency Music Publishing, ASCAP/S2 Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Kevin Powers Publishing Designee, BMI/Baile's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI (C.O.Chubeze, J.B.DeFord, S.C.Cook, J.H.Foote, S.W.Ennis, J.Gray, K.J.Powers, N.Sastry) **6**

B

BAGGAGE Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Feel Your Way Through Publishing, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Self Made Entertainment, BMI/The Piano Room, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Vandeezy Songs, SESAC/Songs Of Rhinestone House Black, SESAC (K.Ballerini, J.J.Dillon, K.Fairchild, H.Lindsey, A.Vanderheyem) **33**

BEAUTIFUL THINGS Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Georgiamo, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Triple Rae Creative Inc, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Where I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP (M.Moroney, C.R.Harrington, J.J.Dillon, J.L.Alexander) **25**

BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Songs From The Penalty Box, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Max McNow Music, BMI/Carver Music Publishing, ASCAP/Tunes Of King Pen, BMI/Ready Set Publishing, BMI/Fugitive Songs Publishing, BMI (M.McNow, J.Kenney, A.A.Suppelsa, T.K.Dabbs) **10**

BOOTS OFF Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR/Songs Of CN, GMR (J.Pardi, W.McCubbin, L.Laird) **41**

BRUNETTE Concord Tunes, SESAC/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (C.LaCorte, R.C.McGill, J.L.Miller, B.Pendergrass) **24**

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) **42**

C

CHANGE MY MIND Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Flatland Boy Music, BMI/Hit Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI (R.Green, Erik Dylan, R.Montana) **22**

CHEVY SILVERADO Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sparko Phone Music, BMI/Gavin J. Lucas Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vacant Heart Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI (T.Beathard, J.Juber, G.J.Lucas, H.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **32**

CHOOISIN' TEXAS Langley Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Luke Dick Publishing Designee, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI/Bada Bing Bada Boom Publishing, BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI (E.Langley, C.L.Dick, M.Lambert, J.Taylor) **2**

D

DAYS LIKE THESE Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Tiltawhirl Music, BMI/Lucky Three Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Super LCS Publishing, BMI (L.Combs, B.Cobb, A.Ratiere) **11**

DEVIL AIN'T DONE Atlas Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Spirit II Nashville, ASCAP/SpiritVault Songs II, ASCAP/4Ever Songz, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/Warburger Publishing, BMI (S.Haywood, D.A.Garcia, G.Warburton) **54**

DREAM COME TRUE BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Redfeather Publishing, ASCAP/Razor And Tie Music Publishing, BMI/Tofer The Musical, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/This Is Chromatic Music, BMI/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP/WeisOwl, ASCAP (C.Pearce, T.Brown, L.Hungate, E.L.Weisband) **50**

E

EASY TO LOVE Hit Train Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/HALLPASS, ASCAP/Turntable Music Pub, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Rocky Creek James, ASCAP/Tape Room LLC, Series 1, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/PINB Publishing, ASCAP (D.Lynch, B.J.Johnson, J.R.Hall, H.Phelps, Z.Crowell) **45**

ENDS OF THE EARTH Ty Myers Publishing Designee, BMI (T.Myers) **15**

F

THE FALL Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI/Bobby Pinson Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Keep Choppin Publishing, BMI/Exit 183 Songs, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (B.Pinson, R.Fulcher, J.S.Stover) **13**

FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/FBRI Country Tunes, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Coreent Music, ASCAP/Nate Smith Music Publishing Company, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Track & Feels Publishing Designee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI (M.W.Hardy, Z.Aband, B.Bailey, C.Brown, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, N.Smith) **1**

FIREWORKS Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI/Bobby Pinson Music, BMI/Good Boy Gravy, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI/Eclipse One Music, BMI/Y'all Come Back Now, BMI/Taylor Goyette Entertainment, BMI (B.Baber, J.James, T.Goyette) **47**

G

GARY Poems On Junk Mail, SESAC/BMG Cicada, SESAC (S.L.Wilson Jr.) **55**

GOLDEN CHILD Anthem Entertainment B, SOCAN/Iron Songbird Publishing B, BMI/Jacoby Songs II, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing I, BMI/Sweet Baby RuRu Songs, BMI/World For Aaron Eshuis Concord Alto CCL, ASCAP (M.Patrick, J.Hyde, A.Eshuis) **18**

H

HATE HOW YOU LOOK Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Round Hill Verses Publishing, BMI (N.Sanato, C.McKenna, J.Farren, C.Yancey) **36**

HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH Game Rooster Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Felker) **48**

THE HELL YOU ARE Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Thirty Two Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/The Blocks Are Back Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Crazy Baby Songs, BMI/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Better Bad Songs, SESAC/Philippines 47 Songs, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/WeisOwl, ASCAP (A.Cooke, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, R.C.McGill, E.L.Weisband) **44**

HIGHS & LOWS Not Listed (Not Listed) **56**

HOLDIN' IT DOWN Not Listed (Not Listed) **59**

HOUSE AGAIN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway 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) **9**

HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irishsonmusic, BMI (K.M.Allison, J.Edwards, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan) **4**

I

I AIN'T COMING BACK Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bell Ear Publishing, ASCAP/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Universal Music Works, GMR/Posty Publishing, GMR/Etn 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) **14**

I DARE YOU Nick Jonas Publishing, BMI/PINZ Publishing House, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Seven Peaks Music, ASCAP/Seventeen Music, ASCAP (N.J.Jonas, Tommy English, S.Mooney, D.Whitmore, Jr.) **16**

IT WON'T BE LONG Big Machine, ASCAP/Liz Rose Music, LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Songs Of Wild Cat Well Music, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI (G.C.Birge, J.A.Fox, R.C.McGill, T.Anderson) **3**

I WISH YOU WOULD Tack Mack Tunes, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Concord Arch Songs, ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain Tunes, ASCAP/Boom Town Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Creative Pulse Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/Tompkins Family Vacation, ASCAP/1508 Creative Nation Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (M.E.Carpenter, J.Hutcherson, J.Moore, C.Tompkins) **52**

K

KEEPS ME SANE Anthems Of Platinum Grammer, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP/Copyright Control (C.T.L.Nance, D.Napier, B.McCollough) **60**

KID MYSELF Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (J.Morgan, T.R.Hubbard, J.M.Schmidt) **38**

KILLED THE MAN Sony Lakeview, SESAC/Riser House Tunes, SESAC/I Barely Even Know Er Music, BMI/International Dog Music, BMI/Downtown DMP Songs, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/LuVegas Publishing, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI (M.D.Whitworth, J.D.Conrad, T.Cartwright, C.B.Baldwin) **49**

L

LONG LIVE COUNTRY Shane Proffitt Publishing Designee, BMI/Matt Rogers Publishing Designee, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI (S.Proffitt, M.Rogers, L.Rimes) **39**

M

MAKE A LIAR Little Louder Songs, BMI/Emileon Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI (J.Dean, C.L.Dick, R.Montana) **51**

MAKING GOOD TIME WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Bird And Bean Music, ASCAP/Trevor's Advocate Publishing, ASCAP/Thelwede Woodwood, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Turs And Chorus, ASCAP/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Smackshot Music, BMI/Katie In Paris, BMI/Music Of CTM Outlander Music LP, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/South Of CT Publishing, BMI/Music Of Blackheart, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP (M.T.Ramsey, T.J.Rosen, B.F.Tursi, R.Copperman, Ross Ellis) **23**

ME & A BEER Anthem Red Vinyl Music, BMI/Buckkilla Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Firebird Country Tunes, BMI/Oakdale Market Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP (C.Janson, T.Phillips, A.G.Gorley, A.Sheridan) **20**

N

NEVER CALL AGAIN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Good Cook Tunes, BMI/World For Colton Venner, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Tea Farm Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Bada Bing Bada Boom Publishing, BMI (G.Adcock, J.Taylor, C.Venner, J.Rauton) **34**

NEVER COMIN' BACK ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Invoked Lamb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Lyric Music Publishing, GMR/CN Songs From 1508, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR (C.Cordero, L.Laird, A.Ratiere) **57**

R

REBEL Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Adam Sandler, ASCAP/Laguna Madre Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (D.Baldrige, A.Sanders) **58**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Correy Kent Music, BMI/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Lightning Street Publishing, BMI/Melodies Of CTM Outlander, SESAC/Michael Tyler Music, SESAC/MT ROOM, SESAC/Young Guns Tunes, SESAC (Correy Kent, T.Archer, A.Goodloe, M.Tyler) **28**

S

SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sullivan S Guns Music, BMI (L.Combs, R.Montana, J.D.Singletor) **26**

A SONG TO SING Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/I Wrote These Songs, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/NaynerPuddinPie Publishing, SESAC/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For The Munch Music, BMI (M.Lambert, C.Stapleton, J.V.Frasure, J.Fleenor) **17**

SOUTH OF SANITY Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Major Bob Productions, BMI/Too Broke To Quit Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Doan What I Do, BMI/Getyasome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nesler) **35**

STRAIGHT FOR THE HEART Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Lilyridge Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/Karley Scott Collins Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Susan Perb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Mod Junkie, BMI (J.Robbins, K.S.Collins, Sasha Alex Sloan) **43**

T

TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs By Slip, ASCAP/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/M & M College Fund, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI (B.Hayslip, S.Mosley, J.Walker) **27**

TIME'S TICKING Double Barrel Ace Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Music Of The Corn, ASCAP/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Tunes From The Red White And Blue School, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP (L.Moore, W.L.Bundy, R.Montana, J.S.Stover) **8**

TRAVELIN' SOLDIER Bruce Robinson Music, BMI/Tiltawhirl Music, BMI (B.Robson) **40**

TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Jordan Davis Music, ASCAP/Neon Cross Music, BMI/Black Jeans Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/MV2 Music, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Jake Mitchell Publishing Designee, BMI (J.Davis, D.Dawson, J.Mitchell, J.Thompson) **19**

W

WATER AT A WEDDING Relative Red Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Supergig Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI (G.Egan, M.Dragstrem, R.C.McGill) **46**

WEAK WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Ohiofrick Music, ASCAP/BMG Silver Songs, SESAC/Smoke Miller Music, SESAC/Sonic Style Music, SESAC/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/742 Sage Songs, BMI/4WarrensMusic, BMI (P.Cooper, L.Miller, B.Warren, B.D.Warren) **29**

WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb Songs, ASCAP/Logan Robinson Publishing Designee, NS/Ricky Rowton Publishing Designee, NS/Robbie Gatlin Publishing Designee, NS (D.Scott, L.Robinson, R.Rowton, R.Gatlin) **12**

WISH YOU WELL Big Music Machine, BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/Warburger Publishing, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI (G.Warburton, J.J.Dillon, B.Pendergrass, C.LaCorte) **21**

WORTH YOUR WILD Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Home Team Music, BMI/Tunes Of TrailerParker, BMI/Track & Feels Publishing Designee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC (R.Dickerson, P.Welling, C.Brown) **53**

WRONG HEARTS BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Webslinger Publishing, BMI/Lovelegend Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Supergig Music, ASCAP/Drag Drag Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP (P.C.Brust, C.Lucas, M.Dragstrem, J.Thompson) **30**

DANCE POWER PLAYERS



On March 7, *Billboard* will reveal a list of the most influential dance/electronic music executives and their most significant recent accomplishments.

Advertise and congratulate these power players to align your company with this lucrative market segment that fuels popular culture.

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CODA

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

30 Years Ago When Shania Twain’s ‘I’m Outta Here!’ Locked Into Place At No. 1

In 1996, the track became the second chart-topper from *The Woman in Me*

A woman can be simultaneously feminine and firm. And sound catchy as hell, too.

That was the inherent message in **Shania Twain**’s “(If You’re Not in It for Love) I’m Outta Here!” as it ascended to No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Hot Country Songs chart dated Feb. 3, 1996, for a two-week stay. It followed “Any Man of Mine” as the second of four chart-topping singles from her album *The Woman in Me*, which launched the Canadian vocalist to stardom.

The song’s plot placed a woman at a barstool fending off aggressive advances from an overconfident lounge lizard in a manner that turned country music on its head. Mercury publicists, when they mailed album advances to reviewers, warned that they would either “love it or hate it.” The project — produced by **Robert John “Mutt” Lange**, who co-wrote “Outta Here!” with Twain — helped redefine the genre, mixing rock backbeats and guitars with hard fiddles and Dobro. And Lange’s supporting harmony sounded much like **Dwight Yoakam**.

The Woman in Me has been certified 12-times platinum by the RIAA.

—TOM ROLAND

Shania Twain during a soundcheck for her appearance on CBS’ *Late Show With David Letterman* Feb. 26, 1996, in New York.



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WOMEN IN MUSIC

SPECIAL ISSUE

On April 18, *Billboard* will publish its highly anticipated Women in Music special issue, featuring top women in the music business who are making their mark across top industry sectors.

Coinciding with this issue will be the Women in Music awards ceremony on April 29 at Hollywood Palladium. The event will bring together music's most prominent women artists and the industry's top women business executives to recognize and celebrate their achievements.

Take this opportunity to congratulate the most powerful and talented women in music and wish them continued success.



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