

billboard Country Update

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2026 | PAGE 1 OF 12

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

Tom.Roland@billboard.com



‘Have You Forgotten?’ Hell, No: A Reflection On Country’s 9/11 Songs, 25 Years Later

On Sept. 11, 2001, **Darryl Worley** drove the backroads in Tennessee on his way home and was impressed at the public outpouring.

Just hours after terrorists flew into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, a substantial number of flags and other outdoor expressions of patriotism were already on display at numerous houses. America’s unification didn’t last long; fifteen months later, as he returned from performing for American soldiers in the Middle East, he drove the same streets. The flags were mostly gone, and so — he lamented — was the unification. A few weeks later, he co-wrote “Have You Forgotten?” with **Wynn Varble** (“Waitin’ on a Woman,” “A Little More Country Than That”), crafting one of the handful of country hits that documented the nation’s attitudes about the attack and the wars that were launched in retaliation.

As Americans observe the 25th anniversary of that September day, Worley has released a new recording of the song. It sounds, intentionally, quite similar to the original version, though it has a different feeling, because the nation itself feels different. The central question of “Have You Forgotten?” has an easy answer

for anyone who saw the twin towers fall on TV or heard live newscasts about the heroism of the passengers on Flight 93, the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania.

“I don’t think anyone’s forgotten,” says **Will Kaufman**, author of the forthcoming book *American Song and Struggle from World War II to MAGA: A Cultural History* (Nov. 19, Cambridge University Press).

True. But a whole generation of emerging creatives and executive staff in the early stages of their careers in music have heard the stories — and many of the songs — but don’t actually remember. They were too young to have experienced it or hadn’t yet been born. Their world is a different place than

the one their parents experienced, in part because of 9/11, and adults are left to explain how the wars in the Middle East affected the kids’ lives. It’s the renewal of a regrettable tradition that most age groups unfortunately inherit. Baby boomers, for example, similarly heard tales from their parents about how World War II had shaped the culture into which they were born.

“I think about it all the time,” Worley says. The 9/11 attacks, he notes, “must feel to [kids] like Pearl Harbor did to us.”



JACKSON



WORLEY



KEITH

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BY DAVID MCCLISTER, COURTESY DARRYL WORLEY

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One major way in which 9/11 influenced the culture came with country music's reaction. A bundle of songs reflected the attitudes about war and patriotism that followed the attack. Among them: **Toby Keith's** "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American)" and "American Soldier," **Aaron Tippin's** "Where the Stars and Stripes and the Eagle Fly," **Brooks & Dunn's** "Only in America," **Lonestar's** "I'm Already There," **David Ball's** "Riding with Private Malone," **Lee Greenwood's** "God Bless the U.S.A.," **The Chicks'** "Travelin' Soldier" and **Alan Jackson's** "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)."

That happens with most wars. World War II inspired such country songs as **Elton Britt's** "There's a Star-Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," **Red Foley's** "Smoke on the Water," **Gene Autry's** "At Mail Call Today," **Bob Wills'** "Stars and Stripes on Iwa Jima" and **Carson Robison's** "Mussolini's Letter to Hitler."

The genre likewise scored a few successful singles related to the Korean War and cranked out a bundle during the Vietnam War—such as **Sgt. Barry Sadler's** "The Ballad of the Green Berets" and **Johnny Wright's** "Hello Vietnam"—until the public mood turned sour. At that point, **Johnny Cash's** "What is Truth" gave credence to young people's opposition, and pro-war fare mostly dried up.

The 9/11 songs have inarguably held up better than country's previous war songs. Some of these songs can still be heard on classic country stations 25 years after the terrorist attacks. By comparison, the World War II titles weren't in circulation much 25 years after Pearl Harbor.

"There's a good reason for that," Kaufman maintains. "World War II eventually ended."

The wars in Iran and Afghanistan, he explains, dragged on, and they can be considered continuations of the early-90s War in the Gulf, which was built on leftover antagonisms from the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979 and '80. The president has on numerous occasions connected the current faceoff to 1979, thus many of the war songs that worked in those earlier eras still have similar meanings in 2026. The songs typically convey some level of patriotism, and, Kaufman suggests, that makes them useful to the American psyche. And to forces who might want to influence that psyche.

"I think these songs are so popular," he says, "because they're part of the arsenal."

That's not necessarily why they're created. Worley wanted "Have You Forgotten?" to unify people—to make them remember that the country's enemies are hostile players from other shores, not the members of a rival political party.

Having seen the men and women on the frontlines who risk their lives and sacrifice time with their families, he valued the sense of service that motivated them.

"Being in the war zone and spending that time with the troops was very, very motivating as far as coming home, wanting to do something that would honor them," he says.

Worley maintains his own sense of service with "Have You Forgotten?" He was scheduled to perform it Sept. 10 during a commemorative event at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and again on Sept. 11 during a memorial in New York City.

Still, support for the people who do the grunt work of wars doesn't necessarily equate to support for the war itself. Public support for a war, it could be argued, correlates with the volume of country music's commercially successful songs about it. If any country songs have been written to back the current campaign in Iran, they haven't caught on commercially. Polls suggest the public is not behind it. The war certainly hasn't inspired Worley.

"The whole thing is bothersome," he says. "It's bothersome that it can't be what we thought it was going to be: over and done with. I just feel like it's taken on the similarities of other conflicts we've gotten into, that could drag on for who knows how long."

Younger creatives may not be writing new material about the Strait of Hormuz, but those who were alive during 9/11, and old enough to be aware of it,



Bucky Covington (left) and Billy Ray Cyrus dropped by WSM-AM Nashville on Labor Day to join host Nan Kelley on the station's *Heart of the Night with Nan Kelley*.

have not forgotten that war. They are, in fact, acutely aware of the ways it affected their generation.

"The global war on terror was obviously ongoing for a long time," says songwriter **Andy Sheridan** ("Gonna Love You," "Indigo"), who was in eighth grade in 2001. "I had friends that joined the Army after they graduated high school. They went and served in the military, and then came back and were not the same. So it is personal. This is a dark thing that happened in our history, and obviously the ripples of war stretch out far, far, far beyond the initial event."

Sheridan, who is a history buff, has a 12-year-old son, and is trying to make him aware of the facts around 9/11, though he is reticent to influence his son's beliefs.

"He'll form his own opinions about it at some point when he's older, when he maybe understands a little bit more of the world," Sheridan says.

Country's war-on-terror songs might help that understanding better than some of the genre's predecessors because of the way that they were written. Focused mostly on loss of life, loss of innocence and family separation, the 9/11-era songs are typically less jingoistic than those from previous eras' wars. Instead of grabbing their narratives from headlines, even the pro-military titles—including "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue" and "Have You Forgotten?"—were crafted around first-hand experiences with soldiers.

The songwriters, one might suggest, learned from the earlier battles. Some politicians, unfortunately, have not. The ICE incarcerations and anti-Muslim rhetoric of 2026 are the same sort of atrocities, Kaufman notes, as World War II's "yellow peril," in which Asian-Americans were rounded up and incarcerated. Polls show Americans generally agree that that was wrong.

"I don't think these things can be can be disconnected," Kaufman says.

"Have You Forgotten?" reminds the nation indirectly that its military should be deployed wisely, risking soldiers' lives only when the sacrifice makes sense. But a new live version of Jackson's "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)," re-released in conjunction with the 25th anniversary, addresses all of war's suffering by referencing a Biblical passage: "Faith, hope and love are some good things He gave us/And the greatest is love."

That, too, is worth remembering in every generation. ●



Riley Green performed Sept. 6 on the closing night of the inaugural three-day Country Splash beach festival in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.



Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum senior director of editorial Paul Kingsbury (left) interviewed country singer Cleve Francis Sept. 5 in the museum's "Book Talk" series in advance of the national Oct. 6 release of Francis' autobiography, *Do My Heart Good: My Odyssey Through Country Music, Medicine, and History*.

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ISSUE DATE 10/3

AD CLOSE 9/22

MATERIALS DUE 9/24

DIGITAL VERSION DELIVERED 10/9

PRINT ISSUE SHIPPED BY 10/12

CONTACTS

East Coast: Joe Maimone | joe.maimone@billboard.com

Southeast: Alex Parry | alex@stellasales.solutions

West Coast: Aki Kaneko | moishekaneko@gmail.com

Latin: Marcia Olival | marciaolival29@gmail.com

West/Midwest: Cynthia Mellow | cmellow615@gmail.com

International: Ryan O'Donnell | rodonnell@billboard.com



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Langley's *Dandelion* Marks a Decade First

Add another milestone to **Ella Langley**'s rapidly-growing and already-historic résumé, as well as women's current chart resurgence.

The singer-songwriter's "Loving Life Again" (SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers) lifts four spots to No. 8 on *Billboard*'s Country Airplay chart (dated Sept. 19). It drew 18.6 million audience impressions (up 14%) Sept. 4-10, according to Luminate.

The song becomes Langley's seventh Country Airplay top 10 — and the fourth from her album *Dandelion*, which becomes the first album by a woman in the 2020s to generate four top 10s at the format. It follows three No. 1s: "Choosin' Texas," which led for three weeks in February-March; "Be Her" (four weeks, June); and "I Can't Love You Anymore," with **Morgan Wallen** (two weeks, August).

Released April 10, *Dandelion* has notched 17 weeks and counting at No. 1 on Top Country Albums. ("I Can't Love You Anymore" was added to the set following the song's April 24 arrival.)

Dandelion is the first album by a woman to house four Country Airplay top 10s since **Kelsea Ballerini**'s debut LP, *The First Time*, in 2015-17, via the No. 1s "Love Me Like You Mean It," "Dibs" and "Peter Pan" and the No. 3-peaking "Yeah Boy." Just before, **Carrie Underwood** earned four top 10s from her album *Storyteller* in 2015-16: the No. 1s "Heartbeat" and "Church Bells" and the No. 2 hits "Smoke Break" and "Dirty Laundry."

HE 'KNOWS' THE TOP 10 **Luke Bryan**'s "Country and She Knows It" (Row Crop/MCA Nashville) rises one place to No. 10 on Country Airplay (17.1 million, up 3%). As he scores his 38th top 10, he ties **Jason Aldean** for the most dating to his first week in the tier (Sept. 8, 2007); **Kenny Chesney** and **Blake Shelton** share third place with 34 each over that span.

IT'S STILL 'YOU' Meanwhile, **Luke Combs**' "Be by You" (Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN) tops Country Airplay for a fourth week (33.1 million, up 1%). It's the ninth of his 21 No. 1s to reign for at least that long. It's his sixth such leader of the 2020s, tying Wallen for the most this decade. 🗳️



BY CAYLEE ROBILLARD

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	+2.484	
BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+2.459	
LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+2.353	
RETHINK SOME THINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+2.025	
JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	+2.008	
GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	+1.717	
KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	+1.577	
ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	+1.509	
SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Dan + Shay	+1.361	
PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Hudson Westbrook	+1.323	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+918	
BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+904	
ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud	Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew	+733	
RETHINK SOME THINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	+627	
JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	+619	
BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty	+547	
ANYTIME SOON Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+438	
MEDICINE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	+420	
GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	+418	
KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	+403	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	DON'T TELL ON ME Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	18.645
2	CHOOSIN' TEXAS SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	18.482
3	I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE SAWGOD/Columbia/Big Loud/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen	18.449
4	DON'T WE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	18.285
5	HATE HOW YOU LOOK The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	17.369
6	WOMAN Zone 4/RCA Nashville/SMN	Kane Brown	15.156
7	BE HER SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	14.149
8	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	9.498
9	SLEEPLESS IN A HOTEL ROOM Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Luke Combs	9.435
10	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	7.751



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/-
1	2	16	UNCERTAIN, TX (Lost Highway Interscope) ★★1 Week at 1★	Kacey Musgraves feat. Willie Nelson	1935	86	11	12	21	MIDNIGHT BLUES (Independent)	Selestial Alcoser	1400	63
2	3	17	HIGH NOON (Leo33)	Jenna Paulette	1857	52	12	14	14	HOWDY MA'AM (T3R Music Group)	Caleb Sutton	1318	69
3	5	21	THAT'S WHAT COWBOYS DO (Lonely River)	Curtis Grimes	1815	40	13	13	18	AIN'T THAT A DRINK (Soundline Management)	Ronnie Bowen	1305	24
4	4	15	HIGHWAY ROBBERY (Leo33)	Jason Scott & The High Heat	1806	28	14	15	8	FAN OF YOU (Pretty Damn Tough)	Josh Abbott Band	1295	69
5	6	19	GUINEVERE (T3R Music Group)	Sundance Head	1656	0	15	16	14	CHEAT ON YOU (Independent)	Amanda Kate Ferris	1235	64
6	7	11	FEELIN' GOOD AGAIN (Bossier City/Thirty Tigers)	Turnpike Troubadours w/Sierra Hull	1608	-40	16	20	6	DOWN FOR THE RIDE (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1112	66
7	8	22	I DON'T DRINK ANYMORE (Independent)	Timothy Howls	1584	-52	17	21	12	HONEYSUCKLE (Big Loud Texas/Mercury Records)	Dylan Gossett	1087	48
8	10	19	THIRD ROW GEORGE STRAIT (Independent)	Frank Ray	1544	19	18	25	14	WHAT DO YOU PRAY FOR (Erskine Entertainment)	Sheila Marshall	1036	34
9	9	13	WOULDA BEEN IT (River House)	Tyce Delk	1493	-52	19	22	16	CITY COWGIRL (Independent)	Lani Butler	1000	-16
10	11	23	YOU AND WHISKEY (Independent)	Chuck Wimer & Brandi Behlen	1401	56	20	24	11	DAY DRINKIN' (Independent)	AJ Vallejo	991	-15

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

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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
1	1	24	BE BY YOU Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN ★★ No. 1 (4 Weeks) ★★	Luke Combs	33.097	+0.296	8705	367	1
2	3	21	BOSTON Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★	Stella Lefty	31.761	+2.484	8297	547	2
3	5	18	CARRY ON Warner/HEY NOW	Kenny Chesney	23.977	+0.830	6649	186	3
4	7	7	BEEN BY NOW Mercury/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	23.071	+2.459	6514	904	4
5	2	14	I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU Pixar/Walt Disney/Republic/MCA Nashville	Taylor Swift	22.007	-8.283	5787	-2646	6
6	9	62	KID MYSELF Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan	21.823	+1.577	6172	403	5
7	6	48	CHEVY SILVERADO Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Bailey Zimmerman	19.156	-1.796	4828	-269	9
8	12	10	LOVING LIFE AGAIN SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	18.647	+2.353	5103	918	8
9	10	53	ALL MY EXES Mercury/Big Loud Lauren Alaina Featuring Chase Matthew		18.494	+1.509	5273	733	7
10	11	24	COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT Row Crop/MCA Nashville	Luke Bryan	17.053	+0.539	4746	113	10
11	13	29	GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Zach John King	15.828	+1.717	4475	418	11
12	15	23	SAY SO Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Dan + Shay	14.635	+1.361	4275	380	12
13	16	16	THINK AS YOU DRUNK Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	14.028	+0.974	4171	372	13
14	14	39	SOUTH OF SANITY Leo33	Zach Top	13.489	-0.267	3727	-47	15
15	17	14	PHONE, KEYS, WALLET Broken Bow Lainey Wilson & John Mayer		13.073	+0.310	3979	185	14
16	18	12	HANDS UP Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	11.115	+0.755	3378	238	16
17	22	9	RETHINK SOMETHINGS Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN ★★ Airpower ★★	Luke Combs	11.047	+2.025	3164	627	19
18	20	29	PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville/WAR ★★ Airpower ★★	Hudson Westbrook	10.592	+1.323	3248	396	18
19	23	5	JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	10.433	+2.008	2702	619	22
20	19	34	BOOTS OFF Capitol Nashville/MCA Nashville	Jon Pardi	9.919	+0.422	3143	56	20
21	21	32	MCARTHUR Mercury/Big Loud HARDY, Eric Church, Morgan Wallen & Tim McGraw		9.030	-0.030	3338	12	17
22	24	38	WATER AT A WEDDING Nashville Harbor	Greytan James	7.954	+0.300	2778	45	21
23	25	37	WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	7.546	+0.765	2446	144	24
24	27	21	MEDICINE Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN	Megan Moroney	6.613	+0.975	2282	420	25
25	26	31	LET HIM IN ANYWAY Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	6.443	-0.066	2500	119	23
26	33	5	ANYTIME SOON Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	4.939	+1.303	1715	438	29
27	28	33	HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	4.931	+0.228	2159	153	26
28	32	15	EMPTY WORDS Sony Music Nashville/SMN	Corey Kent	4.871	+0.900	1695	217	31
29	30	22	MOVE ON American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Kevin Powers & Shaboozey	4.833	+0.586	1764	154	28
30	31	13	HORSEBACK CoJo/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Cody Johnson	4.766	+0.563	1806	151	27

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.

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

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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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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	29	29	KILLIN' ME MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	4.551	+0.277	1701	178	30
32	35	28	NEVER COMIN' BACK Lost Highway	Flatland Cavalry	3.373	+0.381	1413	166	32
33	37	9	WHO TOLD YOU THAT Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/Mercury Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	3.309	+0.587	1109	207	39
34	38	5	COWGIRL American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	3.272	+0.659	1283	287	35
35	36	20	WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Goat Island Sound/Mercury Nashville	Jacob Hackworth	3.153	+0.302	1393	65	33
36	34	17	DRY SPELL Kacey Musgraves/Lost Highway	Kacey Musgraves	3.081	-0.130	1126	-44	37
37	40	18	WANNABE Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	Gavin Adcock	2.687	+0.515	1124	134	38
38	39	13	I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE Boss Moves/Black River/Akando	Chris Young	2.625	+0.389	1053	138	40
39	42	25	GOOD DAMN Wheelhouse	Brantley Gilbert	2.256	+0.185	1320	160	34
40	41	16	LAND Hubbard House/Mercury Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	2.179	+0.027	1043	85	41
41	43	12	GIRL DAD Warner Records Nashville/WAR	Cole Swindell	1.915	-0.015	986	21	43
42	46	25	IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY Stoney Creek/Nashville Harbor	Carly Pearce & Riley Green	1.899	+0.256	921	125	44
43	48	12	STRING BY Mack Geiger/RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Mack Geiger	1.725	+0.273	511	47	56
44	44	19	LOVE IS BLIND WEST TO THE REST/Triple Tigers	Ian Munsick	1.720	+0.005	1003	52	42
45	47	23	BACK IN THE BOTTLE Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	1.614	+0.160	1132	90	36
46	45	6	DAMNED IF I DO Music Soup/Interscope/Lost Highway	Vincent Mason	1.594	-0.069	584	25	54
47	49	3	SOMETHING TO LOSE Sandlot/Atlantic/Atlantic Outpost	Stella Lefty Featuring Vincent Mason	1.461	+0.059	432	21	60
48	51	2	SON OF JOLENE Deluge Nashville/East Music Row/New Revolution	Belles With Dolly Parton	1.458	+0.201	510	60	57
49	50	17	BETTER THAT WAY Mercury/Big Loud	Charles Wesley Godwin & Luke Combs	1.366	+0.024	779	16	46
50	54	10	DEAR BIG CITY Curb	Dylan Scott	1.318	+0.150	847	78	45
51	58	2	BET ON THAT Enchntmnt/Warner/WAR	Blake Whiten	1.269	+0.256	645	89	53
52	53	14	GOD KNEW BETTER Stoney Creek	Parmalee	1.225	-0.009	661	13	48
53	56	10	BABY BLUES Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	1.139	+0.054	655	49	51
54	55	7	NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO Gatsby/MCA Nashville	Carter Faith & Wyatt Flores	1.135	-0.031	651	12	52
55	57	8	DONE FOR Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	1.089	+0.036	659	31	49
56	NEW		HOWDY Big Machine ★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker ★★	Cole Goodwin	1.045	+0.167	655	49	50
57	59	2	SAY LA V Quartz Hill	Joe Nichols	1.036	+0.110	559	39	55
58	60	9	YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY True To The Song/Nashville Harbor	Caroline Jones	0.886	-0.018	667	1	47
59	RE-ENTRY		SEARCHLIGHT Atlantic	Shinedown	0.608	-0.024	454	-5	59
60	NEW	1	TALKIN BOUT Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	0.584	+0.006	470	111	58



George Birge announced the signing of a new recording contract with Big River on Sept. 9. From left: Black River VP of marketing Tanya Schrage, Rich MGMT manager Chase Miller, Black River president/CEO Gordon Kerr, Black River VP of A&R Doug Johnson, Birge, Black River executive VP Rick Froio, Marcus & Colvin entertainment attorney Aaron Steinberg and Rich MGMT founder Brendan Rich.



Hudson Westbrook (left) poses with Texas Rangers first base coach Corey Ragsdale after throwing the ceremonial first pitch at the team's Sept. 1 game in Arlington against the Athletics.

COURTESY OF TEXAS RANGERS

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.



CONTACTS

East Coast Joe Maimone | joe.maimone@billboard.com

Southeast Alex Parry | alex@stellasales.solutions

Latin Marcia Olival | marciaolival29@gmail.com

Midwest/Touring Cynthia Mellow | cmellow615@gmail.com

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

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

BY ALIVE COVERAGE



Cody Johnson (left) made a surprise appearance during Carin León's Sept. 4 appearance at The Sphere in Las Vegas.

LANGLEY LEADS ON CMA BALLOT

The final nominees for the 60th annual CMA Awards were revealed Sept. 10.

To no one's surprise, the Country Music Association's voters were repeatedly choosin' **Ella Langley**, who led all nominees with nine nods, including her first entertainer of the year nominations.

She's the only newbie in the entertainer of the year category, joining reigning champ **Lainey Wilson**, past winner **Luke Combs** and previous nominees **Chris Stapleton** and **Cody Johnson**.

Miranda Lambert followed Langley with seven nominations, four of them coming from her work with Langley including cowriting "Choosin' Texas," which has spent a record-setting 21 weeks on top of the Billboard Hot 100. Lambert also earns her 19th nomination for female vocalist of the year.

That sets a new record, surpassing **Reba McEntire's** 18 nominations.

Other nominees reached major milestones, including **Little Big Town**, which received its 21st consecutive nomination for vocal group of the year, the most for any group.

The eligibility period is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Additionally, for single of the year, the track must have reached the top 10 of *Billboard's* Country Airplay or Hot Country Songs charts or the *Country Aircheck* chart.

The 60th CMA Awards will air on ABC and, for the first time, stream live on Disney+ on Nov. 18 as part of a new six-year extension the CMA signed with Disney in May. It will stream starting Nov. 19 on Hulu.

By Melinda Newman

'ROUND THE ROW

• Dolly Parton International Airport? It's not certain yet what Nashville's hub will be named, but the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority voted unanimously, 6-0, on Sept. 11 to begin the process of renaming the site after **Parton**. It comes amid a flurry of Parton-related news. Her SongTeller Hotel and Dolly's Life of Many Colors Museum are set to open on Sept. 29. And a monthly showcase featuring female artists — "FEMcountry at Parton's Live," developed in conjunction with **Leslie Fram's** FEMco — launches Sept. 22 with **Jo Dee Messina**, **Kylie Frey**, **Ruby Amanfu** and **Shelly Fairchild**.

• Sony Music Publishing Nashville and Verse 2 Music extended their publishing agreement with songwriter **Joybeth Taylor** ("Choosin' Texas," "Empty Words").

• Georgia-born songwriter **Justin Dukes** signed a publishing deal with Reservoir.

• Artist-writer **Summer Overstreet** enlisted Nashville-based MY PR Lab for publicity. The move comes ahead of the Sept. 25 release of "Take Her Outta Texas."

• The Nashville Musicians Union, AFM Local 257, developed a Work Standards for Lower Broadway agreement in the midst of recent changes that have squeezed the income for live performers downtown. The agreement — which includes participation from Jam Juice, an automated booking system — sets minimum pay standards, requires that 100% of tips belong to the artist and allows participating bands to book outside of the app. Go [here](#) for full details.

• **Rodney Crowell**, **Riley Green**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Vincent Mason** and **Andrea Zonn** have been added as performers for the Nashville Songwriters Association International's 9th annual Nashville Songwriter Awards Sept. 22 at the Ryman Auditorium.

• **George Strait** will receive the career maker award on Oct. 26 during the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Music City Center.

• Bluegrass musician **Jim VanCleve** will be inducted into the National Fiddler Hall of Fame during an **Appalachian Road Show** concert at the Appalachian Theatre in Boone, N.C. VanCleve is a founding member of both the Road Show and **Mountain Heart**.

• **Megan Moroney** will flip the switch for the 18th annual Opry Goes Pink night Oct. 27 at the Grand Ole Opry, in support of the battle against breast cancer. The evening's bill also includes **Mandy Barnett**, **Mackenzie Carpenter** and **Deana Carter**.

• The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum opens a new exhibit, "Grit and Glory: The Photography of Lawson Little," on Sept. 12, featuring images of Opry performers and Americana acts, including **Roy Acuff**, **Dwight Yoakam**, **Ralph Stanley** and **Raul Malo**.

• The annual Your Roots Are Showing folk conference returns to Belfast, Northern Ireland, Feb. 24-28, 2027.

• A **GoFundMe** page was established to assist with medical bills for Muserk GM **Marc Driskill**, a Nashville music publishing veteran who underwent a 10-hour surgery to reattach his left hand after it was severed from his wrist in an accident. Driskill is recovering at home.

• Video director **Jon Small**, 79, formerly a **Billy Joel** bandmate in the early-1970s duo **Attila**, died Sept. 4. He won two Academy of Country Music Awards for video of the year, recognizing **Reba McEntire's** "Whoever's in New England" and **Garth Brooks' "The Red Strokes,"** and also worked with **Brooks & Dunn**, **Jo Dee Messina** and **The Highwaymen**, among others.

• **Gayle Hill**, 90, who played a pioneering role in developing country music's integration in corporate advertising, died Aug. 18 at her home in Ashland City, Tenn. She produced **Dottie West's** iconic "Country Sunshine" jingle for Coca-Cola and founded G Hill & Company, working with **Loretta Lynn**, **Sonny James** and **Tompall & the Glaser Brothers**, and connecting country acts to Kraft, Rubbermaid, Pizza Hut and GMC. She was a 2019 inductee in the SOURCE Nashville Hall of Fame. A celebration of life is slated for 1:30 p.m. on Sept. 26 at 1025 Ed Burgess Road in Ashland City. ●



BY PAVEL SUSLOV

Blake Whiten received a plaque for his RIAA-certified gold single "Rollin' Stone" when he performed Sept. 2 at The Troubadour in West Hollywood, Calif. From left: Warner Music Group COO/ Warner Records Group co-chairman/COO Tom Corson, Whiten, Warner Records Group co-chairman/COO Aaron Bay-Schuck and Enchantment co-CEO Reid Daroff.

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

Southeast Alex Parry | alex@stellasales.solutions

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-Tamerlane 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) **9**

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) **26**

B

BABY BLUES Not Listed (A.Cooke, J.Clawson, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, K.Sturrock) **53**

BACK IN THE BOTTLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tm Your Huckleberry Music, BMI (R.Houser) **45**

BE BY YOU Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Songs By Porchlight, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Highway 75 Publishing, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Wildhawk Publishing, BMI (D.Alley, S.Banks, N.Walsh) **1**

BEEN BY NOW Warner-Tamerlane 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) **4**

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.Spargu) **51**

BETTER THAT WAY Charles Wesley Godwin Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alligator Quatro, ASCAP/Scrambler Music, ASCAP/Music Garden Studios Publishing, BMI (C.W.Godwin, Scooter Caruso, A.Torrence) **49**

BOOTS OFF Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR/Songs Of CN, GMR (J.Pardi, W.McCubbin, L.Laird) **20**

BOSTON 13117 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Grace Enger Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Joey Reeves Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/LMC Is The Place For Me Publishing, ASCAP/Secret Meadow Songs, ASCAP/Sony Allegro, ASCAP/Stella Lyle Music, ASCAP (G.Enger, J.K.Hindlin, J.Reeves, N.Kahan, S.Lefty) **2**

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) **3**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI (T.Beathard, J.Juber, G.J.Lucas, H.Warren, B.Zimmerman) **7**

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

COWGIRL EMPIRE SF, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Essency Music Publishing, ASCAP/BABAPUBISHER, 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) **34**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/This Is Chromatic Music, BMI (V.Mason, J.A.Hackworth, L.Hungate) **46**

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) **50**

DONE FOR Max McNow Music, BMI/Fugitive Songs Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Adam Yaron Music, BMI/Songs With A Pure Tone, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Music Of Big Family, BMI/In Honor Of Alice Publishing, BMI (M.McNow, A.Yaron, Mags Duval) **55**

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) **36**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (Corey Kent, A.Goodloe, M.Roy, J.Taylor, L.Vaughan) **28**

G

GET TO DRINKIN' Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Works By Kinda Country Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Brody James Music, BMI/Akin For Jonas Music, BMI/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) **11**

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) **41**

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) **52**

GOOD DAMN Indiana Angel Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Music Group, BMI/Rednecker Music, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (G.Gilbert, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, T.Phillips) **39**

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-Tamerlane 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) **16**

HOLDIN' IT DOWN Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/The Big One, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Redd Up Publishing, BMI/Aaron Presley Beachum Publishing Designee, BMI/Evan Christian Mayo Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (Chase Matthew, E.Escue, A.Maxwell, Presley Aaron, E.C.Mayo, J.Centers) **27**

HORSEBACK Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Fall 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) **30**

HOWDY Justin Dukes Publishing Designee, NS/Davis Loose Publishing Designee, NS/Carson Peters Publishing Designee, NS/Ethan Phillips Publishing Designee, NS (J.Dukes, D.Loose, C.Peters, E.Phillips) **56**

I

I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Sir Reginald The Fifth, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Flint River, BMI/Kyle Fishman Music, BMI/Play It Again Entertainment, BMI (C.Young, D.Davidson, K.A.Fishman) **38**

IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY Warner-Tamerlane 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) **42**

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) **5**

J

JADED Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI/Vellabush Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Endurance Music Group, BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Demo Jail Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Langley, R.Wetzel, J.M.Schmidt, E.K.Smith) **19**

K

KID MYSELF Triple Play Music, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP (J.Morgan, T.R.Hubbard, J.M.Schmidt) **6**

KILLIN' ME Parkermac Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Endless Tour Music, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid II, BMI/Heavy Lefty Music, BMI (P.M.Collum, R.Rogers, M.Criswell) **31**

L

LAND T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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.J.Egan, C.Smith) **40**

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) **25**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (M.Musick, R.Tyndell, J.N.Spillman) **44**

LOVING LIFE AGAIN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (E.Langley, E.K.Smith, D.Dawson) **8**

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**

MEDICINE Universal Tunes, SESAC/Georgiamo, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Triple Rae Creative Inc, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/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) **24**

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-Tamerlane 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.C.Chibueze, S.Sanchez, D.R.Stevens, A.Cabrera, J.Torrey) **29**

N

NEVER COMIN' BACK ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Invoked Lamb Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sony Lyric Music Publishing, GMR/CN Songs From 1508, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, GMR (C.Cordero, L.Laird, A.Retiere) **32**

NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Birds Of Baltimore Songs, BMI/Vincent Mason Publishing, BMI/Smackworld Music, GMR/Art of CTM 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) **54**

P

PAINTED UP PRETTY Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Saxet HW Music, BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI (H.Westbrook, Lukas Scott, B.Bailey) **18**

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-Tamerlane 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.Decous, D.Pellairn, D.Wilson, T.Anderson, S.Overstreet, T.E.Phill) **25**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Racks And Plaques Publishing, BMI/Hit Songs Of 50 Egg Music, BMI (L.Combs, J.Davis, D.Sbell, R.Sbell) **17**

S

SAY LA V Not Listed (Not Listed) **57**

SAY SO Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Eleventh Wave Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Cinq Trax, ASCAP/Lilyridge Music, ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP (D.Smyers, S.Mooney, D.H.Hodges, J.Robbins) **12**

SEARCHLIGHT Driven By Music, BMI/Echo Bravo Music LLC, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Know Your Writes, ASCAP/Sony Tunes LLC, ASCAP (B.Smith, D.R.Bassett, E.Bass) **59**

SOMETHING TO LOSE Reservoir 416, BMI/Songs Of One Riot Music, BMI/Copyright Control (J.Decous, G.Enger, S.Lefty, C.L.Dick) **47**

SON OF JOLENE Not Listed (Not Listed) **48**

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/Doin What I Do, BMI/Getyasome Music, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, M.Nesler) **14**

STRING BY Mack Geiger Publishing Designee, APRA (M.Geiger) **43**

T

TALKIN BOUT Not Listed (Not Listed) **60**

THINK AS YOU DRUNK Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Flatland Boy Music, BMI/Hit 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) **13**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Jimmy Sad Publishing, BMI/Ernest Money Publishing Designee, BMI (G.Adcock, J.R.Durrett, B.Clawson, E.K.Smith, M.C.Wallen) **37**

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.J.Egan, M.Dragstrem, R.C.McGill) **22**

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/T Vill Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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) **35**

WHO TOLD YOU THAT Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Total Schmidt Songs, ASCAP/Melodies Of CTM 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/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP (J.M.Schmidt, M.Tyler, H.Phelps, A.G.Gorley) **33**

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YOU'RE IT FOR ME, HONEY Bare Feet Publishing LLC, BMI/RobMadeIt, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Dark Bars Music, BMI/Haus Of Kings, ASCAP (C.D.Jones, R.Grimaldi, L.C.Lamb, B.Ratcliff) **58**



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25TH ANNIVERSARY

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CONTACTS

Touring & Midwest Cynthia Mellow | cmellow615@gmail.com

East Coast Joe Maimone | joe.maimone@billboard.com

Southeast Alex Parry | alex@stellasales.solutions

Latin Marcia Olival | marciaolival29@gmail.com

International Ryan O'Donnell | rodonnell@pmc.com

West Coast Aki Kaneko | moishekaneko@gmail.com



REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

20 Years Ago

Tracy Lawrence Began A Slow Ride With 'Friends' To Country's Peak

The singer's eighth No. 1 received support from his buddies, and a warning from a rival label

"Time," **Tracy Lawrence** said in a No. 1 single, "marches on."

After that release rose to the top in 1996, time marched forward for more than a decade before Lawrence reached the summit again. That journey began when "Find Out Who Your Friends Are" debuted at No. 59 on *Billboard*'s 60-slot Hot Country Songs chart dated Sept. 16, 2006.

The first single on his self-owned Rocky Comfort label, "Friends" was written by **Casey Beathard** ("Don't Blink," "The Boys of Fall") and **Ed Hill** ("Be My Baby

Tonight," "Most People are Good"), and produced by Lawrence with **Julian King** (Tyler Farr, Emerson Drive).

"Friends" picked up some famous friends during a slow ride to No. 1. **George Jones** and his wife, **Nancy Jones**, joined **Darryl Worley** and **Larry the Cable Guy** for cameos in the video; and **Kenny Chesney** and **Tim McGraw** added their voices to an alternate version that counted toward Lawrence's total spins as he promoted it to radio. Sony BMG warned country stations not to play the collaboration in a

June 2007 letter; broadcasters ignored the edict, and Sony BMG sheepishly rescinded it the next day. When the song, still listed as a Lawrence solo effort, reached the top in the June 23, 2007, issue, it ended the singer's 11-year dry spell between chart-topping numbers, setting a then-record 41 weeks to reach the peak.

"Friends" received the Country Music Association's musical event of the year award and the Academy of Country Music's vocal event trophy. It remains the most recent of Lawrence's eight career No. 1s.

Lawrence performs
Feb. 2, 2006, at the
Arco Arena in
Sacramento, Calif.

WEEK-ENDING	NO.	ARTIST	SONG	WEEKS ON CHART
58	56	B. CANNON (C. YOUNG, L. W. CLARK)	TENNESSEE GIRL	19
58	60	B. CANNON (B. DIPIERO, C. WISEMAN)	YOU DON'T KNOW A THING	7
57	1	S. AZAR (S. AZAR, R. FOSTER)	LOVE IS	1
58	51	T. BROWN, J. L. SLOAS (K. ELAM, B. BAKER)	AIN'T MY DAY TO CARE	12
59	NEW	C. HOWARD, E. PITTARELLI (B. F. PITTARELLI, A. RUSSELL)	FIND OUT WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE	1
60	59	T. LAWRENCE, J. KING (C. BEATHARD, E. HILL)	PODUNK	2
		J. STEELE, J. RICK (K. ANDERSON, T. HAMBRIDGE, J. STEELE)		
		Sammy Kershaw		
		Steve Azar		
		Katrina Elam		
		Bomshel		
		Tracy Lawrence		
		Keith Anderson		

