

billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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Influential Producer Tony Brown Officially Becomes An Icon



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Shaboozey's 'Bar' Tabs Another Week At No. 1 >page 4

Paisley, Bellamy Lead Songwriter Hall List >page 10

Country Coda: When Haggard Sang The 'Blues' >page 14

This time of year, **Tony Brown** is frequently reminded of his work with **Elvis Presley**.

On Aug. 16, 1977, he was at the Nashville Airport with several other Presley band members waiting for a plane that would take them to Portland, Maine, for a show. Instead, **Colonel Tom Parker** sent word that the tour was off and they should go home. In his car, Brown heard on the radio that Presley had died. If the DJ had teed up Presley's then-current "Way Down," Brown would have heard himself playing piano even as his world tipped over.

"My first thought was, 'Now what am I going to do, man?'" Brown recalls. "I already spent the money I was going to make on that tour."

Brown's doubts about his future were understandable, though with hindsight, they were temporary. He got a job in the RCA A&R department, and in a few short years, Brown led the MCA A&R department, where he became one of country's leading creative figures, pushing the genre's edge through his 1980s work with **Steve Earle**, **Lyle Lovett** and **Nanci Griffith**. He would also play a significant role in shaping '90s country — still very much in vogue in 2024 — through his productions of **Vince Gill**, **Wynonna**, **Reba McEntire** and **George Strait**.

The Academy of Country Music will recognize Brown's influence on the format's direction on Aug. 21, as he receives the

ACM Icon Award during the ACM Honors at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium. During the event, to be hosted by **Carly Pearce** and **Jordan Davis**, trophies will also be bestowed upon the likes of **Lainey Wilson**, **Chris Stapleton**, **Luke Bryan**, **Trisha Yearwood** and **Alan Jackson**.

"Getting this award just sort of gives me, I don't know, credibility in my mind that I'm not an old-timer," Brown confesses.

He is, to be certain, in a different part of his career. Working at a label, particularly before laptop technologies and the internet became dominant, provided an opportunity to be at the hub of the creative activity, and it fed the extroverted part of his personality.

"Everybody would come to your office to play songs, and even the artists would come to your office to listen to songs together," he says. "Now you need to call them up and say, 'Do you want me to come to your place to listen to songs? Are you going to come to my place?' And they go, 'Just send them to me.' It's a whole different dynamic, and I'm not used to that. I'm a face-to-face kind of guy."

The North Carolina-bred keyboard player grew up in a gospel environment — his evangelist father forbade him from listening to secular music. Studying with a piano teacher in Louisiana one summer as a teenager, he got introduced to country — particularly through **Ray Charles' *Modern Sounds in Country***



BROWN

JASON LOWRIE

AUTHORITATIVE INTELLIGENCE.
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and Western Music — and pursued that direction professionally. He played piano with Presley, **The Oak Ridge Boys**, **Emmylou Harris** and **Rodney Crowell's Cherry Bombs**, and ultimately landed on Music Row, where his gospel background applied nicely. Gospel is a format defined by the words more than the sound, and Brown was keenly focused on lyrics as he signed singer-songwriters and picked material for his production clients. He frequently demanded song pluggers supply lyric sheets when they pitched material.

"I love the melodies," he says, "but I really follow the lyric."

Brown's impressive résumé includes, just for starters, Crowell's *Diamonds & Dirt*, Stapleton's "What Are You Listening To?," Wynonna's "No One Else on Earth," Yearwood's "How Do I Live," Gill's "I Still Believe in You," Strait's "Blue Clear Sky," **David Lee Murphy's** "Dust on the Bottle," **Chely Wright's** "Single White Female," **Gary Allan's** "Smoke Rings in the Dark," **Steve Wariner's** "The Weekend," **Sara Evans' "A Little Bit Stronger"** and **Brooks & Dunn's** "Believe," which infused Brown's gospel history in both its sound and its lyric.

"I still cry, man," Brown says of the recording. "It just makes me cry."

But McEntire's "Fancy," he suggests, is probably the most famous of his productions. More than 30 years after its debut, its swampy tone — enhanced by **Steve Gibson's** slide guitar — still feels current.

"Just before he walked out of the studio, he said, 'Hey, let me put some slide **Mac Gayden** kind of thing on there,'" Brown notes. "It was kind of like an afterthought overdub. He put it on there, and it gives it that snaky kind of Deep South, snake-oil thing."

Brown survived a horrific ordeal in April 2003, suffering a head injury when he slipped at a Santa Monica, Calif., restaurant. His mother died while he was hospitalized, and it left him with plenty to process as he began appearing in public again roughly two months later. He eventually discovered he was mired in depression.

"Depression is a strange thing — it's hard to know you got it," he says. "I didn't realize it until I went to a therapist, and he figured it out. It's nice to get out of it."

Working in a freelance capacity, Brown admittedly doesn't produce as many albums as he did at the height of his career, though he's hardly finished. He oversaw a diverse-sounding 2023 album, *Gaither Tribute: Award-Winning Artists Honor the Songs of Bill & Gloria Gaither*, featuring **Ronnie Dunn**, **Josh Turner**, **CeCe Winans** and **Jamey Johnson**, among others. Brown also co-produced several of the tracks on Strait's *Cowboys and Dreamers*, due Sept. 6, and he's producing a portion of McEntire's next project.

The ACM Icon Award is a welcome confirmation amid that renewed activity. The fear he had when the Presley gig came to a tragic halt isn't much different from the uncertainties he still feels about his future as an independent contractor. When he was producing 13 albums a year, he took the work for granted. Now he has enough time between commitments to savor just how fortunate he has been — and to know he's not ready to stop.

"I am totally pumped that this [award] popped up right now," he says. "It's a big deal." ●



JACOB POWERS

Conner Smith (center) announced he signed with Pioneer Artists and Make Wake Artists for management on Aug. 13. With him: Make Wake founder Chris Kappy (left) and Pioneer founder Jake Kinney.



Josh Ross (left) performed Aug. 12 at a KCYE Las Vegas listener appreciation show at Gilley's. Music director Ransom Garcia joined him at the event.



Jelly Roll (right) with Hardy when he guested on the Aug. 9 episode of Apple Music Country's *The Fire With HARDY*.

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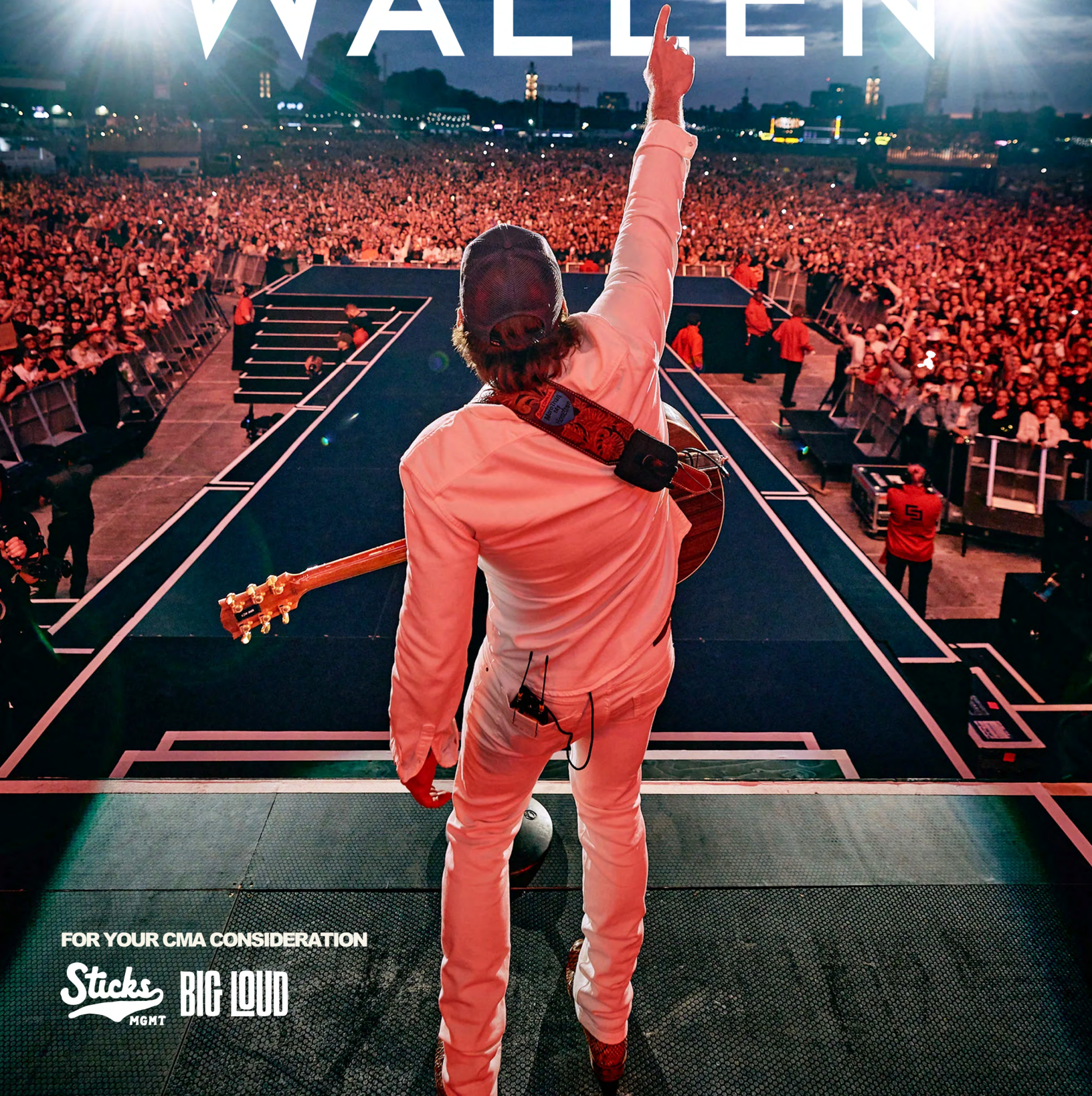
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Expert insight and commentary by Tom Roland and Jim Asker



ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

MORGAN WALLEN



FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

Sticks **BIG LOUD**
MGMT

billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY MONITORED BY **LUMINATE**

ON THE CHARTS JIM ASKER jim.asker@billboard.com

Shaboozey, Carrie Underwood, Faith Hill & More: All The Acts To Top Country Airplay For Four Or More Weeks With Breakthrough Hits

Shaboozey dominates *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart (dated Aug. 24) for a fourth week with "A Bar Song (Tipsy)" (American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music). The track by the Virginian (born **Collins Obinna Chibueze**) drew 30.5 million audience impressions at the format (down 2%), Aug. 9-15, according to Luminate.



DANIEL PRAKOPCY

"A Bar Song" is only the ninth country career-establishing No. 1 at the format to reign for four-plus weeks — and the second among the three most recent Country Airplay leaders, after **Post Malone's** "I Had Some Help" (featuring **Morgan Wallen**) ruled for four beginning in June.

Here are the other such hits (counting acts' first Country Airplay entries as a lead artist or their initial songs promoted to country radio): **Carrie Underwood's** "Jesus Take the Wheel" (six weeks, 2006); **Gretchen Wilson's** "Redneck Woman" (five, 2004); **Uncle Kracker's** "When the Sun Goes Down" (with **Kenny Chesney**; five, 2004); **Blake Shelton's** "Austin" (five, 2001); **Kevin Sharp's** "Nobody Knows" (four, 1997); **Faith Hill's** "Wild One" (four, 1994); and **Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart"** (five, 1992).

What makes "A Bar Song" so special, and a hit at multiple formats? **Travis Daily**, who in May became Cumulus Media vp of country, after assuming brand and content manager duties of the chain's **WKDF** and **WSM-FM** Nashville in April, tells *Billboard*, "I have a kid in college who sends me music almost daily, and he sent me the song one night as I was packing for my move to Nashville. My first reaction was, 'This is exactly what we need to stand out on WKDF when I get to town.'

"Passion for this song is almost unheard of," Daily says. "Some country programmers don't like when pop stations play our country hits. I would argue that songs like this give me a chance to convert some audience into becoming fans of the greatest format in the world, which is obviously country." ●

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

| TITLE Imprint/Label | Artist | GAIN (IN MILLIONS) |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville | Marshmello & Kane Brown | +1.330 |
| POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton | +1.290 |
| HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville | Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph | +0.756 |
| YOUNG LOVE & SATURDAY NIGHTS RCA Nashville | Chris Young | +0.712 |
| YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor | Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green | +0.624 |
| AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Universal Studios/Atlantic/Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville | Luke Combs | +0.574 |
| BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville | Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott | +0.548 |
| SHE'S SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER (REIMAGINED) Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge | Drew Baldridge | +0.535 |
| THIS IS MY DIRT Valory | Justin Moore | +0.480 |
| AM I OKAY? Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville | Megan Moroney | +0.470 |

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

| TITLE Imprint/Label | Artist | GAIN |
|--|-------------------------------------|------|
| POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton | +385 |
| LIES LIES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Morgan Wallen | +251 |
| I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek | Jelly Roll | +244 |
| MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville | Marshmello & Kane Brown | +242 |
| HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville | Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph | +221 |
| YOUNG LOVE & SATURDAY NIGHTS RCA Nashville | Chris Young | +210 |
| YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor | Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green | +176 |
| SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO Leo33 | Zach Top | +168 |
| SHE'S SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER (REIMAGINED) Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge | Drew Baldridge | +143 |
| WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville | Tucker Wetmore | +140 |

RECURRENTS

| THIS WEEK | TITLE Imprint/Label | Artist | TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS) |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | OUTSKIRTS MCA Nashville | Sam Hunt | 16.168 |
| 2 | WHERE IT ENDS Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA | Bailey Zimmerman | 16.007 |
| 3 | WORLD ON FIRE RCA Nashville | Nate Smith | 12.595 |
| 4 | FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville | Luke Combs | 11.271 |
| 5 | TRUCK BED Big Loud | HARDY | 9.577 |
| 6 | THINKIN' BOUT ME Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Morgan Wallen | 9.265 |
| 7 | SAVE ME Bailee & Buddy/Broken Bow/BMG/Stoney Creek | Jelly Roll With Lainey Wilson | 8.980 |
| 8 | BACKTHEN RIGHT NOW Hubbard House/EMI Nashville | Tyler Hubbard | 8.941 |
| 9 | LAST NIGHT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Morgan Wallen | 8.914 |
| 10 | PRETTY LITTLE POISON 717/Warner/WEA | Warren Zeiders | 8.167 |



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING AUGUST 15, 2024

| THIS WEEK | LAST WEEK | WKS ON CHART | TITLE (Label) | ARTIST | TW SPINS | SPINS +/- | THIS WEEK | LAST WEEK | WKS ON CHART | TITLE (Label) | ARTIST | TW SPINS | SPINS +/- |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|---|---------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|---|---------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 18 | CHANGE THE GAME (Independent) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★ | Cody Jinks | 1319 | 39 | 11 | 14 | 10 | ALL I WANNA DO IS DRINK (Independent) | Randy Rogers & Wade Bowen | 1060 | 165 |
| 2 | 3 | 22 | UNDOMESTICATED ME (Independent) | Mark Powell | 1304 | 57 | 12 | 9 | 26 | THIS AIN'T MY FIRST RODEO (Independent) | Olivia Harms | 999 | -41 |
| 3 | 5 | 14 | GOD'S DOIN' (Independent) | Curtis Grimes | 1302 | 138 | 13 | 16 | 12 | SMOKE & MIRRORS (Independent) | Chad Cooke Band | 970 | 121 |
| 4 | 4 | 29 | BLUE SKY GOODBYE (Independent) | Drew Fish Band | 1286 | 116 | 14 | 6 | 20 | MY KIND OF WEATHERED (Independent) | Kin Faux | 957 | -181 |
| 5 | 7 | 18 | HEARTBROKE (Independent) | Joey Green | 1183 | 126 | 15 | 1 | 17 | JUST DRIVE (Independent) | Case Hardin | 926 | -529 |
| 6 | 11 | 10 | WHOLE LOTTA LUBBOCK (Independent) | William Clark Green | 1159 | 120 | 16 | 15 | 20 | SUNSHINE (Independent) | Deryl Dodd | 868 | 18 |
| 7 | 8 | 13 | OUTRUN THE RAIN (Independent) | James Lann | 1125 | 81 | 17 | 20 | 6 | HUNGOVER AGAIN (Independent) | Casey Donahew | 853 | 136 |
| 8 | 10 | 26 | DAMN GOOD FRIENDS (Independent) | Keller Cox | 1076 | 37 | 18 | 17 | 19 | TANGLED (Independent) | Darrin Morris Band | 831 | 51 |
| 9 | 13 | 11 | SOME GIRLS DON'T CRY (Independent) | Billie Jo Jones | 1066 | 94 | 19 | 18 | 14 | WAKE UP LONELY (Independent) | Caleb Young | 798 | 43 |
| 10 | 12 | 15 | BAD BOY GOOD MAN (Independent) | Brandi Behlen | 1066 | 38 | 20 | 19 | 10 | DRUNK SINCE DALLAS (Independent) | Grant Gilbert | 788 | 34 |

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 2024, 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) | | PLAYS | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|--|---|------------------------|--------|-----------|------|------|
| | | | | | THIS WEEK | +/- | THIS WEEK | +/- | RANK |
| 1 | 1 | 16 | A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music | ★★ No. 1 (4 Weeks) ★★ Shaboozey | 30.477 | -0.677 | 7495 | -532 | 2 |
| 2 | 2 | 15 | I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen | 30.087 | -0.723 | 7096 | -313 | 4 |
| 3 | 3 | 27 | BULLETPROOF RCA Nashville | Nate Smith | 27.723 | +0.411 | 7792 | -10 | 1 |
| 4 | 4 | 19 | COWGIRLS Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Morgan Wallen Featuring ERNEST | 26.429 | -0.471 | 6557 | -140 | 5 |
| 5 | 5 | 42 | SHE'S SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER (REIMAGINED) Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge | Drew Baldridge | 24.588 | +0.535 | 7099 | 143 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 36 | CHEVROLET Broken Bow | Dustin Lynch Featuring Jelly Roll | 22.463 | +0.345 | 6517 | 131 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 14 | AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Universal Studios/Atlantic/Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville | Luke Combs | 22.331 | +0.574 | 6347 | 25 | 8 |
| 8 | 9 | 49 | YOUNG LOVE & SATURDAY NIGHTS RCA Nashville | Chris Young | 21.683 | +0.712 | 6347 | 210 | 7 |
| 9 | 6 | 31 | DIRT CHEAP CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/WMN | Cody Johnson | 21.555 | -1.044 | 6293 | -295 | 9 |
| 10 | 10 | 19 | LOVE YOU, MISS YOU, MEAN IT Row Crop/Capitol Nashville | Luke Bryan | 16.921 | +0.417 | 4825 | 83 | 11 |
| 11 | 11 | 64 | LOVE YOU AGAIN Chase Matthew/Warner Music Nashville/WMN | Chase Matthew | 16.695 | +0.447 | 5063 | 120 | 10 |
| 12 | 12 | 40 | THIS IS MY DIRT Valory | Justin Moore | 15.899 | +0.480 | 4719 | 21 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 8 | POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton | 14.377 | +1.290 | 3900 | 385 | 16 |
| 14 | 13 | 14 | HANG TIGHT HONEY Broken Bow | Lainey Wilson | 13.418 | -0.206 | 4366 | 80 | 13 |
| 15 | 15 | 21 | AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN | Dasha | 13.202 | +0.308 | 4024 | 79 | 14 |
| 16 | 16 | 30 | ONE BAD HABIT McGraw/Big Machine | Tim McGraw | 12.817 | +0.159 | 3948 | 99 | 15 |
| 17 | 17 | 10 | I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek | Jelly Roll | 11.579 | -0.131 | 3632 | 244 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 15 | MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville | ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★ Marshmello & Kane Brown | 10.516 | +1.330 | 3212 | 242 | 18 |
| 19 | 21 | 41 | GONNA LOVE YOU Stoney Creek | ★★ Airpower ★★ Parmalee | 9.358 | +0.341 | 3112 | 110 | 20 |
| 20 | 20 | 14 | BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory | Thomas Rhett | 9.341 | +0.217 | 2954 | 22 | 21 |
| 21 | 22 | 7 | LIES LIES LIES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Morgan Wallen | 9.182 | +0.419 | 2622 | 251 | 22 |
| 22 | 18 | 24 | MESSED UP AS ME Hit Red/Capitol Nashville | Keith Urban | 9.077 | -0.450 | 3170 | 51 | 19 |
| 23 | 24 | 32 | SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO Leo33 | Zach Top | 7.423 | +0.448 | 2400 | 168 | 24 |
| 24 | 23 | 28 | BIGGER HOUSES Warner Music Nashville/WAR | Dan + Shay | 7.252 | -0.166 | 2574 | 17 | 23 |
| 25 | 26 | 25 | AMERICAN GIRL Tom Petty Legacy/Capitol Nashville/Valory | Dierks Bentley | 6.039 | +0.256 | 1870 | 15 | 27 |
| 26 | 27 | 26 | THINK I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU Sound/Mercury Nashville | Chris Stapleton | 5.806 | +0.101 | 1841 | 18 | 28 |
| 27 | 25 | 22 | DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE Nashville Harbor | Riley Green | 5.773 | -0.047 | 2157 | 17 | 25 |
| 28 | 28 | 24 | COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville | George Birge | 4.861 | +0.134 | 1910 | 67 | 26 |
| 29 | 29 | 12 | WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville | Tucker Wetmore | 4.552 | +0.189 | 1459 | 140 | 30 |
| 30 | 31 | 32 | BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville | Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott | 3.728 | +0.548 | 1453 | 132 | 31 |

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 © 2024, 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. A song will also receive a bullet if its percentage loss in audience does not exceed the percentage of monitored station downtime for the format. 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-bulletheaded) 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.

billboard Country Airplay

AIRPLAY
MONITORED BY
LUMINATE

| THIS WEEK | LAST WEEK | WKS ON CHART | TITLE Imprint/Label | Artist | AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) | | PLAYS | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|---|---|------------------------|--------|-----------|------|------|
| | | | | | THIS WEEK | +/- | THIS WEEK | +/- | RANK |
| 31 | 30 | 31 | BREAKIN' IN BOOTS RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville | Matt Stell | 3.312 | -0.262 | 1553 | -192 | 29 |
| 32 | 39 | 5 | HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville | Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph | 3.096 | +0.756 | 929 | 221 | 40 |
| 33 | 32 | 21 | CALLED CRAZY Interscope/MCA Nashville | Kassi Ashton | 3.014 | +0.043 | 829 | 0 | 44 |
| 34 | 37 | 17 | FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow | John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean | 2.740 | +0.297 | 1178 | 135 | 35 |
| 35 | 41 | 4 | YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor | Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green | 2.723 | +0.624 | 703 | 176 | 54 |
| 36 | 33 | 42 | FIND ANOTHER BAR Voyager/Red Street | Chris Lane | 2.712 | +0.039 | 1282 | 21 | 32 |
| 37 | 34 | 23 | WHATCHA SEE IS WHATCHA GET Nashville Harbor | Chris Janson | 2.669 | +0.046 | 1278 | 33 | 33 |
| 38 | 38 | 20 | LIFE WITH YOU Curb | Kelsey Hart | 2.502 | +0.062 | 1180 | 1 | 34 |
| 39 | 35 | 23 | THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb | Dylan Scott | 2.498 | -0.001 | 1141 | -40 | 36 |
| 40 | 36 | 4 | GUY FOR THAT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | Post Malone Featuring Luke Combs | 2.373 | -0.117 | 788 | -12 | 46 |
| 41 | 40 | 15 | WRANGLERS Vanner/Republic/Big Loud | Miranda Lambert | 2.340 | +0.030 | 1136 | 44 | 37 |
| 42 | 43 | 18 | FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN | Cole Swindell | 2.189 | +0.133 | 920 | 83 | 41 |
| 43 | 46 | 16 | DRINKIN' BUDDIES Curb | Lee Brice, Nate Smith & Hailey Whitters | 2.177 | +0.248 | 735 | 33 | 51 |
| 44 | 45 | 3 | WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow | Jason Aldean | 2.019 | -0.020 | 815 | -13 | 45 |
| 45 | 42 | 21 | TIE UP Home Grown/Warner Music Nashville/WAR | Zac Brown Band | 1.890 | -0.193 | 1094 | -49 | 39 |
| 46 | 50 | 10 | FALL OF SUMMER Triple Tigers | Scotty McCreery | 1.823 | +0.046 | 857 | 64 | 42 |
| 47 | 47 | 28 | ITRIED A RING ON Monument | Tigirlily Gold | 1.812 | -0.095 | 1098 | -94 | 38 |
| 48 | 52 | 4 | I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville | Jordan Davis | 1.801 | +0.197 | 764 | 110 | 50 |
| 49 | 49 | 8 | COWBOYS CRY TOO Black River | Kelsea Ballerini & Noah Kahan | 1.732 | -0.075 | 838 | 15 | 43 |
| 50 | 48 | 7 | COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville | Old Dominion | 1.726 | -0.167 | 708 | -36 | 53 |
| 51 | 44 | 5 | JUST TO SAY WE DID Blue Chair/Warner Music Nashville/WEA | Kenny Chesney | 1.699 | -0.350 | 776 | -55 | 47 |
| 52 | 51 | 9 | HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA | Bailey Zimmerman | 1.666 | -0.054 | 612 | 62 | 56 |
| 53 | 54 | 11 | HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group | LOCASH | 1.338 | +0.011 | 772 | 14 | 48 |
| 54 | 55 | 17 | COUNTRY BACK Magnolia Music | Randy Houser | 1.260 | +0.067 | 771 | 45 | 49 |
| 55 | 53 | 10 | SIX FEET UNDER (CALEIGH'S SONG) Big Loud Rock/Mercury/Republic/Big Loud | HARDY | 1.254 | -0.230 | 654 | -3 | 55 |
| 56 | 56 | 3 | TRUCK ON FIRE Big Machine | Carly Pearce | 1.232 | +0.046 | 528 | -28 | 57 |
| 57 | 57 | 10 | EVERYTHING I NEED 19/Wheelhouse | Chayce Beckham | 0.982 | +0.087 | 483 | 0 | - |
| 58 | RE-ENTRY | | OVER WHEN WE'RE SOBER Valory | Brantley Gilbert Featuring Ashley Cooke | 0.928 | +0.325 | 458 | 56 | - |
| 59 | 58 | 20 | SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville | Josh Ross | 0.911 | +0.017 | 712 | 25 | 52 |
| 60 | NEW | | LOVE THE LEAVIN' Warner Music Nashville/WMN | ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★ Drew Parker | 0.904 | +0.308 | 325 | 82 | - |



Five different country acts, including Lainey Wilson, joined Post Malone when he made his Grand Ole Opry debut on Aug. 14.



Tucker Wetmore (center) met two Olympians from the American bronze medal-winning men's volleyball team, Matt Anderson (left) and Taylor Averill, during an Aug. 13 visit to SiriusXM's New York office.

CHRIS HOLLO

JASON ALDEAN

FOR YOUR
CMA CONSIDERATION

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

ALBUM OF THE YEAR
HIGHWAY DESPERADO

MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR
"LET YOUR BOYS BE COUNTRY"



LAINNEY WILSON

FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

SINGLE OF THE YEAR
"WATERMELON MOONSHINE"

SONG OF THE YEAR
"WILDFLOWERS AND WILD HORSES"

MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR
"WILDFLOWERS AND WILD HORSES"



FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

JELLY ROLL

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

ALBUM OF THE YEAR
WHITSITT CHAPEL

SINGLE OF THE YEAR
"I AM NOT OKAY"

SONG OF THE YEAR
"I AM NOT OKAY"

MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR
DUSTIN LYNCH
"CHEVROLET (FEAT. JELLY ROLL)"

MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR
DUSTIN LYNCH
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DAVID BERGMAN

Cody Jinks (left) received a Pandora Billionaire plaque from SiriusXM/Pandora vp of music programming — country Johnny Chiang (center) when Jinks opened for Luke Combs in Houston on Aug. 10.

SONGWRITERS HALL INDUCTEES SET

Brad Paisley and The Bellamy Brothers’ David Bellamy are the highest-profile inductees voted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2024.

Their names were unveiled during an Aug. 15 press conference at Nashville’s historic Columbia Studio A, along with fellow songwriters **Al Anderson** (“Love’s Gonna Make It Alright,” “The Cowboy in Me”), **Liz Rose** (“You Belong With Me,” “Girl Crush”), **Dan Penn** (“I’m Your Puppet,” “The Dark End of the Street”) and **Victoria Shaw** (“The River,” “I Love the Way You Love Me”).

The annual induction dinner will take place Nov. 6 at Nashville’s Music City Center, with one particular complication. Paisley is unable to attend the event, and his official entry is being delayed until the 2025 ceremony.

The hall currently has 241 members, including **Hank Williams, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, Bob Dylan, Chuck Berry, Kris Kristofferson** and **Toby Keith**. In addition to being featured in an interactive public display at the Music City Center, the inductees’ names are embedded in the sidewalk outside the facility along Demonbreun Street.

Penn, who came to prominence as a pop songwriter in Memphis prior to his relocation in Nashville, said that watching producers **Chet Atkins** and **Owen Bradley** skip through his demo tapes without listening to the entire song influenced his writing. He frequently started his songs with the title.

“I owe these two gentlemen a debt there for showing me which way to go,” Penn said.

The inductees were informed of their impending membership through phone calls from Hall of Fame executive director **Mark Ford**, who was praised for his delivery.

“When Mark called me, I was in deep shock,” Bellamy said. “It was better than the Publishers Clearing House.”

RADIO & RECORDS®

Big Loud promoted **Eric England** to senior vp of insights and analytics from vice president. Reach him [here](#) ... BrickHouse Entertainment partnered with Vere Music to create a joint venture, Hit and Run Music, that provides artist development, marketing and distribution through Warner Music Group’s ADA. Principals include BrickHouse managing partners **Scott Brickell, Ron Smith** and **Chase Swayze**, plus Vere founder and president **Rusty Harmon**. The label’s initial artist is **Micah Christopher** ... Indie label Oh Boy pacted with Secretly Distribution ... Beasley Music Group promoted **Lamar Smith** to director of corporate engineering from vp of engineering ... **Angela Reed** joined iHeartMedia as senior vp of its inside sales division, RadioInk.com reported. She was previously Miradore chief sales officer ... **Howard Greiner** was promoted to iHeartMedia/Nashville metro president from iHeartMedia/Albany, N.Y., area president, according to RadioInsight.com. The Nashville division includes country **WSIX**; the Albany cluster’s holdings include country **WRVE-HD2** ... Country Radio Broadcasters will hold a one-day early-bird registration on Aug. 21 for Country Radio Seminar, offering enrollment for only \$599 for the conference Feb. 19-21, 2025. The rate rises \$100 on Aug. 22.

‘ROUND THE ROW

The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum promoted four staff members, including three who were boosted from associate director posts: director of school and music programs **Aaron Helvig**, director of museum sales **Dana Romanello** and director of security **Joe Bridges**. Additionally, **Haley Houser** was boosted to associate director to the CEO from executive assistant ... **Christine Melko Ross** joined Outback Presents as Montreal-based senior vp of global operations. She previously spent 23 years with Just for Laughs, where she served most recently as vp of operations and business affairs. Reach her [here](#) ... Indie artist **Christian Hayes** tapped WME for concert booking, Universal Music Publishing Group for publishing and Flood Bumstead McCready & McCarthy for business management, building out a team that already includes Wildrose Projects artist manager **Helena Capps**, PR firm Essential Broadcast Media and Safford Motley attorney **Scott Safford** ... **Angie K** signed with Wasserman Music for representation, with **Nate Ritches** serving as responsible agent. Angie K was slated to make her Grand Ole Opry debut on Aug. 16 ... Songwriter **Ben Williams** (“Tennessee Orange,” “I’m Not Pretty”) signed a publishing agreement with Tape Room Music and Warner Chappell Nashville ... Songwriter **Tia Sillers** (“There’s Your Trouble,” “I Hope You Dance”) inked a publishing deal with Toby & Molly Music ahead of her Aug. 28 Grand Ole Opry debut ... **Zach Bryan** received 19 nominations in the 18-category People’s Choice Country Awards as the finalists list was revealed Aug. 14. **Beyoncé** picked up 17 nominations, followed by **Kacey Musgraves** (15), **Shaboozey** (12), **Kane Brown** and **Morgan Wallen** (11 apiece), and **Luke Combs** (10). NBC will broadcast the show on Sept. 26 from Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry House. Go [here](#) for the full list of nominees ... Eight performers and presenters were added to the 17th annual ACM Honors on Aug. 21: **Jason Aldean, Terri Clark, Jackson Dean, Lauren Alaina, Kameron Marlowe, Lee Ann Womack** and co-hosts **Jordan Davis** and **Carly Pearce** ... BMI Nashville honors **John Oates** with its Troubadour Award on Sept. 16 ... First-round voting in the Country Music Association’s CMA Touring Awards opened Aug. 16, with a second ballot introduced into the process in September for the first time. Final-ballot voting will take place Jan. 6-16, 2025 ... **HARDY**, songwriter **Ben Johnson** (“Bulletproof,” “Truck Bed”) and TV writer/producer **Dave Alan Johnson** (*Doc, Against the Grain*) have begun production on a docuseries, *Music Row* ... Red Street head of streaming and playlist strategy **Michael Steele** and Severance Nashville co-CEO **Steve “Stevo” Robertson** are featured in the *Who Knew* web series *The Smartest People in the Room* on Aug. 22 at 1 p.m. CT. Go [here](#) to register for free ... **Eric Church** will participate in **Joe Walsh’s** annual VetsAid benefit on Nov. 11 at UBS Arena in Belmont Park, N.Y., along with **Toto** and **Kool & The Gang** ... StarVista LIVE’s Country Music Cruise has established a charitable relationship with the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, with fundraising events and a cocktail party planned in conjunction with the January 2025 cruise. ●



Sally Williams (left) was the subject of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum’s 16th annual Louise Scruggs Memorial Forum on Aug. 7. Gibson chief human resources and impact officer Anne Rohosy also attended.



Tracy Lawrence shared a big moment with Linda Davis when he was inducted into the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame in Carthage, Texas, on Aug. 10.

SEAN O'HALLORAN



DUSTIN LYNCH

**FOR YOUR
CMA CONSIDERATION**

**MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR
“CHEVROLET
(FEAT. JELLY ROLL)”**

**MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR
“CHEVROLET
(FEAT. JELLY ROLL)”**

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FOR YOUR CMA CONSIDERATION

JASON ALDEAN

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
ALBUM OF THE YEAR - *HIGHWAY DESPERADO*
MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR - "LET YOUR BOYS BE COUNTRY"

JELLY ROLL

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
ALBUM OF THE YEAR - *WHITSITT CHAPEL*
SINGLE OF THE YEAR - "I AM NOT OKAY"
SONG OF THE YEAR - "I AM NOT OKAY"
MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR - DUSTIN LYNCH - "CHEVROLET (FEAT. JELLY ROLL)"
MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR - DUSTIN LYNCH - "CHEVROLET (FEAT. JELLY ROLL)"

LAINNEY WILSON

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR
FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR
SINGLE OF THE YEAR - "WATERMELON MOONSHINE"
SONG OF THE YEAR - "WILDFLOWERS AND WILD HORSES"
MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR - "WILDFLOWERS AND WILD HORSES"

DUSTIN LYNCH

MUSICAL EVENT OF THE YEAR - "CHEVROLET (FEAT. JELLY ROLL)"
MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR - "CHEVROLET (FEAT. JELLY ROLL)"

PARMALEE

VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR
MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR - "GONNA LOVE YOU"

CHAYCE BECKHAM

ALBUM OF THE YEAR - *BAD FOR ME*
SONG OF THE YEAR - "23"
NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR



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55 Years Ago

Merle Haggard Worked His Way To No. 1

The legend led Hot Country Songs with a salute to the hard-working people with whom he identified

On Aug. 16, 1969, **Merle Haggard's** "Workin' Man Blues" climbed to No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart. It became the seventh of the genre cornerstone's 38 leaders, the third-most in the survey's history after **George Strait**, who reigns with 44, and **Conway Twitty**, who notched 40.

Haggard wrote "Workin' Man Blues," which **Ken Nelson** produced.

Haggard was born on April 6, 1937, in Oildale, Calif. With his smooth vocals, compelling guitar skills and lyrics that keenly linked with the working class, he earned iconic status, leading to his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1994. His many accolades also include a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award (2006) and a Kennedy Center Honor (2010).

After a long bout of pneumonia, Haggard died on April 6, 2016, his 79th birthday. **Marty Stuart** officiated his funeral that April 9. Two weeks after Haggard's death, during a tour stop in Bakersfield, Calif., **Chris Stapleton** and his wife, **Morgaine**, paid tribute with performances of Haggard's "Silver Wings" and "Today I Started Loving You Again."

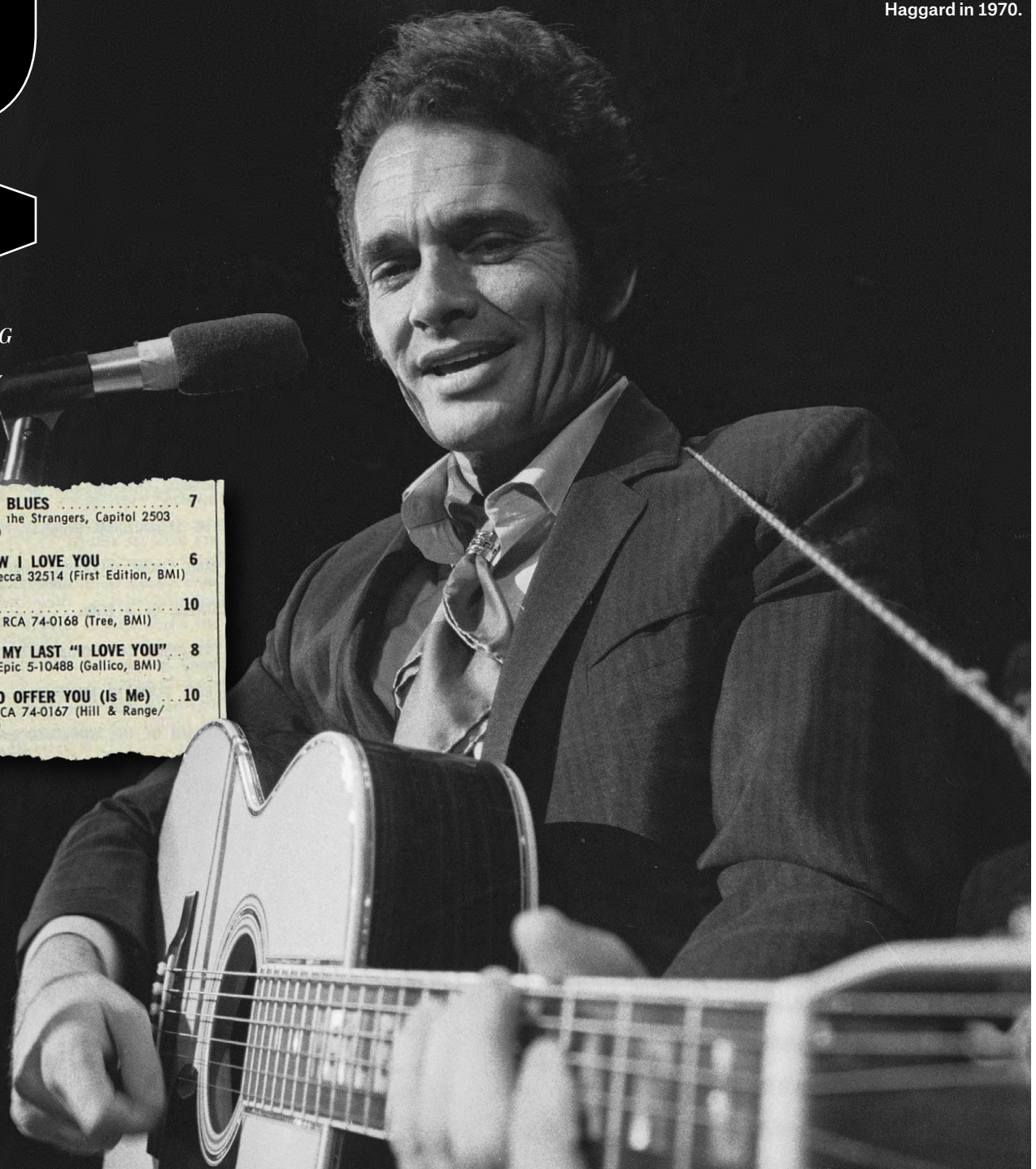
—JIM ASKER

CO D A

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | WORKIN' MAN BLUES 7 |
| | | Merle Haggard & the Strangers, Capitol 2503 (Blue Rock, BMI) |
| 2 | 7 | BUT YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU 6 |
| | | Bill Anderson, Decca 32514 (First Edition, BMI) |
| 3 | 3 | BIG WIND 10 |
| | | Porter Wagoner, RCA 74-0168 (Tree, BMI) |
| 4 | 5 | I'M DOWN TO MY LAST "I LOVE YOU" 8 |
| | | David Houston, Epic 5-10488 (Gallico, BMI) |
| 5 | 1 | ALL I HAVE TO OFFER YOU (Is Me) 10 |
| | | Charley Pride, RCA 74-0167 (Hill & Range/Blue Crest, BMI) |
| | 8 | WINE MEN 10 |

Haggard in 1970.



LYNN PELHAM/GETTY IMAGES