

billboard Country Update

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Belmont's Johnny Cash Archives: A Resilient Moment To Start A New Chapter

Hugs and smiles abounded when **Johnny Cash's** heirs met July 16 with a team of Belmont University representatives for a "Mark the Moment" party at the institution's Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business.

The event celebrated an agreement that makes Belmont the permanent home for Cash's personal archives. The collection of documents and some physical items is being organized and catalogued for access by researchers and scholars, to be housed in a Johnny Cash Learning Center at a university building under construction on Music Row.

As significant as the agreement was, the party's timing had deep karmic repercussions. The event unwittingly coincided with the 40th anniversary of a dark chapter in Cash's history: Some 40 years prior, he opened *The Tennessean* to see his photo plastered on the front page of the Living section with a headline he didn't know was coming: "Man in Black' Without a Label." After a 28-year run with Columbia Records, the company had dropped him without even a courtesy call.

Just 11 months earlier, his bedrock tone had provided the final voice in "Highwayman," taking him to No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs along with super-group band mates **Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings** and **Kris Kristofferson**.

Four decades after he was unceremoniously dismissed, Belmont's acquisition will place a part of his legacy in the heart of

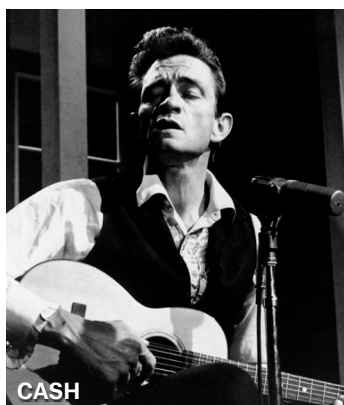
Music Row, literally across the property line from where that decision was made. The new Belmont building is adjacent to a Curb College building that previously housed Columbia. Two recording studios still exist on the property, including the space

in which Cash cut some of his most iconic hits: "Ring of Fire," "What Is Truth," "Man in Black" and the **June Carter** duet "Jackson."

"It's literally almost a phoenix rising from the ashes," says **Dr. Mary Ellen Pethel**, director of the Learning Center. "They're blasting right now, and that new building is going to complement those historic studios. It's like a reunion of sorts, and it's like all is right with the world again."

The \$8.6 million acquisition occurred in part through support from **Scott and Sandi Borchetta, Mike and Linda Curb** and the Harper House Music Foundation, a nonprofit involved in the preservation and/or funding of music venues, education programs and other heritage projects.

The Cash children — **Rosanne Cash, John Carter Cash, Kathy Cash, Cindy Cash** and **Tara Cash Schwoebel** — had wanted their father's history to be preserved in a place where it could be mined for scholarly research and music-related study. Belmont became a partner, Pethel says, through a relationship Curb College dean **Brittany Schaffer** had with the Cash team. Following the July 22 announcement of the deal, Belmont has already fielded requests to explore the collection, though the school is hardly ready for that step.



CASH

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"People want to come research now," Pethel says, "and I'm like, 'They're still in banker's boxes.'"

The collection includes more than 100 of those boxes, the bulk of it consisting of paperwork and documents, such as correspondence, contracts, photos, datebooks, scrapbooks and legal papers.

The boxes also hold VHS tapes and CDs, plus clothing worn by attendees at a Cash fan club meeting and hermetically-sealed cotton from the Cash farm in Arkansas. The Belmont team is still in the beginning stages of taking stock.

"It's got a few of what you would call ephemeral things, or memorabilia," Pethel says. "No guitars."

In addition to providing a source for research, the deal creates a learning experience for some music nerds in training as Pethel has assembled a dozen students to assist in cataloguing and filing the materials. The students were picked because of their interests in legal studies, history or songwriting, for example. They'll be part of a process expected to take 12-24 months as they develop and implement a metadata program. That sounds basic, but marking names or titles consistently (June Carter vs. June Carter Cash, "Folsom Prison" vs. "Folsom Prison Blues") will affect scholars' ability to know what's in the collection and how to access it.

"Smart is cool for this class," Pethel says. "That's for sure."

Pethel is particularly appreciative of the geographic significance of the Johnny Cash Learning Center. She founded Nashville Sites, an enterprise that provides walking, driving and virtual tours of Music City, including themed journeys that focus on music properties, the city's Civil War locations and its Civil Rights history. She believes it could lead to Cash-related tours.

The acquisition comes at a key time as Belmont extends its influence on the Nashville music community. The new building, announced in April 2024, is on a block of Music Row that includes Black River, Soundstage and BMG Music, putting students within easy walking distance from the American Federation of Musicians, Warner Records Nashville, BMI, ASCAP and the Country Music Association, where Schaffer will become CEO on Jan. 1.

The new structure will feature songwriter rooms and a 150-capacity performance space, among other accommodations, making the school more interactive with a music community that already counts scores of Belmont grads among its work force.

And it comes after the 2025 introduction of Dolly U, a course of study that explores numerous entertainment-related disciplines through projects based around the career of **Dolly Parton**. Cash and Parton provide a template, though unintended, for other Nashville music icons to consider as they map out their legacies.

"They're completely separate [projects], and there's no larger plan, no master plan with this," Pethel says. "At the same time, having the Dolly U programming and then acquiring the Johnny Cash Archives certainly plants a flag for Belmont in terms of its ability to celebrate and honor these musical icons, and do so in a way that passes scholarship from one generation to the next."

It's a remarkable reversal of fortune in the center of Music Row. ●



ADDISON HILTON

Stella Lefty (center) performed four songs for Country Music Association (CMA) staff July 22 in a visit to the agency's Nashville headquarters. With her: CMA senior VP of industry relations & philanthropy **Tiffany Kerns (left)**, who ends her run with CMA on Sept. 2; and CMA manager of industry relations **Grace Martins**.



KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES

Shania Twain greeted SiriusXM/Pandora senior VP/GM of music programming **Steve Blatter** when she performed July 23 at Racket NYC in conjunction with the launch of a short-term, Twain-dedicated channel.



JOSH PRUITT/VYVILD VISUALS

Ketch Secor (left) and **Darius Rucker** were recognized by Spotify for a billion streams of "Wagon Wheel" when Secor's band, Old Crow Medicine Show, opened for Rucker July 25 at Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison, Colo. Secor, who co-wrote the song, performed it with Rucker.

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Morgan Wallen Repeats Rare Top-Two Takeover

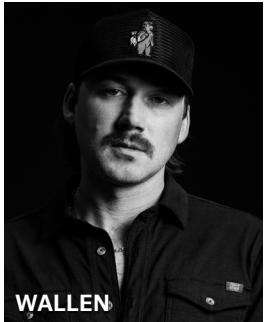
Morgan Wallen scores his 12th multiweek No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Country Airplay chart as “Don’t We” (Mercury/Republic/Big Loud) leads for a second week. His 21st career leader drew 33.6 million audience impressions (essentially even week over week) July 24–30, according to Luminate.

On the Aug. 8–dated chart, Wallen also becomes the first artist to hold the top two positions for multiple weeks in two different runs, as his collaboration with **Ella Langley**, “I Can’t Love You Anymore” (SAWGOD/Columbia/Big Loud/Triple Tigers), keeps at its No. 2 high (32.5 million, up 3%). The double showing marks his sixth total week occupying both positions simultaneously. He first controlled the top two for four weeks in a row in July 2024, via his **Post Malone** collaboration “I Had Some Help” and his **ERNEST** team-up “Cowgirls.”

Only two other artists have occupied Country Airplay’s top two simultaneously. **Luke Bryan** did so for one stretch, for two straight weeks in 2014, with “Play It Again” and “This Is How We Roll,” the latter with **Florida Georgia Line**. **Luke Combs** spaced the feat out over nearly three years, for a week in September 2023 with “Love You Anyway” and “Fast Car” and for one frame this May with “Sleepless in a Hotel Room” and “Days Like These.”

‘NOW’ HEAR THIS **Morgan Wallen** also ties his highest Country Airplay debut as new single “Been by Now” (Mercury/Big Loud) launches at No. 13 (14.7 million). It matches “Love Somebody,” which bowed in November 2024 before reaching No. 1 just 14 weeks later.

“Been by Now” is only the seventh song in Country Airplay’s 36-year history to debut at No. 13 or higher. **Garth Brooks**’ “More Than a Memory” remains the only No. 1 debut, in 2007, while **Taylor Swift**’s “I Knew It, I Knew You” (Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville) became the only other song to start in the top 10 (No. 8 in June); it bullets at No. 9 on the latest list (20.3 million, up 3%). ●



SPIDEY SMITH

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+14.640	
BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	+2.889	
ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	+1.703	
LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+1.673	
BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+1.222	
I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE SAWGOD/Columbia/Big Loud/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen	+0.919	
CARRY ON Warner/HEY NOW	Kenny Chesney	+0.892	
COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	+0.828	
CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	+0.659	
RETHINK SOME THINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+0.571	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+3148	
BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	+432	
COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	+311	
CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	+286	
LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+278	
ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	+263	
CARRY ON Warner/HEY NOW	Kenny Chesney	+194	
I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville	Taylor Swift	+191	
RETHINK SOME THINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+190	
BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+170	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	20.207
2	BE HER SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	19.846
3	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	14.905
4	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	10.711
5	DARLIN' Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	8.580
6	AMEN American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey & Jelly Roll	8.429
7	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	8.312
8	I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring Post Malone	8.303
9	TURN THIS TRUCK AROUND MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	8.262
10	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	7.774

TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING JULY 30, 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	18	REASONS TO CALL (Get Joe) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Billie Jo	2065	93	11	10	16	I DON'T DRINK ANYMORE (Independent)	Timothy Howls	1461	77
2	3	18	HARD TO WRITE A LOVE SONG (Independent)	Mike Ryan	1967	117	12	18	13	GUINEVERE (T3R Music Group)	Sundance Head	1328	160
3	4	12	RAIN (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	Wade Bowen	1848	90	13	17	9	HIGHWAY ROBBERY (Leo33)	Jason Scott & The High Heat	1325	153
4	5	14	DOWN BY THE RIVER (Independent)	Seth Candan	1776	69	14	14	17	YOU AND WHISKEY (Independent)	Chuck Wimer & Brandi Behlen	1289	39
5	6	16	FLOORBOARD FULL OF ROSES (Ranger Music Group)	David Lewis	1671	99	15	15	13	THIRD ROW GEORGE STRAIT (Independent)	Frank Ray	1263	54
6	8	12	TAKE IT EASY COWGIRL (Independent)	Aaron Loy	1599	139	16	20	15	MIDNIGHT BLUES (Independent)	Selestial Alcoser	1232	82
7	9	11	HIGH NOON (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1532	118	17	19	17	IT'S YOU (Independent)	Roses and Weeds	1192	30
8	11	15	THAT'S WHAT COWBOYS DO (Lonely River)	Curtis Grimes	1490	111	18	16	24	IF YOU KNOW YOU KNOW (Synapse)	Derryl Perry	1156	-30
9	7	18	WHISKEY AFTER WOMEN (Write On)	Adysen Malek	1478	-15	19	22	17	HARD TIME MOVING ON (Cowboys & Sailors)	The Great Divide	1069	0
10	13	10	UNCERTAIN, TX (Lost Highway/Interscope)	Kacey Musgraves feat. Willie Nelson	1469	160	20	23	12	AIN'T THAT A DRINK (Soundline Management)	Ronnie Bowen	1046	37

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

billboardCountry Airplay

AIRPLAY
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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
1	1	22	DON'T WE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	★★ No. 1 (2 Weeks) ★★ Morgan Wallen	33.627	+0.066	8894	85	1
2	2	14	I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE SAWGOD/Columbia/Big Loud/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen	32.500	+0.919	8265	78	2
3	4	18	BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	28.226	+1.222	7472	170	3
4	3	22	DON'T TELL ON ME Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	28.012	-3.558	6718	-1070	5
5	5	42	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	25.013	+0.659	7114	286	4
6	6	45	HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	22.544	-0.222	5424	166	9
7	9	15	BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	21.931	+2.889	5673	432	8
8	7	20	WOMAN Zone 4/RCA Nashville/SMN	Kane Brown	20.590	+0.357	5967	46	6
9	8	8	I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville	Taylor Swift	20.337	+0.567	5799	191	7
10	10	12	CARRY ON Warner/HEY NOW	Kenny Chesney	19.633	+0.892	5381	194	10
11	11	56	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	16.706	+0.367	4705	122	12
12	12	26	RIDE, RIDE, RIDE RECORDS/MCA Nashville/RECORDS Nashville	George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	15.877	-0.068	4739	48	11
13	NEW		BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	★★ Hot Shot Debut/Airpower/Breaker/Most Increased Audience ★★ Morgan Wallen	14.690	+14.640	3163	3148	18
14	13	18	COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	14.181	+0.828	4277	311	13
15	14	47	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	13.786	+1.703	3638	263	14
16	15	33	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33	Zach Top	12.043	+0.380	3248	54	16
17	17	23	GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	10.918	+0.008	3245	7	17
18	18	17	SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Dan + Shay	10.847	+0.304	3345	88	15
19	16	10	THINK AS YOU DRUNK Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	10.727	-0.198	3057	92	21
20	20	8	PHONE, KEYS, WALLET Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson & John Mayer	10.101	+0.269	3090	66	19
21	19	26	MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	9.208	-1.004	3072	-250	20
22	21	28	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Jon Pardi	8.963	+0.390	2889	119	22
23	23	6	HANDS UP Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	8.328	+0.177	2458	29	24
24	22	55	EASY TO LOVE Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch	8.002	-0.152	2484	-12	23
25	24	4	LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	7.875	+1.673	2006	278	28
26	25	23	PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	6.483	+0.308	2066	93	26
27	26	32	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greytan James	5.944	-0.228	2248	-29	25
28	27	31	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	5.474	-0.079	1877	113	30
29	28	25	LET HIM IN ANYWAY Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	5.226	+0.294	2013	3	27
30	31	15	MEDICINE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	4.301	+0.526	1412	114	32

COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART LEGEND

RANKINGS

Country Airplay is ranked by total audience impressions for the week ending Sunday based on monitored airplay by Mediabase of 145 stations by Luminate. Audience totals on the chart are derived, in part, using certain Nielsen Audio-copyrighted Persons 12+ audience estimates (under license © 2026, Nielsen Audio). The list of all Country Airplay chart reporters can be viewed in Luminate's online platform.

TIES

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

BULLETS

Awarded on Country Airplay to titles gaining audience or remaining flat from the previous week. Titles that decline in audience but increase in detections will also receive a bullet if the total audience erosion for the week does not exceed 3%.

RECURRENTS

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

HOT SHOT DEBUT

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

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

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

AIRPOWER

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

BREAKER

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

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billboard Country Airplay

 AIRPLAY
MONITORED BY
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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	30	44	LONG LIVE COUNTRY Triple Tigers	Shane Profitt	4.063	+0.051	1584	27	31
32	29	27	HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	4.041	-0.095	1909	92	29
33	35	3	RETHINK SOMETHINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	3.989	+0.571	1275	190	36
34	33	23	KILLIN' ME MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	3.613	-0.064	1379	-40	34
35	32	16	MOVE ON American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Kevin Powers & Shaboozey	3.612	-0.077	1381	13	33
36	34	11	DRY SPELL Kacey Musgraves/Lost Highway	Kacey Musgraves	3.383	-0.120	1104	-1	40
37	37	7	HORSEBACK CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	3.249	+0.158	1171	36	37
38	36	22	WHAT IF WE DON'T Warner Music Nashville/WRN	Ashley McBryde	3.090	-0.102	1347	-30	35
39	RE-ENTRY		NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	2.825	+0.031	1117	0	39
40	38	14	WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Goat Island Sound/Mercury Nashville	Jacob Hackworth	2.559	+0.108	1164	-1	38
41	39	9	EMPTY WORDS Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Corey Kent	2.477	+0.068	854	31	44
42	44	3	WHO TOLD YOU THAT Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	1.917	+0.343	615	60	55
43	43	19	GOOD DAMN Wheelhouse	Brantley Gilbert	1.908	+0.183	1002	59	41
44	41	26	WHEN A COWBOY PRAYS Brandon Lake/Essential/SMN	Brandon Lake X Cody Johnson	1.820	-0.156	739	-73	49
45	42	10	LAND Hubbard House/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	1.740	-0.146	873	-14	43
46	45	12	WANNABE Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Gavin Adcock	1.631	+0.063	801	2	46
47	49	7	I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE Boss Moves/Black River/Akando ★★ Breaker ★★	Chris Young	1.590	+0.190	683	75	51
48	46	9	HURTS LIKE YOU YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel	1.444	+0.018	511	-43	60
49	47	13	LOVE IS BLIND WEST TO THE REST/Triple Tigers	Ian Munsick	1.383	-0.034	836	6	45
50	50	17	BACK IN THE BOTTLE Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	1.335	+0.040	935	-21	42
51	52	19	IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY Stoney Creek/Nashville Harbor	Carly Pearce & Riley Green	1.249	+0.026	643	7	52
52	51	22	KEEPS ME SANE Tyler Nance/Santa Anna/Akando	Tyler Nance	1.245	+0.007	701	-20	50
53	48	6	GIRL DAD Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Cole Swindell	1.216	-0.188	739	12	48
54	53	24	PSYCHOLOGICAL Nashville Harbor	The Band Perry	1.198	-0.009	782	-18	47
55	54	11	BETTER THAT WAY Mercury/Big Loud	Charles Wesley Godwin & Luke Combs	1.096	+0.019	639	32	53
56	58	3	YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY True To The Song/Big Machine	Caroline Jones	1.077	+0.117	635	28	54
57	60	2	NOTHIN' BETTERTO DO Gatsby/MCA Nashville	Carter Faith & Wyatt Flores	1.020	+0.109	529	42	59
58	59	5	DEAR BIG CITY Curb	Dylan Scott	0.997	+0.076	575	68	56
59	56	5	BABY BLUES Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	0.924	-0.070	497	-48	-
60	55	10	GOD KNEW BETTER Stoney Creek	Parmalee	0.893	-0.123	550	-23	57



Parker McCollum visited with WHKO Dayton, Ohio, staff when he played the Nutter Center on July 25. From left: WHKO PD/morning personality Nancy Wilson, MCA Nashville director of Midwest promotion Donna Passuntino, McCollum and WHKO midday host Nikki Montgomery.



Lainey Wilson joined Switchfoot, including vocalist/guitarist Jon Foreman, as the alternative rock band made its Grand Ole Opry debut on July 23.

CHRIS HOLLO

billboard

60TH CMA AWARDS

2026

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF THE CMA AWARDS

Please join *Billboard* as we celebrate 60 years of “Country Music’s Biggest Night.” For six decades, the CMA Awards have recognized the artists and industry professionals whose creativity and dedication continue to define country music. This special editorial feature honors the unforgettable performances, iconic moments, and lasting legacy of one of music’s most celebrated awards shows.

Founded in 1958, the Country Music Association became the first trade organization established to promote a single genre of music. Less than a decade later, the inaugural CMA Awards Banquet and Show was held in 1967, launching what would become country music’s highest peer-voted honor. First televised in 1968 and now the longest-running annual music awards program on network television, the CMA Awards have continued to recognize excellence across every facet of the industry.

Voted on by more than 7,000 CMA members, the awards celebrate the artists, musicians, songwriters, producers, broadcasters, touring professionals, executives, and countless behind-the-scenes contributors who shape the genre year after year. More than an annual awards show, the CMA Awards have become a reflection of country music’s evolution, honoring both its rich traditions and its next generation of stars.

As the industry celebrates this diamond anniversary, *Billboard* will look back at six decades of unforgettable performances, groundbreaking achievements, and the people who transformed the CMA Awards into the biggest night in country music. Join us in commemorating the legacy of an institution that has celebrated the very best of country music for 60 years.

CONTACT

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ISSUE DATE 10/10 | AD CLOSE 9/29 | MATERIALS DUE 10/1

NASHVILLE & NATIONAL TOM ROLAND tom.roland@billboard.com

Craig Campbell and songwriter Lance Carpenter ("Love Me Like You Mean It") performed July 23 at the Lake Martin Songwriters Festival in Alexander City, Ala. From left: Campbell, festival chairman Steven Pace, Campbell Entertainment Group founder Craig Campbell and Carpenter.

ERV WOOLSEY COMPANY SHUTTERS

The Erv Woolsey Company, named for the longtime manager of Country Music Hall of Fame member **George Strait**, announced its closure on July 31.

The company was formed in 1983 as Woolsey focused his attention fulltime on the singer, who he'd first heard eight years prior performing at the Prairie Rose, a San Marcos, Texas, club that Woolsey owned. Woolsey helped get Strait a recording deal with MCA Nashville, where Woolsey worked in radio promotion. Those connections ultimately led to a signature career, beginning with the 1981 single "Unwound."

Woolsey expanded the enterprise in subsequent years, working at times with the likes of **Clay Walker**, **Lee Ann Womack**, **Dierks Bentley** and **Ronnie Milsap**.

The firm continued to operate following Woolsey's death in 2024 under the guidance of CEO **Clinton Woolsey**.

With the company's closure, its employees are refocusing their efforts separately. Clinton will continue as lead singer of rock band **Stone Senate**. Woolsey representative **Dottie Oelhafen** founded The Artist Desk Co. where she will continue working independently with Strait and Clinton.

Artist manager **Allen Mitchell** formed Reverie Ranch Music Group, and will continue working with **Michael Ray**, **Jenna Paulette**, **Tyler Booth**, **Adam Hood**, **Stone Senate**, **Cledus T. Judd** and **The Davisson Brothers**.

Reach Clinton [here](#), Oelhafen [here](#) and Mitchell [here](#).

RADIO & RECORDS®

Sony Music Nashville announced the signing of a Texas-bred duo — **Bottomland**, featuring **Cannon Brand** and **Justin Gates** — on July 31. The first music in the agreement, "We're About to Break Up," was released the same day ... Developing artist **Alli Walker** signed a recording deal with Huff Co. and ON-Erpm and released a new track, "Dog at the Door," on July 31 ... Artist-writer **Izzy Mahoubi**, whose multi-genre influences have landed her in Americana-leaning music festivals, signed with independent 3686 Records ... **Kelly Sutton** takes over as the lead personality in the **WSM-AM** Nashville morning show on Aug. 10 after five years on the team. **Bill Cody**, who spent three decades as the show's primary host, died June 9. **Charlie Mattos** and studio director **Annie Ney** remain in place with frequent appearances by Sutton's Amazon

Music co-host **Amber Anderson** ... **Ian Rambo** joined Connoisseur/Fredricksburg, Va., as operations manager, overseeing four stations, including country **WFLS**. He arrives from a similar position at Riverfront/Rapid City, S.D., where the six-station cluster includes country **KZZI** ... Zimmer Communications and Mid-West Family Broadcasting are merging their operations in Springfield, Mo., to create a nine-state cluster, RadioInsight.com reported. The signals include Mid-West's classic country **KOMG**, and Zimmer's country **KZMO** and classic country **KWTO**.

'ROUND THE ROW

Borchetta Entertainment Group welcomed two co-VPs to the management company: **Kevin Spellman** and **Henley Halem**. Spellman spent 17 years as a manager at Vector Management in Nashville, while Halem worked in several industry sectors before settling in management, spending the last two years with Vector in Los Angeles ... G Major Management hired two new employees: day-to-day manager **Taylor Venis** and assistant day-to-day manager **Kenzie Couch**. Venis was most recently Big Loud director of special events; Couch's last role was as MCA promotion coordinator. Venis will handle daily management duties for **Mae Estes**, who joined the G Major roster along with artist-writer **Clayton Mullen** ... **Allison Pilotti** joined Ten Ten Music Group as head of creative following a five-year run at River House, where she wrapped her tenure as manager of A&R + publishing ... Nashville radio vet **Devon O'Day** launched Devon's Farm Media, focused on PR, media strategy and podcast production, among other services ... As **Dolly Parton** prepares for the opening of her SongTeller Hotel in Nashville, her company hired four employees for the related attraction, Dolly's Life of Many Colors Museum: guest experience managers **Dustin Shetley** and **Meg Harkins**; financial analyst **Steven Hart**; and operations coordinator **Pam Alterio**. Shetley was formerly an assistant store manager with The North Face in Columbus, Ohio; Harkins was previously Ryman Auditorium tours assistant manager and training specialist; Hart spent six years as Alpine Association Benefits operations lead in Colorado; and Alterio is a former operations coordinator with El Segundo, Calif.-based Clementine Paper ... Cornman Music and Warner Chappell Nashville signed artist-writer **Caldwell** to a publishing deal ... **Ryan Bingham** joined the music roster at WME ... Truly Handmade Records, representing the recorded catalogs of **Guy Clark** and **Susanna Clark**, added their works to the Humanable artist roster, a move that acknowledges no artificial intelligence influenced their creation ... Ten artists form the initial lineup for "Riding with the King: A Tribute to John Hiatt," a Nov. 9 concert at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium that marks the 30th annual Concert for Cumberland Heights. **Keith Urban**, **Rosanne Cash**, **Steve Earle** and **Rodney Crowell** are among the first announced, with an appearance also planned by **Hiatt** himself ... Drummer **Stan Perkins**, 72, died July 22 in Jackson, Tenn. The last surviving son of rock 'n' roll pioneer **Carl Perkins**, he toured in his father's band, which also included his brother, bassist **Greg Perkins**. The sons joined the senior Perkins to co-write **Dolly Parton**'s 1991 country single, "Single and Gold." ●



WOOLSEY

COURTESY/ERVWOOLSEY.CO



Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum writer-editor Jon Freeman (left) interviewed producer Buddy Cannon (Willie Nelson, Kenny Chesney) on July 25 in conjunction with the museum's new exhibit "Kenny Chesney: Living in Fast Forward."

billboard

2026

R&B / HIP-HOP POWER ISSUE

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

On Aug. 22, *Billboard* will publish its R&B/Hip-Hop Power Players issue showcasing the artists, producers and executives who have made R&B/hip-hop the hottest genre on earth.

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



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International Ryan O'Donnell | rodonnell@pmc.com

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

billboard Country Airplay Index

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

A

ALL MY EXES lylas Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/These Are Pulse Songs, BMI/PASSTHEAT PUBLISHING, BMI/Only Legends Music, BMI/Ben Thre 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.J.Johnson, W.Phillips) **15**

B

BABY BLUES Not Listed (A.Cooke, J.Clawson, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, K.Sturrock) **59**

BACK IN THE BOTTLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/I'm Your Huckleberry Music, BMI (R.Houser) **50**

BE BY YOU Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Songs By Porchlight, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Highway 75 Publishing, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Wildhawk Publishing, BMI (D. Alley, S.Banks, N.Waish) **3**

BEEN BY NOW Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (M.C.Wallen, R.H.Block, J.Byron, B.Pendergrass, T.Phillips, Charlie Handsome) **13**

BETTER THAT WAY Charles Wesley Godwin Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alligator Quatro, ASCAP/Scrambler Music, ASCAP/Music Garden Studios Publishing, BMI (C.W.Godwin, Scooter Carouse, A.Torrence) **55**

BOOTS OFF Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR/Songs Of CN, GMR (J.Pardi, W.McCubbin, L.Laird) **22**

BOSTON I3117 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Grace Enger Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Joel Reeves Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/LMC Is The Place For Me Publishing, ASCAP/Secret Meadow Songs, ASCAP/Sony Allegro, ASCAP/Stella Lety Music, ASCAP (G.Enger, J.K.Hindlin, J.Reeves, N.Kahan, S.Lefty) **7**

C

CARRY ON Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Big Blue Nation Music, ASCAP/Combustion Five, ASCAP/Damn Country Music Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP (R.C.McGill, M.Jenkins, J.L.Alexander) **10**

CHEVY SILVERADO Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sparko Phone Music, BMI/Gavin J. Lucas Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Vacant Heart Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Gail Zimmerman Publishing, BMI (T.Beathard, J.Luber, B.J.Jones, H.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **5**

COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Trailer Parker Twang Lab, BMI/Hometeam Publishing LLC, BMI/Kilometer Music Group B, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP (J.L.Miller, P.Welling, M.Dragstrem) **14**

D

DEAR BIG CITY Anthem Music Publishing II, SESAC/Brooks Money Songs, SESAC/Anthem Music Publishing I, BMI/Single Life Songs, BMI/Pirate89 Publishing, BMI (M. Alderman, N.Kenyon, J.Paulin) **58**

DON'T TELL ON ME Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Triples Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/IrishsonnMusic, BMI/Kwsay Publishing, BMI/Writersonthecon Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (K.M.Allison, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan, L.Vaughan) **4**

DON'T WE Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Poggy's Picks, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (M.C.Wallen, R.H.Block, J.Byron, A.G.Gorley, B.Pendergrass, Charlie Handsome) **1**

DRY SPELL Recordings Of Cosmic Intent, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Sony Lyric Music Publishing, GMR/CN Songs From 1508, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR/Smackworld Music, GMR/Art Of CMT Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs For Indy And Owl, ASCAP (K.Musgraves, L.Laird, S.McAnally, J.Osborne) **36**

E

EASY TO LOVE Hit Train Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Ben Thre 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/PTNB Publishing, ASCAP (D. Lynch, B.J.Johnson, J.R.Hall, H.Phelps, Z.Crowell) **24**

EMPTY WORDS Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Corey Kent Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Lightning Street Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Bada Bing Bada Boom Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (Corey Kent, A.Goodloe, M.Roy, J.Taylor, L.Vaughan) **41**

G

GET TO DRINKIN' Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Works By Kinda Country Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Brady James Music, BMI/Akin For Jonas Music, BMI/8 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) **17**

GIRL DAD Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Colden Rainey Music, BMI/Michael Tyler Music, SESAC/MT Room, SESAC/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC/Young Guns Tunes, SESAC/Made A Huge Mistake Music, BMI/Dead Aim Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (C. Swindell, M.Tyler, B.M.Steinig) **53**

GOD KNEW BETTER Concord Copyrights, BMI/Camp James Music, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/53 Creative, BMI/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tackelbox Publishing, ASCAP/8936 Music, BMI/Parmalee Music Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Matt Thomas Music Publishing, BMI (A. Dean, D.Fanning, J.Collazo, A.Albert, M.Thomas, B.Knox, J.McSwain, S.Thomas) **60**

GOOD DAMN Indiana Angel Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Rednecker Music, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (G.Gilbert, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, T.Phillips) **43**

H

HANDS UP Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Better Bad Songs, SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippines 4:7 Songs, BMI (J.B.DeFord, R.H.Block, J.A.Fox, M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill) **23**

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) **6**

HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela 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) **32**

HORSEBACK Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI/Little Acre Music, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Sounds Of Soperman Music Publishing, ASCAP (R.Montana, W.McCubbin, P.Sikes) **37**

HURTS LIKE YOU Yellabush Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poggy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/These Are Songs Of Pulse, ASCAP/Gabe Simon Pub Designee, ASCAP/Smells Like Good Music, ASCAP/Reservoir Media Music, ASCAP (R.Wetzel, A.G.Gorley, G.Simon, Carrie K. S.Jones) **48**

I

I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI (E.Langley, A.Goodloe, J.Taylor) **2**

I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Sir Reginald The Fifth, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Flint River, BMI/Kyle Fishman Music, BMI/Play It Again Entertainment, BMI (C.Young, D.Davidson, K.A.Fishman) **47**

IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Black Jeans Music, BMI/Neon Cross Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Crazy Baby Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Turtle Garden Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Mouth Feel Music Publishing, ASCAP (D.Dawson, S.W.Ennis, J.T.Minton, J.Reynolds) **51**

I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU Wonderland Music Company, Inc., BMI/Pixar Music, BMI/Walt Disney Music Company, ASCAP/Pixar Talking Pictures, ASCAP (T.Swift, J.M.Antonoff) **9**

K

KEEPS ME SANE Anthems Of Platinum Grammer, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP/Copyright Control (C.T.L.Nance, D.Napier, B.McCollough) **52**

KID MYSELF Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (J.Morgan, T.R.Hubbard, J.M.Schmidt) **11**

KILLIN' ME Parkermac Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Endless Tour Music, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid II, BMI/Heavy Lefty Music, BMI (P.McCollum, R.Rogers, M.Criswell) **34**

L

LAND T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Songs For Knox, BMI/HAYLO Music Works, ASCAP) Of 6, ASCAP/Endurance Music Group, ASCAP (T.R.Hubbard, Z.Aband, G.J.Egan, C.Smith) **45**

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.Wallace) **29**

LONG LIVE COUNTRY Shane Proffitt Publishing Designee, BMI/Zippizmusic, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI (S.Proffitt, M.J.Rogers, L.Rimes) **31**

LOVE IS BLIND Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Crawbaby Music, BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Harolds Purple Heart Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Abundantiam Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (L.Munsick, R.Tyndell, J.N.Spillman) **49**

LOVING LIFE AGAIN Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Langley, E.K.Smith, D.Dawson) **25**

M

MCARTHUR Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Relative Music Group Family, ASCAP/Head Coach Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippines 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Old Bandana, BMI (M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill, J.Rodgers, J.Thompson) **21**

MEDICINE Universal Tunes, SESAC/Georgiamo, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Triples 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) **30**

MOVE ON Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Cabrera Music, BMI/EMPIRE Strikes First, BMI/Nearis Publishing, SESAC/EMPIRE San Francisco, SESAC/Kreshendo, ASCAP/Songs Of 78, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Beat Stars Publishing, ASCAP/Torrey Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (T.W.Kane, K.J.Powers, C.O.Chibueze, S.Sanchez, D.R.Stevens, A.Cabrera, J.Torrey) **35**

N

NEVER COMIN' BACK ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Invoked Lamb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Lyric Music Publishing, GMR/CN Songs From 1508, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR (C. Cordera, L.Laird, A.Retiere) **39**

NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Birds Of Biltmore Songs, BMI/Vincent Mason Publishing, BMI/Smackwood Music, GMR/Art Of CMT Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Samuel Tyler Johnson Publishing Designee, BMI (C.F.Jones, V.Mason, S.McAnally, J.J.Dillon, S.T.Johnson) **57**

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PAINTED YOU PRETTY Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Saxet HW Music, BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI (H.Westbrook, Lukas Scott, B.Bailey) **26**

PHONE, KEYS, WALLET Sony Countryside, BMI/Story Farmer, BMI/Songs Of One Riot Music, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/Matchless Publishing LLC Pub Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Drown Boogie Music, BMI/Songs Of Wild Cat Well Music, BMI/Native Notes Music, BMI/Thomas Hull Publishing Designee, PRS/Universal Music Publishing Ltd. (UK), PRS (L.Wilson, J.Decious, D.Pellarin, D.Wilson, T.Anderson, S.Overstreet, T.E.Phill) **20**

PSYCHOLOGICAL Smack Back Music, BMI/Concord Baritone CCJ, BMI/Midtown Mistake Publishing, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Colton Venner Publishing, BMI (C.Park, G.Tyler, C.Venner) **54**

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RETHINK SOME THINGS Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Show Me Your Titles LLC, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Bent Prop Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Countryside, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Racks And Plaques Publishing, BMI/Hits Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI (L.Combs, J.Davis, D.Issell, R.Issell) **33**

RIDE, RIDE, RIDE Big Music Machine, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/T Tree Music, BMI (G.C.Birge, T.R.Hubbard, C.Brown, P.Welling) **12**

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SAY SO Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Eleventh Wave Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Livridge Music, ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP (D.Smyers, S.Mooney, D.H.Hodges, J.Robbins) **18**

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/Do What I Do, BMI/Getysome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nesler) **16**

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THINK AS YOU DRUNK Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Flatland Boy Music, BMI/Hits Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Little Acre Music, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Where I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Florida Cracker Music, BMI (R.Green, J.L.Alexander, Erik Dylan, W.McCubbin, S.Emerick, T.Keith) **19**

W

WANNABE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Good Cock Tunes, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Bo Wallace Publishing, BMI/Murphy The Wolf Music, BMI/Mandy's Favorite Songs, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Jimmy Sad Publishing, BMI/Ernest Music Publishing Designee, BMI (G. Adcock, J.R.Durrett, B.Clawson, E.K.Smith, M.C.Wallen) **46**

WATER AT A WEDDING Relative Red Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Super Big Music, BMI/Philippines 4:7 Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippines 4:7 Songs, BMI/Songs For Knox, BMI (G.J.Egan, M.Dragstrem, R.C.McGill) **27**

WHAT IF WE DON'T Beejo Fetch Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Song Factory, BMI/Merf Music Publishing LLC, BMI/Cotton Sounds, BMI/Songs Of Merf Music LLC, BMI (A.McBryde, T.J.Box, R.Clay) **38**

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/T Villi Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Finally Got Some Publishing, BMI/Songs By 10K HRS Publishing, BMI/Goat Island Palms, LLC, BMI/Smells Like Good Music, ASCAP/Reservoir Media Music, ASCAP (J.A.Hackworth, D.Ross, J.Free, S.Jones) **40**

WHEN A COWBOY PRAYS Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Brandon Lake Music, ASCAP/All Essential Music, ASCAP/Pravin 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) **44**

WHO TOLD YOU THAT Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC/Peertunes, Ltd., SESAC/Rocky Creek James, ASCAP/Tape Room 2.0, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poggy's Picks, ASCAP (J.M.Schmidt, M.Tyler, H.Phelps, A.G.Gorley) **42**

WOMAN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Family Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poggy'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) **8**

WORTH YOUR WILD Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Home Team Music, BMI/Tunes Of TrailerParker, BMI/Track & Feels, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC (R.Dickerson, P.Welling, C.Brown) **28**

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YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY Bare Feet Publishing LLC, BMI/RobMadeThis, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Dark Bars Music, BMI/Haus Of Kings, ASCAP (C.D.Jones, R.Grimaldi, L.McLamb, B.Ratcliff) **56**

billboard

2026

TOP LATIN POWER PLAYERS

On Oct. 10, *Billboard* will profile the most influential people in Latin music, from label executives, music publishers and managers to leaders in media and live entertainment.

Join *Billboard* in congratulating this year's Latin Power Players.



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International Ryan O'Donnell | rodonnell@billboard.com

West Coast Aki Kaneko | moishekaneko@gmail.com

ISSUE DATE 10/10 | AD CLOSE 9/29 | MATERIALS DUE 10/1

25

25 Years Ago When Jamie O'Neal Called On 'Angels' For Her Second No. 1

Her two chart-toppers also brought her a pair of Grammy nominations

It wasn't exactly Christmas, but "Angels" were heard on high during the summer of 2001.

Australian-born **Jamie O'Neal** ascended to No. 1 for the second time on the *Billboard* Hot Country Songs chart dated Aug. 4 with "When I Think About Angels."

Co-written with **Roxie Dean** ("Why They Call It Falling") and **Sonny Tillis**, the bright midtempo embraced a romantic obsession with a chorus built around a thought chain: the singer's mind progresses from thoughts of rain through several links to thoughts about angels

and, ultimately, thoughts "about you."

Produced by **Keith Stegall** (**Alan Jackson**, **Zac Brown Band**), "Angels" featured O'Neal's husband, **Rodney Good**, as a backing vocalist. Its August reign came the same month as the one-year anniversary of their marriage, and the anniversary of her chart debut with "There Is No Arizona," which became her first No. 1 single.

Both "Arizona" and "Angels" were nominated in 2002 for best country song in the Grammy Awards, making her the first female to double up in that category since **Donna Fargo** in 1973.

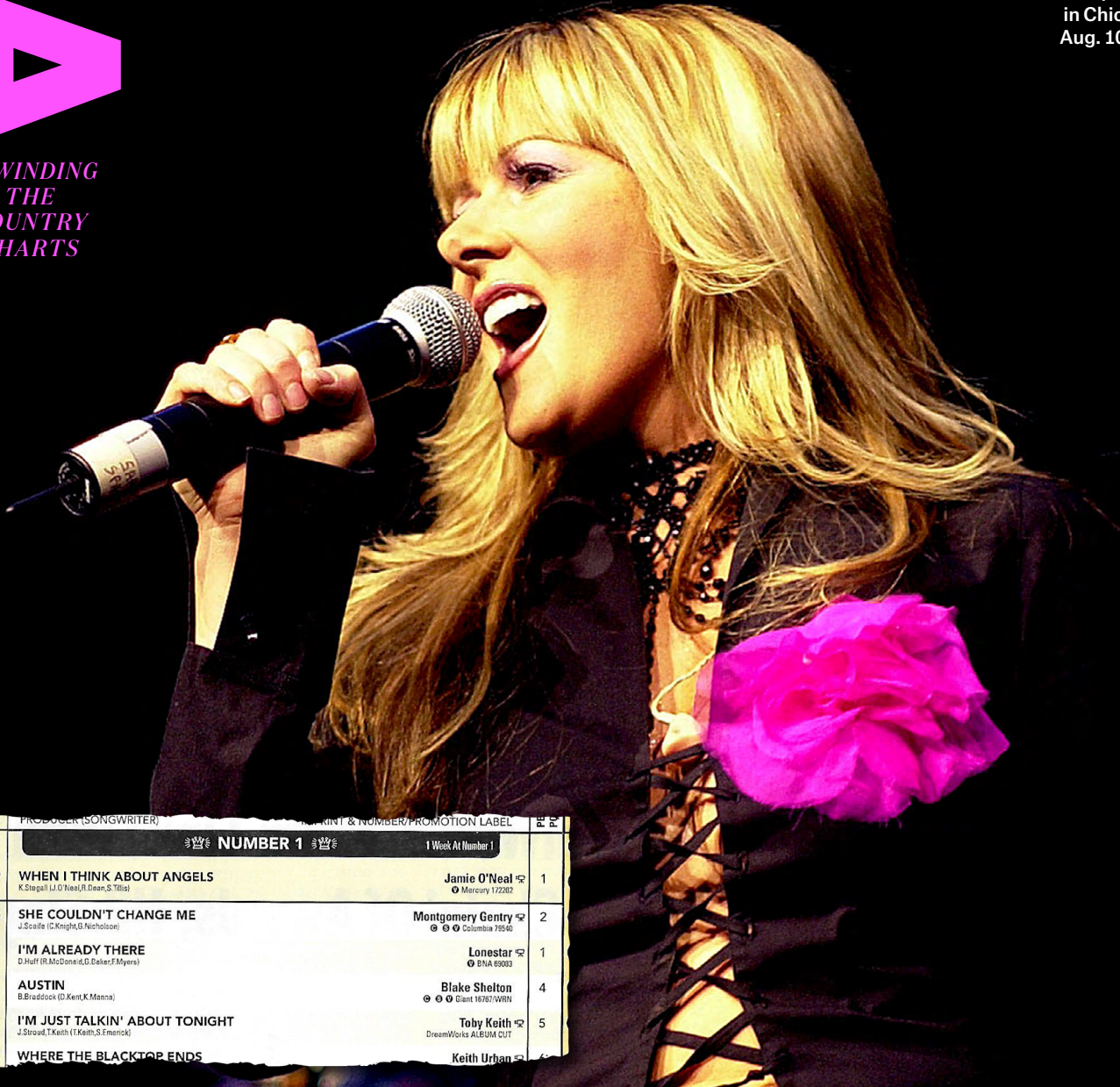
As "Angels" hovered over the genre, O'Neal accompanied **Reba McEntire**, **Martina McBride**, **Sara Evans** and **Carolyn Dawn Johnson** in the 25-date Girls Night Out Tour, the first country arena package to feature five women.

O'Neal revisited "When I Think About Angels" in a 2020 recording with McBride, and she reimagined "Arizona" in a 2025 collaboration with **The Isaacs**. She also issued a new album, *Gypsum*, on Jan. 23, 2026. O'Neal's likely to perform both of her signature songs July 31 at Nashville's Harken Hall.

—TOM ROLAND

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

O'Neal performs in Chicago on Aug. 10, 2001.



				PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	PERFORMER & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL	
					NUMBER 1	1 Week At Number 1
1	3	3	19	WHEN I THINK ABOUT ANGELS K.Stegall (J.O'Neal/R.Dean/S.Tillis)	Jamie O'Neal Mercury 122282	1
2	2	2	26	SHE COULDN'T CHANGE ME J.Scottie (C.Knight/G.Nicholson)	Montgomery Gentry Columbia 79540	2
3	1	1	17	I'M ALREADY THERE D.Huff (R.McDonald/G.Gelzer/F.Myers)	Lonestar BNA 69093	1
4	4	6	15	AUSTIN B.Braddock (D.Kent/K.Manna)	Blake Shelton Giant 16787/VWN	4
5	5	8	11	I'M JUST TALKIN' ABOUT TONIGHT J.Stroud/T.Keith (T.Keith/S.Emanick)	Toby Keith DreamWorks ALBUM CUT	5
6	7	10	17	WHERE THE BLACKTOP ENDS	Keith Urban	6

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