billboard Country Update

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Click Here For Friday's *Billboard Country Update* And Country Airplay Chart

ON THE CHARTS

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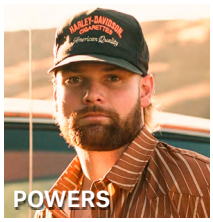


Dan + Shay's Tribute Song Rises

20 **DAN + SHAY**
"Say So"
The ballad reaches a new No. 20 high on Hot Country Songs, led by 26.6 million in airplay audience (up 8%) Oct. 30-Nov. 5, according to Luminate. The lead single from **Dan + Shay**'s album *Young*, released in August, was inspired by the 2025 death of mentor **Ben Vaughn**, who signed the duo to its first publishing deal.



42 **KEVIN POWERS & SHABOOZEY**
"Move On"
The collaboration enters Hot Country Songs at No. 42, marking **Powers**' first entry. The Boston-born, North Carolina-raised singer-songwriter is signed to **Shaboozey**'s American Dogwood label. He also co-wrote Shaboozey and **Jelly Roll**'s "Amen," which hit No. 1 on Country Airplay and No. 6 on Hot Country Songs earlier this year.



45 **BLAKE SHELTON**
"Let Him In Anyway"
Shelton charts his 77th Hot Country Songs title (10.9 million in radio reach, up 8%). The song, from his 2025 album *For Recreational Use Only*, concurrently climbs to No. 17 in its 39th week on Country Airplay. Frequent collaborator **HARDY** co-wrote it with **Zach Abend**, **Kyle Clark** and **Carson Wallace**.



47 **HARDY**
"By God"
HARDY's gospel-meets-country track bows at No. 47 on Hot Country Songs (4.1 million airplay impressions). He has five top 10s, paced by "One Beer" (featuring **Lauren Alaina** and **Devin Dawson**), which reached No. 4 in 2020. "By God" also opens at No. 32 on Country Airplay, where he has earned four No. 1s.



HARDY: RYAN SMITH. DAN + SHAY: ROBBY KLEIN.



BIGGEST ADD DATE OF HIS CAREER

Thank you Country Radio and Digital Partners

169 STATIONS

PANEL CLOSED



BLUE HIGHWAY
Records

Fifty-One/Forty-Nine Records

billboard Hot Country Songs

AIRPLAY, STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TWO WEEKS AGO	WKS ON CHART	TITLE / PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	Artist / IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL	COUNTRY AIRPLAY RANK	PEAK POSITION
1	1	1	55	**CHOOSIN' TEXAS** ★★ No. 1 (48 Weeks) ★★ E.LANGLEY,B.WEST,M.LAMBERT (E.LANGLEY,C.L.DICK,M.LAMBERT,J.TAYLOR)	**Ella Langley** SAWGOD/COLUMBIA/TRIPLE TIGERS	RC	1
2	2	3	31	**BOSTON** J.REEVES (G.C.ENGER,J.K.HINDLIN,J.S.REEVES,N.KAHAN,S.F.LEFKOFSKY)	**Stella Lefty** SANDLOT/ATLANTIC OUTPOST	RC	2
3	3	4	15	**BEEN BY NOW** J.MOI,CHARLIE HANDSOME,M.HASTINGS,H.COMPTON (M.C.WALLEN,R.H.BLOCK,J.BYRON,B.PENDERGRASS,T.PHILLIPS,CHARLIE HANDSOME)	**Morgan Wallen** MERCURY/BIG LOUD	5	2
4	5	7	13	**JADED** ★★ Sales & Airplay Gainer ★★ G.SIMON,J.M.SCHMIDT (E.LANGLEY,R.WETZEL,J.M.SCHMIDT,E.K.SMITH)	**Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley** YELLABUSH/COLUMBIA/RECORDS NASHVILLE	3	4
5	4	2	3	**LIES** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan Featuring Lana Del Rey** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	2
6	6	5	33	**LOVING LIFE AGAIN** E.LANGLEY,B.WEST,M.LAMBERT,D.DAWSON (E.LANGLEY,E.K.SMITH,D.DAWSON)	**Ella Langley** SAWGOD/COLUMBIA/TRIPLE TIGERS	1	5
7	7	6	38	**BE HER** E.LANGLEY,B.WEST,M.LAMBERT (E.LANGLEY,S.AHNQUIST,J.M.SCHMIDT,M.W.HARDY)	**Ella Langley** SAWGOD/COLUMBIA/TRIPLE TIGERS	RC	2
8	8	8	8	**LAST THING YOU NEED** CHARLIE HANDSOME,J.MOI (B.PENDERGRASS,R.C.MCGILL,J.BYRON,M.C.WALLEN,CHARLIE HANDSOME)	**Morgan Wallen** TAKE-TWO INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE/ATLANTIC/BIG LOUD	38	4
9	9	10	28	**I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE** B.WEST,A.GOODLOE,E.LANGLEY (E.LANGLEY,A.GOODLOE,J.TAYLOR)	**Ella Langley & Morgan Wallen** SAWGOD/COLUMBIA/BIG LOUD/TRIPLE TIGERS	RC	3
10	10	11	33	**RETHINK SOME THINGS** CHIP MATTHEWS,J.D.SINGLETON,L.COMBS (L.COMBS,J.DAVIS,D.ISBELL,R.ISBELL)	**Luke Combs** SEVEN RIDGES/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE/SMN	7	10
11	11	13	16	**TAKE ME BACK (LEAVE ME THERE)** T.W.WILLMON (K.ARCHER,T.CARTWRIGHT,P.GOOD)	**Cody Johnson** COJO/WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	41	10
12	12	15	22	**PHONE, KEYS, WALLET** KID HARPOON (L.WILSON,J.DECIOUS,D.PELLARIN,D.WILSON,T.ANDERSON,S.OVERSTREET,T.E.P.HULL)	**Lainey Wilson & John Mayer** BROKEN BOW	11	12
13	14	19	23	**THINK AS YOU DRUNK** D.HUFF (R.GREEN,J.L.ALEXANDER,ERIK DYLAN,W.MCCUBBIN,S.EMERICK,T.KEITH)	**Riley Green** NASHVILLE HARBOR	8	11
14	17	22	35	**EMPTY WORDS** A.GOODLOE (COREY KENT,A.GOODLOE,M.ROY,J.TAYLOR,L.VAUGHAN)	**Corey Kent** COMBUSTION/RCA NASHVILLE/SMN	14	13
15	13	21	25	**SOMETHING TO LOSE** J.REEVES (J.DECIOUS,G.C.ENGER,S.F.LEFKOFSKY,C.L.DICK)	**Stella Lefty With Vincent Mason** SANDLOT/ATLANTIC OUTPOST/LOST HIGHWAY	25	11
16	19	26	33	**GET TO DRINKIN'** R.WILSON,Z.J.KING (Z.J.KING,R.AKINS,T.ARCHER,K.A.FISHMAN,K.STURROCK)	**Zach John King** SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE/SMN	2	16
17	16	16	22	**I KNEW IT, I KNEW YOU** J.M.ANTONOFF,T.SWIFT (T.SWIFT,J.M.ANTONOFF)	**Taylor Swift** PIXAR/WALT DISNEY/REPUBLIC/MCA	RC	1
18	15	25	26	**COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT** J.STEVENS (J.L.MILLER,P.WELLING,M.DRAGSTREM)	**Luke Bryan** ROW CROP/MCA NASHVILLE/MCA	4	15
19	20	27	22	**COWGIRL** S.COOK,N.SASTRY,SHABOOZEY (C.O.CHIBUEZE,S.C.COOK,A.A.PAUTI,T.W.KANE,M.R.STEVENS,N.SASTRY,J.L.COTTER,J.MORGAN,J.HOSKINS)	**Shaboozey** AMERICAN DOGWOOD/EMPIRE/MAGNOLIA MUSIC	21	11
20	24	31	26	**SAY SO** D.SMYERS,S.HENDRICKS (D.SMYERS,S.MOONEY,D.H.HODGES,J.ROBBINS)	**Dan + Shay** WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	6	20
21	23	30	56	**PAINTED YOU PRETTY** LUKAS SCOTT (H.WESTBROOK,LUKAS SCOTT,B.BAILEY)	**Hudson Westbrook** RIVER HOUSE/WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	10	21
22	22	28	5	**SNAKESKIN BOOTS** J.FRASURE,M.LAMBERT (M.LAMBERT,J.V.FRASURE,N.HEMBY,B.J.MCLOUGHLIN)	**Miranda Lambert & Ella Langley** VANNER/MCA	51	12
23	26	34	19	**HANDS UP** CHARLIE HANDSOME,B.JOHNSON (J.B.DEFORD,R.H.BLOCK,J.A.FOX,M.W.HARDY,R.C.MCGILL)	**Jelly Roll** BAILEE & BUDDY/BMG/STONEY CREEK	9	23
24	25	33	22	**KID MYSELF** B.ANDERSON,J.MORGAN (J.MORGAN,T.R.HUBBARD,J.M.SCHMIDT)	**John Morgan** NIGHT TRAIN/BROKEN BOW	RC	16
25	18	9	3	**LODI WHEN** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	9

COUNTRY SONGWRITERS™

	1	#1 100 WKS **ZACH BRYAN**
	2	**ELLA LANGLEY**
	3	**JOYBETH TAYLOR**
	4	**LUKE DICK**
	5	**MIRANDA LAMBERT**
	6	**JORDAN SCHMIDT**
	7	**ERNEST**
	8	**MACK GEIGER**
	9	**RILEY GREEN**
	10	**STELLA LEFTY**



CAYLEE ROBILLARD

COUNTRY PRODUCERS™

	1	#1 12 WKS **JOE REEVES**
TIE	2	**BEN WEST**
TIE	2	**ELLA LANGLEY**
	4	**MIRANDA LAMBERT**
	5	**CHARLIE HANDSOME**
	6	**TRENT WILLMON**
	7	**KID HARPOON**
	8	**AUSTIN GOODLOE**
	9	**JOEY MOI**
	10	**JAMIE MCLAUGHLIN**

The weekly Country Songwriters and Country Producers charts are based on total points accrued by a songwriter and producer, respectively, for each attributed song that appears on the Hot Country Songs chart. As with Billboard's yearly recaps, multiple writers or producers split points for each song equally (and the dividing of points will lead to occasional ties on rankings).

billboard Hot Country Songs

AIRPLAY, STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TWO WEEKS AGO	WKS ON CHART	TITLE / PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	Artist / IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL	COUNTRY AIRPLAY RANK	PEAK POSITION
26	28	35	19	**BET ON THAT** A.R.SHAWN (B.WHITEN,G.AVERILL,J.HOSKINS,J.M.SPARGUR)	**Blake Whiten** ENCHNTMNT/WARNER/WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	22	26
27	31	37	22	**STRING BY** ★★ Streaming Gainer ★★ J.ADLAM (M.GEIGER)	**Mack Geiger** MACK GEIGER/RECORDS/COLUMBIA/RECORDS NASHVILLE	35	23
28	30	36	28	**MEDICINE** K.BUSH (M.MORONEY,C.R.HARRINGTON,J.J.DILLON,J.L.ALEXANDER)	**Megan Moroney** MEGAN MORONEY/COLUMBIA/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE/SMN	16	11
29	33	40	6	**ANYTIME SOON** M.KNOX (K.M.ALLISON,J.EDWARDS,T.KENNEDY,J.MORGAN)	**Jason Aldean** MACON/BROKEN BOW	13	29
30	32	39	9	**WATER AT A WEDDING** J.P.MASSEY,GREYLAN JAMES (G.J.EGAN,M.DRAGSTREM,R.C.MCGILL)	**Greylan James** NASHVILLE HARBOR	15	30
31	36	44	7	**WORTH YOUR WILD** J.KERR,R.DICKERSON,C.BROWN (R.DICKERSON,P.WELLING,C.BROWN)	**Russell Dickerson** TRIPLE TIGERS	12	31
32	37	38	19	**ANOTHER DRINK** MARSHMELLO,A.VANDERHEYM,EARWULF (MARSHMELLO,A.VANDERHEYM,T.ERIKSEN,J.J.DILLON,K.BALLERINI,CASTLE)	**Marshmello & Kelsea Ballerini** JOYTIME COLLECTIVE/MERCURY/BIG LOUD	-	20
33	39	46	8	**MESS** P.DIGIOVANNI (J.DAVIS,J.DAVIS,P.DIGIOVANNI,T.P.WOOD)	**Jordan Davis** MCA NASHVILLE/MCA	45	33
34	40	41	16	**WHO TOLD YOU THAT** C.LACORTE,T.WETMORE (J.M.SCHMIDT,M.TYLER,H.PHELPS,A.G.GORLEY)	**Tucker Wetmore** TUCKER WETMORE/BACK BLOCKS/MERCURY/MCA	24	25
35	42	42	12	**POURING** J.ADLAM (M.GEIGER)	**Mack Geiger** MACK GEIGER/RECORDS/RECORDS NASHVILLE	-	35
36	41	45	15	**WHAT YOU WANT** J.GEAR,V.MASON,B.TRUITT (V.MASON,J.RAUTON)	**Vincent Mason** MUSIC SOUP/INTERSCOPE/LOST HIGHWAY	-	33
37	27	12	3	**ROBOT KILLED THE WORKING MAN** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	12
38	44	49	7	**HORSEBACK** T.W.WILLMON (R.MONTANA,W.MCCUBBIN,P.SIKES)	**Cody Johnson** COJO/WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	18	38
39	43	43	4	**KINDA LOVE IT** KID HARPOON (L.WILSON,T.E.P.HULL,J.DECIOUS,J.MAYER)	**Lainey Wilson** BROKEN BOW	-	29
40	46	47	20	**KILLIN' ME** F.LIDDELL,E.MASSE (P.MCCOLLUM,R.ROGERS,M.CRISWELL)	**Parker McCollum** MCA NASHVILLE/MCA	28	30
41	29	14	3	**PLAINSMAN** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan Featuring Turnpike Troubadours** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	14
42	NEW		1	**MOVE ON** ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★ S.COOK (T.W.KANE,K.J.POWERS,C.O.CHIBUEZE,S.SANCHEZ,D.R.STEVENS,A.CABRERA,J.TORREY)	**Kevin Powers & Shaboozey** AMERICAN DOGWOOD/EMPIRE/MAGNOLIA MUSIC	19	42
43	RE-ENTRY		2	**OVERRATED** E.BLAIR (W.ZEIDERS,E.BLAIR,S.M.DOUGLAS,J.FINKELSTEIN)	**Warren Zeiders & Bellah Mae** 717/WARNER	60	43
44	48	–	4	**WORKIN' MAN** J.RODGERS (G.ADCOCK,L.LAIRD,J.BELL)	**Gavin Adcock** THRIVIN HERE/WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE/WRN	-	38
45	NEW		1	**LET HIM IN ANYWAY** S.HENDRICKS (M.W.HARDY,Z.ABEND,K.S.CLARK,C.WALLACE)	**Blake Shelton** TEN POINT/WHEELHOUSE	17	45
46	34	17	3	**BACKWARDS** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	17
47	NEW		1	**BY GOD** HARDY,Z.ABEND (M.W.HARDY,Z.ABEND,H.PHELPS)	**HARDY** MERCURY/BIG LOUD	32	47
48	47	–	9	**THAT'S JUST ME** D.HUFF,R.GREEN (R.GREEN)	**Riley Green** NASHVILLE HARBOR	-	19
49	50	50	9	**GO AGAIN** D.HUFF,R.GREEN (R.GREEN)	**Riley Green Featuring Hannah McFarland** NASHVILLE HARBOR	-	32
50	35	18	3	**YOU'LL GET BY** Z.L.BRYAN,J.MCLAUGHLIN,E.SPEAR (Z.L.BRYAN)	**Zach Bryan** BELTING BRONCO/WARNER	-	18

The week's most popular country songs, ranked by radio airplay audience impressions as measured by Luminate, sales data as compiled by Luminate and streaming activity data from online music sources tracked by Luminate. Descending titles below No. 25 are moved to recurrent after 20 weeks.

COUNTRY MARKET WATCH

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

WEEKLY UNIT COUNT

	ALBUM CONSUMPTION	AUDIO ON-DEMAND	VIDEO ON-DEMAND
This Week	2,179,000	2,146,337,000	95,617,000
Last Week	2,348,000	2,317,127,000	98,422,000
Change	-7.2%	-7.4%	-2.8%
This Week Last Year	1,755,000	2,155,581,000	99,042,000
Change	24.2%	-0.4%	-3.5%

YEAR-TO-DATE

	2025	2026	CHANGE
Album Consumption	88,097,000	110,506,000	25.4%
Audio On-Demand	106,556,773,000	108,540,935,000	1.9%
Video On-Demand	5,183,996,000	4,808,597,000	-7.2%

YEAR-OVER-YEAR

ALBUM CONSUMPTION

'25 88.10 million

'26 110.51 million

TOTAL ON-DEMAND STREAMS

'25 111.71 billion

'26 113.35 billion

All data measures U.S. activity as of the week ending November 5, 2026. All units counts are rounded to the nearest thousand. At the beginning of 2026, the formula for album consumption units (album sales + track-equivalent albums [TEA] + stream-equivalent albums [SEA]) was updated. Under the revised methodology, one SEA unit is now defined as 1,000 paid subscription streams or 2,500 ad-supported on-demand audio streams. As a result, year-over-year comparisons of album consumption units are not directly equivalent. The updated formula requires approximately 20% fewer paid subscription streams or 33.3% fewer ad-supported streams to generate one album consumption unit compared to the prior methodology.

For inquiries about any Luminate, please contact Howard Lin at hlin@liuminatedata.com LUMINATE

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2026 billboard GRAMMY® VOTER GUIDE ISSUE

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15,000+

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ISSUE DATE 12/5
AD CLOSE 11/24
MATERIALS DUE 11/25

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GRAMMY AWARDS®

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ASHLEE COONEY

Songwriter Laura Veltz ("The Bones," "Speechless") hosted a fundraiser Nov. 4 at The Listening Room to send a Nashville 12-and-under baseball team to a 2027 event in Cooperstown, N.Y. From left: Ashley McBryde, Maren Morris, Veltz, songwriter Luke Dick ("Choosin' Texas," "Burning Man") and Listening Room owner/founder Chris Blair.

GENE AUTRY'S GUITAR IN GLOBAL DISPUTE

As programmers prepare Christmas playlists, the **Gene Autry** recordings "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Here Comes Santa Claus (Down Santa Claus Lane)" are currently top of mind.

But a 1931 Autry recording — "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine," which charted on *Billboard*'s all-genre hit parade in 1935 — is suddenly timely, as well, in a detective story that's erupted into a trans-Atlantic legal tiff.

A rare Martin OM-45 guitar, one of only 50 produced in the early-1930s, was found in a Swedish farmhouse among the inheritance a father left to his daughter when he died in February 2021. The guitar, it turns out, was likely owned by Autry and stolen from him in 1932. The exact journey the instrument took cannot be fully traced, but steps were taken somewhere in the past 90 years to conceal its identity. The process of uncovering the guitar's authenticity and tracing its original ownership back to Autry, a Country Music Hall of Fame member who was an iconic singing cowboy during much of the 20th century, reads like a *C.S.I.* forensics drama, laid out in a four-part series by Swedish newspaper *Göteborgs-Posten*.

Owe Jakobsson had inherited the instrument from his father, **Gunnar**, who was an inventive repairman. The original guitar had amateur-grade modifications made to the neck and bridge, and Owe's daughter, **Sandra**, received a $7,000 offer for the Martin when she was selling off pieces of the estate. Another potential buyer tipped her off that it was likely worth far more, and they discovered that even a modern replica is worth about $12,000. This guitar, which had all the earmarks of being an original, could be worth six figures.

Sandra took the instrument to a Stockholm guitar shop for restoration, and there, **Leif Lundbäck** discovered a name, Gene Autry, that had been covered with black paint. He also found a serial number when he detached the neck. The Martin company, they would discover, has documentation from several letters that Autry wrote in early 1932 that verify a connection.

The singer's 1932 tax return, produced by the estate, indicates that a Martin guitar had been stolen from him in the fall, roughly nine months after his correspondence with Martin.

Autry's widow, **Jackie Autry**, offered $20,000 for the instrument after she was contacted. Sandra declined that figure, holding that it has sentimental value because she had inherited it from her father. The two sides are at a stalemate — Autry has not increased her offer and told *Göteborgs-Posten*, "I don't pay money to blackmailers." Sandra has been advised that the guitar is worth far more, and that Autry's estate can afford it. The case is complicated by differing nuances in the laws of Sweden and the United States.

"I'm the one who inherited it," Sandra told *Göteborgs-Posten*. "So, with that said, I don't think I'm being dishonest by wanting to keep it."

Go here to read the full, four-part series.

RADIO & RECORDS®

• **Brad Turcotte** joined New West as GM. He was most recently TEG Live senior VP of country, operating out of Nashville for the Australian firm Ticketek Entertainment Group. The announcement comes as the label signs progressive bluegrass band **Shadowgrass**.

• Warner Records Nashville laid off five staff members on Nov. 3, including VP of marketing **Victoria "Torie" Mason**, senior VP of publicity **Fount Lynch** and VP of radio **Anna Cage**. Also departing were West Coast manager of Warner artist relations **Jenna Johnson** and Team WMN radio manager **Kayla Burnett**.

• Blue Highway Canada director of national promotion **Ron Harwood** announced plans to retire at the end of the month, concluding a 37-year run in the music business.

• Nashville-born artist **Connor McCutcheon** signed with Loop Group for label and artist services, plus concert booking.

• Jacobs Media president **Fred Jacobs** announced plans to retire from his position at the end of 2026. VP/GM **Paul Jacobs** will ascend to CEO beginning Jan. 1. Fred will officially take a chairman title, maintaining an association with the firm in a limited role.

• **Jenn Lopez** will join **WQDR** Raleigh, N.C., as morning co-host with incumbent **Mike Wheless**, *The Raleigh News & Observer* reported. Wheless has been operating solo since previous co-host **Amanda Daughtry** left the station in July. Lopez arrives from adult contemporary **WOMX** Orlando, Fla., where she also worked the morning shift.

• **Mike Stern** begins Nov. 16 as head of programming for Zimmer Communications stations in three Missouri markets — Columbia, Jefferson City and Springfield — according to RadioInk.com. Stern segues from a role as a Jacobs Media consultant. Zimmer's country signals include **KCLR** Columbia and **KATI** Jefferson City.

• Beasley/Las Vegas hired **Mike DeAmicis** as its director of sales, RadioInk.com reported. He previously spent four years as Salem Media VP/GM of national sales. The five-station Beasley cluster includes country **KCYE**.

• **WFRE** Frederick, Md., added **Skywalker** to its night slot, according to RadioInsight.com. Already the assistant PD/afternoon personality for top 40 **WSPK** Poughkeepsie, N.Y., he similarly voicetracks shifts at **WNTB** Wilmington, N.C., and **WBQK** Williamsburg, Va.

• Late Grand Ole Opry host **Bill Cody** was announced as the recipient of the Country Music Association's media achievement award during a Nov. 8 event at the Grand Ole Opry House.

• *Taste of Country Mornings* co-host **Nicole Taylor**, 35, died Sept. 28 from breast cancer. The company announced her passing on Nov. 3. She spent two years with the syndicated show.



Craig Morgan (right) received a distinguished service award from the Grammy Museum Mississippi in Cleveland on Nov. 3. With him: Operation Enduring Freedom veteran Seth Still (left) and retired Major General Jim Lipscomb.

billboard

2026

YEAR IN MUSIC AND TOURING



Billboard's Year in Music & Touring issue will wrap up 2026 with an extraordinary package of year-end charts, interviews and analysis of the year's top songs, albums, artists, labels and more based on *Billboard's* world-renowned data. The year-end touring charts will highlight the top venues, promoters and tours by attendance, ticket sales and genre.

Place your brand in front of booking agents, artists, managers, concert promoters, producers, venue operators, label heads and touring executives who are driving the live-music business worldwide.

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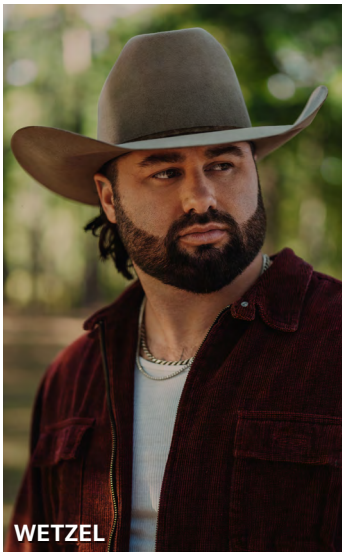
ISSUE DATE 12/12 | **AD CLOSE** 12/1 | **MATERIALS DUE** 12/3

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

billboard TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST / IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL	TITLE	CERT.	PEAK POS.
1	1	2	77	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD/MERCURY 1000170961*/REPUBLIC	I'M THE PROBLEM	4	1
2	2	3	30	ELLA LANGLEY SAWGOD 843811*/COLUMBIA	DANDELION	■	1
3	4	4	192	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD/MERCURY 037570*/REPUBLIC	ONE THING AT A TIME	9	1
4	3	1	3	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO DIGITAL EX/WARNER	YOUNG MANHOOD AND OTHER DONATABLE ORGANS		1
5	5	5	304	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD 033180*/REPUBLIC	DANGEROUS: THE DOUBLE ALBUM	9	1
6	6	6	118	ELLA LANGLEY SAWGOD 848014*/COLUMBIA	HUNGOVER	■	4
7	8	8	11	STELLA LEFTY SANDLOT/ATLANTIC OUTPOST 075678579547*/AG	LONG WAY HOME		4
8	7	7	56	JASON ALDEAN MACON/BROKEN BOW/BMG 964205183*/BBMG	30 NUMBER ONE HITS		4
9	9	9	7	RILEY GREEN NASHVILLE HARBOR 843930155460*/BIG MACHINE	THAT'S JUST ME		2
10	10	10	33	LUKE COMBS SEVEN RIDGES/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 841767*/SMN	THE WAY I AM		1
11	11	11	106	RILEY GREEN NASHVILLE HARBOR 843930116935/BIG MACHINE	DON'T MIND IF I DO	■	6
12	13	14	510	GEORGE STRAIT MCA NASHVILLE 000459/MCA (25.98)	50 NUMBER ONES	7	1
13	12	12	233	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 86979*/WARNER	AMERICAN HEARTBREAK	3	1
14	17	17	412	TOBY KEITH SHOW DOG-UNIVERSAL 010334/UME	35 BIGGEST HITS	■	1
15	16	16	492	LUKE COMBS RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 538883*/SMN	THIS ONE'S FOR YOU	8	1
16	18	19	127	SHABOOZEY AMERICAN DOGWOOD 1023*/EMPIRE	WHERE I'VE BEEN, ISN'T WHERE I'M GOING	■	2
17	15	15	167	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 725898*/WARNER	ZACH BRYAN	■	1
18	26	31	16	KOE WETZEL YELLABUSH 846148* WS EX/COLUMBIA	THE NIGHT CHAMPION		12
19	19	18	601	CHRIS STAPLETON MERCURY NASHVILLE 019405*/MCA	TRAVELLER	7	1
20	14	13	38	DOLLY PARTON RCA 997802*/LEGACY	DIAMONDS & RHINESTONES: THE GREATEST HITS COLLECTION		4
21	20	20	440	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD 783*	IF I KNOW ME	4	1
22	25	24	116	POST MALONE MERCURY 602465958249*/REPUBLIC	F-1 TRILLION	■	1
23	RE-ENTRY		511	BROOKS & DUNN ARISTA NASHVILLE 18852/LEGACY (18.98/12.98)	THE GREATEST HITS COLLECTION	4	2
24	21	26	80	TUCKER WETMORE TUCKER WETMORE/BACK BLOCKS/MERCURY NASHVILLE/MERCURY 602475886273*/MCA/REPUBLIC	WHAT NOT TO	●	4
25	22	21	312	CHRIS STAPLETON MERCURY NASHVILLE 032689*/MCA	STARTING OVER	3	1

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JOHN PARK



DANIEL PRAKOPCYK

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

billboard COUNTRY STREAMING SONGS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE / ARTIST
1	1	55	CHOOSIN' TEXAS ELLA LANGLEY
2	2	3	LIES ZACH BRYAN FEAT. LANA DEL REY
3	3	15	BEEN BY NOW MORGAN WALLEN
4	4	29	BOSTON STELLA LEFTY
5	5	7	LAST THING YOU NEED MORGAN WALLEN
6	6	38	BE HER ELLA LANGLEY
7	7	28	I CAN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE ELLA LANGLEY & MORGAN WALLEN
8	8	45	BROKEN WINDOW SERENADE WHISKEY MYERS
9	9	13	JADED KOE WETZEL & ELLA LANGLEY
10	10	78	WEREN'T FOR THE WIND ELLA LANGLEY
11	12	12	TAKE ME BACK (LEAVE ME THERE) CODY JOHNSON
12	11	92	I'M THE PROBLEM MORGAN WALLEN
13	15	228	SOMETHING IN THE ORANGE ZACH BRYAN
14	RE-ENTRY		JINGLE BELL ROCK BOBBY HELMS
15	13	77	I GOT BETTER MORGAN WALLEN
16	14	77	WHAT I WANT MORGAN WALLEN FEAT. TATE MCRAE
17	RE-ENTRY		ROCKIN' AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE BRENDA LEE
18	17	33	LOVING LIFE AGAIN ELLA LANGLEY
19	16	77	WORST WAY RILEY GREEN
20	21	193	LAST NIGHT MORGAN WALLEN
21	22	128	I HAD SOME HELP POST MALONE FEAT. MORGAN WALLEN
22	18	38	BE BY YOU LUKE COMBS
23	19	484	TENNESSEE WHISKEY CHRIS STAPLETON
24	23	133	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) SHABOOZEY
25	24	15	SOMETHING TO LOSE STELLA LEFTY WITH VINCENT MASON

The week's top-streamed country songs as compiled by Luminate. Charts update weekly on Tuesdays at www.Billboard.Biz/charts. Copyright 2026, Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved.

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

billboard AMERICANA/ FOLK ALBUMS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST / IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL	TITLE	CERT.	PEAK POS.
1	1	2	28	NOAH KAHAN MERCURY 199957317412*/REPUBLIC	THE GREAT DIVIDE	■	1
2	3	3	178	NOAH KAHAN MERCURY 036702*/REPUBLIC	STICK SEASON	4	1
3	2	1	3	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO DIGITAL EX/WARNER	YOUNG MANHOOD AND OTHER DONATABLE ORGANS		1
4	5	4	233	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 86979*/WARNER	AMERICAN HEARTBREAK	3	1
5	19	20	16	GRACIE ABRAMS INTERSCOPE /INTERSCOPE CAPITOL	DAUGHTER FROM HELL		1
6	8	9	127	SHABOOZEY AMERICAN DOGWOOD 1023*/EMPIRE	WHERE I'VE BEEN, ISN'T WHERE I'M GOING	■	1
7	6	6	167	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 725898*/WARNER	ZACH BRYAN	■	1
8	9	7	593	HOZIER RUBYWORKS/COLUMBIA 309996*/LEGACY	HOZIER	5	1
9	7	5	12	PHOEBE BRIDGERS DEAD OCEANS 400*	LOST WEEKEND		1
10	14	13	20	KOE WETZEL YELLABUSH 846148* WS EX/COLUMBIA	THE NIGHT CHAMPION		5

Americana/Folk Albums ranks the most popular Americana/folk albums of the week, as compiled by Luminate, based on multi-metric consumption (blending traditional album sales, track equivalent albums, and streaming equivalent albums). Copyright 2026, Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved.

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

billboard BLUEGRASS ALBUMS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST / IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL	TITLE	CERT.	PEAK POS.
1	1	1	10	BILLY STRINGS REPRISE 729555*/WARNER	SO MUCH FOR GOODBYES		1
2	RE-ENTRY		39	NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND 558938	FISHIN' IN THE DARK: THE BEST OF NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND		1
3	3	4	164	THE STEELDRIVERS ROUNDER/CRAFT 610598*/CONCORD	THE STEELDRIVERS		1
4	4	5	118	SOUNDTRACK LOST HIGHWAY/MERCURY 170069*/UME	O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?	8	1
5	5	6	145	THE STEELDRIVERS ROUNDER/CRAFT 610624*/CONCORD	RECKLESS		2
6	6	7	173	STURGILL SIMPSON HIGH TOP MOUNTAIN 58784*/THIRTY TIGERS	CUTTIN' GRASS, VOL. 1: THE BUTCHER SHOPPE SESSIONS		1
7	7	8	110	BILLY STRINGS REPRISE 726466*/WARNER	HIGHWAY PRAYERS		1
8	8	9	173	BILLY STRINGS ROUNDER 610063*/CONCORD	HOME		1
9	RE-ENTRY		84	ALISON KRAUSS ROUNDER/CRAFT 610555/CONCORD	A HUNDRED MILES OR MORE: A COLLECTION	●	1
10	NEW		1	THE CREEKERS WARNER RECORDS NASHVILLE	FOLLOW THE SOUND		10

Bluegrass Albums ranks the most popular bluegrass albums of the week, as compiled by Luminate, based on multimeric consumption (blending traditional album sales, track-equivalent albums, and streaming-equivalent albums). Copyright 2026, Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved

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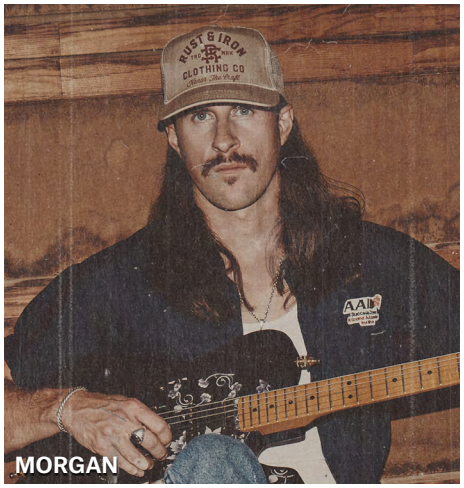
John Morgan's 'Cry Baby' Turns Personal Hurt Into A Potential Hit



Apologies suck.

They're necessary in any adult relationship, but saying the right words, at the right time, is tricky, and muffing it up can actually dig the hole deeper. More importantly, if an apology is due, it means somebody did — or said — something hurtful. Having made a mistake that requires an "I'm sorry" is what sucks the most about trying to make amends.

"If you care about a person in a relationship, there's going to be times where you're pissed off at each other, and you're gonna say something that just comes right out," says **John Morgan**. "People get stressed, you know, and they say things that you wouldn't normally say. That's just part of life, being able to grow through those moments."



MORGAN

Apologizing for a stray remark is one thing. Taking ownership for a series of mistakes is next level, and songwriter **Tully Kennedy** ("If I Didn't Love You," "Tip It on Back"), around the time of his 20th wedding anniversary, took stock of the relationship he'd built with his wife.

"I'm thinking about all the times I wasn't the best boyfriend back in the day, or the best husband," he says. "I looked at her, and I said, 'You know, sorry I made you cry, baby.'"

He had a writing appointment that day — April 11, 2025 — at BMG Music on Nashville's Music Row with **Kurt Allison** ("Anytime Soon," "Seein' Red") and **Lydia Vaughan** ("If I Didn't Love You," "Bar None"), and on his commute, that personal moment started to feel like the foundation for a song.

"'Cry Baby' — I loved the play on the hook," Kennedy says. "If you look at 'Cry Baby,' there's so many different ways you can take that."

When he suggested the title at BMG, Vaughan fixated on the option Kennedy preferred, even before he finished explaining it, and they all dove in. Allison had a moody, introspective-sounding musical track that he'd created, and when he played it, Kennedy gave it a thumbs up.

"You can't really go too far down the road if you're not matching a vibe with [the idea], especially that title," Allison notes. "That title has to really land in a certain spot."

Kennedy sang the first couple lines in a conversational tone, approximating the apology he'd offered to his wife. The goal was to develop it with phrases that some guy listening in his car could envision saying to his other half: vulnerable, but not weak.

"I'm 51 now, so I can look back and be like, 'Boy, I handled that wrong,'" Kennedy says. "It's actually been a great tool in my songwriting in these later years, because I can look back on all the things I've missed, and got wrong, and was insensitive [about]. I can kind of draw off that well a little bit more than I could a while ago."

The chorus lifted musically, and they hammered the title home in the first line of that section: "I don't wanna make you *cry*, baby." They hit a similar rhyme scheme five times in the chorus — "*eyes*, baby," "*fight*, baby" — emphasizing the "i" rhyme, then backing off on the "baby" part.

"It's easy to sing along to that way," Vaughan notes, "but it also makes it less like, 'Wow, they're just saying "baby" over and over again,' because the emphasis isn't actually on 'baby' each time."

In the process, they transitioned from the opening verse's admission of a screw-up to the moment when the guy tries to make it right. They continued even more positively in verse two with the singer crediting his long-term improvement as a human being to his woman's influence.

In the bridge, the singer contemplates what it would mean if this fight would cost him the relationship. It's a familiar step in diffusing many couples' arguments.

"Everyone has had a fight — or multiple — with their significant other that has made you question the relationship," Vaughan says. "You know, 'If we're fighting like this, does this mean we're not right together?' And that's not always the case. Sometimes it's actually the opposite. Sometimes when you fight, it's because you really care about the relationship and you want it to improve. Obviously, it's different for everybody, but that bridge thought is kind of a natural thing that comes with fighting sometimes."

They didn't finish the song that day. When they next went to the publishing company, Morgan was part of the group, and he made some tweaks that improved it. Morgan sang on the "Cry Baby" demo, produced by Allison, with Vaughan providing harmonies. They'd written the song with **Jason Aldean** in mind — no surprise, since Kennedy and Allison play in his road band — and Kennedy sent it to him.

"Something that we've always kept in mind with him is that he is okay with having faults and knowing that he's not the perfect person," Allison offers. "He's vulnerable enough to embrace those things, but [say] 'I make a lot of mistakes, but I'm going to be the best version of myself that I can for you.'"

Aldean had just finished an album, and he thought Morgan could have a hit with "Cry Baby," so he let it go. Morgan enthusiastically took it back.

"The melody is the is the money maker, to me, in that song," Morgan says. "It's an earworm, and I couldn't let it just stay in the catalog."

Morgan and producer **Brent Anderson** (**Chris Janson**, **Jameson Rodgers**) started building the final version after the first of the year, layering multiple guitar parts and reworking the instrumental riff in the intro. As the foundation filled out, Anderson brought in two of Morgan's band members, bassist **Caleb Bates** and drummer **Rob Ricotta**, to record the rhythm section. And they brought Vaughan in to recreate her harmonies from the demo.

"She's just such a good singer," Anderson says. "Once you heard a little taste of it, you're like, 'Oh, that's the sauce.'"

Unfortunately, her recordings were lost in a robbery. After Anderson played the Bluebird Café on Feb. 17, he came home, parked his car in the driveway for just 10 minutes, and when he returned to the vehicle, his backpack with the hard drive containing her performance was gone. He posted about it on social media and was stunned when four fellow producers — **Matt Dragstrem**, **Derek George**, **Derek Wells** and **Frank Rogers** — offered their studios and gear so that he could finish "Cry Baby" on time.

"It was really eye-opening to me," Anderson notes. "It made me feel the strongest sense of community I've felt in a while."

Vaughan re-recorded her backing vocals, making it the third time she'd played that role for "Cry Baby" — "Good thing I like this song," she quips — and steel guitarist **Mike Johnson** added the final new part.

Thanks to the assist from Anderson's fellow producers, they still got the song finished by the due date — "You get a timeline no matter what," Morgan says — and Broken Bow released it to country radio via PlayMPE on Oct. 12, as his previous single, "Kid Myself," peaked at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Country Airplay chart dated Oct. 17. Programmers suggested to Morgan that "Cry Baby" could continue his momentum.

"I've been doing radio tours for a couple years now," he says, "and when I get to talk to PDs, I ask them, you know, 'What are you thinking?' There was an overwhelming 'yes' on this song."

No apologies are necessary.

MATTHEW BERINATO

billboard Hot Country Songs Index

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

A

ANOTHER DRINK Marshmello Music, BMI/Universal Tunes, SESAC/Police Bunny Songs, SESAC/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Feel Your Way Through Publishing, ASCAP/Iamcastle Music Publishing, BMI/Chumba Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI *(Marshmello, A.Vanderheym, T.Eriksen, J.J.Dillon, K.Ballerini, CASTLE)* **32**

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BE HER Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Sea Gayle Distillery Music, ASCAP/Endurance Music Group, BMI/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI/Ross & Rae Music, ASCAP/Relative Rights, ASCAP *(E. Langley, S.Ahnquist, J.M.Schmidt, M.W.Hardy)* **7**

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LIES Zach Lane Bryan Publishing Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI *(Z.L.Bryan)* **5**

LODI WHEN Zach Lane Bryan Publishing Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI *(Z.L.Bryan)* **25**

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