

billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD.COM/NEWSLETTERS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 | PAGE 1 OF 11

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

Tom.Roland@billboard.com



Country Artists Find Professional Life Goes On, Even After The Hits Stop Coming

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Luke Combs' One-Year Milestone
➤page 4

People's Choice Leads Flurry Of Awards
➤page 8

Country Coda: Diamond Rio's 'Beautiful Mess'
➤page 11

In recent weeks, **Sugarland's Kristian Bush** went on a nostalgia trip, attending concerts that featured **U2**, **The Dead**, **The English Beat** and **Adam Ant**.

But that run of shows was more than just a personal stroll down memory lane. Bush engaged in some professional research, too, anticipating Sugarland's 18-date concert run on **Little Big Town's** Take Me Home Tour, beginning Oct. 24 in Greenville, S.C.

"I'm trying to educate myself in nostalgia and what it makes me feel like as a fan," Bush says. "I'm starting to get my feet in the actual mud and dirt of what it's like as the artist."

Transitioning from hit-maker to nostalgia act is likely the hardest segue most artists make during their careers. It's a difficult rite of passage akin to losing a parent — few want to experience it, but almost every performer does.

Complicating the process, the beginning of that change in career path isn't clear at the outset. **Terri Clark** remembers a five-year period when she struggled to understand what was happening, unintentionally quoting from her own "Poor Poor Pitiful Me."

"There's a lot of 'woe is me,' I think, for a while," she says. "You feel like you're getting forgotten, like what you did didn't matter."

Of course, it did matter. But once the transition to legacy act starts, the way in which it matters shifts. Instead of having current

songs played in hot rotations, the artist's new material sags in consumption while the old music remains as gold material or in nostalgic playlists. Fans still come to the concerts, but they're there primarily to hear what **Garth Brooks** calls "the old stuff." The new stuff tends to generate the weakest response.

"People want old clothes from a new shop," Bush suggests metaphorically. "They don't want new music from their old band, but they want a new show from them."

Navigating that shift challenges an artist's self-confidence and sense of purpose. The longer they were on top and the more successful

they were during that window, the harder it's likely to be for them to make the transition. Some eventually learn to appreciate the time they spent in the top 10 as an uncommon privilege and see their past hits as an asset they can use going forward. Others never fully accept the change in stature.

"I remember working shows with [Merle] Haggard and Waylon [Jennings], and those guys," Tracy Lawrence says. "They were pissed at us, you know. They blamed us because they had been dominant on the radio for years. And then all of a sudden, this young country wave comes along and they're not getting airplay anymore. They were not happy about it, and they kind of blamed us a little bit for it. The only one that I remember not doing that was [George] Jones. You know, George embraced it. He did



CLARK



BUSH



LAWRENCE

CLARK: PHIL CROZIER; LAWRENCE: CAYLEE ROBILLOD

AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA

LUKE COMBS

#1 BB (2 WEEKS)

LUKE HAS SPENT 53 WEEKS AT NUMBER ONE ON THE BILLBOARD COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART IN HIS CAREER!

THANK YOU COUNTRY RADIO

TWISTERS
THE ALBUM

‘[I Don’t Need Your] Rockin’ Chair’ and had all of us go out and tour with him and all these things. It was just a completely different experience. And that really stuck with me because I realized that we’re all going to go through this cycle.”

The phenomenon was lampooned in **John Anderson’s** 1982 single “Would You Catch a Falling Star,” in which an artist’s crowds and transportation have all been downsized. “Nobody loves you when you’re down,” the **Bobby Braddock**-penned classic suggests as the legacy-act character struggles to revive a moment that’s no longer accessible. The audience in that song has determined the performer’s peak commercial period has passed, even if the artist hasn’t yet recognized it.

“At what point do you decide you’re nostalgia and what point did the outside world decide you’re nostalgia?” Bush asks. “There’s an internal meter and there’s an external meter, and pain [is] involved in the distance between when the two hit.”

The system sets artists up for that kind of downfall. The music industry succeeds by making stars, and it pampers and appeases them while they’re hot. It’s good for the executives’ short-term access to power, but it’s bad for the artists’ long-term mental health. In the most glaring example, **Elvis Presley** was famously buffered from the public by management and by his entourage, known as the Memphis Mafia, but was ultimately destroyed by his own success.

“When you’re in the middle of it, the ego gets in the way, and there’s all these people around you that are in that inner circle that protect you from the world and let you get away with stuff that normal people don’t get away with,” Lawrence says. “It’s really hard to have a good, honest perspective when you get wrapped up in it because you just get kind of carried away with yourself. Coming out on the other side, everybody doesn’t make it back out.”

Lawrence, Clark and Bush have all turned the corner. If they were uncomfortable being classified as legacy acts, they would not have consented to interviews on the subject.

Bush has made a point of asking nostalgia acts he knows in pop and rock about their experiences with the change. One of them told him that after accepting the transition, his professional life was awesome: He has a loyal core audience, knows what his fans will accept and regularly sees happy faces in the crowd. The legacy acts who deny their position, he added, are simply miserable.

Lawrence and Clark, after adjusting to the shift in their careers, were able to parlay their expertise into hosting roles with network gold shows. Both are currently nominated in the Country Music Association’s Broadcast Awards for weekly national personality of the year, for Silverfish Media’s *Honky Tonkin’ With Tracy Lawrence* and Westwood One’s *Country Gold With Terri Clark*. She ended her tenure with the show in early September; Lawrence told *Billboard* exclusively that he intends to wrap his *Honky Tonkin’* affiliation in the next year.

Lawrence and Clark both addressed the transition musically. He tackled it in “Price of Fame,” a 2020 collaboration with **Eddie Montgomery** that Lawrence wrote with **3 Doors Down** lead vocalist **Brad Arnold**. Clark embraced it through this year’s *Take Two*, a project that reframes her past hits as duets with the likes of **Cody Johnson**, **Lainey Wilson** and **Ashley McBryde**, whose appreciation for Clark underscored the significance of becoming a legacy act. **Trisha Yearwood** had told Clark that when artists realize it’s time to stop competing with younger acts and begin to serve as mentors, life becomes easier. McBryde, in the early stages of her national career, was possibly the first artist to tell Clark that her music had been an influence. *Take Two* strengthened that message.

“Not only do you embrace where you’re at, you get all that affirmation and form new friendships with some of the younger artists that you influenced when they were growing up,” Clark says. “That, to me, is a full-circle recognition of it’s about a body of work, and your lifetime of your work is not just about five or 10 years. It’s about the whole journey.”

As it turns out, the journey can actually be more satisfying after the hits stop coming.

“I’m much calmer than I used to be,” Lawrence says. “I don’t need as much validation as I used to.”

As a legacy act, the former stress of trying to find and continuously market new hits gives way to feeding the existing fan base, which can become more of a community. Whether those fans are coming to relive past glories or to simply revel in music they appreciate, they’re typically a supportive audience. Entertaining them becomes a different experience once the artist accepts that their legacy is enough.

“They relate to certain events and milestones in their own life with one of your songs, and you really have to stay in that place with it and not make it about you,” Clark says. “Make it about them. That’s when it’s not hard for me to sing these songs, when I see how excited people get.” ●



EMILY APRIL ALLEN

Jackson Dean performed “Heavens to Betsy” for Country Music Association staff during a Sept. 24 visit to the organization’s Nashville headquarters. He’s shown with CMA senior vp of industry relations and philanthropy Tiffany Kerns (left) and senior vp of marketing, content and communications strategy Kelly Striewski.



Doug Stone greeted opening act Tori Martin when he performed Sept. 20 at the Wildcatters Saloon in Katy, Texas.



JEFF NIERA

Miranda Lambert (right), pictured with Tamron Hall, visited Hall’s ABC show on Sept. 25 while promoting her album *Postcards From Texas*.



Jamey Johnson (left) performed “Give It Away” as writer-producer Buddy Cannon (“Set ‘Em Up Joe,” “I’ve Come To Expect It From You”) (center) received the Nashville Songwriters Association International’s president’s keystone award during the Nashville Songwriters Awards on Sept. 24 at the Ryman Auditorium. With them is NSAI board president Lee Thomas Miller.

DYLAN SCHNEIDER

Puzzled

DEBUT ALBUM AVAILABLE NOW
FEATURING "CARHARTT"

HEADLINING "BAD DECISIONS" TOUR
OPENING FOR MITCHELL TENPENNY

[CLICK TO LISTEN](#)



billboardCountry Airplay

AIRPLAY
MONITORED BY
LUMINATE

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

Luke Combs' No. 1 Run Marks New Milestone: 'More Than I Could Have Ever Dreamed Of'

Luke Combs claims a second week at No. 1 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart (dated Oct. 5) with "Ain't No Love in Oklahoma" (Universal Studios/Atlantic/Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville). The song increased by 2% to 30.7 million audience impressions Sept. 20-26, according to Luminate.

Co-authored by Combs, the hit from the soundtrack *Twisters: The Album* is the 13th of his 18 Country Airplay leaders to dominate for multiple weeks—and marks another notable career achievement. Combining all his No. 1s, he has now spent over a year—53 weeks—at the summit. **Kenny Chesney** has logged the most weeks at No. 1 (83), dating to the chart's 1990 start, followed by **Tim McGraw** (80), **George Strait** (66), **Alan Jackson** (60), **Blake Shelton** (57), **Toby Keith** and Combs (53 each).

"The support from country radio for my music and fans has always been more than I ever could have imagined," Combs tells *Billboard*. "I never thought I would get one week at No. 1, but when I did, I felt like I had won the lottery. So for my songs to have spent a full year at No. 1 with guys I grew up listening to and admiring is more than I could have ever dreamed of. Thank you, country radio, for letting this young man from North Carolina, who most had never heard of when y'all started playing my music, live out his dreams and do what he loves."

Tom Oakes, SummitMedia operations manager/program director of Country Airplay reporter **KTTS** Springfield, Mo., says Combs' success "is a testament to his ability to relate to the audience. It comes through his songs, which speak to listeners on a level that they experience and live every day, whether it's a serious or more dramatic theme or just flat-out fun. At the core of his staying power is his ability to consistently appeal to listeners, as seen through long-term positive research on his music." 🗨



MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
TRUCK STILL WORKS Loaded Goat/EMI Nashville	Brad Paisley	+4.941	
POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton		+1.776	
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green		+1.748	
LOVE YOU, MISS YOU, MEAN IT Row Crop/Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	+1.485	
I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+1.478	
BIGGER HOUSES Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+1.159	
MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville Marshmello & Kane Brown		+1.099	
HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	+0.959	
THIS IS MY DIRT Valory	Justin Moore	+0.857	
AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	+0.774	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
TRUCK STILL WORKS Loaded Goat/EMI Nashville	Brad Paisley	+1199	
I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+555	
POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton		+424	
HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	+422	
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green		+403	
COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	+373	
MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville Marshmello & Kane Brown		+336	
LOVE YOU, MISS YOU, MEAN IT Row Crop/Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	+285	
AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	+268	
BIGGER HOUSES Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	+246	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	SHE'S SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER (REIMAGINED) Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge	Drew Baldridge	14.592
2	OUTSKIRTS MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	13.065
3	WHERE IT ENDS Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	12.969
4	WORLD ON FIRE RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	12.307
5	FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville	Luke Combs	9.833
6	SAVE ME Bailee & Buddy/Broken Bow/BMG/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll With Lainey Wilson	8.581
7	LAST NIGHT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	8.091
8	DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	8.016
9	THINKIN' BOUT ME Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	7.984
10	PRETTY LITTLE POISON 717/Warner/WEA	Warren Zeiders	7.412



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 26, 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	21	BAD BOY GOOD MAN (Independent) ★★1 Week at 1★	Brandi Behlen	1578	149	11	12	12	WHEELS (Independent)	Shane Smith & The Saints	1129	15
2	3	12	HUNGOVER AGAIN (Independent)	Casey Donahew	1457	41	12	14	12	ME TIME (Flying C)	Brooke Graham	1083	49
3	5	18	SMOKE & MIRRORS (Independent)	Chad Cooke Band	1427	130	13	15	16	BEER'S BETTER ON A BOAT (Independent)	Clay Hollis & Jesse Raub, Jr.	938	26
4	4	19	OUTRUN THE RAIN (Independent)	James Lann	1417	7	14	16	14	KEEP LOOKIN' DOWN THE ROAD (No Big Deal)	Reckless Kelly	929	56
5	6	16	ALL I WANNA DO IS DRINK (Independent)	Randy Rogers & Wade Bowen	1260	-17	15	11	16	WHOLE LOTTA LUBBOCK (Independent)	William Clark Green	856	-272
6	7	20	WAKE UP LONELY (Independent)	Caleb Young	1242	52	16	20	9	PAIN AND SORROW (Independent)	Matt Castillo	848	113
7	8	17	HEAVEN SHINES DOWN ON YOU (Independent)	Sundance Head	1193	58	17	17	12	TWO WAY DRIVE (River House)	Hudson Westbrook	825	23
8	9	17	LOST IN THE COUNTRY (LuckySky Music)	Tori Martin	1179	49	18	18	11	ROPE THE WIND (Rockin R)	Amanda Kate Ferris	793	38
9	10	16	DRUNK SINCE DALLAS (Independent)	Grant Gilbert	1174	45	19	19	14	90SVILLE (Synapse)	Derryl Perry	782	35
10	13	8	HIT THE HAY RUNNIN (Independent)	Aaron Watson	1134	83	20	22	12	RIDE OR DIE (Independent)	James Robert Webb	740	14

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

billboardCountry 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	20	AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Universal Studios/Atlantic/Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville ★★ No. 1 (2 Weeks) ★★	Luke Combs	30.713	+0.499	8565	113	1
2	2	22	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	27.160	+0.493	6615	71	5
3	5	14	POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton	26.607	+1.776	7381	424	2
4	4	21	I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen	25.524	-0.474	6196	-7	8
5	6	21	MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville	Marshmello & Kane Brown	23.952	+1.099	6686	336	4
6	8	25	LOVE YOU, MISS YOU, MEAN IT Row Crop/Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	23.748	+1.485	6730	285	3
7	10	16	I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	21.633	+1.478	6261	555	7
8	9	46	THIS IS MY DIRT Valory	Justin Moore	21.299	+0.857	6282	96	6
9	7	25	COWGIRLS Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring ERNEST	21.084	-1.536	5052	-384	10
10	3	42	CHEVROLET Broken Bow	Dustin Lynch Featuring Jelly Roll	20.316	-5.886	5210	-1707	9
11	11	13	LIES LIES LIES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	16.113	+0.494	4590	205	13
12	12	27	AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WWMN	Dasha	16.051	+0.774	4833	268	11
13	13	47	GONNA LOVE YOU Stoney Creek	Parmalee	15.735	+0.513	4704	224	12
14	15	20	BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	13.465	+0.438	4093	47	15
15	14	36	ONE BAD HABIT McGraw/Big Machine	Tim McGraw	13.465	-0.128	4234	-59	14
16	17	10	YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor	Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green	11.705	+1.748	3226	403	18
17	16	30	MESSED UP AS ME Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	10.476	+0.400	3519	74	16
18	18	30	COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	10.399	+0.582	3506	373	17
19	19	32	THINK I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU Sound/Mercury Nashville ★★ Airpower ★★	Chris Stapleton	9.844	+0.707	2870	66	20
20	21	34	BIGGER HOUSES Warner Music Nashville/WAR ★★ Airpower ★★	Dan + Shay	9.530	+1.159	2952	246	19
21	20	38	SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO Leo33	Zach Top	8.690	+0.275	2837	-3	21
22	22	18	WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	8.268	+0.413	2764	181	23
23	23	28	DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	7.941	+0.107	2816	-42	22
24	26	11	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	7.863	+0.959	2420	422	25
25	24	31	AMERICAN GIRL Tom Petty Legacy/Capitol Nashville/Valory	Dierks Bentley	7.803	+0.636	2308	21	26
26	25	38	BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	7.412	+0.463	2446	171	24
27	27	10	GUY FORTHAT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Luke Combs	5.583	+0.660	1519	185	32
28	28	37	BREAKIN' IN BOOTS RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Matt Stell	5.216	+0.596	2156	214	27
29	NEW		TRUCK STILL WORKS Loaded Goat/EMI Nashville ★★ Hot Shot Debut/Most Increased Audience ★★	Brad Paisley	4.941	+4.941	1199	1199	39
30	31	48	FIND ANOTHER BAR Voyager/Red Street	Chris Lane	4.172	+0.094	1899	126	28

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-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.

© 2024 Billboard Media, LLC

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	29	11	JUST TO SAY WE DID Blue Chair/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Kenny Chesney	4.129	-0.131	1285	-101	37
32	30	23	FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	4.127	+0.022	1617	39	30
33	33	29	THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	3.998	+0.419	1651	42	29
34	34	4	4X4XU Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	3.940	+0.518	1238	89	38
35	35	10	I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	3.846	+0.499	1382	162	34
36	36	15	HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	3.705	+0.417	1047	78	43
37	32	29	WHATCHA SEE IS WHATCHA GET Nashville Harbor	Chris Janson	3.699	-0.058	1617	19	31
38	38	21	WRANGLERS Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert	3.084	+0.159	1516	139	33
39	42	6	AM I OKAY? Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	2.941	+0.602	857	91	51
40	37	27	CALLED CRAZY Interscope/MCA Nashville	Kassi Ashton	2.904	-0.211	1023	-9	45
41	41	26	LIFE WITH YOU Curb	Kelsey Hart	2.869	+0.063	1342	-15	35
42	39	24	FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	2.852	-0.071	1161	0	40
43	44	9	WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	2.326	+0.147	1026	42	44
44	43	13	COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	2.316	+0.080	957	-23	48
45	47	14	COWBOYS CRY TOO Black River	Kelsea Ballerini & Noah Kahan	2.207	+0.231	1144	11	41
46	45	34	I TRIED A RING ON Monument	Tigirlily Gold	2.162	-0.009	1307	-14	36
47	49	9	TRUCK ON FIRE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	2.049	+0.167	907	79	49
48	46	16	FALL OF SUMMER Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery	2.018	-0.000	997	57	47
49	48	17	HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	1.994	+0.045	1012	60	46
50	50	27	TIE UP Home Grown/Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Zac Brown Band	1.755	-0.075	1056	-27	42
51	51	26	SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	1.502	+0.039	870	-45	50
52	54	16	EVERYTHING I NEED 19/Wheelhouse	Chayce Beckham	1.495	+0.246	693	14	53
53	52	23	COUNTRY BACK Magnolia Music	Randy Houser	1.392	+0.074	845	76	52
54	55	3	FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	1.301	+0.087	510	70	60
55	53	7	OVER WHEN WE'RE SOBER Valory	Brantley Gilbert Featuring Ashley Cooke	1.156	-0.138	578	-31	56
56	56	14	THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	1.148	-0.023	608	14	55
57	57	6	COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	1.085	-0.014	558	-8	57
58	60	5	BONES Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.072	+0.117	637	20	54
59	58	3	PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	1.052	+0.039	538	45	59
60	40	2	WHAT KINDA MAN MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	1.050	-1.773	462	-255	-



From left: Old Dominion band members Brad Tursi, Matthew Ramsey and Trevor Rosen visited Nashville's TriStar Centennial Children's Hospital on Sept. 3, performing for staff and patients, including Natalie Philbeck.



Niko Moon and his wife, songwriter Anna Moon ("Good Time"), donated \$22,000 from the Happy Cowboy Foundation to veterans group Mission 22 during his sold-out Sept. 20 concert at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium. From left: Mission 22 CEO Misha Knea, Niko, Anna and Mission 22 community outreach coordinator Carley Hill.

ISSUE DATE
10/26/24

AEG
PRESENTS

LIVE NATION

MOODY
CENTER

TACOMA
DOME

25 Scotiabank
Arena

#LIVESUMMIT

NOVEMBER 14

BillboardLiveMusicSummit.com

billboard
LIVE MUSIC
SUMMIT + AWARDS

In November, for the first time ever, *Billboard* will honor the 100 most powerful people in the concert business at the Billboard Live Music Summit & Awards, which returns to Los Angeles on Nov. 14 as a must-attend event for the decision-makers and thought leaders shaping the future of the touring industry.

The 2024 Live Music Power Players will be recognized in the Oct. 26 print issue of *Billboard* and celebrated at the Live Music Summit, which will include panel discussions and award presentations to the year's most visionary leaders worldwide.

Advertise in this issue to reach agents, artists, managers, venues, promoters and event producers. [Congratulate the 2024 Live Music Power Players](#), as well as the [Legend of Live](#), [Executive of the Year](#), [lifetime achievement honoree](#) and the [Top Tour](#).

BONUS DISTRIBUTION:

Billboard Live Music Summit & Awards 11/14

ON SALE: 10/26

AD CLOSE: 10/15 / **MATERIALS DUE:** 10/17

CONTACT:

East Coast/Midwest: Joe Maimone
joe.maimone@billboard.com

Touring and West Coast: Cynthia Mellow
cmellow615@gmail.com

International: Ryan O'Donnell
rodonnell@pmc.com

Latin: Marcia Olival
marciaolival29@gmail.com

Southeast: Lee Ann Photoglo
laphotoglo@gmail.com

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

CHRIS HOLLO

Saanaeh (left) and Rissi Palmer (right) sang “XXX’s and OOO’s (An American Girl)” at the Grand Ole Opry on Sept. 21 to celebrate songwriter-author Alice Randall and her album *My Black Country: The Songs of Alice Randall*.

PEOPLE’S CHOICE HEADS AWARDS WEEK

Morgan Wallen earned four trophies to lead the winners in the second annual People’s Choice Country Awards, held Sept. 26 at Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry House.

The NBC telecast was the highest-profile awards event in the last week, though it was hardly the only one. “The Painter” won song of the year during the Nashville Songwriter Awards on Sept. 25 at Nashville’s Ryman Auditorium, and **Del McCoury**’s family members hauled in more hardware during the International Bluegrass Music Association’s IBMA Awards on Sept. 26 in Raleigh, N.C.

• Wallen’s People’s Choice victories included repeat wins as The People’s Artist and The Concert. **Luke Combs** collected three honors, while **Shaboozey** and **MGK** snared two apiece. Go [here](#) for the complete account.

• “The Painter” scored honors for composers **Benjy Davis**, **Ryan Larkins** and **Kat Higgins** during the Nashville Songwriters Awards, which also recognized **Ashley Gorley**, **Jelly Roll**, **Alan Jackson** and **Buddy Cannon**. Go [here](#) for the full story.

• The **Del McCoury Band** claimed the IBMA’s entertainer of the year, while **The Travelin’ McCourys**, including four members of the McCoury Band, earned instrumental group. Banjo player of the year **Rob McCoury** is a member of both ensembles, while guitar winner **Cody Kilby** is a member of the Travelin’ band. Go [here](#) to read more.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Warner Music Nashville installed **Gregg Nadel** as co-chair/co-president of the division, succeeding **Ben Kline**, who steps down following a decade with the company. Nadel, formerly Elektra president, shares his new role with **Cris Lacy** ... Valory appointed **Andi Brooks** as director of streaming, segueing from her previous role as Nashville Harbor director of Southwest promotion and marketing ... Universal Music Group Nashville hired CFO **Robert Kilduff**, who previously held the same title at the nonprofit Gary Sinise Foundation ... **Jon Borris** joined The Core Records as the label’s Nashville-based GM. He was previously New York-based Republic senior vp of top 40 and adult promotion ... BBR Music Group/BMG Nashville signed **Blake Shelton** to a recording deal ... Oklahoma City band **Jason Scott & The High Heat** joined the artist roster at Leo33. The group also pacted with Triple 8 Management and tabbed Wasserman for concert booking. Their first EP for Leo33, *High Country Heat*, will arrive Oct. 25 ... Bluegrass label Mighty Cord, owned by “Murder on Music Row” songwriter **Larry Cordle**, signed **Green River Revue** to a recording contract ... Bluegrass veteran **Junior Sisk** agreed to a label deal with Turnberry ... Pinecastle welcomed bluegrass performer **Chris Davis** to the label’s lineup ... **WWWF** Farmingdale, N.Y., afternoon host **Kelly Ford** added music director stripes ... Cumulus hired **Theresa Vicari Ahee** as regional sales manager for Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich., [RadioInk.com](#) reported. She’ll represent six stations, including country **WWWW** Ann Arbor. Ahee spent three years away from the broadcast industry, but previously worked six years as senior account executive for news/talk **WJR-AM** Detroit, which is also part of the portfolio she inherits ... Alpha/Dayton, Ohio, promoted **Kevin Washington** to operations manager from assistant program director, according to [RadioInk.com](#). The five-station cluster includes country **WCLH** ... **WVVR** Hopkinsville, Ky.-Clarksville,

Tenn., PD **Chad Heritage** joins the station’s morning team, shifting from afternoons as part of an on-air realignment, [RadioInsight.com](#) reported. **John Glass** takes over the afternoon daypart, with Skyview’s *B-Dub Radio* filling Glass’ former evening role ... Country Radio Seminar is accepting nominations for the Tom Rivers humanitarian award [here](#) through Dec. 6.

‘ROUND THE ROW

Warner Chappell Nashville promoted **Spencer Nohe** to vp of A&R from director ... CMT let go at least eight staffers as Paramount revises the network, which dropped news from its website in June. The departures include director of music and talent **Stacey Cato**, vp of production **Quinn Brown**, senior director of production **Ray Sells**, senior producer **Jennifer DeVault**, senior manager of music and talent **Jordan Walker**, senior manager of music and talent **Abbi Roth**, executive assistant **Bryana Cielo** and vp of production management **Heather Graffagnino** ... **Justin Tomlinson** launched artist management and development firm JNote Worldwide, focused on artists in R&B, gospel and country. The former Sony Music Nashville associate director of digital marketing and strategy served most recently as New York-based Atlantic senior director of global marketing ... Good Company Entertainment expanded with the launch of management division GCE-Texas, co-managed by GCE founder **Keith Gale** and Texas-based **Joe Carter**. The first client for the Lone Star wing is **Wynn Williams** ... Sheltered Music signed artist-writer **Travis Meadows** to a publishing deal ... Songwriter **Joe Whelan** nabbed a publishing agreement with Porchlight Music ... Big Machine Music added songwriter-producer **King Henry** to the publishing roster ... Nashville-based Jonas Group Publishing acquired publishing copyrights and recordings from writer-artist **Julia Michaels** (“Circles Around This Town”) ... The Academy of Country Music will accept new member applications and renewals from Oct. 1 through Nov. 15 ... The Nashville Songwriters Association International launches the 25th annual NSAI Song Contest on Oct. 1. Mentoring sessions with writers **Shane McAnally** (“Messed Up As Me,” “We Don’t Fight Anymore”) and **Jessie Jo Dillon** (“10,000 Hours,” “Am I Okay?”) are among the potential prizes ... The Unsigned Only Music Competition named Nashville artist-writer **Matt McClure** the fandemonium winner, for “The Shore” ... A bronze statue of **Johnny Cash** was unveiled Sept. 24 at the U.S. Capitol, to represent the state of Arkansas ... Songwriter-keyboardist **Bobby Wood** (“In Another’s Eyes,” “Half the Way”) was recognized Sept. 20 with the unveiling of a Mississippi Country Music Trail Marker in New Albany, *The New Albany Gazette* reported ... ASCAP Nashville set the 2024 class for its GPS Project songwriter development program. Included are **Aaron Pollock**, **Bobby Watson**, **Bri Fletcher**, **Bryce Cain**, **Daniella Spadini**, **Dylan Rockoff**, **Fran Litterski**, **Jillian Dawn**, **John Frank** and **Maggie Reeves** ... **Kenny Chesney** donated over \$1 million to New England charities in conjunction with his Aug. 23-24 booking at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Mass. ... The Academy of Country Music’s ACM Lifting Lives raised \$225,000 with an auction during the ACM Honors. The event launched Sept. 24 on the Merit Street platform ... Songwriter **Hugh Prestwood** died Sept. 22 in Lincoln, Neb., a passage noted on his [Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame biography](#). Prestwood’s compositions included **Randy Travis**’ “Hard Rock Bottom of Your Heart,” **Crystal Gayle**’s “The Sound of Goodbye” and **Trisha Yearwood**’s “The Song Remembers When.” 📍



Artist-writer Travis Meadows (“Human,” “What We Ain’t Got”) (center) signed a publishing deal with Sheltered Music, announced Sept. 24. He’s flanked by Sheltered Music senior vp Darrell Franklin (left) and senior creative director Freeman Wizer.



2 0 2 4

TOP BUSINESS MANAGERS

On Nov. 16, *Billboard* will showcase the most in-demand business managers, whose financial expertise ensures their music industry clients invest (and spend) their money wisely.

Making money in the music industry is hard enough for artists and executives, which is why they turn to an elite few to help with financial profit and investment.

As a result of the rise of branding deals and streaming services, the task of managing artist income has become more complicated than ever, making the role of music business managers invaluable.

Advertise in this issue and reach an elite group of influencers who guide their clients' financial fortunes and know a thing or two about how to invest their own money.

CONTACTS

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

Touring and West Coast: Cynthia Mellow | cmellow615@gmail.com

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

Latin: Marcia Olival | marciaolival29@gmail.com

Southeast: Lee Ann Photoglo | laphotoglo@gmail.com

billboard Country Airplay Index

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

1

J

M

○

P

S

T

W

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/ONE-TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Riley Green Publishing Designee, BMI (E Langley, A Balthiere, R Green) 16

22

22 Years Ago Diamond Rio Turned A ‘Mess’ Into A No. 1

The group cleaned up with its fourth of five leaders on the Hot Country Songs chart

On Sept. 28, 2002, **Diamond Rio**’s “Beautiful Mess” began a two-week run at No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Hot Country Songs chart, marking the group’s fourth leader.

The song was co-written by **Sonny LeMaire** of **Exile**, **Clay Mills** and **Shane Minor**. It was released as the lead single from Diamond Rio’s album *Completely*, which also generated the act’s fifth and most recent No. 1 single, “I Believe.”

In April 1990, the band signed with Arista Records Nashville. The group then comprised lead vocalist **Marty Roe**, mandolinist **Gene Johnson**, guitarist **Jimmy Olander**, drummer **Brian Prout**,

keyboardist **Dan Truman** and bassist **Dana Williams**.

In June 1991, Diamond Rio’s debut Hot Country Songs entry, “Meet in the Middle,” hit No. 1 — making the act the first group to reign with a rookie single.

In 2022, Diamond Rio underwent its first lineup change in 33 years, as Prout retired and was replaced by **Micah Schweinsberg**, formerly of gospel act **The Crabb Family**. Later that year, Johnson announced his departure from the band to focus his efforts in bluegrass.

Currently on the road, Diamond Rio will make its next stop in Wharton, Texas, on Sept. 29. —JIM ASKER

			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	WEEKS AT NO. 1	WEEKS AT NO. 1
			NUMBER 1	1 Week At Number 1	
1	5	7	BEAUTIFUL MESS M.D. CLUTE, DIAMOND RIO (S. LEMAIRE, C. MILLS, S. MINOR)	Diamond Rio ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	1
2	2	4	TEN ROUNDS WITH JOSE CUERVO B.J. WALKER, JR., J.C. BEATHARD, M. HEENEY, M. CANNON-GOODMAN	Tracy Byrd RCA ALBUM CUT	2
3	6	6	THE IMPOSSIBLE B. ROYAN (K. LOVELACE, L. MILLER)	Joe Nichols UNIVERSAL SOUTH 172241	3
4	1	2	I MISS MY FRIEND F. ROGERS, J. STROUD (T. MARTIN, M. NESLER, T. SHAPIRO)	Darryl Worley DREAMWORKS 450378	1
5	8	8	SOMEBODY LIKE YOU D. HUFF, K. URBAN (K. URBAN, J. SHANKS)	Keith Urban CAPITOL ALBUM CUT	5

From left: Diamond Rio’s Prout, Williams, Roe, Truman and Johnson at the 2022 Academy of Country Music Awards in Universal City, Calif.



RON GALELLA/RON GALELLA COLLECTION VIA GETTY IMAGES