

# billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD.COM/NEWSLETTERS

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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## Paul Overstreet's Workman-Like Path To The Country Music Hall Of Fame

"No one gives 'em medals/The world don't know their names." A key line from the chorus of **Paul Overstreet's** engaging 1991 single "Heroes" consolidates the kinds of characters that have dominated his work as a songwriter: ordinary, blue-collar folk dedicated to their families — not for reward, but because it's the right thing to do.

Ironically, Overstreet is in line to receive a medal for his efforts in October, when the Country Music Hall of Fame officially welcomes him in its annual medallion ceremony and unveils a bronze plaque that bears his name. That plaque will hang in the Rotunda at the Hall of Fame and Museum, along with the images of **Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, The Judds** and **Hank Williams**, artists who likewise documented the stories of the working class.

Country Music Association CEO **Sarah Trahern** emphasized that plaque and its symbolism when she called Overstreet to inform him of his induction as a songwriter.

"She was going, 'Forever, your name will be on that wall,' he remembers. "I thought of Hank Senior — like, that was the thing that inspired me was that great songwriting: him, **Marty Robbins** and those guys that were just really great at what they did. It made me very emotional."

Plenty of Overstreet's songs have connected emotionally with country fans since his first hit as a writer: **George Jones'** 1982 single "Same Ole Me," featuring **The Oak Ridge Boys** on backing vocals. Overstreet's titles would also include **Randy Travis'** "On the Other Hand," "Forever and Ever, Amen," and "Diggin' Up Bones"; **Tanya Tucker's** "My Arms Stay Open

All Night" and "One Love at a Time"; **The Judds'** "Love Can Build a Bridge"; **Keith Whitley's** "When You Say Nothing At All"; **Kenny Chesney's** "She Thinks My Tractor's Sexy"; and **Ronnie Milsap's** "Houston Solution." Those are just some of the Overstreet songs recorded by artists who already have Hall of Fame plaques.

Other Overstreet successes include **Blake Shelton's** "Some Beach," **Michael Martin Murphey's** "A Long Line of Love," **The Forrester Sisters'** "You Again," **Tracy Byrd's** "The Truth About Men" and the **Marie Osmond/Paul Davis** collaboration "You're Still New to Me." Plus, Overstreet's own singles as an artist: "Richest Man on Earth," "Sowin' Love," "Mama's Come Around," "Seein' My Father in Me" and, of course, "Heroes."

Outside of "Same Ole Me," all of Overstreet's hits came after he met his future wife on Halloween 1984 and stopped drinking on New Year's Day 1985. It would be nearly two decades before he took another sip of alcohol.

"A lot more songs were coming because I was finishing stuff," he says. "I had more time, and my brain wasn't foggy from the booze."

His focus changed, as well, as he shifted from the tear-in-my-beer stereotype associated with classic country music. He increasingly created material that reflected the improvements he was experiencing in his own life.

"I started writing songs that I thought had meaning and made people feel better," he says. "I had three-and-a-half minutes out of somebody's day with a song that I could lift them up or give



OVERSTREET

ROLAND: NATHAN CHAPMAN

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them a little bit of a positive thought. That’s a lot of what I was doing.”

The March 20 announcement of Overstreet’s induction — along with **Tim McGraw** and bluegrass pioneers **The Stanley Brothers** — was both timely and full-circle, reflecting the road that brought him to this Hall of Fame juncture. It came just weeks before the 40th anniversary of an April 3 benefit that marked the first official concert by **Schuyler, Knobloch & Overstreet**, a trio that grew out of Bluebird Café performances and earned a No. 1 single with “Baby’s Got a New Baby.” April 12 also marks four decades since Warner Bros. re-released Travis’ “On the Other Hand,” resulting in a chart-topping single that launched the most commercially prolific era in Overstreet’s career.

A year later, Overstreet had already parted ways with band mates **Thom Schuyler** and **Fred Knobloch** — “I just had a different idea of where I wanted to go than where they were wanting to take the group,” he reflects — and after haggling a bit with MTM Records, he dropped his animosity with the label and released a solo MTM single, “Love Helps Those,” before ending up at RCA.

“That one little decision changed a lot of things,” Overstreet says. “Heck, little twists and turns, little small things, turn out to be huge in your life.”

The full-circle part of Overstreet’s Hall membership connects with his pre-Nashville start. A Mississippi native, he had an older brother, **Norman Overstreet**, who served two tours of duty in Vietnam before Paul’s 1973 graduation from high school. His brother persuaded Paul to join him in Waco, Texas, where he worked for Young Brothers Construction Company by day and partied at country music venue Melody Ranch by night. A Melody Ranch concert by **Johnny Rodriguez** and Tucker, both in the early stages of their careers, convinced Overstreet that he needed to try his hand at country. Paul quit his job and moved to Nashville, uncertain what he was doing and sleeping in his car while he figured it out. He obviously found his way when he applied a working-class ethic to the songwriting business, which — he discovered — didn’t pay for another 11 or 12 months after a song got released.

“If I didn’t work today,” he says, “I knew I was going to feel it a year and a half down the road.”

Paul was on a cruise in Southeast Asia, partially inspired by his desire to see the area where his brother served, when the Hall call came from Trahern. And he’s promoting “Doin’ It to Country Songs,” a current collaboration with **Roger Creager** and **Kevin Fowler**, to Texas stations through his own Lucky Pony label.

“I don’t really know what I’m doing,” he admits. “To me, it’s fun. That’s all music is at this point. That’s all it should be.”

Overstreet has yet to determine what current Hall of Fame member he wants to conduct his induction in October — Tucker, frequent co-writer **Don Schlitz** and former RCA chief **Joe Galante** all make sense — but he’s still trying to process the fact that he’ll have a plaque hanging next to his heroes.

“I didn’t really understand what I was doing or why I was doing it, other than I had the strong desire to write songs,” he says. “To find out that your work has been acknowledged the way it is when you go into the Country Music Hall of Fame, that’s a huge, huge thing to someone like me. I don’t know that I would ever be able to explain it.” ●



Quartz Hill artist Lakelin Lemmings (center) met *Billboard* country, Christian & gospel charts & data analyst Russ Penuell at the Omni Nashville Hotel during Country Radio Seminar March 18-20. With them: SiriusXM Highway Mornings with Cody Alan co-host Lauryn Snapp.



Artist-writer-actor Sam Palladio (center) announced his signing with 3686 Records on April 7. He’s flanked by: label co-founders Eric Arjes (left) and Levi Hummon.



SOURCE Nashville welcomed three executives for a lunchtime panel on women in leadership March 26 at the Country Music Association’s Nashville offices. From left: Downtown Music Publishing president Emily Stephenson, Hearts Bluff Music executive VP of creative & acquisitions Ashley Hertzog Embry and Sony Music Nashville chair/CEO Taylor Lindsey.

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# ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC

## 61ST ACM AWARDS PROGRAM

The Academy of Country Music is a leading association for the country music industry that serves as a powerful advocate for country fans, artists and all facets of the business, as well as provides philanthropic aid through charitable partner ACM Lifting Lives. The 61st ACM Awards will be returning to the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on May 17. It will be preceded by ACM Lifting Lives Country On The Green hosted by Riley Green & Friends on May 15 at Topgolf, and the ACM's Next Wave: Country Beach Bash on May 16 at Mandalay Bay Beach!

**Put your artist or brand in front of 5,000-plus academy members, voters and music industry professionals in the ACM Awards program guide, produced by *Billboard*. The guide will be distributed at the ACM Awards ceremony, with digital distribution to 50k ACM members across the world!**

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# billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY  
MONITORED BY  
**LUMINATE**

ON THE CHARTS **RUSS PENUELL** [rpenuell@billboard.com](mailto:rpenuell@billboard.com)

## Luke Combs Earns Milestone 20th Country Airplay No. 1

**Luke Combs** lands his 20th No. 1 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart as "Sleepless in a Hotel Room" (Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN) checks into the top of the list dated April 18, up 9% to 30.4 million audience impressions April 3-9, according to Luminate. He earns the honor after parent LP *The Way I Am* debuted as his **fifth** No. 1 on Top Country Albums (April 4).

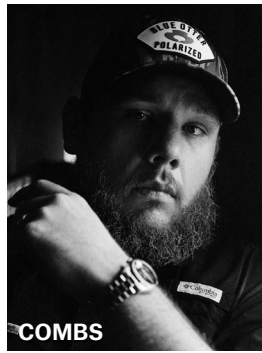
Written by Combs, **Randy Montana** and **Jonathan Singleton**, the new leader follows the set's "Back in the Saddle," which ruled for two weeks in November, extending a run that dates to "Hurricane," Combs' first No. 1, in May 2017.

Combs rarely misses at country radio. Of his 35 Country Airplay entries, 26 have reached the top 10 (74%), with 20 of those going on to No. 1 (77%). Narrowed to the 28 songs billed solely to him, the conversion is sharper: 21 (75%) have reached the top 10 and 18 of those (86%) have climbed to No. 1.

Combs ties **Brooks & Dunn**, **Toby Keith**, **Brad Paisley** and **Morgan Wallen** for the 10th-most No. 1s since Country Airplay began in January 1990. **Kenny Chesney** leads with 33, followed by **Blake Shelton** (30), **Tim McGraw** (29), **Jason Aldean**, **Luke Bryan**, **Alan Jackson**, **George Strait** (26 each), **Thomas Rhett** and **Keith Urban** (21 each). Combs ranks seventh in total weeks at No. 1 (56), after Chesney (83), McGraw (80), Strait (66), Wallen (62), Shelton (61) and Jackson (60).

Meanwhile, Combs' concurrent radio single, "Days Like These," steps to a new No. 6 Country Airplay high (23.9 million, up 5%), while fellow *The Way I Am* track "Be by You" rises 54-48 (1.9 million, up 34%).

**GETTING THEIR 'SAY'** **Dan + Shay** debut at No. 28 on Country Airplay with "Say So," (Warner Records Nashville/WAR), their 20th entry. Released April 3, the song drew 6.3 million audience impressions in its first week and adds to a catalog that includes 12 top 10s and eight No. 1s across more than a decade. ●



ROBBY KLEIN

### MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+6.274
AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	+3.923
BE HER SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+3.374
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+2.489
HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	+2.001
BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+1.965
DON'T WE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.863
DON'T TELL ON ME Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+1.856
CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+1.821
WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb	Dylan Scott	+1.412

### MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+1707
AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	+1162
BE HER SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+862
DON'T WE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+692
DON'T TELL ON ME Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+585
SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+535
HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	+507
CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+472
DAYS LIKE THESE Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+414
BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+406

### RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	20 CIGARETTES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	15.732
2	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	13.149
3	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	12.642
4	HOW FAR DOES A GOODBYE GO Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	12.431
5	DARLIN' Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	11.267
6	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	10.621
7	I GOT BETTER Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	9.965
8	FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	HARDY	9.488
9	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	9.179
10	JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	9.013



## TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING APRIL 9, 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	3	29	IS THIS THING WORKIN' (Tommy Jackson 30 Tigers) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Randy Rogers Band feat. Parker McCollum	1757	109	11	14	12	BLESSING AND A CURSE (RedPlay Media)	Guy Vincent	1141	88
2	4	26	RATHER BE ALONE (Broken Angel)	Love & Chaos	1684	126	12	13	25	MOVING ON (Independent)	Trent Cowie	1135	59
3	2	13	LIFE STILL HAPPENS (Weathers Legacy Music/Sea Gayle Music)	Josh Weathers	1633	-41	13	17	8	ONE WILD REASON (Independent)	Jesse Raub Jr.	1091	157
4	5	13	SO GOOD FOR ME (Independent)	Bubba Westly	1520	32	14	16	13	NEON NEVER LIES (Mirror Ball Records)	Caleb Young	1060	40
5	7	8	PAINTED YOU PRETTY (Independent)	Hudson Westbrook	1421	83	15	1	21	STEADY (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1034	-877
6	8	13	LONG WAY HOME (Independent)	Matt Daniel	1312	-25	16	6	28	HONKY TONK HEART (Independent)	David Lewis feat. Randall King	1031	-362
7	9	10	SELFISH (Independent)	Josh Abbott Band	1282	25	17	18	21	COWBOY KINDA PARTY (Independent)	Caleb Sutton	1014	91
8	10	12	HOW MANY SORRYS (Cameron Allbright Music)	Cameron Allbright	1242	66	18	15	31	.30-30 (Independent)	Deryl Dodd	1004	-41
9	11	15	WHEN I THINK ABOUT YOU (Independent)	Amanda Kate Ferris	1220	98	19	21	26	WHAT KIND OF MAN (Independent)	Sheila Marshall	955	84
10	12	10	GOING THROUGH (WHISKEY LIKE WATER) (Independent)	Tilluride	1180	68	20	19	13	BEAUTIFUL YOU (Prophets and Outlaws Music)	Prophets and Outlaws	941	38

Texas Regional Radio Report Top 100 is compiled from weekly online playlist reports from 86 radio stations located in Texas and surrounding states, including reports from specialty shows, internet and satellite radio outlets. Songs are ranked by total plays. For tracking, complete chart methodology and more information, visit [www.texasregionalradio.com](http://www.texasregionalradio.com), or contact Dave Smith at 972-252-8777. Copyright 2026, Texas Regional Radio Report

# 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
1	3	13	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	★★ No. 1 (1 Week) ★★ Luke Combs	30.437	+2.489	8065	535	2
2	5	30	AIN'T A BAD LIFE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	Thomas Rhett Featuring Jordan Davis	30.003	+3.923	8312	1162	1
3	2	25	CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	27.727	-1.563	6814	-689	4
4	6	50	WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE Curb	Dylan Scott	26.036	+1.412	7234	310	3
5	4	40	AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Stoney Creek/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	24.104	-2.442	5891	-1120	8
6	7	22	DAYS LIKE THESE Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	23.890	+1.203	6621	414	5
7	1	68	TIME'S TICKING Blue Highway	Justin Moore	23.524	-6.408	6002	-2415	6
8	8	50	THE FALL CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WARN	Cody Johnson	21.934	+0.710	5993	58	7
9	10	17	BRUNETTE Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	20.352	+1.965	5594	406	10
10	9	15	CHANGE MY MIND Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	20.347	+1.821	5872	472	9
11	12	24	TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	18.386	+0.889	5287	301	11
12	15	8	BE HER SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	16.103	+3.374	3980	862	15
13	14	45	ME & A BEER Harpeth 60	Chris Janson	15.516	+1.347	4613	318	12
14	13	51	I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Post Malone	15.265	+0.681	4120	212	13
15	16	24	BEAUTIFUL THINGS Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	13.785	+1.102	4043	379	14
16	18	29	HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	12.916	+2.001	3914	507	16
17	17	18	ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville/SMN	Corey Kent & Koe Wetzel	12.745	+0.723	3883	273	17
18	19	57	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	10.759	+0.474	3366	164	18
19	20	26	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WARN	Bailey Zimmerman	9.723	+1.141	3110	161	19
20	24	6	DON'T TELL ON ME Macon/Broken Bow	★★ Airpower ★★ Jason Aldean	9.539	+1.856	3100	585	20
21	29	6	DON'T WE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	7.931	+1.863	2502	692	23
22	22	10	MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	7.827	+0.014	2624	83	22
23	23	53	TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Boss Moves/Black River	Chris Young	7.800	+0.074	2814	-31	21
24	26	21	AFTER MIDNIGHT RCA Nashville/SMN	Nate Smith & Tyler Hubbard	7.181	+0.811	2334	180	25
25	25	10	RIDE, RIDE, RIDE RECORDS/RECORDS Nashville	George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	6.873	+0.301	2380	129	24
26	27	17	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33	Zach Top	6.552	+0.374	2173	145	28
27	28	43	WRONG HEARTS BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	6.492	+0.326	2288	45	26
28	NEW		SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WAR	★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker/Most Increased Audience ★★ Dan + Shay	6.286	+6.274	1714	1707	32
29	30	40	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	5.657	+0.176	2203	-13	27
30	31	4	WOMAN Zone 4/RCA Nashville/SMN	Kane Brown	5.561	+0.946	1972	325	29

## COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART LEGEND

### RANKINGS

Country Airplay is ranked by total audience impressions for the week ending Sunday based on monitored airplay by Mediabase of 145 stations by Luminate. Audience totals on the chart are derived, in part, using certain Nielsen Audio-copyrighted Persons 12+ audience estimates (under license © 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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**LUMINATE**

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	21	2	COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	5.275	-2.733	1352	-452	38
32	32	31	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	4.828	+0.656	1757	113	30
33	33	12	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Jon Pardi	4.168	+0.335	1631	172	33
34	34	7	GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	4.122	+0.461	1364	111	37
35	35	39	EASY TO LOVE Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch	3.913	+0.354	1748	123	31
36	36	16	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greylan James	3.458	+0.002	1460	85	34
37	37	28	LONG LIVE COUNTRY Triple Tigers	Shane Profitt	3.267	+0.289	1304	71	39
38	39	11	GARY Mercury/Big Loud	Stephen Wilson Jr.	3.043	+0.197	1175	38	40
39	38	25	FIREWORKS Curb	Kelsey Hart	2.878	-0.085	1398	-37	35
40	44	7	PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR <b>★★ Breaker ★★</b>	Hudson Westbrook	2.614	+0.658	995	245	46
41	40	21	STRAIGHT FOR THE HEART Alexandra Kay/Wheelhouse	Alexandra Kay	2.565	+0.247	1368	96	36
42	43	12	MAKE A LIAR Blue Highway	Jackson Dean	2.260	+0.289	1008	44	44
43	45	9	LET HIM IN ANYWAY Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	2.241	+0.371	1037	77	42
44	42	24	THE HELL YOU ARE Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	2.192	+0.132	1019	-7	43
45	50	11	HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	2.125	+0.557	1162	168	41
46	41	11	NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	2.096	+0.017	795	41	49
47	47	15	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.912	+0.221	999	22	45
48	54	2	BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	1.902	+0.484	330	90	-
49	49	10	WHEN A COWBOY PRAYS Brandon Lake/Essential/SMN	Brandon Lake X Cody Johnson	1.750	+0.162	740	48	52
50	48	22	KILLED THE MAN Curb	Lee Brice	1.743	+0.109	934	11	47
51	46	6	WHAT IF WE DON'T Warner Music Nashville/WRN	Ashley McBryde	1.728	-0.107	904	-12	48
52	53	30	HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH Bossier City/Thirty Tigers/Akando	Tumpike Troubadours	1.586	+0.102	556	8	58
53	52	7	KILLIN' ME MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	1.555	+0.044	792	54	50
54	56	21	TRAVELIN' SOLDIER CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	1.311	+0.089	235	9	-
55	57	18	DEVIL AIN'T DONE Stoney Creek	Atlas	1.254	+0.091	697	26	54
56	55	13	HIGHS & LOWS Quartz Hill	Matt Cooper	1.241	-0.034	767	8	51
57	51	3	GOOD DAMN Wheelhouse	Brantley Gilbert	0.963	-0.554	634	-50	57
58	58	8	PSYCHOLOGICAL Nashville Harbor	The Band Perry	0.936	+0.006	680	22	55
59	60	6	KEEPS ME SANE Tyler Nance/Santa Anna	Tyler Nance	0.867	+0.027	526	18	59
60	NEW		BACK IN THE BOTTLE Magnolia Music <b>★★ Breaker ★★</b>	Randy Houser	0.864	+0.029	697	37	53



BRELAND (center) encountered Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse when he joined several other artists for an April 2 performance at the Grand Ole Opry House's Studio A in Nashville celebrating the Walt Disney EP *Main Street Country*.



Indie artist Thomason (aka Trey Lewis) made his Bluebird Café debut April 2. At the iconic Nashville venue (from left): artist-writers Ben Roberts, Davis Corley, Thomason and Matt McKinney.

CATHERINE POWELL

# billboard

2026

# COUNTRY POWER PLAYERS



*Billboard's* 12th annual Country Power Players issue will celebrate the executives and artists who have propelled country music to another stellar year. This special feature will highlight those who have had the greatest impact in the genre over the past year, spanning recorded music, streaming, radio, publishing, management and live entertainment.

Advertise in *Billboard's* Country Power Players issue to congratulate this year's honorees while reaching key decision-makers who are driving the music business.

## BONUS DISTRIBUTION

Billboard Country Power Players Cocktail Party & Awards  
June 3 in Nashville.

## CONTACTS

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ISSUE DATE 5/30 | AD CLOSE 5/19 | MATERIALS DUE 5/21

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

TOM TURK

Rhett Akins (“Dirt on My Boots”) headlined a March 26 performance at Nashville’s 3rd & Lindsley during the Nashville Songwriters Association International’s annual Tin Pan South festival. From left: Bob DiPiero (“Blue Clear Sky”), Parker Welling (“What’s Your Country Song”), Lydia Vaughan (“Don’t Tell On Me”) and Akins.

## GIRL POWER EXERTED IN ACMS

Women thoroughly dominate the nominations for the 2026 Academy of Country Music Awards, announced April 9.

This year’s four most-nominated artists are all women: **Megan Moroney** leads with nine nods, followed by **Miranda Lambert** with eight, and **Ella Langley** and **Lainey Wilson**, who garnered seven apiece. It’s the second year in a row that a female solo artist has led the nominations. Langley was out front last year with eight nods.

Lambert, the most decorated artist in ACM history with 33 wins, may well collect even more trophies when the 2026 ACM Awards are presented at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on May 17. The show will stream live on Prime Video for the fifth consecutive year.

Lambert’s eight nominations are the most she has received in a single year since 2017. Lambert received her 17th nomination for female artist of the year, which allows her to pull ahead of **Reba McEntire** for the most nominations in the history of that category. McEntire was nominated 16 times from 1984 to 2018. The two artists share a nomination this year — music event of the year for “Trailblazer,” which they recorded with Wilson. McEntire was nominated twice for her work on the record, as both an artist and a producer. These are her first ACM nods since 2021.

Moroney received her first nod for entertainer of the year, where she faces six repeat nominees. **Chris Stapleton**, who won in 2023, received his eighth nonconsecutive nomination in the category. **Luke Combs**, who has yet to win the trophy, was nominated for the seventh year in a row.

**Morgan Wallen** received his fourth consecutive entertainer of the year nod. He, too, has yet to win in the category. **Jelly Roll**, **Cody Johnson** and Wilson each earned their third entertainer of the year nods. Wilson won the last two years. If she wins again this year, she’ll become the first person to win three years running since **Jason Aldean** earned the honor every year from 2016 to 2018. She’d be the first woman to ever win three years in a row.

**Carter Faith**’s *Cherry Valley* was a surprise nominee for album of the year. Faith’s album is competing with Wallen’s *I’m the Problem*, his third album in a row to be nominated in that category; **Zach Top**’s *Ain’t in It for My Health*, his second album contender in a row; and albums by first-time category nominees **Riley Green** and **Parker McCollum**.

Wilson’s “Somewhere Over Laredo” is this year’s only work to receive nominations for single, song and visual media of the year. The song interpolates the melody of the Oscar-winning classic “Over the Rainbow,” which resulted in that song’s co-writers, **Harold Arlen** and **E.Y. “Yip” Harburg**, receiving posthumous ACM song of the year nominations. Arlen died in 1986; Harburg in 1981.

Langley’s “Choosin’ Texas” and Top’s “I Never Lie” were nominated for both single and song of the year.

Go [here](#) for the full story.

— By Paul Grein

## RADIO & RECORDS®

Artist-writer **Sam Palladio**, who moved to Music City in conjunction with his role in the ABC-TV series *Nashville*, signed a recording deal with independent 3686 Records, founded by writer-producer **Eric Arjes** (**The Eli Young Band**, **BRELAND**) and artist-writer **Levi Hummon**. **Bennett Zier** was named Audacy/Virginia senior advisor after serving as a market manager for the company’s properties in the state, RadioInk.com reported. That includes one country signal: **WRXL-HD2** Richmond ... **WUSJ** Jackson, Miss., PD **Traci Lee** is moving into the morning show from afternoons, according to RadioInsight.com. She fills a vacancy created by **Hannah Lane**’s departure for **KSCS** Dallas ... **KNCI** Sacramento morning mainstay **Pat Still** is set to retire on April 17, RadioInsight.com reported. He spent more than 33 years with the station in a career that spans nearly 50 years.

## ‘ROUND THE ROW

Big Loud Publishing promoted **Michael Giangreco** to president of A&R from VP ... CAA corporate communications executive **Jenna Powell** ends her tenure in the role on April 17 to lead the communications division at Innovative Partnerships Group, a company that specializes in sponsorships and naming rights ... **Mark Thomas** takes over as Propeller director of talent and industry partnerships. He was previously Paramount senior producer of marketing & creative production, involved in *Yellowstone* and several CMT titles. Propeller is a social media firm that assists artists and festivals in motivating their fan bases to support worthy causes. Reach Thomas [here](#) ... Maverick Nashville promoted three staff members. **Tori MacDonald-Nash** rose to director of artist projects from assistant, **Ashley Negrillo** climbs to senior creative director from director and **Grace Foster** steps up to manager of marketing strategy and fan engagement from marketing coordinator ... Sony Music Nashville signee **Benny G** makes his Grand Ole Opry debut on April 17 ... Big Loud/Mercury Nashville artist **Dylan Gossett** enlisted TMWRK for management ... Record Research releases *Joel Whitburn’s History of Top Country Singles 1944-2025* on June 4. A detailed guide to the *Billboard* country singles charts, the reference book is available for pre-order at a \$10 discount [here](#) ... Ear Trumpet Labs pacted with **Margo Price** to represent the company’s Louise microphone line ... Gibson launched a year-long Handcrafted in Nashville, TN campaign to promote its electric guitars ... Tin Pan South announced its 2027 festival is slated for March 30-April 3 ... The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum refreshed its Taylor Swift Education Center display with memorabilia related to the album *The Life of a Showgirl* ... The Give It Away Fund, overseen by **Jamey** and **Brittney Johnson**, presented grants to 11 different charities, including paying for meals for 550 students in Mississippi’s Hancock School District, the same system where Brittney attended ... **Carly Pearce** and **Ashley Cooke** raised more than \$45,000 for Nashville’s Pet Community Center with an April 6 benefit concert at City Winery Nashville ... **Craig Campbell**’s 12th annual Celebrity Cornhole Challenge is slated for June 2 at 6<sup>th</sup> & Peabody in Nashville ... EM.Co senior vp of promotion **Jack Purcell** revealed he has a hereditary kidney disease and is seeking a kidney donor. His original kidney is currently functioning at 15%. Go [here](#) for more information. 🍌



Artist manager Shelby Marvel joined the Borchetta Entertainment Group, bringing The Band Perry with her to the roster. From left: Marvel, TBP’s Johnny Castello and Kimberly Perry and Borchetta Entertainment Group founder/chairman Scott Borchetta.

# INDIE POWER PLAYERS

On May 9, *Billboard* will publish its annual Indie Power Players list. This special feature in advance of Indie Week (June 8-11) and the 16th annual Libera Awards will profile leading executives at top independent record labels, distributors and artist and label services companies. Positioning themselves as the driving force behind the success of the independent music industry, these executives contribute to both the indie sector and the world of music at large.

Take this opportunity to advertise and congratulate this year's 2026 Indie Power Players.

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HIT SONGS DECONSTRUCTED DAVID PENN

# Ella Langley's 'Choosin' Texas' Deconstructed: Heartbreak That Feels Authentic & Relatable

Hit Songs Deconstructed analyzes the sonic characteristics that helped land Langley her reigning multiweek No. 1.

"I don't know. I really don't," **Ella Langley** considered when asked by *Billboard* why so many people have gravitated to her smash "Choosin' Texas," which added a fifth week at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and a 19th frame atop Hot Country Songs (dated April 11).

"All of us that wrote it, we talk about that. We love this song. I don't know if it's because it's a very honest point of view, you know, but I hear a lot of honest songs all the time. I tried to add some groove into this record, big singing choruses and big melodic guitar licks that you can remember. I don't know if it feels nostalgic or sounds like something they hadn't heard before."

To Langley's points, it may be a bit of all of the above.

Below is Hit Songs Deconstructed's look at three key factors that have helped "Choosin' Texas" — which Langley co-wrote with **Luke Dick**, **Miranda Lambert** and **Joybeth Taylor** and co-produced with Lambert and **Ben West** — dominate from Texas to Tennessee and beyond.

## ROLLING RHYTHM & GENTLE SWAY

"Choosin' Texas" features a rolling, conversational rhythm and gentle sway, shaped by the push and pull between held notes and quicker syllabic bursts. First established by the guitar hook in the intro, this lilting feel reappears in key vocal lines across the song, subtly linking the instrumental hook and vocal melody in a way listeners are more likely to feel than consciously notice.

The result is a song that feels especially cohesive, familiar and memorable as it unfolds. It also lends the track a subtle two-step sway, making lyrics like "two-steppin' round the room" feel especially natural. And when that rhythmic pattern is strategically broken at pivotal moments, such as leading into the chorus and spotlighting the "he's choosin' Texas, I can tell" hook at the end, the payoff lands even harder.



LANGLEY

## SPACE & RESTRAINT DEEPEN EMOTIONAL PULL

Rather than forcing the heartbreak, "Choosin' Texas" lets it develop with an easy realism. Key lines are given room to breathe and Langley's even-keeled delivery keeps the emotion grounded instead of oversold.

That restraint makes the song feel more believable, allowing the heartache to hit in a way that feels authentic and easy to connect with.

## FRESH TAKE ON A FAMILIAR THEME

"Choosin' Texas" gives a classic love-triangle story a clever twist by framing it as a rivalry between two states. Rooted in imagery like Smoky Mountain rain, **Hank Williams** tunes and Memphis blues, the narrator's world is distinctly Tennessee, while the other woman is never even named — she's simply Texas.

As the song progresses, the emotion feels less like a sudden loss and more like an inevitable one, as if he was always being pulled back to where he belonged. That idea comes into even sharper focus with the I-40 reference, which places that emotional divide on the very highway connecting their two worlds.

This framing gives the lyric a distinctly country identity while keeping its emotional core — losing someone whose heart was always headed elsewhere — universally relatable and refreshingly original.

*David and Yael Penn co-founded Hit Songs Deconstructed. In 2023, Hit Songs Deconstructed and fellow song analysis platform MyPart publicly launched ChartCipher, an AI-powered platform analyzing a deeper scope of hit songs, as defined by Billboard's charts. 🎧*

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# billboard Country Airplay Index

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

## A

**AFTER MIDNIGHT** W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Track & Feels Publishing Desinee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vibez From Tree Vibez Music, ASCAP/Concord Alto C1, ASCAP/Five Docks Down Music Publishing, ASCAP/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/T Tree Music, BMI (C.Brown, C.Crowder, T.R.Hubbard) **24**

**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/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) **2**

**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 Albina, J.A.Gutch, B.J.Johnson, W.Phillips) **32**

**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/Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sony Tunes 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) **5**

## B

**BACK IN THE BOTTLE** Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/I'm Your Huckleberry Music, BMI (R.Houser) **60**

**BEAUTIFUL THINGS** Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Giorgianno, 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) **15**

**BE BY YOU** Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Songs By Porchlight, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Highway 75 Publishing, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Wildhawk Publishing, BMI (D.Alley, S.Banks, N.Walsh) **48**

**BE HER** Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Sea Gayle Distillery Music, ASCAP/Endurance Music Group, BMI/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI/Ross & Rae Music, ASCAP/Relative Rights, ASCAP (E.Langley, S.Ahnquist, J.M.Schmidt, M.W.Hardy) **12**

**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) **33**

**BRUNETTE** Concord Tunes, SESAC/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Carl Jabies 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) **9**

## C

**CHANGE MY MIND** Warner-Tamerlane 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) **10**

**CHEVY SILVERADO** Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Tunes 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, J.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **19**

**CHOOSIN' TEXAS** Langley Publishing, BMI/One 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) **3**

**COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT** Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Trailer Parker Twang Lab, BMI/Hometeam Publishing LLC, BMI/Kilometre Music Group B, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP (J.L.Miller, P.Welling, M.Dragstrem) **31**

## D

**DAYS LIKE THESE** Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Tittawhirl 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) **6**

**DEVIL AIN'T DONE** Atlas Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Spirit II Nashville, ASCAP/SpiritVault Songs II, ASCAP/Ever Songz, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/Warbanger Publishing, BMI (S.Haywood, D.A.Garcia, G.Warburton) **55**

**DON'T TELL ON ME** Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irishsonmusic, BMI/Ksway Publishing, BMI/WritersontheconcordPublishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (K.M.Allison, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan, L.Vaughan) **20**

**DON'T WE** Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Sony Tunes LLC, BMI (M.C.Wallen, R.H.Block, J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, B.Pendergrass, Charlie Handsome) **21**

## 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) **35**

## 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) **8**

**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) **39**

## G

**GARY** Poems On Junk Mail, SESAC/BMG Cicada, SESAC (S.L.Wilson Jr.) **38**

**GET TO DRINKIN'** Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Works By Kinda Country Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Brody James Music, BMI/Akin For Jonas Music, BMI/B Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/ERN's Cadillac Music, BMI/Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Kyle Sturrock Music, ASCAP (Z.J.King, R.Akins, T.Archer, K.A.Fishman, K.Sturrock) **34**

**GOOD DAMN** Indiana Angel Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Redneck Music, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (B.Gilbert, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, T.Phillips) **57**

## H

**HATE HOW YOU LOOK** Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Round Hill Verses Publishing, BMI (N.Sainato, C.McKenna, J.Farren, C.Yancey) **16**

**HEAVEN PASSING THROUGH** Game Rooster Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Felker) **52**

**THE HELL YOU ARE** Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Two 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/Phillipians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/WeisDowl, ASCAP (A.Cooke, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, R.C.McGill, E.Weisband) **44**

**HIGHS & LOWS** Songs Of North Chapel Music, BMI/Endurance Music Group, BMI/318 Records Publishing, BMI (M.Cooper) **56**

**HOLDIN' IT DOWN** Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/The Big One, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Redd Up Publishing, BMI/Aaron Presley Beachum Publishing Designee, BMI/Evan Christian Mayo Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (Chase Matthew, E.Escue, A.Maxwell, Presley Aaron, E.C.Mayo, J.Center) **45**

## 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 Music, BMI (M.C.Wallen, L.B.Bell, M.W.Hardy, A.R.Post, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **14**

## K

**KEEPS ME SANE** Anthems Of Platinum Grammer, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP/Copyright Control (C.T.L.Nance, D.Napier, B.McCollough) **59**

**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) **29**

**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) **50**

**KILLIN' ME** Parkernac Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endless Tour Music, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid II, BMI/Heavy Lefty Music, BMI (P.M.Collum, R.Rogers, M.Criswell) **53**

## L

**LET HIM IN ANYWAY** Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Best Damn Music, BMI (M.W.Hardy, Z.Aband, K.S.Clark, C.Walace) **43**

**LONG LIVE COUNTRY** Shane Proffitt Publishing Designee, BMI/Zippismusic, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI (S.Proffitt, M.Rogers, L.Rimes) **37**

## 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) **42**

**MCARTHUR** Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Relative Music Group Family, ASCAP/Head Coach Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Phillipians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Old Bandana, BMI (M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill, J.Rodgers, J.Thompson) **22**

**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-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) **13**

## N

**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.Retiere) **46**

## P

**PAINTED YOU PRETTY** Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Saxet HW Music, BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI (H.Westbrook, Lukas Scott, B.Bailey) **40**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL** Smack Back Music, BMI/Concord Baritone C1, BMI/Midtown Mistake Publishing, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Colton Venner Publishing, BMI (C.Park, G.Tyler, C.Venner) **58**

## 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) **25**

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW** Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Corey Kent Music, BMI/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Lighting Street Publishing, BMI/Melodies Of C1M Outlander, SESAC/Michael Tyler Music, SESAC/MT Room, SESAC/Young Guns Tunes, SESAC (Corey Kent, T.Archer, A.Goodloe, M.Tyler) **17**

## S

**SAY SO** Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Eleventh Wave Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Lyridge Music, ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP (D.Smyers, S.Mooney, D.H.Hodges, J.Robbins) **28**

**SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM** Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sullivan S 5 Guns Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Hits Of 50 Egg Music, ASCAP/Braven Baker Music, ASCAP (L.Combs, R.Montana, J.D.Singleton) **1**

**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/Doon What I Do, BMI/Getysasome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nester) **26**

**STRAIGHT FOR THE HEART** Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Lyridge Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/Karley Scott Collins Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Susan Perb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Mod Junkie, BMI (J.Robbins, K.S.Collins, Sasha Alex Sloan) **41**

## 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) **23**

**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) **7**

**TRAVELIN' SOLDIER** Bruce Robinson Music, BMI/Tittawhirl Music, BMI (B.Robson) **54**

**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 Designee, BMI (J.Davis, D.Dawson, J.Mitchell, J.Thompson) **11**

## 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/Phillipians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Songs For Knox, BMI (G.J.Egan, M.Dragstrem, R.C.McGill) **36**

**WHAT HE'LL NEVER HAVE** Curb Songs, ASCAP/Logan Robinson Publishing Designee, NS/Ricky Rowton Publishing Designee, NS/Robert Gatlin Publishing Designee, NS (D.Scott, L.Robinson, R.Rowton, R.Gatlin) **4**

**WHAT IF WE DON'T** Beejo Fetch Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Song Factory, BMI/Merf Music Publishing LLC, BMI/Colton Sounds, BMI/Songs Of Merf Music LLC, BMI (A.McBryde, T.Box, R.Clay) **51**

**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 By 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) **49**

**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) **18**

**WOMAN** Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Family Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Copyright Control/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (K.Brown, J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, B.J.Johnson, T.Phillips) **30**

**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 Designee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC (R.Dickerson, P.Welling, C.Brown) **47**

**WRONG HEARTS** BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Weslinger Publishing, BMI/Lovelegend Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/Drag Drag Music, ASCAP/Round Hill Songs II, ASCAP (P.C.Brust, C.Lucas, M.Dragstrem, J.Thompson) **27**

# COUNTRY

60 Years Ago

## Jeannie Seely's Chart Debut: There Was No Way To Skirt Her Grammy-Winning Launch

The Pennsylvania native performed on the Grand Ole Opry more than any act in history

When **Jeannie Seely** first entered *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs on April 16, 1966, no one could have predicted that that debut—regrettably misspelled on the chart—would seed a history-making career.

“Don’t Touch Me” was written by **Hank Cochran**, a future Country Music Hall of Fame member who convinced the Pennsylvania-born Seely to move to Nashville from Los Angeles, where she was a secretary at Liberty Records. Cochran would become her husband for 10 years and also wrote each of Seely’s three other top 10 singles,

including a No. 2 **Jack Greene** collaboration, “Wish I Didn’t Have To Miss You.”

“Don’t Touch Me,” produced by Hall of Famer **Fred Foster** (**Kris Kristofferson**, **Willie Nelson**), peaked at No. 2 on the list on June 25, 1966, blocked from the top spot by **Sonny James’** “Take Good Care of Her.” The following year, “Don’t Touch Me” earned her a Grammy award for best country performance by a female; she would sing it during her September 1967 induction into the Grand Ole Opry at the Ryman Auditorium, and again during the

**WSM-AM** Nashville show’s March 1974 opening performance at the Grand Ole Opry House.

Noted for her quick wit and sharp tongue, Seely set an Opry precedent, becoming the first woman to wear a miniskirt on the venerable show, despite protestations from its male leadership. She went on to play the Opry a record 5,397 times before her death on Aug. 1, 2025, 11 months after the dedication of the Jeannie Seely Interchange at the Opry’s Briley Parkway exit ramp. —TOM ROLAND

# A

REWINDING THE COUNTRY CHARTS

46	—	CATCH A LITTLE RAINDROP	1
		Claude King, Columbia 43510 (Gallico, BMI)	
47	—	DON'T TOUCH ME	1
		Jeannie Seely, Monument 933 (Pamper, BMI)	
48	48	INSURANCE	2
		Hank Locklin, RCA Victor 8783 (Western Hills, BMI)	
49	—	ONE BUM TOWN	1
		Del Reeves, United Artists 50001 (Moss Rose, BMI)	
50	—	YOU AIN'T NO BETTER THAN ME	1
		Webb Pierce, Decca 31924 (Cedarwood, BMI)	

Seely, from an early photo shoot, circa 1970.

