

billboard Country Update

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Women's Country Chart Rebound: How It Reflects The Genre's Past, And Maybe Our Future

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Dolly Parton's death on Aug. 25 came at an interesting moment in time.

Parton lived long enough to know — if she paid attention to current charts and trends — that the path she blazed for women is likely in good hands. Earlier in the month — on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart dated Aug. 4 — women occupied each of the top five positions on the list for the seventh week in a row. Females had dominated that tier several times in the past, but never more than two weeks in a row.

During much of the last decade, women received short shrift in country music. On several occasions, females were missing entirely from the top 20 of Country Airplay.

This new rise in chart status is led by **Ella Langley**, **Stella Lefty** and **Lainey Wilson** and aided by the return of **Taylor Swift** to the genre through her *Toy Story 5* contribution "I Knew It, I Knew You." It will only be known as time unfolds whether this moment is a short-term blip or a more permanent market correction, though several factors — the demographics of the audience, the format's need for sonic variety and the sheer

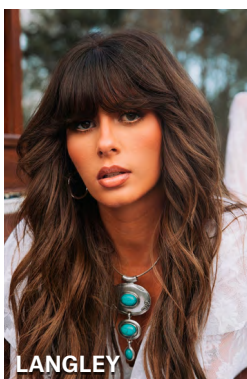
determination of women — all suggest that the industry is unlikely to become a desert for women again in the near future.

"Is it a market correction? Yes," says Warner Records Nashville chair/president **Cris Lacy**. "It's one that needed to happen because our audience is male and female. There need to be representatives of the audience in the format, and equal — as much as you can — [in that] representation."

Parton's arrival on the national scene in 1967 — the year after the National Organization for Women was founded — reflected the gender attitudes of the era. After she landed two solo singles on Hot Country Songs, she accepted the role of "girl singer" in **Porter Wagoner's**

operation, which brought TV exposure on his syndicated show and made her an important cog in his concert tours.

The two of them fought on numerous occasions as Wagoner took a stereotypical view of their roles. She longed to be on her own, and by the time she left his employ in 1974, she was actually a bigger solo artist than Wagoner, thanks to her core hits "Coat of Many Colors," "Jolene" and "I Will Always Love You." She was a unique force — no other country woman has



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become as successful in as many platforms as Parton — but she became an inspiration for every female artist that has followed her in the genre. She not only employed a one-of-a-kind voice to a series of important songs, she subtly clapped back at the patriarchal architecture of the business, playfully using her sexuality to both attract attention and disarm potential detractors of either sex.

“She’s such an empowering force that has given a guiding light to women like me who kind of love to step on the boundaries just a little bit,” says **Kaitlin Butts**. “She’s such a great example of somebody that just does it the right way: says it with grace, but also likes to be a little raunchy sometimes.”

In the generation preceding Parton, women were generally treated as second-class artists. **Kitty Wells**, **Patsy Montana**, **Rose Maddox** and **Patsy Cline** were told they could never sell enough tickets to headline and were encouraged to dress demurely, to avoid creating jealousy among the married women in the fan base.

Parton and her peers — **Loretta Lynn**, **Tammy Wynette**, **Reba McEntire** and **Barbara Mandrell** — made enough gains that they were able to step out on their own. All but Wynette were named the Country Music Association’s entertainer of the year, and they set a precedent for the next wave of women, including **Shania Twain**, **Faith Hill**, **Terri Clark** and **Martina McBride**.

Men wanted to believe that the women were all fighting with each other. Some of that did occur, but mostly, they recognized that they shared unique hurdles: their hair and makeup rituals required more time and money than their male counterparts, radio programmers often refused to play them consecutively in their rotations, and label executives would brush off potential signees if they already had one or two females on the roster.

Women primarily supported each other, as when **Lorrie Morgan**, **Pam Tillis** and **Carlene Carter** organized an all-female tour in 1995, and when the **Girls Night Out Tour** — featuring McEntire, McBride, **Sara Evans**, **Jamie O’Neal** and **Carolyn Dawn Johnson** — hit the trail in 2001.

When the bro-country era featured songs about field parties, drinking and one-night stands, cultural double standards put women at a disadvantage. They were generally dissuaded from addressing those topics, though **Maddie & Tae**’s “Girl in a Country Song” managed to poke fun at the trend.

Carrie Underwood, **Miranda Lambert** and **Kacey Musgraves** thrived during that era, and their tenacity is something of a bridge to the new generation of female country artists. It’s appropriate, for example, that Lambert co-wrote Langley’s record-busting “Choosin’ Texas” while Underwood is mentoring young artists as a judge on ABC’s *American Idol*.

“I love that Miranda’s involved — the multi-generational success of ‘Choosin’ Texas’ is so cool,” says **Brandi Cyrus**. “It’s a really cool time in music.”

Langley, like Lambert, is sharing her success with other members of the women’s club.

“Ella is bringing other women on stage with her, from **Madeline Edwards** to **Laci Kaye Booth** to Kaitlin Butts,” FEMco founder **Leslie Fram** says. “All these women are doing this. I feel like this is the moment that now we’re finally going to course-correct.”

Parton’s SongTeller Hotel, prior to the singer’s death, aligned with Fram to start a showcase series, “FEMcountry at Parton’s Live.” The “Partnership” officially begins Sept. 22; the initial lineup will be announced in the next week.

Perhaps ironically, **Gloria Steinem** — who was an icon for the women’s movement — died Sept. 2. She conducted her work for equality in different ways than Parton, but both trailblazers helped to change stereotypes around their gender. Women are no longer required universally to stay home and handle all of the cleaning chores by themselves. They typically see the world in different ways than men, and their voices and viewpoints are important for leadership — and for country playlists.

Thus, the rebound of women within the format is an important development at a time that it’s required.

“I think it’s a direct reflection of what’s happening in the world,” Lacy says. “Let’s be honest — it’s a mess. There’s a lot of brute force and aggression and anger and emotion, and women, for years, have worked on processing all of those things.”

“Women are innately intuitive. They are instinctively compassionate. They are very perceptive, and rather than mislabeling all of these superpowers as weaknesses, those are actually the things that give them the ability to be great leaders. So their voices are getting louder.”

Thus, there’s more to this window than “Choosin’ Texas.” The country audience — and the country, in general — is more frequently, and with more intentionality, choosin’ women. ●



Jordan Davis welcomed local radio staff when he performed Aug. 30 at Thompson’s Point in Portland, Maine. From left: WPOR PD Jon Shannon, Davis, Capitol Nashville director of Northeast promotion Annie Sandor and WTHH PD/morning host Jadd Namaani.



Slater Nalley (center) celebrated his Grand Ole Opry debut on Sept. 1. With him, Warner Records Nashville (WRN) director of A&R/research Mason Domke and WRN chair/president Cris Lacy.



Carly Pearce previewed her new *Honest Woman* album with an Aug. 18 industry showcase at The Analog in Nashville. From left: BBR Music Group/BMG Nashville executive VP of recorded music JoJamie Hahr, BBR/BMG Nashville GM Peter Strickland, Pearce and Borchetta Entertainment Group founder/chairman Scott Borchetta.

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Alaina, Matthew Go Top 10, Belles And Dolly Debut

Lauren Alaina’s “All My Exes,” featuring Chase Matthew (Mercury/Big Loud), rises a spot to No. 10 on *Billboard*’s Country Airplay chart (dated Sept. 12). With 17 million audience impressions (up 3%) Aug. 28-Sept. 3, according to Luminate, the song is Alaina’s fourth top 10 and Matthew’s third.

Notably, three of Alaina’s top 10s are collaborations — fitting on a chart where team-ups are scarce but tend to overperform once they catch on. “All My Exes” joins her three one-week No. 1s: **HARDY**’s “One Beer,” on which she and **Devin Dawson** are featured (December 2020); **Kane Brown**’s “What Ifs,” another feature (October 2017); and her own “Road Less Traveled” (April 2017).

Matthew previously visited the top 10 with “Darlin’,” a three-week No. 1 last November, and “Love You Again,” his chart debut that reached No. 9 in 2024.

Alaina cowrote “All My Exes” with **Jimmie Gutch**, **Ben Johnson** and **Whitney Phillips**, born of an argument with a former partner. “I was 22, 23, living in Nashville and dating other country music artists and dating other people in the business, and comedians,” she explained in *Billboard*’s Makin’ Tracks last September. “All the wrong people, basically.”



ALAINA (left) and MATTHEW

SECOND-GENERATION ‘JOLENE’ Singer-songwriter **Belles** and the late **Dolly Parton**’s “Son of Jolene” (Deluge Nashville/East Music Row/New Revolution) debuts at No. 51 on Country Airplay (1.3 million, up 68%). Belles, who earns her first entry on the chart, cowrote the song with **Tyler Bank** and **Dan Harrison** as a sequel to Parton’s 1974 Hot Country Songs No. 1 classic, “Jolene.” The new song made its way to Parton through longtime producer **Kent Wells** and the legend liked the concept enough to add her vocals.

“Son of Jolene” stands as the last new song released during Parton’s lifetime. “I don’t even know how to say ‘thank you,’” Belles posted after Parton died Aug. 25. “I was just a girl from Nebraska growing up idolizing Dolly and I never imagined moving to Nashville that I would get to meet her, much less have this song with her. She just took a chance on me. She really made me believe in myself a lot more. I’m just very grateful.”

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU	Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville Taylor Swift	+7.882
LOVING LIFE AGAIN	SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers Ella Langley	+3.261
BEEN BY NOW	Mercury/Big Loud Morgan Wallen	+2.220
BOSTON	Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost Stella Lefty	+1.921
SAY SO	Warner Records Nashville/WRN Dan + Shay	+1.720
KID MYSELF	Night Train/Broken Bow John Morgan	+1.565
ANYTIME SOON	Macon/Broken Bow Jason Aldean	+1.435
GET TO DRINKIN’	Sony Music Nashville/SMN Zach John King	+1.347
JADED	YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	+1.327
RETHINK SOME THINGS	Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN Luke Combs	+1.277

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU	Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville Taylor Swift	+1960
LOVING LIFE AGAIN	SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers Ella Langley	+732
BEEN BY NOW	Mercury/Big Loud Morgan Wallen	+699
BOSTON	Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost Stella Lefty	+451
RETHINK SOME THINGS	Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN Luke Combs	+436
JADED	YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	+425
KID MYSELF	Night Train/Broken Bow John Morgan	+415
SAY SO	Warner Records Nashville/WRN Dan + Shay	+415
GET TO DRINKIN’	Sony Music Nashville/SMN Zach John King	+344
ANYTIME SOON	Macon/Broken Bow Jason Aldean	+287

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	DON’T WE	Mercury/Republic/Big Loud Morgan Wallen	20.514
2	HATE HOW YOU LOOK	The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville Josh Ross	19.267
3	CHOOSIN’ TEXAS	SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers Ella Langley	19.200
4	DON’T TELL ON ME	Macon/Broken Bow Jason Aldean	18.636
5	BE HER	SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers Ella Langley	15.548
6	RIDE, RIDE, RIDE	RECORDS/MCA Nashville/RECORDS Nashville George Birge Featuring Luke Bryan	11.047
7	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED	Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory Thomas Rhett	9.761
8	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM	Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN Luke Combs	9.677
9	GOOD NEWS	American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music Shaboozey	7.145
10	BRUNETTE	Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Republic/EMI Nashville/Mercury Nashville Tucker Wetmore	6.700



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 3, 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	17	TAKE IT EASY COWGIRL (Independent) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	Aaron Loy	2061	181	11	12	22	YOU AND WHISKEY (Independent)	Chuck Wimer & Brandi Behlen	1345	-2
2	3	15	UNCERTAIN, TX (Lost Highway/Interscope)	Kacey Musgraves feat. Willie Nelson	1849	66	12	13	20	MIDNIGHT BLUES (Independent)	Selestial Alcoser	1337	28
3	4	16	HIGH NOON (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1805	31	13	14	17	AIN’T THAT A DRINK (Soundline Management)	Ronnie Bowen	1281	22
4	5	14	HIGHWAY ROBBERY (Leo33)	Jason Scott & The High Heat	1778	54	14	16	13	HOWDY MA’AM (T3R Music Group)	Caleb Sutton	1249	35
5	6	20	THAT’S WHAT COWBOYS DO (Lonely River)	Curtis Grimes	1775	112	15	19	7	FAN OF YOU (Pretty Damn Tough)	Josh Abbott Band	1226	129
6	7	18	GUINEVERE (T3R Music Group)	Sundance Head	1656	57	16	17	13	CHEAT ON YOU (Independent)	Amanda Kate Ferris	1171	34
7	9	10	FEELIN’ GOOD AGAIN (Bossier City/Thirty Tigers)	Turnpike Troubadours w/Sierra Hull	1648	171	17	15	22	IT’S YOU (Independent)	Roses and Weeds	1161	-55
8	8	21	I DON’T DRINK ANYMORE (Independent)	Timothy Howls	1636	50	18	18	18	DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT TEXAS (Independent)	Lane Bricker	1098	-30
9	11	12	WOULDA BEEN IT (River House)	Tyce Delk	1545	81	19	1	21	FLOORBOARD FULL OF ROSES (Ranger Music Group)	David Lewis	1086	-969
10	10	18	THIRD ROW GEORGE STRAIT (Independent)	Frank Ray	1525	50	20	28	5	DOWN FOR THE RIDE (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1046	144

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	23	BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	★★ No. 1 (3 Weeks) ★★ Luke Combs	32.801	+0.215	8338	36	2
2	6	13	I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville	★★ Most Increased Audience ★★ Taylor Swift	30.291	+7.882	8433	1960	1
3	3	20	BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	29.277	+1.921	7750	451	3
4	2	25	WOMAN Zone 4/RCA Nashville/SMN	Kane Brown	23.621	-4.933	6652	-1413	4
5	7	17	CARRY ON Warner/HEY NOW	Kenny Chesney	23.147	+1.209	6463	236	5
6	4	47	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	20.952	-4.579	5097	-1660	8
7	10	6	BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	20.612	+2.220	5610	699	7
8	5	19	I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE SAWGOD/Columbia/Big Loud/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen	20.278	-3.601	4842	-1023	9
9	9	61	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	20.247	+1.565	5769	415	6
10	11	52	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	16.984	+0.569	4540	56	11
11	12	23	COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	16.514	+1.151	4633	196	10
12	14	9	LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	16.293	+3.261	4185	732	12
13	15	28	GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	14.110	+1.347	4057	344	13
14	13	38	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33	Zach Top	13.756	+0.246	3774	-76	17
15	18	22	SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Dan + Shay	13.273	+1.720	3895	415	14
16	17	15	THINK AS YOU DRUNK Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	13.054	+0.805	3799	194	15
17	16	13	PHONE, KEYS, WALLET Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson & John Mayer	12.763	+0.505	3794	99	16
18	19	11	HANDS UP Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	10.361	+0.553	3140	155	19
19	21	33	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	★★ Airpower ★★ Jon Pardi	9.497	+0.849	3087	225	20
20	22	28	PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	9.269	+0.988	2852	281	21
21	20	31	MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw	9.061	-0.253	3326	-68	18
22	23	8	RETHINK SOMETHINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	9.022	+1.277	2537	436	23
23	26	4	JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	8.425	+1.327	2083	425	26
24	25	37	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greytan James	7.654	+0.489	2733	211	22
25	27	36	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	6.781	+0.814	2302	240	25
26	28	30	LET HIM IN ANYWAY Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	6.509	+0.603	2381	139	24
27	29	20	MEDICINE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	5.638	+0.689	1862	227	28
28	31	32	HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	4.703	+0.541	2006	187	27
29	32	28	KILLIN' ME MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	4.274	+0.258	1523	26	31
30	33	21	MOVE ON American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Kevin Powers & Shaboozey	4.248	+0.269	1610	94	30

COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART LEGEND

RANKINGS

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

TIES

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

BULLETS

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

RECURRENTS

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

HOT SHOT DEBUT

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

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

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

AIRPOWER

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

BREAKER

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

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 AIRPLAY
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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	34	12	HORSEBACK CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	4.204	+0.426	1655	187	29
32	35	14	EMPTY WORDS Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Corey Kent	3.971	+0.642	1478	192	32
33	42	4	ANYTIME SOON Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	3.636	+1.435	1277	287	34
34	36	16	DRY SPELL Kacey Musgraves/Lost Highway	Kacey Musgraves	3.211	+0.128	1170	-9	36
35	37	27	NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	2.993	-0.004	1247	29	35
36	38	19	WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Goat Island Sound/Mercury Nashville	Jacob Hackworth	2.851	+0.053	1328	49	33
37	40	8	WHO TOLD YOU THAT Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	2.722	+0.432	902	165	45
38	39	4	COWGIRL American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	2.613	+0.242	996	65	39
39	43	12	I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE Boss Moves/Black River/Akando	Chris Young	2.236	+0.323	915	122	44
40	41	17	WANNABE Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Gavin Adcock	2.172	-0.114	990	66	40
41	45	15	LAND Hubbard House/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	2.152	+0.269	958	37	42
42	44	24	GOOD DAMN Wheelhouse	Brantley Gilbert	2.071	+0.160	1160	93	37
43	46	11	GIRL DAD Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Cole Swindell	1.930	+0.317	965	80	41
44	47	18	LOVE IS BLIND WEST TO THE REST/Triple Tigers	Ian Munsick	1.715	+0.167	951	42	43
45	48	5	DAMNED IF I DO Music Soup/Interscope/Lost Highway	Vincent Mason	1.663	+0.121	559	37	56
46	49	24	IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY Stoney Creek/Nashville Harbor	Carly Pearce & Riley Green	1.643	+0.146	796	24	46
47	51	22	BACK IN THE BOTTLE Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	1.454	+0.089	1042	71	38
48	50	11	STRING BY Mack Geiger/RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Mack Geiger	1.451	+0.057	464	53	59
49	52	2	SOMETHING TO LOSE Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty Featuring Vincent Mason	1.401	+0.137	411	83	-
50	53	16	BETTER THAT WAY Mercury/Big Loud	Charles Wesley Godwin & Luke Combs	1.341	+0.119	763	52	48
51	NEW		SON OF JOLENE Deluge Nashville/East Music Row/New Revolution	Belles With Dolly Parton	1.257	+0.510	450	128	-
52	54	27	KEEPS ME SANE Tyler Nance/Santa Anna/Akando	Tyler Nance	1.242	+0.090	705	-21	49
53	57	13	GOD KNEW BETTER Stoney Creek	Parmalee	1.234	+0.155	648	59	51
54	56	9	DEAR BIG CITY Curb	Dylan Scott	1.168	+0.036	769	76	47
55	55	6	NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO Gatsby/MCA Nashville	Carter Faith & Wyatt Flores	1.166	+0.024	639	39	52
56	59	9	BABY BLUES Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	1.085	+0.131	606	51	54
57	58	7	DONE FOR Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	1.052	-0.000	628	7	53
58	NEW		BET ON THAT Enchntmnt/Warner/WAR	Blake Whiten	1.013	+0.170	556	124	57
59	NEW		SAY LA V Quartz Hill	Joe Nichols	0.927	+0.132	520	46	58
60	60	8	YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY True To The Song/Nashville Harbor	Caroline Jones	0.904	-0.043	666	3	50



Ty Myers, 19, became the youngest country artist to headline Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison, Colo., when he took the stage Aug. 30 with his nine-piece band. From left on stage: bassist Reid Parker, sax player Paulo Santos, trombonist Daniel Fears, backing vocalist Kennadi Rose, Myers, guitarist Randy Toman Jr., multi-instrumentalist Will Knaack, drummer Michael Davila, keyboardist Sean Giddings and trumpeter Sam Howden.

JOCELYN MYERS

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Blake Whiten met up with a crew from KSCS Dallas when he performed Aug. 29 at the House of Blues. From left: KSCS promotions director Jessica MacKenzie-Williams, KSCS/KPLX PD Mike Preston, Whiten, KSCS evening personality Hannah Lane and KSCS assistant PD/music director Al Farb.

PARTON CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE

Dolly Parton-related news stories and new projects continue to roll out in the aftermath of her Aug. 25 death.

On the brink of Labor Day weekend, it's appropriate that some of them play with Parton's working-class anthem, "9 to 5."

Here are some of the latest developments surrounding Parton:

- **Garth Brooks** declared Sept. 25 "Dolly Day" at his Nashville club, Friends in Low Places Bar & Honky-Tonk. All proceeds from that day will be donated to Parton's Imagination Library book program for children. That date was selected since its numeric representation, 9/25, can be read as "9 to 5."

- The city of New Orleans will likewise celebrate Parton on Sept. 25, which organizers are framing as "9 to 5 Day," according to **WWL-TV** New Orleans. The Krewe of Dolly originally scheduled a memorial parade in her honor on Sept. 5, but conflicts with another event in the city's French Quarter forced a date change.

- Nashville-based event company Run Nash set a 9to5K Run & Walk for Sept. 5, with a Dolly Dash Kids Run and a Stiletto Run both in the mix. The event raises money for the local United Way and Imagination Library programs. Mayor **Freddie O'Connell** has proclaimed September as Imagination Library Month.

- Black River will hold a Studios & Stories event at the Sound Stage Studios on Sept. 19, allowing teens a chance to write a song with a professional composer. Visitors can also observe as a song gets recorded. Go [here](#) for tickets, with proceeds benefiting the Imagination Library.

- Author **Joe Formgren** crafted *Dolly Parton: An Unofficial Biography — A Different Tone* entirely after her death. The 276-page project is intended as the initial release in a More Music Stories series.

'ROUND THE ROW

- Leadership Music executive director **Debbie Linn** announced her intent to retire from the position in 2027, ending a 15-year run in the role.

- Songwriter **Dan Alley** ("Country Song Came On," "House Again") renewed his publishing contract with River House Artists and Sony Music Publishing Nashville.

- Artist-writer **Bridey Costello** agreed to a publishing deal with Blue Harbor Music.

- Artist-writer **Kyle Gates** joined the roster at booking agency Evergreen Artist Group.

- **Chase Wright** signed a booking agreement with the North Loop Agency.

- The Country Music Association will reveal the nominees for the 60th annual CMA Awards on Sept. 10. ABC's *Good Morning America* host **Lara Spencer** will announce some of the finalists during the show, with **Lee Ann Womack** and *American Idol* winner **Hannah Harper** unveiling the remainder in a livestream on the CMA YouTube channel at 8 a.m. CT. The awards will be presented Nov. 18 at Nashville's Bridgestone Arena.

- The Country Music Association announced finalists for three CMA International Awards. Nominees for the international country broadcaster award are **Shannon Ella**, iHeartRadio/Pure Country (Canada); **Bob Harris**, BBC Radio 2 (United Kingdom); **Baylen Leonard**, Absolute Country Radio (United Kingdom)

and **Justin Thomson**, iHeartCountry AU (Australia). Up for international artist achievement award are **Jordan Davis**, **Drake Milligan**, **Tucker Wetmore** and **Lainey Wilson**. In the running for the Jeff Walker global country artist award are **Wade Forster** (Australia), **Gareth** (United Kingdom), **James Johnston** (Australia) and **Tami Neilson** (New Zealand).

- **The Milk Carton Kids** were tabbed to host the 25th annual Americana Honors & Awards Sept. 16 at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium. Performers include **Robert Plant**, **Brandi Carlile**, **Margo Price**, **Molly Tuttle**, **Flatland Cavalry** and **Kashus Culpepper**.

- **Blue Highway** member **Tim Stafford** will deliver the keynote speech on Oct. 20 for the International Bluegrass Music Association's IBMA Business Conference in Chattanooga, Tenn.

- **Tracy Lawrence**, 1920s recording artist **Eck Robertson**, keyboardist **Jim "Moose" Brown** and songwriter **Dave Gibson** ("Jukebox in My Mind," "Ships That Don't Come In") will be inducted into the Arkansas Country Music Hall of Fame on June 7, 2027, at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

- The Nashville Songwriters Association International is accepting entries in the 27th annual NSAI Song Contest through Oct. 31 with mentoring sessions from **Trisha Yearwood** and Christian artist **Matthew West** among the prizes for 13 winners. Other winnings include cash and a one-song publishing deal with SMACKSongs.

- **Larry, Steve & Rudy: The Gatlin Brothers** announced their Farewell Celebration Tour, launching Sept. 8 in Oxford, Miss. The date of their final concert is undetermined, though they're currently projecting May 2028.

- **Vince Gill** observes his 35th anniversary as a Grand Ole Opry member during two shows on Oct. 17. Joining him in the lineup will be **Ricky Skaggs**, **Patty Loveless**, **Amy Grant** and **Wendy Moten**.

- **Keller Cox** was named best country artist for his song "Way Things Work" in the Unsigned Only Music Awards. **Mark Chesnutt** and **Ruthie Foster** joined a slew of artists and executives on the judges panel for the 24-category competition. Go [here](#) for the full list of winners.

- **Lacy J. Dalton** celebrates her 80th birthday with an acoustic concert Oct. 15 at Nashville's 3rd & Lindsley. Participants include **Jimmy Fortune**, **Terri Gibbs**, **David Frizzell** and **Michelle Wright** as Dalton raises money for her nonprofit Let 'Em Run Foundation for wild horses and burros.

- **Laura Veltz** ("Speechless," "The Bones") hosts a songwriters round Nov. 4 at The Listening Room in Nashville with **Ashley McBryde**, **Maren Morris** and songwriter **Luke Dick** ("Choosin' Texas," "Burning Man"). The event raises money to send a group of 12-year-olds to Cooperstown, N.Y. — the home of the Baseball Hall of Fame — for a week of youth baseball.

- Artist-writer **Frankie Miller**, 95, died Aug. 29 at his home in Texas from natural causes. After beginning his recording career in 1951, he lofted five songs onto *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs from 1959-1964, including the top 10 singles "Black Land Farmer" and "Family Man." "Black Land Farmer" was hailed among the 500 greatest country singles in history in the 2003 Country Music Foundation book *Heartaches by the Number*. 📀



Scotty McCreery (left) presented Josh Turner with a plaque recognizing his 20-year-old album *Your Man* as an RIAA-certified triple-Platinum project, and certifying three singles from the collection as Gold or Multi-Platinum.

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

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 There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Hoops Don't Lie Publishing, BMI/Modern Arts Songs, BMI/Music By Work Of Art, BMI (Lauren Alaina, J.A.Gutch, B.Johnson, W.Phillips) **10**

ANYTIME SOON Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irishsonmusic, BMI (K.M.Allison, J.Edwards, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan) **33**

B

BABY BLUES Not Listed (A.Cooke, J.Clawson, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, K.Sturrock) **36**

BACK IN THE BOTTLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/I'm Your Huckleberry Music, BMI (R.Houser) **47**

BE BY YOU Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway 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.Walsh) **1**

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/Rarre 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) **7**

BET ON THAT Blake Whiten Publishing Designee, BMI/Gold Room Special Music, BMI/Hipgnosis Beats, BMI/Hotsecks Songs, BMI/Songs On The Range, BMI/Where It Begins, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/London Margate Songs, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (B.White, G.Averill, Hoskins, J.M.Sparrow) **58**

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) **50**

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BOSTON 13117 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Grace Enger Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Joee Reeves Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/LMC Is The Place For Me Publishing, ASCAP/Secret Meadow Songs, ASCAP/Sony Allegro, ASCAP/Stella Lefty Music, ASCAP (G.Enger, J.K.Hindlin, J.Reeves, N.Kahan, S.Lefty) **3**

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) **5**

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/Billy Zimmerman Publishing, BMI (T.Beathard, J.Juber, G.J.Lucas, H.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **6**

COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Trailer Parker Iwang Lab, BMI/Hometeam Publishing LLC, BMI/Kilometre Music Group B, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP (J.L.Miller, P.Welling, M.Dragstrom) **11**

COWGIRL EMPIRE SF, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Essency Music Publishing, ASCAP/BABAPUBLISHER, ASCAP/Collins Chibueze Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Jared Lincoln Cotter Pub Designee, BMI/Timothy Whitfield Kane Pub Designee, ASCAP/Pipeline Global Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (C.C.Chibueze, S.C.Cook, A.A.Pauti, T.W.Kane, M.R.Stevens, N.Sastry, J.L.Cotter) **38**

D

DAMNED IF I DO Concord Copyrights, BMI/Songs To Hang Your Hat On, BMI/Mississippi Street Light Publishing, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/This Is Chromatic Music, BMI (V.Mason, J.A.Hackworth, L.Hungate) **45**

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) **54**

DONE FOR Max McNown Music, BMI/Fugitive Songs Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Adam Yaron Music, BMI/Songs With A Pure Tone, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Music Of Big Family, BMI/In Honor Of Alice Publishing, BMI (M.McNown, A.Yaron, Mugs Daval) **57**

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 CTM 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) **34**

E

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) **32**

G

GET TO DRINKIN' Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Works By Kinda Country Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Brody 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) **13**

GIRL DAD Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Colden Rainey Music, BMI/Michael Tyler Music, SESAC/MT Room, SESAC/Melodies Of CTM 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.Stennis) **43**

GOD KNEW BETTER Concord Copyrights, BMI/Camp James Music, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tacklebox 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) **53**

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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/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI (J.B.DeFord, R.H.Block, J.A.Fox, M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill) **18**

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.Centers) **28**

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 Sopernatural Music Publishing, ASCAP (R.Montana, W.McCubbin, P.Sikes) **31**

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) **8**

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) **39**

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) **46**

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) **2**

J

JADED Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Yellabush Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Endurance Music Group, BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI (E.Langley, R.Wetzel, J.M.Schmidt, E.K.Smith) **23**

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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/Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (J.Morgan, T.R.Hubbard, J.M.Schmidt) **9**

KILLIN' ME Parkernac 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) **29**

L

LAND 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/1 Of 6, ASCAP/Endurance Music Group, ASCAP (T.R.Hubbard, Z.Aband, G.Egan, C.Smith) **41**

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) **26**

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.Musick, R.Tyndel, J.N.Spillman) **44**

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) **12**

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/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Old Bandana, BMI (M.W.Hardy, R.C.McGill, J.Rodgers, J.Thompson) **21**

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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-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI (H.Westbrook, Lukas Scott, B.Bailey) **20**

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/Dtown 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.Overset, T.E.P.Hull) **17**

R

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) **22**

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SON OF JOLENE Not Listed (Not Listed) **51**

SOUTH OF SANITY Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Major Bob Productions, BMI/Too Broke To Quit Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Doan What I Do, BMI/Getysasome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nesler) **14**

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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.Adcok, J.R.Durrett, K.Sewson, E.K.Smith, M.Wallace) **40**

WATER AT A WEDDING Relative Red Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Songs For Knox, BMI (G.Egan, M.Dragstrom, R.C.McGill) **24**

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/7 Vill Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/I 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) **36**

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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/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.Johnson, T.Phillips) **4**

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) **25**

Y

YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY Bare Feet Publishing LLC, BMI/RobMadeIt's, 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) **60**



MESSINA TOURING

25TH ANNIVERSARY

**PLEASE JOIN BILLBOARD IN CELEBRATING
MESSINA TOURING ON 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS!**

Founded in 2002 by legendary promoter Louis Messina, Messina Touring has grown into one of the world's premier concert promotion companies. Built on an artist-first philosophy and a commitment to long-term partnerships, the company has spent more than two decades producing record-breaking tours and unforgettable live experiences for many of the biggest names in music, including Taylor Swift, George Strait, Ed Sheeran, Phoebe Bridgers, Kenny Chesney, Eric Church, Blake Shelton, Zac Brown Band, Old Dominion, The Lumineers and Ty Myers.

Under the leadership of President Mike Dugan and Nashville President Haley McCollister, Messina Touring continues to shape the future of live entertainment by empowering artists, strengthening fan connections and setting new standards across the touring industry.

BONUS DISTRIBUTION

Billboard Live Music Summit, 11/10/26
West Hollywood

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C
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D
E
A

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

40 Years Ago Conway Twitty's 'Desperado Love' Turned Desperation Into Dollars

The song observes the anniversary of its enviable chart precedent: No. 40 at 40

Conway Twitty started his music career on *Billboard*'s Hot 100 before he found his full voice in country, and the last of his 40 chart-topping titles in the genre came from a songwriter who made a similar format change.

North Carolina-born **Sammy Johns** ("Common Man," "America") earned national recognition when his recording of "Chevy Van" parked at No. 5 on the Hot 100 in 1975, but he followed that by writing his way into the country market. With "Desperado Love," co-written by **Michael**

Garvin ("Only One You," "Your Heart's Not in It"), Johns transformed a negative life period into a win. He was about to lose his house, started drinking to numb his depression, then decided to see if there was a song in all of his misery. He felt desperation, brainstormed that into desperado and took off from there.

Twitty recorded the resulting melodic midtempo with co-producers **Dee Henry**, whom he would marry in 1987, and **Ron Treat**, and enlisted **Vince Gill** as a backing vocalist. Released as the first single from

Twitty's Warner Bros. album *Fallin' for You for Years*, "Desperado Love" rode onto *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs chart dated June 7, 1986, and stole the No. 1 ranking three months later, on the Sept. 6 list.

In the process, Twitty set a precedent, becoming the first artist to land 40 No. 1 country singles.

Born in Mississippi with the birth name Harold Jenkins, Twitty died in June 1993 at age 59. He joined the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1999 alongside **Dolly Parton** and **Johnny Bond**. —TOM ROLAND

Twitty performs at London's Wembley Arena, 1985.



THU WEEK	LAS WEEK	2 WK AGO	WKS CHA	TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	ARTIST LABEL & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL
1	2	3	14	DESPERADO LOVE C.TWITTY,D.HENRY,R.TREAT (M.GARVIN,S.JOHNS)	CONWAY TWITTY WARNER BROS. 7-28692
2	3	4	13	COUNTRY STATE OF MIND H.WILLIAMS,JR.,B.BECKETT,J.E.NORMAN (H.WILLIAMS,JR.,R.A.WADE)	HANK WILLIAMS, JR. WARNER/CURB 7-28691/WARNER BROS.
3	4	5	15	SOMETIMES A LADY P.WORLEY,E.RAVEN (E.RAVEN,F.MYERS)	EDDY RAVEN RCA 14319
4	5	7	11	LITTLE ROCK J.BOWEN,R.MCINTIRE (P.MCMANUS,B.DIPIERO,G.HOUSE)	REBA MCINTIRE MCA 52848
5	6	6	13	GOT MY HEART SET ON YOU B.LOGAN (D.GRAY,B.RENEAU)	JOHN CONLEE COLUMBIA 38-06104
6	7	8		STAND A LITTLE RAIN	NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND