billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD.COM/NEWSLETTERS NOVEMBER 13, 2026 | PAGE 1 OF 9

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

Tom.Roland@billboard.com



The Sammy Kershaw Kerfuffle: How Red Carpets Work, And How They Could Change

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Ella Langley's Latest Record >page 4

Producer Brian Ahern Remembered >page 7

Country Coda: Alabama's 'The Touch' At 40 >page 9

When the Country Music Association presents its 60th annual awards on Nov. 18, nine-time nominee **Ella Langley**, seven-timer **Miranda Lambert** and five-timer **Kacey Musgraves** all have the potential for a big night.

Who seemed to get the most attention in the run-up to the awards?


KNUTSON


KERSHAW


STEM

So far, that would be **Sammy Kershaw**, an artist who hasn't had a top 10 single in 28 years and has just one CMA nomination — a 1993 nod for the Horizon award — in his history. In a single social-media post on Nov. 6, less than two weeks before the awards, he lamented that he'd been "strung along for months," only to discover that he would not be allowed to walk the red carpet. The Kershaw kerfuffle generated criticism from the general public, which mostly perceived the decision as a slight to an older artist. **Rodney Atkins**, **Stella Parton** and **The Frontmen Live** — **Tim Rushlow**, **Larry Stewart** and **Richie McDonald** — subsequently revealed similar interactions with the CMA, and artists such as **Riley Green**, **Clay Walker**, **Pam Tillis** and **Jake Owen** voiced support and/or sympathy for Kershaw.

The drama placed the trade organization in a tough position. It's in the CMA's best interest to have a positive relationship with every artist in the genre, and it's generally accepted that the trade organization will never say anything negative about any performer. But the carpet — as glamorous as it might appear on a TV at home — is actually a high-stress, high-priced work environment that's utterly chaotic, no matter how much effort goes into planning. Even if the CMA wanted to accommodate him, Kershaw represents just one member in a class of artists that's problematic for some other red-carpet participants, all of whom use the carpet for different purposes.

While plenty of fans have seen red-carpet coverage on TV, most consumers — and, probably, the majority of the indus-

DECISIVE INTELLIGENCE.
DELIVERED DIGITALLY.

billboard
DIGITAL NEWSLETTERS

CLICK HERE FOR FREE DELIVERY

try itself — have never actually experienced one in person. Carpets involve three different camps: the awards show; the artists, along with their teams; and the media. For a balanced understanding of the controversy, the *Billboard Country Update* talked with two people who have worked in two of those three areas: Triple 8 manager **Scott Stem**, a former CMA publicist who now manages **Scotty McCreery**; and TriStar Southern Hills Medical Center director of communications **Jesse Knutson**, who previously covered red carpets as a reporter for **WTVF-TV** Nashville and organized them as an Academy of Country Music publicist.

The primary purpose for the carpet is to generate publicity for the show. Both the CMA and ACM typically spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to create the setting. Those costs include building rental, the physical carpet, ropes, stanchions, lights, staff, backdrops, WiFi and other electronics. With that investment, the organization puts a sharp priority on creating PR for the telecast, both to drive viewership and to create post-show buzz. And the artists most capable of doing that are the most prominent acts.

"They have a limited amount of time and a limited amount of space," Stem says, "and the first priority for them with a red carpet are the artists who are involved in the show — the nominees, the presenters, and the performers."

Both organizations have typically allowed former winners and artists with current hits on the carpet, since their stories can help with that engagement, but it gets complicated with artists outside that scope. Many of the national media is focused strictly on a handful of acts related to that show and resist talking to new acts or heritage artists. Meanwhile, plenty of smaller outlets and country-centric media are willing to speak with just about anyone, in part because of the interview's future value. Some reporters develop non-awards stories by polling artists on the carpet, others end up with game-like content or short pieces about individual performers. Still others gather selfies for social media or use the time to build relationships with newer artists. Many of those developing acts fade away, but some become major stars, and the content becomes more valuable.

"How many clips have you seen of reporters interviewing **Taylor Swift**, like on her first red carpet?" Knutson asks rhetorically. "Those come up from time to time, but you don't know who's going to be the next Taylor Swift until they become Taylor Swift."

To the casual observer, it appears that the artists arrive randomly, though there's a flow to the schedule. The show's participants have a dress rehearsal in the afternoon, and they tend to appear in the final hour or two once they're done with that practice run. The first hour or two of the carpet are the most ideal for the acts who are not involved with the production, and the awards show team tries to slate artists so that they arrive at a steady pace, though it never goes exactly as planned. To some degree, setting that schedule is comparable to assigning tables at a wedding reception.

"I tried to plan them so Ella Langley would walk at a similar time to Riley Green when their big song came out together," Knutson says. "If I knew that people had fun relationships, like **Maren Morris** and **Brothers Osborne**, [I put them] on the carpet at a similar time. Keeping **Blake Shelton** and Miranda Lambert apart — we did that, too."

The carpet's first hour is typically slow, particularly for the media at the end of the line, who may have to wait for 10-20 other media to conduct their abbreviated, three-minute conversations before the artist reaches them. But by the end of the carpet's schedule, artists are stacked up, often standing along a backdrop at the edge of the carpet waiting for other artists to finish their interviews. Meanwhile, reporters are often looking down the line as they conduct interviews, plotting who might be coming, fearing that the biggest artists will walk past them.

It's potentially brutal to an artist's ego, and the artist's team typically preps the performer in advance that not every outlet will be appropriate for them.

"That's just kind of the law of the jungle out there," Stem says. "You have to understand how that works."

Kershaw and the CMA came to an agreement, and the singer is now expected to walk the carpet. Thanks to the controversy that came from it, Kershaw will be one of those acts that most media will want to interview, but in the long run, organizations may allow the already-cramped carpets to become even more crowded to avoid potentially bad publicity. For this particular year, Kershaw's carpet walk may not fit the original goals for any of the parties involved.

"Every single reporter," says Knutson, "is going to be asking him about this, not about the show, and not about whatever projects he's working on."



Bill Anderson took part in a Nov. 7 panel discussion at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum about its newest exhibit, "Roger Miller: Wit, Wisdom, and Wonder." From left Museum writer-editor Erin Osmon; Miller's widow, Mary Miller; Miller's former music director, Randy Hart; and Anderson.



MAXSTERNLICHT

Independent artist Belle Frantz (center) performed for veterans at the VA Home in Murfreesboro, Tenn., on Nov. 10 in conjunction with Musicians On Call. With her: Musicians On Call executive VP Katy Epley (left) and Tennessee Veterans Home administrator Ann Dies.



Rhonda Vincent offered congratulations when Bernie Taupin made his Grand Ole Opry debut on Nov. 7.



KHRIS POAGE

Whiskey Myers' John Jeffers (right) received thanks from NFL commissioner Roger Goodell for playing the national anthem on electric guitar when the Minnesota Vikings hosted the Buffalo Bills Nov. 9 on Monday Night Football from U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.



28 BILLBOARD / DEBUT - BREAKER

U2
COUNTRY AIRPLAY
CHART DEBUT

DOLLY PARTON
HIGHEST CAREER
CHART DEBUT

INTERSCOPE RECORDS
BIG MACHINE RECORDS

billboard Country Airplay

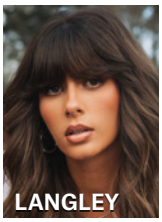
AIRPLAY MONITORED BY LUMINATE

ON THE CHARTS RUSS PENUELL rpenuell@billboard.com

Strong For Weeks: Langley Sets Another Record

Ella Langley's "Loving Life Again" (SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers) claims a third week at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Country Airplay chart, leading the list dated Nov. 21 with 33.8 million audience impressions Nov. 6-12, according to Luminate.

The latest frame ups Langley's 2026 total to 12 weeks atop Country Airplay across four songs—"Choosin' Texas," "Be Her" and the **Morgan Wallen** duet "I Can't Love You Anymore" previously led—breaking her out of a tie with **Carrie Underwood** (2006) for the most by a woman in a single year. Wallen holds the record with 17 weeks on top in 2023. He also logged 16 in 2025 and 13 in 2022 and **Luke Combs** had 13 in 2019 and 2021 (while **Kenny Chesney** totaled 12 in 2007).



CAYLEE ROBILLARD

In 2026, Langley's time atop Country Airplay outpaces runner-up Combs' nine weeks and Wallen's seven. Combs has led with "Sleepless in a Hotel Room" and "Be by You" and Wallen, with "20 Cigarettes," "Don't We," his Langley collaboration and "Been by Now."

Meanwhile, "Choosin' Texas" has spent 48 weeks and counting atop Hot Country Songs, two shy of the all-time mark held by **Bebe Rexha** and **Florida Georgia Line**'s "Meant To Be" (2017-18).

NEW TOP 10s **Lainey Wilson** pockets her 10th Country Airplay top 10 and **John Mayer**, his first, as "Phone, Keys, Wallet" (Broken Bow) rises two spots to No. 9 (16.4 million, up 4%).

Plus, **Russell Dickerson** reaches the top 10 (12-10; 15.6 million, up 9%) for the seventh time, with "Worth Your Wild" (Triple Tigers).

DEBUTS **Thomas Rhett** scores his second-highest Country Airplay debut as "Be There in a Minute" (Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway) opens at No. 19 (9.3 million). Only "What's Your Country Song" (No. 18 in 2020), one of his 21 No. 1s, started higher.

Meanwhile, **U2** makes its Country Airplay debut as "Torn," featuring **Dolly Parton** (Island/Interscope/Big Machine), launches at No. 28 (4.8 million)—marking the late Parton's highest-ever entrance on the chart. With "Son of Jolene," alongside **Belles**, likewise on the list, at No. 56 (1.1 million), two Parton songs place simultaneously for the first time since 2006; "Torn" is also her first top 40 entry on the chart since then.

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
BE THERE IN A MINUTE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	**Thomas Rhett**	+9.273
TORN Island/Interscope/Big Machine	**U2 Featuring Dolly Parton**	+4.832
PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville	**Hudson Westbrook**	+2.318
JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	**Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley**	+2.224
EMPTY WORDS Combustion/RCA Nashville/SMN	**Corey Kent**	+1.730
LAST THING YOU NEED Take-Two Interactive Software/Atlantic/Big Loud	**Morgan Wallen**	+1.653
GET TO DRINKIN' Sony Music Nashville/SMN	**Zach John King**	+1.555
WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	**Russell Dickerson**	+1.259
SAY SO Warner Records Nashville	**Dan + Shay**	+1.094
HANDS UP Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek	**Jelly Roll**	+1.067

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
BE THERE IN A MINUTE Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	**Thomas Rhett**	+2361
TORN Island/Interscope/Big Machine	**U2 Featuring Dolly Parton**	+1250
LAST THING YOU NEED Take-Two Interactive Software/Atlantic/Big Loud	**Morgan Wallen**	+473
EMPTY WORDS Combustion/RCA Nashville/SMN	**Corey Kent**	+460
JADED YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	**Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley**	+454
PHONE, KEYS, WALLET Broken Bow	**Lainey Wilson & John Mayer**	+382
WORTH YOUR WILD Triple Tigers	**Russell Dickerson**	+378
SOMETHING TO LOSE Sandlot/Atlantic Outpost/Lost Highway	**Stella Lefty With Vincent Mason**	+366
REMEMBER ME THAT WAY Warner/HEY NOW	**Kenny Chesney**	+358
PAINTED YOU PRETTY River House/Warner Records Nashville	**Hudson Westbrook**	+352

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	**BOSTON** Sandlot/Atlantic Outpost	**Stella Lefty**	19.367
2	**KID MYSELF** Night Train/Broken Bow	**John Morgan**	17.574
3	**BE BY YOU** Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN	**Luke Combs**	17.177
4	**COUNTRY AND SHE KNOWS IT** Row Crop/MCA Nashville/MCA	**Luke Bryan**	16.181
5	**BEEN BY NOW** Mercury/Big Loud	**Morgan Wallen**	15.411
6	**CHOOSIN' TEXAS** SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	**Ella Langley**	14.599
7	**DON'T TELL ON ME** Macon/Broken Bow	**Jason Aldean**	13.804
8	**HATE HOW YOU LOOK** The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	**Josh Ross**	13.676
9	**DON'T WE** Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	**Morgan Wallen**	12.948
10	**CHEVY SILVERADO** Atlantic/Warner Records Nashville/WRN	**Bailey Zimmerman**	12.889

TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 12, 2026

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE (Label)	ARTIST	TW SPINS	SPINS +/–
1	2	28	**THIRD ROW GEORGE STRAIT** (Independent) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	**Frank Ray**	1905	76
2	3	17	**FAN OF YOU** (Pretty Damn Tough)	**Josh Abbott Band**	1863	42
3	4	15	**GOOD TIME** (Independent)	**William Clark Green**	1819	-1
4	5	12	**GOOD OL' GIRLS** (Independent)	**Sandee June**	1818	141
5	6	23	**HOWDY MA'AM** (T3R Music Group)	**Caleb Sutton**	1570	-46
6	8	9	**THIS TIME** (Jaydon Grissom Music)	**Jaydon Grissom**	1557	83
7	9	21	**HONEYSUCKLE** (Big Loud Texas/Mercury Records)	**Dylan Gossett**	1486	42
8	7	23	**CHEAT ON YOU** (Independent)	**Amanda Kate Ferris**	1479	-16
9	11	13	**MUST HAVE HAD A GOOD TIME** (Independent)	**Tilluride**	1417	83
10	10	15	**IT WON'T MATTER ANYWAY** (Independent)	**Case Hardin**	1338	-13
11	16	7	**VIP IN THIS B.A.R.** (Independent)	**Jamie Richards**	1301	98
12	13	20	**DAY DRINKIN** (Independent)	**AJ Vallejo**	1268	6
13	14	15	**KNOW IT ALL** (Independent)	**Cody Jinks**	1266	25
14	12	23	**WHAT DO YOU PRAY FOR** (Erskine Entertainment)	**Sheila Marshall**	1263	-5
15	15	25	**CITY COWGIRL** (Independent)	**Lani Butler**	1211	5
16	20	7	**POUR ME A DRINK** (Independent)	**Seth Candan**	1209	157
17	19	6	**WEIGHT ON THE LEVEE** (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	**Wade Bowen**	1124	62
18	17	20	**BRACE FOR IMPACT** (Independent)	**Ghosts of Hill County**	1116	-35
19	18	15	**QUIT** (LuckySky Music)	**Tori Martin**	1104	25
20	24	4	**EARNHARDT** (Almost Country)	**Casey Donahew**	1019	158

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

billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY MONITORED BY LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label		Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) THIS WEEK	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) +/–	PLAYS THIS WEEK	PLAYS +/–	PLAYS RANK
1	1	19	**LOVING LIFE AGAIN** SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	★★ No. 1 (3 Weeks) ★★	Ella Langley	33.841	+0.007	8789	81	1
2	2	38	**GET TO DRINKIN'** Sony Music Nashville/SMN		Zach John King	29.061	+1.555	7672	214	3
3	3	14	**JADED** YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville		Koe Wetzel & Ella Langley	28.827	+2.224	7730	454	2
4	6	32	**SAY SO** Warner Records Nashville		Dan + Shay	25.914	+1.094	7171	316	4
5	7	18	**RETHINK SOME THINGS** Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville/SMN		Luke Combs	25.608	+0.895	7016	308	5
6	8	25	**THINK AS YOU DRUNK** Nashville Harbor		Riley Green	19.350	+0.478	5572	119	6
7	10	38	**PAINTED YOU PRETTY** River House/Warner Records Nashville		Hudson Westbrook	18.597	+2.318	5020	352	9
8	9	21	**HANDS UP** Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Stoney Creek		Jelly Roll	18.289	+1.067	5125	282	8
9	11	23	**PHONE, KEYS, WALLET** Broken Bow		Lainey Wilson & John Mayer	16.446	+0.571	5231	382	7
10	12	46	**WORTH YOUR WILD** Triple Tigers		Russell Dickerson	15.603	+1.259	4298	378	11
11	13	14	**ANYTIME SOON** Macon/Broken Bow		Jason Aldean	15.369	+1.062	4382	302	10
12	14	24	**EMPTY WORDS** Combustion/RCA Nashville/SMN		Corey Kent	15.121	+1.730	4297	460	12
13	15	47	**WATER AT A WEDDING** Nashville Harbor		Greylan James	13.568	+0.431	3976	-60	13
14	16	30	**MEDICINE** Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville/SMN		Megan Moroney	12.911	-0.178	3922	152	14
15	17	40	**LET HIM IN ANYWAY** Ten Point/Wheelhouse		Blake Shelton	10.360	+0.275	3204	-112	15
16	20	42	**HOLDIN' IT DOWN** Chase Matthew/Warner Records Nashville		Chase Matthew	9.525	+0.854	3023	111	16
17	19	31	**MOVE ON** American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music		Kevin Powers & Shaboozey	9.508	+0.769	2935	108	17
18	18	22	**HORSEBACK** CoJo/Warner Records Nashville		Cody Johnson	9.374	+0.177	2920	-1	18
19	NEW		**BE THERE IN A MINUTE** Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Blue Highway	★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker/Most Increased Audience ★★	Thomas Rhett	9.285	+9.273	2364	2361	21
20	21	14	**COWGIRL** American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	★★ Airpower ★★	Shaboozey	8.829	+0.708	2707	117	19
21	23	8	**REMEMBER ME THAT WAY** Warner/HEY NOW		Kenny Chesney	8.166	+0.970	2347	358	24
22	24	18	**WHO TOLD YOU THAT** Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Mercury/MCA		Tucker Wetmore	7.659	+0.839	2545	339	20
23	22	11	**BET ON THAT** Enchntmnt/Warner/Warner Records Nashville		Blake Whiten	7.613	+0.409	2357	133	22
24	25	12	**SOMETHING TO LOSE** Sandlot/Atlantic Outpost/Lost Highway		Stella Lefty With Vincent Mason	7.331	+1.064	2353	366	23
25	26	22	**I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LEAVE** Boss Moves/Black River/Akando		Chris Young	6.142	+0.420	2039	42	26
26	27	37	**NEVER COMIN' BACK** Lost Highway		Flatland Cavalry	6.110	+0.438	2253	203	25
27	28	38	**KILLIN' ME** MCA Nashville/MCA		Parker McCollum	5.070	-0.235	1754	-128	28
28	NEW		**TORN** Island/Interscope/Big Machine	★★ Breaker ★★	U2 Featuring Dolly Parton	4.832	+4.832	1250	1250	34
29	38	8	**LAST THING YOU NEED** Take-Two Interactive Software/Atlantic/Big Loud	★★ Breaker ★★	Morgan Wallen	4.573	+1.653	1143	473	41
30	29	34	**GOOD DAMN** Wheelhouse		Brantley Gilbert	4.269	-0.096	1853	-70	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.

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.

© 2026 Billboard Media, LLC

billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY MONITORED BY LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) THIS WEEK	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) +/–	PLAYS THIS WEEK	PLAYS +/–	PLAYS RANK
31	30	27	**WANNABE** Thrivin Here/Warner Records Nashville	✧avin Adcock	4.097	-0.008	1574	1	30
32	31	29	**WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG** Goat Island Sound/Mercury Nashville/MCA	Jacob Hackworth	4.057	+0.017	1643	-17	29
33	34	8	**FINDERS KEEPERS** Row Crop/MCA Nashville/MCA	Luke Bryan & Luke Combs	3.934	+0.565	1286	259	33
34	35	21	**STRING BY** Mack Geiger/RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Mack Geiger	3.598	+0.250	1121	-8	42
35	33	34	**IF I DON'T LEAVE I'M GONNA STAY** Stoney Creek/Nashville Harbor	Carly Pearce & Riley Green	3.591	-0.119	1487	-21	31
36	37	25	**LAND** Hubbard House/Mercury Nashville/MCA	Tyler Hubbard	3.122	+0.041	1241	18	36
37	36	26	**DRY SPELL** Kacey Musgraves/Lost Highway	Kacey Musgraves	2.889	-0.278	1177	-27	39
38	39	21	**GIRL DAD** Warner Records Nashville	Cole Swindell	2.638	-0.245	1160	-19	40
39	40	28	**LOVE IS BLIND** WEST TO THE REST/Triple Tigers	Ian Munsick	2.583	+0.006	1234	-27	37
40	43	19	**BABY BLUES** Back Blocks/Mercury/Big Loud	Ashley Cooke	2.424	+0.279	1245	69	35
41	45	7	**MESS** MCA Nashville/MCA	Jordan Davis	2.261	+0.167	1093	74	43
42	44	19	**DEAR BIG CITY** Curb	Dylan Scott	2.166	+0.059	1177	14	38
43	41	9	**TAKE ME BACK (LEAVE ME THERE)** CoJo/Warner Records Nashville	Cody Johnson	2.163	-0.232	451	-31	59
44	42	32	**BACK IN THE BOTTLE** Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	2.090	-0.069	1405	83	32
45	47	26	**BETTER THAT WAY** Mercury/Big Loud	Charles Wesley Godwin & Luke Combs	1.927	+0.138	938	20	46
46	49	11	**SAY LA V** Quartz Hill	Joe Nichols	1.815	+0.214	965	63	44
47	46	17	**DONE FOR** Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	1.783	-0.015	908	16	47
48	48	16	**NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO** Gatsby/MCA Nashville/MCA	Carter Faith & Wyatt Flores	1.683	-0.034	863	49	49
49	53	10	**TALKIN BOUT** Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	1.595	+0.086	791	36	51
50	51	6	**SNAKESKIN BOOTS** Vanner/MCA	Miranda Lambert & Ella Langley	1.595	+0.027	802	61	50
51	50	7	**AIN'T MY PROBLEM** Riser House	Mitchell Tenpenny	1.550	-0.019	755	30	52
52	52	6	**DRINK THINGS THROUGH** The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville/MCA	Josh Ross	1.537	-0.016	643	14	55
53	55	10	**HOWDY** Big Machine	Cole Goodwin	1.436	+0.081	962	37	45
54	32	2	**BY GOD** Mercury/Big Loud	HARDY	1.273	-2.578	705	-520	53
55	56	7	**SON OF JOLENE** Deluge Nashville/East Music Row/New Revolution	Belles With Dolly Parton	1.124	+0.046	501	2	58
56	58	4	**FORGET WE EVER MET** Sony Music Nashville/SMN	McCoy Moore	1.072	+0.160	680	5	54
57	59	3	**THE YEARS ARE SHORT** Curb	Rodney Atkins	1.067	+0.301	865	289	48
58	57	4	**BLACKTOP BLUES** Blue Highway	Jackson Dean	0.964	-0.024	544	4	56
59	RE-ENTRY		**BORN AND RAISED HELL** Mercury Nashville/MCA	Brothers Osborne Featuring Cody Johnson	0.802	+0.329	425	139	-
60	60	2	**OVERRATED** 717/Warner	Warren Zeiders & Bellah Mae	0.758	+0.026	268	8	-



COOPER SMITH

Ray Stevens (seated) received applause after leading the cast in "Everything is Beautiful" to close the Nov. 9 concert "Don't Look, Ethel! A Salute to the Musical Genius of Ray Stevens." From left (standing): Howard Bellamy, Deborah Allen, Dailey & Vincent's Jamie Dailey, T. Graham Brown and Larry Gatlin.



John Fogerty (left) guested on a Veterans Day installment of Zach Bryan's video series, *The Belting Bronco*, which debuted on Nov. 12.

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



KAREN JURY

Randy Houser (left), Lukas Nelson (center) and Riley Green rehearsed backstage at the Molokini Garden at Grand Wailea on Nov. 7 before playing the closing event at the No Ka 'Oi Songwriters Festival in Maui.

PRODUCER BRIAN AHERN REMEMBERED

Canadian-born producer **Brian Ahern**, 81, died Nov. 9 in Minnesota, years after he played a significant role in the rise of female country singers **Anne Murray** and **Emmylou Harris**.

A native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Ahern met Murray while serving as the musical producer for *Singalong Jubilee*, according to Canada's CBC News. After a move to Toronto, he persuaded her to pursue a recording career, overseeing her earliest hits, including "Snowbird," "A Love Song" and "He Thinks I Still Care."

When he was introduced to Harris, Ahearn played her music written by **Rodney Crowell**, and her appreciation for those songs led to Crowell becoming a member of her backing group, **The Hot Band**, and to a producer relationship with Ahern that birthed such Harris hits as "To Daddy," "If I Could Only Win Your Love," "Blue Kentucky Girl" and "Two More Bottles of Wine."

Ahern also established the Enactron Truck, a mobile recording service that was used to cut **Willie Nelson**'s *Stardust*, **The Band**'s *The Last Waltz*, **Barbra Streisand**'s *A Star is Born* soundtrack and the *Trio* album by Harris, **Dolly Parton** and **Linda Ronstadt**.

Go here for the CBC News account.

'ROUND THE ROW

• **Josh Van Valkenburg** joins Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG) Nashville as president on Jan. 4, moving from Sony Music Publishing Nashville, where he currently serves as executive VP of creative. With that appointment, current UMPG Nashville chairman **Troy Tomlinson** will transition into an exclusive advisory role. Go here for the full story.

• BMI Nashville promoted **Shannon Sanders** to assistant VP of creative from executive director.

• Shore Fire Media promoted Nashville-based **Jaclyn D. Childress** to president, two years after she was named a senior VP. A 13-year veteran with the company, she will continue to lead the firm's Music City division.

• **Abby Miller** joined the management firm Borchetta Entertainment Group as head of artist development, where she'll work with **Carly Pearce**, **Molly Tuttle** and **The Band Perry**, among others. Miller previously owned an independent consulting business, established after she worked as Black River A&R manager.

• Sweet Talk Publicity made three staff moves, including the hiring of account executive **Abbey Frederick** and junior account executive **Hailey Johnsen**. Frederick was formerly marketing coordinator for the Los Angeles-based MadaLuxe Group. Johnsen was previously an account coordinator for Las Vegas-based Wicked Creative. Sweet Talk also promoted **LilyMarie Smith** to publicity coordinator from an entry-level position she filled following her graduation from Belmont University.

• Former 33 Creative co-owner **Tina Crawford** launched an artist management firm, To A T Entertainment, signing pop artist **Trinity Lake** as the initial client. Reach Crawford here.

• Nashville-based songwriter-musician-producer **Scott Barrier** joined Irish music pros **Peter Fleming** and **Kris Marsden**, and Serbian music veteran **Natalija Djokic** to create NKP Songs, based in Northern Ireland. Reach Barrier here.

• **Chris Young** selected **Fletcher Foster**'s F2 Entertainment Group for management.

• **Tenille Arts** tabbed the MPI Talent Agency for concert booking.

• Former **Ronnie McDowell** sideman **Tony Mantor** launched his second podcast, *Coast to Coast Heroes*, on Nov. 11 with the initial episode focused on Medal of Honor recipient **Sammy Lee Davis**.

• Australian-born artists **Mitch Thompson** and **Tom Jordan** resurrected their Nashville-based duo **Seaforth** after a three-year hiatus, performing at Odie's in Midtown Nashville. Concurrently, the act released a new single, "Run Out of Beer."

• **Betty Malo**, widow of the late **Mavericks** frontman **Raul Malo**, filed suit in Nashville on Nov. 11 against his former bandmates — drummer **Paul Deakin**, keyboardist **Jerry Dale McFadden** and guitarist **Eddie Perez** — to enjoin them from touring under the name "The Mavericks & Friends." The group's operating agreement prevented the use of the name The Mavericks if Raul was not involved in the enterprise, though the defendants insist an amendment to that agreement allows them to use the modified moniker. Go here for the full story.

• **Taylor Swift** will participate in the Country Music Association's 60th annual awards Nov. 18, delivering her first performance on the show in 13 years. Others among a dozen acts added to the CMA lineup include **Vince Gill**, **Brothers Osborne**, **Megan Moroney**, **Chris Stapleton**, **Luke Combs**, **Luke Bryan**, **HARDY** and **Stephen Wilson Jr.**

• **Carly Pearce** makes her film debut in the forthcoming feature *My Jesus*, inspired by the life story of cross-genre artist **Anne Wilson**. A release date for the movie has not been announced.

• Rare acetates, reference discs and sales awards from the vault of late Georgetown Masters co-founder **Denny Purcell** are available for bidding in Wax Poetics' "The Denny Purcell Archive: Nashville Acetates & Masters." The auction, spanning 1976-1989, includes materials related to his work with **Dolly Parton**, **Charley Pride**, **Chet Atkins** and **Ricky Van Shelton**. Go here to view the items.

• **Jackson Dean** launched a t-shirt to raise money for the Wolf Conservation Center, dedicated to protecting North American wolves. The shirt was designed following the release of his duet with **Laci Kaye Booth**, "The Moon and the Wolf."

• **Nancy Jones** donated more than $100,000 on behalf of **George Jones**' estate to a Middle Tennessee State University scholarship named after her late husband, and to Concerts 4 a Cause, following a tribute concert held Sept. 13 at the Nashville Palace.

• **Miranda Lambert** raised more than $1 million for her MuttNation Foundation with a Music for Mutts benefit Nov. 6 in Round Top, Texas. Also on the bill were **Randy Rogers**, **Jon Randall**, **Jack Ingram** and **Juliana Rankin**.

• **Phil Vassar** headlines a Christmas 4 Kids songwriter concert Nov. 19 at Historic Rock Castle in Hendersonville, Tenn. The benefit also features songwriters **James Slater** ("In My Daughter's Eyes," "Unstoppable") and **Josh Mirenda** ("Somewhere on a Beach," "Girl Like You").

• Artist-writer **Mark McGuinn**, 58, died Oct. 26 in North Carolina. He peaked at No. 6 on *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs in 2001 with "Mrs. Steven Rudy," released by independent VFR Records. McGuinn also authored the Lonestar hit "Unusually Unusual." Go here for a complete obituary.



Brantley Gilbert headlined the Kicks 99 Guitar Pull for WKXC Augusta, Ga., at Bell Auditorium on Nov. 10, the first of two nights for the event. From left: Josh Ross, George Birge, WKXC PD Chris O'Kelley, Gilbert and Chase Matthew.

billboard Country Airplay Index

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

A

AIN'T MY PROBLEM Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs Of Riser House, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Spin That Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Tacklebox Publishing, ASCAP/Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Beats Building Fences, BMI *(M.Tenpenny, C. DeStefano, A.Albert, T.Archer)* **51**

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)* **11**

B

BABY BLUES Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Crazy Baby Songs, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Kyle Sturrock Music, ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Twelve Two Music, BMI/The Blocks Are Back Music, BMI/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/Better Bad Songs, SESAC *(A.J.Cooke, J.Clawson, S.W.Ennis, J.A.Fox, K.Sturrock)* **40**

BACK IN THE BOTTLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/I'm Your Huckleberry Music, BMI *(R.Houser)* **44**

BE THERE IN A MINUTE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rhettoric Domain Music, BMI/Samsons Locks Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/716 Music, BMI/Tunes Of Black River, BMI *(Thomas Rhett, R.H.Block, J.Byron, J.Kerr)* **19**

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.Whiten, G.Averill, J.Hoskins, J.M.Spargur)* **23**

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 Carusoe, A.Torrence)* **45**

BLACKTOP BLUES Little Louder Songs, BMI/Emileon Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs By The Bell, BMI/Worktape Tunes, BMI *(J.Dean, T.Beathard, J.Bell, C.L.Dick)* **58**

BORN AND RAISED HELL Trampy McCauley, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/All The Kings Pens, ASCAP/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Concord Road, BMI/Marvel Madness Music, BMI/Lee Thomas Miller Music, BMI/Smackshot Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI *(J.Osborne, L.T.Miller, K.Marvel)* **59**

BY GOD Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Biggest Bendable Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Rocky Creek James, ASCAP/Tape Room 2.0, ASCAP *(M.W.Hardy, Z.Abend, H.Phelps)* **54**

C

COWGIRL EMPIRE SF, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Essancy Music Publishing, BMI/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/Jackson Morgan Publishing Designee, NS/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Hits On The Range, ASCAP/Ayowhit Entertainment, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP *(C.O.Chibueze, S.C.Cook, A.A.Pauti, T.W.Kane, M.R.Stevens, N.Sastry, J.L.Cotter, J.Morgan, J.Hoskins)* **20**

D

DEAR BIG CITY Anthem Music Publishing II, SESAC/Brooks Money Songs, SESAC/Anthem Music Publishing I, BMI/Single Life Songs, BMI/Pirate89 Publishing, BMI *(M.Alderman, N.Kenyon, J.Paulin)* **42**

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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Music Of Big Family, BMI/In Honor Of Alice Publishing, BMI *(M.McNown, A.Yaron, Mags Duval)* **47**

DRINK THINGS THROUGH Sad Boy Sad Songs, BMI/These Are Pulse Songs, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Anaesthetic Publishing, SOCAN/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Lawrence Principato Publishing Designee, BMI/Kinetics & One Love, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP *(M.A.Collins, Chad Kroeger, L.M.Principato, J.Dussolliet)* **52**

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)* **37**

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/Matt Roy Publishing, BMI/Hipgnosis Songs Group, BMI *(Corey Kent, A.Goodloe, M.Roy, J.Taylor, L.Vaughan)* **12**

F

FINDERS KEEPERS Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs By The Bell, BMI/Worktape Tunes, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Chimney Pot Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Madfun, ASCAP *(B.Bailey, J.Bell, S.Ellis)* **33**

FORGET WE EVER MET Smack Back Music, BMI/CTM Outlander Music Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Relative Rights, ASCAP/Ross & Rae Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Music Of The Corn, ASCAP *(M.Moore, S.Ahnquist, W.L.Bundy)* **56**

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)* **2**

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)* **38**

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 *(B.Gilbert, B.Berryhill, M.W.Hardy, T.Phillips)* **30**

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)* **8**

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/Droptime Music, BMI *(Chase Matthew, E.Escue, A.Maxwell, Presley Aaron, E.C.Mayo, J.Centers)* **16**

HORSEBACK Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI/Little Acre Music, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Sounds Of Soperman Music Publishing, ASCAP *(R.Montana, W.McCubbin, P.Sikes)* **18**

HOWDY Justin Dukes Publishing Designee, NS/Davis Loose Publishing Designee, NS/Needs More Fiddle Music, BMI/Ethan Phillips Publishing Designee, NS/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI *(J. Dukes, D.Loose, C.Peters, E.Phillips)* **53**

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 Music Publishing, BMI *(C.Young, D.Davidson, K.A.Fishman)* **25**

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)* **35**

J

JADED Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI/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/Demo Jail Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI *(E.Langley, R.Wetzel, J.M.Schmidt, E.K.Smith)* **3**

K

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. McCollum, R.Rogers, M.Criswell)* **27**

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.Abend, G.J.Egan, C.Smith)* **36**

LAST THING YOU NEED Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Philippians 4:7 Songs, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI *(B.Pendergrass, R.C.McGill, J.Byron, M.C.Wallen, Charlie Handsome)* **29**

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.Abend, K.S.Clark, C.Wallace)* **15**

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 *(I.Munsick, R.Tyndell, J.N.Spillman)* **39**

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)* **1**

M

MEDICINE Universal Tunes, SESAC/Georgiamo, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Triple Rae Creative Inc, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Where I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP *(M.Moroney, C.R.Harrington, J.J.Dillon, J.L.Alexander)* **14**

MESS Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Bent Prop Publishing, ASCAP/Rome Soundtrack, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/1508 Creative Nation Songs, BMI/Trash Man Songs, SOCAN *(J.Davis, J.Davis, P.DiGiovanni, T.P.Wood)* **41**

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 Publising, ASCAP/Torrey Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI *(T.W.Kane, K.J.Powers, C.O.Chibueze, S.Sanchez, D.R.Stevens, A.Cabrera, J.Torrey)* **17**

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)* **26**

NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Birds Of Biltmore Songs, BMI/Vincent Mason Publishing, BMI/Smackwood Music, GMR/Art of CTM Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Big Music Machine, BMI/Samuel Tyler Johnson Publishing Designee, BMI *(C.F.Jones, V.Mason, S.McAnally, J.J.Dillon, S.T.Johnson)* **48**

O

OVERRATED PA Cowboy Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/SELECTORSONGS, ASCAP/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Eastman Pond Publishing, BMI *(W.Zeiders, E.Blair, S.M.Douglas, J.Finkelstein)* **60**

P

PAINTED YOU PRETTY Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Saxet HW Music, BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/FBRL Country Tunes, BMI *(H. Westbrook, Lukas Scott, B.Bailey)* **7**

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/Lullah & Fox Publishing, GMR/Universal Music Publishing Ltd. (UK), PRS/Universal Music Works, GMR *(L.Wilson, J.Decious, D.Pellarin, D.Wilson, T.Anderson, S.Overstreet, T.E.P.Hull)* **9**

R

REMEMBER ME THAT WAY Smackworld Music, GMR/Art of CTM Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Spirit Nashville One, BMI *(S.McAnally, Z.Abend, M.W.Hardy)* **21**

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.Isbell, R.Isbell)* **5**

S

SAY LA V Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/DanielW25 Songs, BMI/N Chapel Songs, ASCAP/Endurance Music Group, ASCAP/Triple5Songs, ASCAP/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sonic Notes, BMI/Two Islands Music, BMI *(B.D.Warren, J.D.Sellers, L.Miller)* **46**

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)* **4**

SNAKESKIN BOOTS Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For The Munch Music, BMI/Songs Of Influence, BMI/WRUCKENROLLMUSIC, BMI/Music Of CTM Outlander Music LP, BMI/Brendan James Publishing, BMI *(M.Lambert, J.V.Frasure, N.Hemby, B.J.McLoughlin)* **50**

SOMETHING TO LOSE Reservoir 416, BMI/Songs Of One Riot Music, BMI/Copyright Control *(J.Decious, G.C.Enger, S.F.Lefkofsky, C.L.Dick)* **24**

SON OF JOLENE Songs Of Deluge Music, ASCAP/Velvet Apple Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Dashboard Anthems Music, ASCAP/TD Bank Music, SESAC *(K.Belles, D.Parton, D.Harrison, T.Bank)* **55**

STRING BY Mack Geiger Publishing Designee, APRA *(M. Geiger)* **34**

T

TAKE ME BACK (LEAVE ME THERE) Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red White And Sony Blue Songs, BMI/Songs In The Key of Eh, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/LuVegas Publishing, BMI/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/King Pen Songs, SESAC/Smack Attack Music, SESAC/Sienna Dawn Songs, SESAC/Melodies Of CTM Outlander, SESAC *(K.Archer, T.Cartwright, P.Good)* **43**

TALKIN BOUT Edgehill Music Publishing LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Anthem, BMI/Single Life Songs, BMI/Combuster Bluth, SESAC/I LIKE BIG CUTS PUBLISHING, SESAC *(P.C.Brust, C.Lucas, N.Kenyon, W.B.Bollinger)* **49**

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)* **6**

TORN Universal Music Publishing Ltd. (UK), PRS/Universal PolyGram Int. Publishing Inc., ASCAP/Velvet Apple Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI *(D.Parton, Bono, J.McDaid, The Edge, A.Clayton, L.Mullen, Jr.)* **28**

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)* **31**

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)* **13**

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)* **32**

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)* **22**

WORTH YOUR WILD Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Home Team Music, BMI/Tunes Of TrailerParker, BMI/Track & Feels, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC *(R. Dickerson, P.Welling, C.Brown)* **10**

Y

THE YEARS ARE SHORT Spirit Nashville One Crescendo, BMI/Rust And Chrome Music, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid, BMI/Seven Ring Circus Songs, BMI/Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI *(M.Criswell, C.M.Beathard)* **57**

CODA

REWINDING THE COUNTRY CHARTS

40 Years Ago

When Alabama Had 'The Touch' With No. 1 Albums

The band's 1986 release was its seventh straight multi-week leader

When **Alabama** edged 2-1 on *Billboard*'s Top Country Albums chart dated Nov. 15, 1986, the band demonstrated it was still in touch with country fans' tastes, delivering the group's seventh straight non-holiday leader.

The album's title, *The Touch*, was apropos. The first single from the package was a cover of **The Carpenters**' "Touch Me When We're Dancing," which ranked No. 4 on the concurrent Hot Country Songs. That single would rise to No. 1 two weeks later, and the follow-up, "'You've Got' The Touch," would reach the summit on April 11, 1987, bringing their run of No. 1 country songs to 21, with an exception for holiday singles and collaborations. That consecutive streak remains a record four decades later.

Bred in Fort Payne, Ala., the quartet featured frontman **Randy Owen**, guitarist **Jeff Cook**, bassist **Teddy Gentry** and drummer **Mark Herndon**, selling out arenas while combining country and harmony-based rock influences. True to form, *The Touch* mixed ballads, uptempo country, old-time rock 'n' roll and one track with a touch of New Wave sonics, keeping them at the genre's forefront even as the New Traditionalist movement was taking over.

The Touch ultimately spent 10 weeks in the pole position on Top Country Albums. Alabama brought its next three releases to No. 1, rolling up 10 consecutive Albums chart-toppers. The band added one more leader with the 2006 gospel collection, *Songs of Inspiration*. The foursome spent 125 total weeks in the lead on Top Country Albums, a metric that contributed to Alabama's 2005 induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. —TOM ROLAND



From left: Cook, Gentry, Owen and Herndon in a CBS PR shot for *The 60th Anniversary of the Grand Ole Opry*, telecast Jan. 14, 1986.

CBS VIA GETTY IMAGES