

billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Super Bowl Halftime Show Risks Becoming A Turning Point In Public Views Of Country Music

The country music industry has made greater effort in recent years to understand—and court—potential minority consumers.

In that context, the decision by a handful of country artists to perform during Turning Point USA's "All-American Halftime Show," an alternative to the NFL's official Super Bowl halftime entertainment, threatens to undermine the country industry's efforts to widen its appeal.

TPUSA chairwoman/CEO **Erika Kirk** announced plans to hold the show specifically after **Bad Bunny**—a bilingual superstar from Puerto Rico, an American territory—was announced as the Super Bowl's halftime headliner. Over the ensuing months, TPUSA lined up **Kid Rock**, **Brantley Gil-**

bert, **Lee Brice** and **Gabby Barrett** for its counter-programming. Kirk has subsequently referred to her organization's event as a "pro-American" alternative, a characterization that implies Bad Bunny is somehow un-American.

"This is one of the most divisive events that I can think of," says MTSU's Scott Borchetta College of Media and Entertainment dean **Beverly Keel**. "It's clear what they're doing. It is the white alternative to an American artist of Puerto Rican descent, so they're not vague in their messaging, the event programmers."

It's not clear if the three country artists on the bill fully understood the impact of their decision to perform. The participation of Kid Rock, who is a multi-genre artist with a penchant for provocation, seems on point for his brand. The country acts

declined to comment for this story. Brice, however, spoke to Fox News, saying the event provided an opportunity to "be a part of something that I believe in."

He specifically cited the memory of TPUSA founder **Charlie Kirk**, who was killed in September during a public event at Utah Valley University in Orem.

"Charlie Kirk wanted everybody to have a microphone," Brice said, calling the alternative halftime show "a celebration of what he believed in and what he brought to the table. And I'm just proud, you know? I'm proud to be an American, and I'm excited. I'm a musician. I get to go play music."

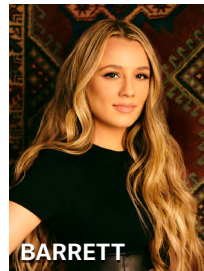
Kirk, however, was more controversial than that characterization suggests. He was generally edited in conservative media in ways that made him an icon for freedom of speech, but some of his speech, when presented in different circumstances on other platforms, created critics who viewed him as racist, homophobic and misogynistic.

The artists performing on the "All-American Halftime Show" have every right to be there, but fears exist that they will be seen less as individual artists by some consumers than as a representation of country music. If those consumers see Kirk in the harsher framework and associate him with the whole of country, it could damage the genre overall.

"An artist has a right to do whatever they want to, as long as they understand the pros and cons and the consequences that



GILBERT



BARRETT



BRICE

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GILBERT: ALEXA CAMPBELL; BARRETT: ROBBY KLEIN; BRICE: CHASE LAUER

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come with that,” says Triple 8 Management artist manager **Scott Stem**. “My concern on this one is did they [know the direction] that Turning Point was going to take, as far as saying it’s a ‘pro-American’ thing when Turning Point is trying to turn it as an anti-Bad Bunny thing. Bad Bunny is most definitely American. He’s Puerto Rican.”

Several other country acts were approached about participating in the Turning Point event, notes F2 Entertainment president/CEO **Fletcher Foster**, and they balked at the opportunity, presumably believing the likely controversy outweighed the benefit of performing on national TV. Every artist has to make decisions about their participation based on their own circumstances. They are not required, said several people interviewed for this story, to factor in the impact of their decisions on the industry overall.

“Hopefully, most artists know who their base is already,” Foster says. “Whether it be extreme left, extreme right, right in the middle, you know, are they happy with that? Or do they want to grow it? I think that’s a lot of the questions. Are they fine with potentially alienating another audience?”

In the current cultural atmosphere, it is difficult to avoid those issues without appearing wishy-washy. The political parties are extremely bifurcated, and art reflects the society in which it’s created.

“If music is going to be honest and authentic, then in a polarized society, it’s gonna go left [or] right,” suggests *Culture at Large* podcaster **Marcus K. Dowling**. “There’s no way you could say, ‘Okay, I’m making a song that occupies the middle.’”

Country music executives are working to make the genre an inclusive, big-tent format, and while that specifically means outreach to progressive-minded fans and/or non-white demographics, that also means that the industry should not knock the conservative voices in its midst.

“You can’t exclude somebody from that tent,” Dowling says. “Now, they could all stand in a corner of the tent, of course, because it’s the biggest tent. That’s the issue. I think that if you are a liberal-minded, non-conservative country music fan, when you say it’s the biggest tent, it’s the most inclusive it’s ever been. Inclusivity works both ways.”

Gilbert posted a message on Instagram on Feb. 6 that sought to separate his motivations from the hostility that birthed the event.

“I respect that some people may see this differently, but I’m not playing this show to be divisive,” he said. “I was offered this opportunity and imagined my kids watching their daddy perform at halftime during the biggest game in American football.”

“The way I treat people isn’t conditional based on what our differences may be,” he added. “I believe ‘united we stand, divided we fall,’ and my prayer for our country is that we stand united.”

Unfortunately, country music has a history that is less than welcoming. Until 2008, **Charley Pride** was the only Black artist to become a consistent hitmaker, and even then, **Darius Rucker** faced pushback from skeptical gatekeepers and fielded racist social media commentary, too. He succeeded despite those voices, and since then, country’s mainstream has also opened to **Kane Brown**, **BRELAND**, **Jimmie Allen** (whose momentum tanked after he was sued for sexual abuse), **Blanco Brown** and **Shaboozey**, who has notched two No. 1 singles on *Billboard*’s Country Airplay. Shaboozey gave an emotional speech after winning a Grammy during the pre-show ceremony on Feb. 1, noting the sacrifices made by his mother, a recently-retired Nigerian immigrant who worked as a registered nurse in a hospital psychiatric ward while raising her children.

He dedicated his win to immigrants: “Thank you for bringing your culture, your music, your stories and your traditions here. You give America color.”

Reflecting the whole of America, numerous firms and organizations — including the Country Music Association and the Academy of Country Music — have developed programs in recent years to heighten opportunities for women, LGBTQ+ creators, and artists and executives of color. The fear surrounding the “All-American Halftime Show” is that the baggage that many associate with Turning Point might taint perceptions of country’s willingness to welcome everyone into its tent. One hope that’s been expressed repeatedly is that fans associate the event with Kid Rock as the headliner and are able to separate country from the TPUSA brand.

“I firmly believe that everybody loves a country music song, even if they don’t always want to admit it,” Stem says. “And I think that if you’re interested in exploring the genre, you’re going to explore it. The great thing about country music is it’s wide, and there’s a huge diversity there. There’s conservative artists and there’s liberal artists, and there’s songs for everybody all the way between.”

The challenge for the genre is to make that message clear, even when events or individual artists’ partnerships feed some of its stereotypical narratives. ●



Ingrid Andress (left) and Ashley McBryde participated Feb. 4 when Warner Records Nashville hosted an Audacy Summit at its Music Row offices. With them: Audacy VP of programming/country format captain Tim Roberts.



Tenille Arts visited with The Big 615 host Storme Warren on Jan. 29 in promotion of her new single, “Don’t Ruin Flowers.”



Sierra Hull (left) visited with Joni Mitchell during the Premiere Ceremony at the 68th annual Grammy Awards Feb. 1 in Los Angeles.

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ON THE CHARTS **RUSS PENUELL** rpenuell@billboard.com

Langley's 'Texas' Fast-Tracks To No. 1

Ella Langley's "Choosin' Texas" (SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers) steps to No. 1 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart (dated Feb. 14). The track drew 29.7 million audience impressions (up 4%) Jan. 30-Feb. 5, according to Luminate.

Notably, the average trip to the top of Country Airplay in the last 10 years has taken 30 weeks; "Choosin' Texas" needed just 16, completing the quickest journey for a song by a woman and no co-billed acts since two **Carrie Underwood** tracks in 2016 also led in their 16th weeks: "Church Bells" and "Heartbeat."

Langley earns her third Country Airplay leader and first on her own, following last year's "Don't Mind If I Do" and 2024's "You Look Like You Love Me," both with **Riley Green**. Langley has placed six titles on the list, including 2025's "Weren't for the Wind," which peaked at No. 2.

But the story extends well beyond Country Airplay. "Choosin' Texas" has continued to build across metrics, leading *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart for 10 weeks after reaching No. 1 just six weeks — well ahead of the 10-year average of 15 — and moving into territory rarely occupied by solo women. An 11th week in the lead there would place Langley alongside **Gabby Barrett** ("The Good Ones," 2021) and **Kelsea Ballerini** ("Peter Pan," 2016) as the only women with no other credited acts to lead both charts at the same time since the surveys have coexisted (dating to October 2012). (The Feb. 14-dated Hot Country Songs chart will be released Monday, Feb. 9.)

Moreover, that momentum feeds into a broader picture. "Choosin' Texas" sits one position shy of the summit on the all-genre *Billboard* Hot 100, positioning Langley in especially rare company should it reach No. 1.

HARDY PARTY All-star team-up "McArthur," from **HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen** and **Tim McGraw** (Mercury/Big Loud), bows at No. 28 (5.7 million) on Country Airplay. Released Jan. 30, the generation-spanning story song marks **HARDY's** highest debut among 10 charted titles. 🗘



CAYLEE ROBILARD

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	+6.753
MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	+5.693
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+3.614
RIDE, RIDE, RIDE RECORDS/RECORDS Nashville	George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	+2.390
HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+1.708
20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.572
ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	+1.546
BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+1.529
AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	+1.347
BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	+1.312

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	+1999
MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	+1193
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+1020
RIDE, RIDE, RIDE RECORDS/RECORDS Nashville	George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	+596
20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+486
AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	+457
GOLDEN CHILD Riser House	Meghan Patrick	+446
BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+362
CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+336
HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+324

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	DARLIN' Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	17.175
2	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	16.507
3	COWGIRL Stoney Creek	Parmalee	15.815
4	I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	14.514
5	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	12.009
6	JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	10.579
7	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	10.316
8	6 MONTHS LATER Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	9.916
9	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	9.590
10	STAY COUNTRY OR DIE TRYIN' Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	9.420



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 5, 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	26	DIED AND GONE COUNTRY (Independent) ★★1 Week at 1★	Curtis Grimes	1730	70	11	12	27	THE OLDER I GET (MORE COUNTRY I'M GETTING TO BE) (Fool Hearted)	Jon Wolfe	1349	41
2	4	19	TURQUOISE AND SILVER (Get Joe)	Billie Jo Jones	1702	129	12	14	12	STEADY (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1298	50
3	3	16	FLYIN' (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	Wade Bowen	1669	93	13	13	19	HONKY TONK HEART (Independent)	David Lewis feat. Randall King	1266	-29
4	6	18	ROUGH SPOT (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1606	67	14	16	20	IS THIS THING WORKIN' (Tommy Jackson/Thirty Tigers)	Randy Rogers Band feat. Parker McCollum	1203	34
5	10	6	FORT WORTH (Independent)	Kylie Frey feat. Randall King	1569	182	15	1	17	PONTIAC (SO TELL ME MOMMA) (Aduh/New Revolution)	Aaron Watson	1172	-655
6	5	25	I WAS WRONG (Independent)	Mike Ryan	1564	5	16	18	17	RATHER BE ALONE (Broken Angel)	Love & Chaos	1132	37
7	7	15	SOUTHERN KING (CDX)	Sandee June	1538	85	17	17	22	.30-30 (Independent)	Deryl Dodd	1105	4
8	8	20	WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE (Bill Grease Rec)	William Clark Green	1502	63	18	19	20	WHITE DRESS DIRECTION (Write On)	Adysen Malek	1087	59
9	9	22	TEXAS STRONG (Independent)	Aaron Loy	1467	31	19	23	4	LIFE STILL HAPPENS (Weathers Legacy Music/Sea Gayle Music)	Josh Weathers	1027	192
10	11	20	PRETTY WOMAN OF MINE (Independent)	Lee Thomas	1364	2	20	20	23	HEARTBREAK QUEEN (Fame Records)	Kensie Coppin	986	26

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

billboard Country 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	2	16	CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers ★★ No. 1 (1 Week) ★★	Ella Langley	29.719	+1.139	7849	283	1
2	4	21	HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	27.688	+1.708	7585	324	2
3	5	18	20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	27.315	+1.572	7443	486	4
4	6	31	AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	26.806	+1.347	7275	457	5
5	1	43	FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	HARDY	24.987	-6.631	6626	-2071	6
6	9	46	HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★	Hudson Westbrook	24.557	+6.753	7576	1999	3
7	3	54	IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	21.797	-4.823	5993	-1492	7
8	7	21	AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	20.042	+0.833	5483	239	8
9	8	59	TIME'S TICKING Valory	Justin Moore	18.861	+0.484	5167	169	9
10	10	52	BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	16.785	+1.312	4787	233	10
11	11	13	DAYS LIKE THESE Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	15.978	+0.776	4568	247	11
12	12	41	WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb	Dylan Scott	15.578	+0.825	4472	188	12
13	13	41	THE FALL CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	13.922	-0.095	3923	12	13
14	15	49	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	13.630	+1.547	3549	179	15
15	14	42	I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Post Malone	12.336	-0.039	3260	52	16
16	16	53	I DARE YOU Big Machine	Rascal Flatts & Jonas Brothers	11.872	-0.138	3921	-7	14
17	18	61	GOLDEN CHILD Riser House	Meghan Patrick	9.830	+1.082	3082	446	17
18	26	4	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	9.276	+3.614	2525	1020	22
19	19	15	TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	9.216	+0.581	3018	71	18
20	17	30	A SONG TO SING Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert & Chris Stapleton	8.934	+0.145	2823	-31	21
21	20	36	ME & A BEER Harpeth 60	Chris Janson	8.471	+0.621	2825	136	20
22	21	48	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	8.232	+0.708	2833	217	19
23	24	8	BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	7.575	+1.529	2198	362	26
24	22	6	CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	7.504	+0.987	2469	336	23
25	25	15	BEAUTIFUL THINGS Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	6.475	+0.734	2245	194	25
26	23	26	MAKING GOOD TIME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Old Dominion	6.288	+0.016	2166	-18	27
27	28	9	ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville/SMN	Corey Kent & Koe Wetzel	5.732	+0.404	2048	102	29
28	NEW		MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud ★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker ★★	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	5.710	+5.693	1198	1193	39
29	27	44	TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Boss Moves/Black River	Chris Young	5.562	+0.145	2263	54	24
30	29	33	WEAK Valory	Preston Cooper	5.528	+0.294	2076	2	28

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.

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	32	17	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	5.137	+0.662	1981	252	30
32	31	12	AFTER MIDNIGHT RCA Nashville/SMN	Nate Smith & Tyler Hubbard	5.032	+0.473	1530	136	34
33	33	37	BAGGAGE Black River	Kelsea Ballerini	4.655	+0.305	1959	10	31
34	30	34	WRONG HEARTS BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	4.503	-0.195	1736	-28	32
35	35	8	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33	Zach Top	4.384	+0.854	1228	157	37
36	34	28	NEVER CALL AGAIN Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Gavin Adcock	3.994	+0.160	1632	135	33
37	38	31	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	3.196	+0.308	1346	85	35
38	37	22	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	3.047	+0.134	1212	64	38
39	36	20	HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	3.007	+0.085	1291	17	36
40	NEW		RIDE, RIDE, RIDE RECORDS/RECORDS Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	2.390	+2.390	596	596	56
41	41	3	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Jon Pardi	1.971	+0.258	786	128	46
42	39	19	LONG LIVE COUNTRY Triple Tigers	Shane Profitt	1.939	-0.058	965	-37	43
43	42	38	BURNED DOWN HEAVEN Chase McDaniel/Big Machine	Chase McDaniel	1.763	+0.072	979	60	42
44	45	30	EASY TO LOVE Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch	1.749	+0.157	1062	56	40
45	40	12	TRAVELIN' SOLDIER CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	1.732	-0.039	325	-19	-
46	44	15	THE HELL YOU ARE Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	1.636	+0.005	780	-7	47
47	47	16	FIREWORKS Curb	Kelsey Hart	1.592	+0.132	1031	21	41
48	43	12	STRAIGHT FOR THE HEART Alexandra Kay/Wheelhouse	Alexandra Kay	1.590	-0.086	953	10	44
49	46	7	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greytan James	1.570	+0.055	729	6	48
50	51	3	MAKE A LIAR Big Machine	Jackson Dean	1.431	+0.317	647	136	51
51	48	21	HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH Bossier City/Thirty Tigers/Akando	Tumpike Troubadours	1.413	+0.009	479	23	59
52	57	2	NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	1.288	+0.523	359	114	-
53	50	11	DREAM COME TRUE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	1.280	+0.003	913	39	45
54	49	13	KILLED THE MAN Curb	Lee Brice	1.276	-0.096	722	-37	49
55	54	9	DEVIL AIN'T DONE Stoney Creek	Atlas	1.149	+0.160	636	16	52
56	53	6	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.058	+0.024	676	-21	50
57	55	2	GARY Mercury/Big Loud	Stephen Wilson Jr.	0.986	+0.156	605	113	54
58	59	2	HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	0.838	+0.185	626	132	53
59	56	4	HIGHS & LOWS Quartz Hill	Matt Cooper	0.790	-0.009	597	-9	55
60	NEW		WHEN A COWBOY PRAYS Brandon Lake/Essential/SMN	Brandon Lake X Cody Johnson	0.705	+0.359	198	82	-



Kameron Marlowe performed Feb. 4 for a WIRK West Palm Beach, Fla., Secret Session concert at the Tin Roof in Del Ray. From left: WIRK midday host Moriah Daniels, Marlowe, WIRK morning talent Chelsea Taylor, WIRK music director Nick Rivers and RCA Nashville Southeast regional promotion manager Ali O'Connell.



Rissi Palmer and Amy Grant were among the panelists for "Opry 100: A Century of the Grand Ole Opry," a Jan. 15 session during the Your Roots are Showing Music Conference in Belfast, Ireland. From left: Belfast Lord Mayor Councillor Tracy Kelly, Palmer, Grant, 100 Years of Grand Ole Opry author Craig Shelburne and Fisher Entertainment Consulting founder Pete Fisher.

COLIN GILLEN

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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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Artist-writer Sicily Rose signed with Orr Road Records in a recording deal announced Jan. 30. From left: Off Road president David Fanning, Rose and Off Road senior VP of marketing & promotion Jamie Graves.

THE HALL YOU SAY?

Four iconic country artists were named within the last week as April honorees in two separate museum awards events.

Late performers **Toby Keith** and **Kenny Rogers** will be recognized by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City during the facility's 65th annual awards on April 11. The announcement came Feb. 3.

Three days later, the Musicians Hall of Fame in Nashville tabbed **Dolly Parton** and **Keith Urban** among eight new additions to its ranks; their entry takes place April 28 at the Hall of Fame in Municipal Auditorium.

Rogers' imagery around his song "The Gambler" and related movies employed western themes, making him a logical selection for the Oklahoma City museum's Hall of Great Western Performers. Rogers will be inducted into the Hall alongside actor **Ed Harris**. Keith will receive a special directors' award during the same ceremony, which will also recognize former secretary of state **Rex Tillerson** among the event's seven total honorees.

Parton and Urban join the Musicians Hall among a slate of musicians across multiple genres, including Nashville-born **Dann Huff**, who worked as a session guitarist for the likes of **Michael Jackson** and **Mariah Carey** on his way to becoming a producer for such acts as **Kane Brown** and **Rascal Flatts**.

The rest of the Musicians class includes **George Thorogood & the Destroyers**, producer **John Boylan** (**Johnny Lee**, **The Charlie Daniels Band**), bassist **Leland Sklar**, **Michael McDonald** and late keyboard player **Nicky Hopkins**.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Quartz Hill Music Group's sister gospel publishing company, North Chapel Music, established a subsidiary label, North Chapel Records. Artist-writer **Nathan Woodard** is the first signee. Founder **Benny Brown** will serve as the record company's president with North Chapel Music senior creative director **Wendy Buckner** adding label VP stripes ... **Sommer Frisk** joined Connoisseur Media/Palm Springs, Calif., as market manager. The eight-station cluster includes country **KDES**. She also takes on regional manager roles for Salt Lake City and Alaska, where the country outlets include **KBRJ** and **KAYO** Anchorage. Frisk was previously Cumulus/Oxnard-Ventura, Calif., VP/market manager, a job that included oversight of country **KHAY** ... Connoisseur hired **Deidra Lieberman** as West Coast regional manager of national sales. She spent three years as the principal of her own San Francisco-based DLSF Consulting. In addition to two stations in Anchorage, country properties in her purview include **KUPL** Portland, Ore.; and **KBAY** San Jose ... **Kevin LeGrett** started Feb. 2 as Beasley Media Group chief business officer. He was most recently iHeartSports president ... **Matt Ginn** joined iHeartMedia as Community Markets division president, RadioInk.com reported. He was previously TEGNA head of sales enablement and business development ... Seven Mountains Media installed **Nancy Ryan** and **Newman** as the morning show at **WFGE** State College, Pa., according to RadioInsight.com. It represents the third station in the chain to use the duo in the wake-up shift; the pair is already

heard on **WFVY** Lebanon, Pa.; and **WPIG** Olean, N.Y. ... **Buddy Logan** ended his tenure as **KNUE** Tyler, Texas, afternoon personality and syndicated *Radio Texas Live* host after 15 years, according to RadioInsight.com ... **Luke Bryan** joined the lineup for the iHeartCountry Festival May 2 at the Moody Center in Austin, Texas ... Country Radio Seminar added a March 17 panel lineup, "The Radio Station of the Future: CRS Pre-Show Seminar," to its original three-day run. Radio Vendor Alliance senior strategic advisor **Mike McVay** and Tracy Johnson Media Group president **Tracy Johnson** will moderate three panels from 1:45-5:00 p.m. with an eye on what's ahead for broadcasters.

'ROUND THE ROW

The Jonas Group hired **Abby Lin** as global head of sync. She will continue to operate out of Los Angeles, where she was previously employed as Sony Music VP of film & TV sync licensing ... PLA Media added Texas artist-writer **Wes McClelland** to its PR roster ... SOURCE Nashville unveiled its new officers, including president **Mallory Mason Pascal** (Oak Haus), VP **Michelle Goble** (ESQ Artist Management), secretary **Kasey Cleckler** (Cape & Anchor) and treasurer **Beth Tyson** (FBMM). The board welcomes 23 new members, including **Alyson Stokes** (Opry Entertainment Group), **Lisa Smoot** (Big Loud) and **Nicolette McCann** (Red Light Management). Go [here](#) for the full list ... Dobro player **Jerry Douglas** will be interviewed publicly as the next installment of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's Nashville Cats musician series on March 7 ... The Grand Ole Opry partnered with Martin Guitar and Gruhn Guitars founder **George Gruhn** to create a limited-edition Martin HD-28 Grand Ole Opry 100th anniversary guitar. **Vince Gill** was the first to perform with the model during the Opry's history Nov. 28 broadcast ... Nashville's Two Rivers Mansion will hold a "Minnie at the Mansion" event on Feb. 22 featuring music, plus a presentation and Q&A featuring **Mary Ellen Pethel** and **Don Cusic**, co-authors of *Howdy! The Minnie Pearl Story* ... *Dolly Parton's Threads: My Songs in Symphony* was booked for seven weeks with the Nashville Symphony at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center. The ensemble will perform orchestral arrangements of her music from June 16 through July 31 ... Leadership Music is accepting applications for its Class of 2027 [here](#) through Feb. 27 ... Songwriter **Darrell Scott** ("It's a Great Day to be Alive," "Born to Fly") is offering a Songfood Songwriting Intensive Workshop April 13-16 in Nashville. Go [here](#) for more info ... The annual Sunday Mornin' Country event, a closing-day tradition adjacent to CMA Fest, takes place June 7 at the Grand Ole Opry House with **Mandy Barnett**, **John Berry** and Country Music Hall of Fame member **Charlie McCoy** ... **Vince Gill**, **John Oates** and **Suzy Bogguss** headline the annual For Pete's Sake concert Feb. 15 at Nashville's City Winery, with proceeds benefiting The Pete Huttlinger Fund for Adult Congenital Cardiac Research at Vanderbilt University Medical Center ... Artist-musician **Don Adams**, 85, died Feb. 1, *Parade* reported. The Ohio-born player landed five songs on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs from 1967-1974, and played in the road bands of **Johnny Paycheck** and **George Jones**. ●



The Society of Leaders in Development (SOLID) unveiled its new board on Feb. 4. From left: treasurer **Eunice Hernandez** (Studio Bank), secretary **Savannah Alday** (Wasserman), president **Alannah Schwartz** (Endurance Music Group) and VP **Nina Teapot Owens** (The Teapot Legacy).

Global Power Players

On March 7, *Billboard* will publish its annual Global Power Players Issue. This issue will profile leaders in the music industry from the United States and international 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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI (C.LaCorte, R.C.McGill, J.L.Miller, B.Pendergrass) **3**

A

AFTER MIDNIGHT W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Track & Feels Publishing Desinee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vibez From Two Vibez Music, ASCAP/Concord Alto CCL, ASCAP/Five Docks Down Music Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/T Tree Music, BMI (C.Brown, C.Crowder, T.R.Hubbard) **32**

AIN'T A BAD LIFE Warner-Tamerlane 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/Poppo's Picks, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain Tunes, ASCAP/Mark Trussell Pub Desinee, ASCAP (Thomas Rhett, J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, B.Pendergrass, M.Trussell) **8**

ALL MY EXES lylas Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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/Hoops Don't Lie Publishing, BMI/Modern Arts Songs, BMI/Music By Work Of Art, BMI (Lauren Alaina, J.A.Gutch, B.C.Johnson, W.Philips) **38**

AMEN Poorchoice Music Publishing, BMI/Songs Into Poems, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Crazy Baby Songs, BMI/Jordan Gray Publishing Desinee, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/Essancy Music Publishing, ASCAP/S2 Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Kevin Powers Publishing Desinee, BMI/Balee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sony Tunes LLC, BMI/Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI (C.O.Chibweze, J.B.DeFord, S.C.Cook, J.H.Foote, S.W.Ennis, J.Gray, K.J.Powers, N.Sastry) **4**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Self Made Entertainment, BMI/The Piano Room, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Vandeezy Songs, SESAC/Songs Of Rhythm House Black, SESAC (K.Ballerini, J.J.Dillon, K.Fairchild, L.Hindsey, 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.Alexander) **25**

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

BOOTS OFF Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (C.LaCorte, R.C.McGill, J.L.Miller, B.Pendergrass) **23**

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.Danielle, J.M.Nite, L.Rimes) **43**

C

CHANGE MY MIND Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Fatland Boy Music, BMI/Hit Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI (R.Green, Erik Dylan, R.Montana) **24**

CHEVY SILVERADO Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs LLC, BMI/Sparko Phone Music, BMI/Gavin J. Lucas Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vacant Heart Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI (T.Beathard, J.Juber, G.J.Lucas, H.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **31**

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

D

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

DEVIL AIN'T DONE Atlas Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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/Warbanger Publishing, BMI (S.Haywood, D.A.Garcia, G.Warburton) **55**

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) **53**

E

EASY TO LOVE Hit Train Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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) **44**

ENDS OF THE EARTH Ty Myers Publishing Desinee, BMI (T.Myers) **14**

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-Tamerlane 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/Poppo's Picks, ASCAP/Coerent Music, ASCAP/Nate Smith Music Publishing Company, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Track & Feels Publishing Desinee, 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) **5**

FIREWORKS Sea Gayle Ale House Music, BMI/Bobby Pinson Music, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Sony Country, 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.) **57**

GOLDEN CHILD Anthem Entertainment B, SOCAN/Iron Songbird Publishing B, BMI/Jackboys 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) **17**

H

HATE HOW YOU LOOK Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Round Hill Verses Publishing, BMI (N.Sahato, C.McKenna, J.Farren, C.Yancey) **39**

HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH Game Rooster Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Felker) **51**

THE HELL YOU ARE Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/12/26 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/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/WeisOwl, ASCAP (A.Cooke, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, R.C.McGill, E.L.Weisband) **46**

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HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/The Big One, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Reed Up Publishing, BMI/Aaron Presley Beachum Publishing Desinee, BMI/Evan Christian Mayo Publishing Desinee, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (Chase Matthew, E.Escue, A.Maxwell, Presley Aaron, E.C.Mayo, J.Centers) **58**

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.Alley) **6**

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) **2**

I

I AIN'T COMING BACK Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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 Charlie, BMI (M.C.Wallen, L.B.Bell, M.W.Hardy, A.R.Post, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **15**

I DARE YOU Nick Jonas Publishing, BMI/PWZ Publishing House, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Seven Peaks Music, ASCAP/8Sixteen 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-Tamerlane 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) **7**

K

KID MYSELF Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (J.Morgan, T.R.Hubbard, J.M.Schmidt) **37**

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/LuVeGus Publishing, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI (M.D.Whitworth, J.D.Conrad, T.Catwright, C.B.Baldwin) **54**

L

LONG LIVE COUNTRY Shane Proffitt Publishing Desinee, BMI/Matt Rogers Publishing Desinee, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI (S.Proffitt, M.Rogers, L.Rimes) **42**

M

MAKE A LIAR Little Louder Songs, BMI/Emileon Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI (J.Dean, C.L.Dick, R.Montana) **50**

MAKING GOOD TIME WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Bird And Bean Music, ASCAP/Trevor's Advocate Publishing, ASCAP/12w66 Dogwood, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Turs And Chorus, ASCAP/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Smackshot Music, BMI/Katie In Paris, BMI/Music Of CIM Outtaquater Music LP, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/South Of CT Publishing, BMI/Music Of Blackheart, BMI/Concord Copyrights Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP (M.T.Ramsey, T.J.Rosen, B.F.Tursi, R.Copperman, Ross Ellis) **26**

MCARTHUR Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Relative Music Group Family, ASCAP/Head Coach Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI (M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill, J.Rodgers, J.Thompson) **28**

ME & A BEER Anthem Red Vinyl Music, BMI/Buckkilla Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppo's Picks, ASCAP/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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) **21**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Bada Bing Bada Boom Publishing, BMI (G.Adcock, J.Taylor, C.Venner, J.Routon) **36**

NEVER COMIN' BACK ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Invoked Lamb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Lyric Music Publishing, GMR/CN Songs From 1508, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR (C.Cordero, L.Laird, A.Raitiere) **52**

R

RIDE, RIDE, RIDE Big Music Machine, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/T Tree Music, BMI (G.C.Birge, T.R.Hubbard, C.Brown, P.Welling) **40**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Coey Kent Music, BMI/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Lighting Street Publishing, BMI/Melodies Of CIM Outlander, SESAC/Michael Tyler Music, SESAC/MT ROOM, SESAC/Young Guns Tunes, SESAC (Corey Kent, T.Archer, A.Goodloe, M.Tyler) **27**

S

SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sullivan S Guns Music, BMI (L.Combs, R.Montana, J.D.Singleton) **18**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For The Munch Music, BMI (M.Lambert, C.Stapleton, J.V.Frasure, J.Fleenor) **20**

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/Getysosome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nesler) **35**

STRAIGHT FOR THE HEART Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Livvridge Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/Karley Scott Collins Publishing Desinee, ASCAP/Susan Perb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Mod Junkie, BMI (J.Robbins, K.S.Collins, Sasha Alex Sloan) **48**

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) **29**

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-Tamerlane 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 (J.Moore, W.L.Bundy, R.Montana, J.S.Stover) **9**

TRAVELIN' SOLDIER Bruce Robinson Music, BMI/Tiltawhirl Music, BMI (B.Robson) **45**

TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Jordan Davis Music, ASCAP/Neon Cross Music, BMI/Black Jeans Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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 Desinee, BMI (J.Davis, D.Dawson, J.Mitchell, J.Thompson) **19**

W

WATER AT A WEDDING Relative Red Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI (G.J.Egan, M.Dragstrom, R.C.McGill) **49**

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

WHEN A COWBOY PRAYS Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Brandon Lake Music, ASCAP/All Essential Music, ASCAP/Prayin' Cowboy Publishing, SESAC/So Essential Tunes, SESAC/Songs That Dog Will Hunt, BMI/Capitol CMG Paragon, BMI/Sugar Rain Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (B.M.Lake, J.Sooter, H.Bentley, D.Southerland) **60**

WISH YOU WELL Big Music Machine, BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/Warbanger 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) **22**

WORTH YOUR WILD Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Home Team Music, BMI/Tunes Of TrailerParker, BMI/Track & Feels Publishing Desinee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC (R.Dickerson, P.Welling, C.Brown) **56**

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 Road Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP (P.C.Brust, C.Lucas, M.Dragstem, J.Thompson) **34**

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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R&B/Hip-Hop/Los Angeles Aki Kaneko | moishekaneko@gmail.com

COUNTRY

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

5 Years Ago When Luke Combs Found A 'Better' Way To Reach No. 1

His 2021 chart-topper was the second entry in a love-song trilogy

When **Luke Combs** arrived at No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart dated Feb. 6, 2021, he accomplished a double-triple achievement.

"Better Together" topped two lists simultaneously, reaching the summit that same week on Country Airplay. In addition to that double play, the song represented the second installment in a trilogy of ballads honoring **Nicole**

Hocking, his wife since Aug. 1, 2020. The first of those three titles, "Beautiful Crazy," logged 11 weeks atop Hot Country Songs beginning March 2, 2019. The third, "Forever After All," registered nine weeks beginning May 15, 2021. "Better Together" spent three weeks at the summit, accruing 23 total weeks in the lead for his love-song trio. Co-written by **Dan Isbell** ("The

Kind of Love We Make," "Back in the Saddle") and **Randy Montana** ("Beer Never Broke My Heart," "This Is My Dirt"), "Better Together" was Combs' fourth of six frontrunners on Hot Country Songs.

Combs' "Sleepless in a Hotel Room" rests at No. 4 on the current list. His album *The Way I Am* is due March 20.

—TOM ROLAND

Luke Combs during production for the *CMT Music Awards* on June 9, 2021, in Nashville



WEEK	WEEK	AGO	CHART	PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL	RANK	POSITION
1	2	5	34	BETTER TOGETHER S. MOFFATT (L. COMBS, D. ISBELL, R. MONTANA)	Luke Combs RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE	1	1
2	1	2	92	I HOPE R. COPPERMAN, Z. KALE (Z. KALE, J. M. NITE, G. BARRETT)	Gabby Barrett WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WAR	RC	1
3	4	4	24	7 SUMMERS J. MOI (M. WALLEN, S. MCANALLY, J. OSBORNE)	Morgan Wallen REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	15	1
4	5	3	41	MORE THAN MY HOMETOWN J. MOI (M. W. HARDY, E. K. SMITH, CHARLIE HANDSOME, M. WALLEN)	Morgan Wallen REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	RC	2
5	3	1	3	WASTED ON YOU J. MOI, J. DURRETT (M. WALLEN, E. K. SMITH, J. THOMPSON, CHARLIE HANDSOME)	Morgan Wallen REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	-	1
6	6	9	23	STARTING OVER	Chris Stapleton	10	7

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2026

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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ISSUE DATE 4/18 | AD CLOSE 4/7 | MATERIALS DUE 4/9