

billboard Country Update

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NOVEMBER 15, 2024 | PAGE 1 OF 11

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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The CMA Awards And Grammys Treat Country Differently — Why That's A Good Thing

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Morgan Wallen Gets A High Five On Airplay Chart
➤page 4

Luke Bryan, Lainey Wilson In CMA Lead-Up
➤page 8

Country Coda: Sam Hunt's 10-Year Chart Anniversary
➤page 11

When the Country Music Association presents the 58th annual CMA Awards on Nov. 20, it will mark the latest date on the calendar that the organization's trophy event has ever been convened.

The late date set up a precedent when the Recording Academy unveiled the nominees for the 67th annual Grammy Awards on Nov. 8, the earliest announcement date in the history of that show's cycle. It marks the first time that both the Grammy and CMA contests have simultaneously aligned: Each has announced its final ballot, but neither has revealed any of its winners.

As a result, the differences in the two institutions' approaches to country are even more glaring than in previous years. Houston native **Beyoncé** is the clearest example of the dichotomy. Her country-hybrid album, *Cowboy Carter*, and seven of its tracks amassed 11 Grammy nominations, making her the leading finalist in the entire contest. Her portfolio includes entries in each of the four country-specific categories: best country song ("Texas Hold 'Em"), best country album (*Cowboy Carter*), best country solo performance ("16 Carriages") and best country duo/group performance ("II Most Wanted," featuring **Miley Cyrus**).

But Beyoncé's crossover material was entirely absent from the CMA ballot.

Conversely, fellow Texan **Cody Johnson** tied for second in the CMA hardware royale with five nominations, including

slots among the finalists for male vocalist and album of the year (*Leather*). But his big-voiced traditionalism was left off the Grammy list.

The disparities between the two awards shows were built into their missions. The CMA is a Nashville-based trade organization devoted to promoting the country format, and it counts plenty of marketers, media and executives among its membership. Its origins date back to the late 1950s when Music City's leaders united out of fear that the emergence of youthful rock'n'roll could destroy country's very existence.

The Recording Academy is a multigenre institution centered in Santa Monica, Calif., that is primarily focused on the creatives in the business.

The academy and the CMA hold many common values and purposes, which means that they share plenty of nominees. This year, 10 artists appear on the CMA list and in the Grammy country field, including **Lainey Wilson**, **Morgan Wallen**, **Shaboozey**, **Jelly Roll** and **Chris Stapleton**.

But the organizations' history and structures create some specific differences, too, and the ways in which they diverge have the greatest influence on the contrasts in their ballots. CMA voters, who represent a single format with a large bloc of members in the genre's home city, operate with an air of protectionism. They tend to reward artists and projects that maintain country's identity, even as they help the genre progress. They're also prone



JOHNSON



BEYONCÉ

JOHNSON: CHRIS DOUGLAS; BEYONCÉ: MASON POOLE

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to honor people they see on a regular basis, meaning the nominees mostly live in Music City or visit and mingle often. As a result, **Megan Moroney**, **Parker McCollum**, **Lady A**, **Maddie & Tae**, **Brooks & Dunn** and **Old Dominion** are all CMA contenders, though they didn't quite make the Grammy ballot.

Grammy voters, following the dictates of creativity, are more likely to celebrate songs and artists that color outside the lines. The academy tends to champion specific artists for long periods of time, but even those Grammy favorites who have strong traditional roots — such as **Willie Nelson** and **Kacey Musgraves**, both of whom appear on the current ballot — arrived as rebel spirits. Likewise, the CMA has often celebrated country acts whose style straddles mainstream commercialism and left-of-center sounds, such as eclectic red-dirt artist **Lyle Lovett**, folky **Mary Chapin Carpenter** and honky-tonk firebrand **Dwight Yoakam**.

Traditional country icons **George Strait** and **Alan Jackson** further underscore the differences between the Grammys and the CMAs. They rank third and fourth on the all-time list of CMA winners, with 17 and 16 victories, respectively. But they have won only three Grammys between them.

Much was made about Beyoncé's absence from this year's CMAs, with a number of critics implying the snub was cold-stone racism in action. No doubt that played a role in some votes, but if that was the sole factor, it's likely that neither Shaboozey — who's up for new artist and single of the year, with "A Bar Song (Topsy)" — nor vocal duo nominees **The War and Treaty** would be on the ballot in the Nov. 20 ceremony.

To be certain, country has made a greater effort to support Black artists and executives in recent years. And many in the space were excited about the prospects of Beyoncé entering the country realm and perhaps expanding the genre's audience.

But she announced quite pointedly that *Cowboy Carter* was a "Beyoncé album," not solely a country release, and to many insiders, it sounds more like an artist playing with the sound than immersing herself in it. Given the choice, CMA voters — with their interest in maintaining country's identity — were always likely to choose talents who seem like they're committed to country over an artist dipping their toe in the water for one album. And in the fields where she seemed most likely to have a shot — album, single, song, musical event or female vocalist — it's not like there's a dud who doesn't belong on the ballot.

By contrast, **Post Malone** spent plenty of face time with country creatives while making *F-1 Trillion*, investing himself in the culture and snagging four CMA nods in the process.

Ultimately, with CMA and Grammy nominees both waiting for the final results, the awards events' differing views seem to embody the tug between tradition and progressiveness. The desire to protect the sound of the format is valid, as is the artful interest in pushing its limits and mixing it with other sounds and traditions.

The two awards shows, taken in combination, validate both viewpoints on the genre. Both shows, and both approaches to the music, are necessary. And welcome. 🍌



JASON DAVIS

Keith Urban (right) presented tour manager Chuck Hull (center) the Sam "Old Skool" Harden Award for mentoring live-entertainment professionals at the Touring Career Workshop on Nov. 12 in Nashville. They're joined by Workshop executive director Chris Lisle.



DREW NOBLE

Tanner Adell (center) performed for Country Music Association staff on Nov. 7 at the organization's Nashville office. With her are CMA senior director of industry relations and inclusion Mia Jones (left) and CMA senior vp of industry relations and philanthropy Tiffany Kerns.



Drew Baldrige (right) performed Nov. 8 at Eddie's Attic in Atlanta, joined by support acts Dylan Wolfe and Tori Martin.

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No Lie: Morgan Wallen Notches Record Fifth Country Airplay No. 1 In A Single Year

Morgan Wallen earns his 15th No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Country Airplay chart as “Lies Lies Lies” (Mercury/Republic/Big Loud) ascends one spot to the top of the list dated Nov. 23. During the Nov. 8-14 tracking week, it drew 30.3 million audience impressions (down 6%), according to Luminate.

With the song—which is expected to serve as the lead single from an upcoming Wallen album—he rounds up his fifth Country Airplay chart-topper of 2024. It’s the first time that an artist has amassed five No. 1s in a single year dating to the survey’s January 1990 launch. “Lies Lies Lies” follows “Cowgirls” (featuring ERNEST), which led for one week in July; Post Malone’s “I Had Some Help” (featuring Wallen; four weeks, June-July); “Man Made a Bar” (featuring Eric Church; one week, April); and Thomas Rhett’s “Mamaw’s House” (featuring Wallen; one week, March).

Luke Combs (2021) and Garth Brooks (1991 and 1993) each collected four new Country Airplay No. 1s in single years, while Wallen ranked at the summit with four songs in 2023, including “You Proof,” which first led in 2022. Brooks remains the only act to notch as many as four new No. 1s all as a lead artist in a single year, in both 1991 and 1993.

A GOOD TOP 10 ‘HABIT’ Tim McGraw claims his own slice of Country Airplay history by scoring his record-tying 61st top 10 as “One Bad Habit” (McGraw/Big Machine) bounds 11-5 (24 million, up 40%). McGraw matches Kenny Chesney and George Strait for the most top 10s. Alan Jackson is next, with 51; followed by Keith Urban (44); Toby Keith (42); and Brooks & Dunn (41). Plus, with “One Bad Habit” climbing to No. 5, McGraw pads his lead for the most top five hits on the chart: 55. Strait is second, with 53; Chesney has 50. ●




JOHN SHEPHERD/GETTY IMAGES FOR MORGAN WALLEN'S ONE NIGHT AT A TIME 2024

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE		
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
ONE BAD HABIT McGraw/Big Machine	Tim McGraw	+6.817
COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	+1.594
LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.562
LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+1.506
WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+1.413
BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	+1.219
HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	+1.158
I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+1.064
4X4XU Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	+0.949
BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	+0.943

MOST INCREASED PLAYS		
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
ONE BAD HABIT McGraw/Big Machine	Tim McGraw	+2176
COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	+536
BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	+444
LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	+392
LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+372
4X4XU Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	+344
BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	+320
WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	+314
I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	+299
I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/Capitol Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson & Carrie Underwood	+273

RECURRENTS				
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label		Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud		Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen	20.056
2	CHEVROLET Broken Bow		Dustin Lynch Featuring Jelly Roll	16.558
3	COWGIRLS Mercury/Republic/Big Loud		Morgan Wallen Featuring ERNEST	14.549
4	AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Universal Studios/Atlantic/Seven Ridges/Columbia Nashville		Luke Combs	14.426
5	WORLD ON FIRE RCA Nashville		Nate Smith	11.793
6	SHE'S SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER (REIMAGINED) Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge		Drew Baldridge	10.122
7	WHERE IT ENDS Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA		Bailey Zimmerman	10.017
8	FAST CAR River House/Columbia Nashville		Luke Combs	9.707
9	OUTSKIRTS MCA Nashville		Sam Hunt	9.352
10	AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN		Dasha	8.683



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 14, 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	23	DRUNK SINCE DALLAS (Independent) ★★1 Week at 1★	Grant Gilbert	1596	54	11	13	12	HILL COUNTRY HOME (Independent)	Kyle Park	1124	10
2	3	24	LOST IN THE COUNTRY (LuckySky Music)	Tori Martin	1528	11	12	16	19	RIDE OR DIE (Independent)	James Robert Webb	1110	40
3	4	19	ME TIME (Flying C)	Brooke Graham	1465	17	13	14	18	ROPE THE WIND (Rockin R)	Amanda Kate Ferris	1065	-24
4	9	10	KEEPIN ME ALIVE (Independent)	Matt Daniel	1341	115	14	5	27	WAKE UP LONELY (Independent)	Caleb Young	1057	-270
5	6	19	WHEELS (Independent)	Shane Smith & The Saints	1327	38	15	17	21	90SVILLE (Synapse)	Derryl Perry	981	-8
6	8	16	PAIN AND SORROW (Independent)	Matt Castillo	1309	73	16	18	12	ONE MORE FOR THE RIDE (Independent)	Ryder Grimes	958	71
7	10	23	BEER'S BETTER ON A BOAT (Independent)	Clay Hollis & Jesse Raub, Jr.	1247	33	17	20	9	GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING (Independent)	Mike Ryan	940	121
8	15	14	FRONT PORCH IN THE RAIN (Independent)	Hayden Haddock	1170	87	18	19	16	THIS COULD BE LOVE (Independent)	Kaitlyn Kohler feat. Jamie Richards	837	5
9	11	19	TWO WAY DRIVE (River House)	Hudson Westbrook	1156	22	19	21	8	MORE AFRAID OF LIVING (Independent)	David Adam Byrnes	836	71
10	12	9	FRIDAY NIGHT (Independent)	Wade Bowen	1148	16	20	7	15	HIT THE HAY RUNNIN (Independent)	Aaron Watson	834	-417

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

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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
1	2	20	LIES LIES LIES Mercury/Republic/Big Loud ★★ No. 1 (1 Week) ★★	Morgan Wallen	30.261	-1.814	7735	-981	1
2	1	23	I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	29.107	-3.156	6813	-1244	3
3	3	21	POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton	26.866	-0.937	6409	-318	4
4	4	28	MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville	Marshmello & Kane Brown	24.376	-2.521	5902	-576	6
5	11	43	ONE BAD HABIT McGraw/Big Machine ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★	Tim McGraw	23.972	+6.817	7188	2176	2
6	5	29	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	22.878	+0.105	5445	-95	10
7	6	54	GONNA LOVE YOU Stoney Creek	Parmalee	20.903	+0.637	6082	229	5
8	7	17	YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME SAWGOD/Columbia/Nashville Harbor	Ella Langley Featuring Riley Green	20.246	+0.609	5727	37	9
9	9	37	COWBOY SONGS RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	19.881	+1.594	5743	536	8
10	8	27	BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	19.833	+0.831	5894	320	7
11	10	18	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	18.630	+1.158	5295	183	11
12	12	45	BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	16.762	+1.219	4695	444	12
13	14	25	WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Back Blocks/EMI Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	15.272	+1.413	4331	314	13
14	13	41	BIGGER HOUSES Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Dan + Shay	14.791	-0.106	4317	-4	14
15	16	4	LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	13.169	+1.562	3242	372	18
16	17	37	MESSED UP AS ME Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	11.259	+0.189	3693	48	15
17	15	45	SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO Leo33	Zach Top	11.151	-0.855	3520	-117	16
18	18	35	DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	10.941	+0.437	3337	61	17
19	19	17	GUY FOR THAT Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Luke Combs	10.295	+0.430	2803	91	21
20	20	39	THINK I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU Sound/Mercury Nashville	Chris Stapleton	9.731	+0.047	2878	-101	19
21	21	11	4X4XU Broken Bow	Lainey Wilson	9.347	+0.949	2846	344	20
22	23	17	I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	8.686	+1.064	2706	299	22
23	22	38	AMERICAN GIRL Tom Petty Legacy/Capitol Nashville/Valory	Dierks Bentley	7.839	+0.186	2427	127	24
24	25	31	FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	7.725	+0.884	2261	247	26
25	24	44	BREAKIN' IN BOOTS RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Matt Stell	7.318	+0.181	2633	-46	23
26	26	36	THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	7.049	+0.381	2248	203	27
27	27	30	FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	6.908	+0.512	2388	157	25
28	28	7	I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/Capitol Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson & Carrie Underwood	5.587	+0.746	1731	273	28
29	29	22	HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	5.157	+0.327	1675	158	31
30	30	24	HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	4.707	-0.024	1713	23	30

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.

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billboard Country Airplay

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THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)		PLAYS		
					THIS WEEK	+/-	THIS WEEK	+/-	RANK
31	31	13	AM I OKAY? Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	4.501	+0.135	1257	43	39
32	33	18	JUST TO SAY WE DID Blue Chair/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Kenny Chesney	4.076	+0.182	1576	77	33
33	32	16	WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	4.035	+0.047	1504	-34	35
34	35	33	LIFE WITH YOU Curb	Kelsey Hart	3.967	+0.250	1728	97	29
35	34	36	WHATCHA SEE IS WHATCHA GET Nashville Harbor	Chris Janson	3.905	+0.182	1649	3	32
36	38	5	DARKEST HOUR (HELENE EDIT) BigEC/EMI Nashville	Eric Church	3.541	+0.254	1467	11	36
37	36	28	WRANGLERS Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert	3.447	-0.025	1575	-69	34
38	37	20	COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	3.262	-0.069	1179	-81	42
39	44	2	BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	3.224	+0.943	700	197	50
40	39	33	SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	3.039	-0.063	1358	-18	37
41	41	23	FALL OF SUMMER Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery	2.800	+0.128	1250	81	40
42	42	16	TRUCK ON FIRE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	2.622	+0.047	1187	37	41
43	43	21	COWBOYS CRYTOO Black River	Kelsea Ballerini & Noah Kahan	2.604	+0.102	1326	44	38
44	NEW		LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★	Jelly Roll	2.314	+1.506	598	392	55
45	50	5	I NEVER LIE Leo33	Zach Top	2.169	+0.504	509	117	59
46	45	8	HEAVENS TO BETSY Big Machine	Jackson Dean	2.099	+0.039	850	-43	44
47	56	2	TOUGH PEOPLE Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge/Stoney Creek	Drew Baldridge	2.071	+0.722	846	257	45
48	48	10	FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	1.917	+0.196	747	108	47
49	46	23	EVERYTHING I NEED 19/Wheelhouse	Chayce Beckham	1.863	+0.072	857	9	43
50	49	13	COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	1.750	+0.037	844	20	46
51	53	12	LOVE THE LEAVIN' Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Drew Parker	1.688	+0.201	639	53	52
52	47	10	PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	1.615	-0.120	706	-54	49
53	52	11	BONES Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.594	+0.046	708	13	48
54	51	14	OVER WHEN WE'RE SOBER Valory Brantley Gilbert Featuring Ashley Cooke	Brantley Gilbert Featuring Ashley Cooke	1.503	-0.050	673	6	51
55	55	7	TRUCK STILL WORKS Loaded Goat/EMI Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Brad Paisley	1.456	+0.097	592	31	56
56	58	3	RELAPSE 717/Warner/WEA	Warren Zeiders	1.455	+0.208	565	21	57
57	57	16	DEVIL YOU KNOW Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Tyler Braden	1.410	+0.073	498	3	60
58	54	9	WHAT KINDA MAN MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	1.333	-0.059	612	-5	54
59	59	21	THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	1.295	+0.069	621	12	53
60	NEW		FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	0.937	+0.184	332	87	-



Tyler Hubbard (center) welcomed WKLB Boston PD Dawn Santolucito when he performed Nov. 7 at the House of Blues. They're joined by EMI director of Northeast promotion Mike Krinik.



Zac Brown Band bassist John Driskell Hopkins performed on CBS *Mornings* on Nov. 13 to promote Hop On a Cure, his foundation that raises awareness of Lou Gehrig's disease. From left: CBS co-host Nate Burluson, Hopkins and CBS co-hosts Gayle King and Tony Dokoupil.

MORGAN WALLEN // ROD WAVE // TAYLOR SWIFT

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+
The Year
In Music

WHAT WE LEARNED
FROM THE ARTISTS WHO
DEFINED 2023

billboard

THE NO. 1s ISSUE

YEAR IN
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ISSUE DATE 12/14 | **AD CLOSE** 12/3
MATERIALS DUE 12/5

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Billboard's Year in Music: The No. 1s will wrap up 2024 with an extraordinary editorial package. Included will be year-end charts, interviews and analysis on the year's top artists, songs, albums and labels as well as the year's top producers, songwriters and publishers.

The year-end Billboard Boxscore charts will shine a light on the most successful tours and the top venues and promoters.

This highly anticipated issue serves as a compilation of must-have information. It is referenced year-round by everyone in the music business and touring industry as their de facto resource for *Billboard's* historical data and information.

Advertise in this signature collector's edition and position your company, artist or breakthrough achievement in front of the power players in the industry. This issue provides the ideal showcase to run a brand or congratulatory message to acknowledge success over the past year.

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

NICHOLAS TAVARES

Nate Smith (center) performed Oct. 30 for a Nashville Hangar Party celebrating two transportation companies, relocated Ryan Aviation Group and newly formed Autobus. Smith is flanked by Autobus founder Jeremy Maul (left) and Ryan Aviation founder Dan Ryan.

CMA, ABC PREP AWARDS PROMOTION

The Country Music Association and ABC plotted a series of in-network appearances to increase awareness of the 58th annual CMA Awards, which will air Nov. 20 from Nashville's Bridgestone Arena.

Luke Bryan and Lainey Wilson, who are co-hosting the show with Peyton Manning, are joining Kelsea Ballerini, Cody Johnson and Ashley McBryde during *On the Red Carpet: Countdown to the CMA Awards*, hosted by Tamara Scott. The half-hour entry airs Nov. 16 or Nov. 17, depending on local market scheduling.

Dwight Yoakam, Nate Smith and Blake Shelton perform Nov. 18-20, respectively, on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, and Bryan hosts a one-hour special, *Vegas Lights & Country Nights: Countdown to the CMA Awards — A Special Edition of 20/20*, on Nov. 19.

Bryan, Manning and Wilson will also guest on the Nov. 20 edition of *Good Morning America*, with Brett Young performing.

The CMA announced several late-breaking programming notes for the show: George Strait will receive the Willie Nelson Lifetime Achievement Award, and a dozen artists were added to the list of performers. They include Ballerini, Johnson, Brooks & Dunn, Eric Church, Luke Combs, Riley Green, Jelly Roll, Kacey Musgraves, Ella Langley, Megan Moroney, Noah Kahan and Bailey Zimmerman.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Marie Pizano, who founded the MVP3 Foundation, launched the subsidiary MVP3 Music Group in Memphis with Wade Quanton tagged as the initial artist. He will release his first single for the label, "Don't Waste Your Time," on Dec. 12. Kent Wells (Dolly Parton, Carly Pearce) produced the track... Artist-writer Braxton Keith signed a recording contract with Warner Music Nashville and a publishing deal with Liz Rose Music. Meanwhile, WMN and Warner Records added Adrien Nunez to the roster, releasing "Apology Song" in the process on Nov. 15 ... Quality Control Music inked a recording arrangement with sister vocal quartet The Boykinz. Their first single in the agreement, "Fell in Love With a Cowboy," arrived Nov. 15 ... Jeff Littlejohn is retiring after 32 years with iHeartMedia, ending his run as executive vp of engineering and systems, RadioInk.com reported. Senior vp Steve George will fill the role... Current iHeartMedia/Oklahoma senior vp of programming J.J. Ryan had his job expanded, taking on similar responsibilities for Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri, according to RadioInk.com. The move covers two positions that were eliminated in the last two rounds of consolidation ... Christina Wolford lost her job as iHeartMedia/Chillicothe, Ohio, group PD in a series of layoffs, RadioInsight.com reported. A 35-year veteran of the company, Wolford handled afternoons at country WKKJ and WCHO ... Sticks Media, owned by KBEQ Kansas City PD/morning host Todd Nixon, acquired classic hits WLGR Warrensburg-Glens Falls, N.Y., from Loud Media for \$295,000, according to RadioInsight.com ... Country Radio Seminar is offering a reduced unemployment rate of \$299 for next year's convention Feb. 19-21 in Nashville. The deadline to apply is Jan. 17.

'ROUND THE ROW

Matt Zahn, former marketing manager for Nashville-based Morris Light & Sound, joined St. Louis-based Gateway Studios & Production Services as director of marketing ... Scott Sexton was promoted to 2911 Media vp of publicity from director ... W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School executive director Jonah Rabinowitz stepped down after three decades in the role in conjunction with a move to Vermont. The board has launched a national search for his replacement. Go [here](#) for info ... T. Graham Brown signed a booking deal with Kinkead Entertainment ... Warner Chappell Nashville and Cornman Music signed Trent Wayne to a joint-venture publishing contract ... Big Loud Publishing/Local Hay reached a publishing agreement with Brock Phillips ... Artist-writer Dan Marshall joined the songwriting roster at Jonas Group Publishing ... Timmy McKeever secured Arcade Management for career guidance as he preps the Dec. 6 release of his debut album, *Devils & Angels*. McKeever is already affiliated with Droptone Recordings and WME ... Randy Travis and former Warner Music Nashville CEO John Esposito will receive the Nashville Symphony Harmony Award on Dec. 14 during the 40th annual Symphony Ball at Schermerhorn Symphony Center ... The Academy of Country Music will accept submissions for its 60th annual ACM Awards from Jan. 6-17, 2025. The organization's voting timeline includes first-round balloting Feb. 10-18, second-round votes March 10-17 and the final round March 31-April 7 ... Blake Shelton is one of four executive producers for *The Road*, a new singing competition ordered by CBS that's scheduled to debut in fall 2025 ... Late Oak Ridge Boy Joe Bonsall's final book, *I See Myself: Musings and Memories of a Blessed Life*, was published Nov. 13 by Fidelis Publishing ... The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum published a new book by Geoffrey Himes, *In-Law Country: How Emmylou Harris, Rosanne Cash, and Their Circle Fashioned a New Kind of Country Music, 1968-1985*. The museum also reissued *Singing in the Saddle: The History of the Singing Cowboy* by Riders in the Sky co-founder Douglas B. Green ... "Freddie Fender: Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Baldemar Huerta" will remain open in San Benito, Texas, through Jan. 4, 2025, extending the exhibit's life by nearly two months from its original closing date, Nov. 9 ... Rodney Atkins recorded a public service announcement encouraging Tennesseans to donate blood to the American Red Cross ... Thomas Rhett is giving away his 1973 Ford Bronco through One Country in a campaign that includes a \$10,000 donation by Rhett to Feeding America to assist survivors of hurricanes Helene and Milton ... Gabby Barrett headlined a Giving for Good concert on Nov. 13 at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's CMA Theater to raise money for Murphslife, a foundation dedicated to fighting poverty in Central and South America ... Trisha Yearwood and unnamed guests will perform Band As One Nashville: A Concert for the Cure on March 26, 2025, at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium ... Lady A's Charles Kelley will be joined by siblings Josh and John for the third annual Kelley Bros Sticks & Strings golf tournament Nov. 17-18 in Evans, Ga. ... Phil Vassar, Darryl Worley, Chapel Hart, Ty Herndon and Jamie O'Neal will play the annual Christmas 4 Kids concert, named for the organization it benefits, Nov. 25 at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium ... Fiddler Peter "Zeke" Dawson died Nov. 11 in Dickson, Tenn., *The Dickson County Source* reported. He worked with Loretta Lynn and George Jones, and played on Mickey Gilley's "Bring It on Home to Me" and T.G. Sheppard's "Happy Together." ○



Tigirlily Gold visited with KUZZ Bakersfield, Calif., staff when the duo played the Crystal Palace on Nov. 9. From left: KUZZ morning host Ness Heraldez, Tigirlily members Krista and Kendra Slaughtbaugh, and KUZZ PD Brent Michaels.

billboard



67TH ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS® PROGRAM BOOK

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ISSUE DATE 2/2 | AD CLOSE 1/6 | MATERIALS DUE 1/8

billboard Country Airplay Index

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

4X4XU Sony Countryside, BMI/Story Farmer, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/Songs Of One Riot Music, BMI/ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Super LCS Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (L.Wilson, J.Decious, A.Ratiere) **21**

A

AMERICAN GIRL Almo Music Corp., ASCAP/Tarka Music, ASCAP (T.E.Petty) **23**

AM I OKAY? Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Georgiamo Music, SESAC/Concord Global Music, GMR/Songs Of CN, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, SESAC/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI (M.Moroney, L.Laird, J.J.Dillon) **31**

B

BACKSEAT DRIVER Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs Of Black River Music, ASCAP/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Songs Of Combustion Five, BMI/Seeker From The Speaker Music, BMI/On Cor Music, BMI (J.Davis, J.Walker) **39**

A BAR SONG (TIPSY) Kreshendo, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/S2 Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Essency Music Publishing, ASCAP/Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/Ami April Music, Inc., ASCAP/Hood Hop Music, ASCAP/Tango Music Publishing, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Le Seek C'est Chic, ASCAP (C.O.Chibueze, S.C.Cook, N.Sastry, J.Jones, J.A.Kent, M.A.Williams) **6**

BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Be A Light Publishing, BMI/Music Of Big Family, BMI/Dragon Bunny Music, BMI/Dan Wyan Music, BMI/Alien Cargo Plane Music, ASCAP/Top Notch High Quality Music, ASCAP/1317 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Maverick King Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tunes, ASCAP/Slidron Publishing LLC, BMI/The Place To Be Is LMC Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (Thomas Rhetz, J.C.Bonetta, J.E.Coleman, J.K.Hindin, A.Izquierdo, Z.Kelsey, J.Ryan) **10**

BIGGER HOUSES Beats And Banjos, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/First Cut Is The Deepest Inc., BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Sugar Plum Songs, ASCAP/Talkbox Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (A. Albert, D.Smyers, J.T.Minton, J.Reynolds) **14**

BONES Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/HOME Team Harmonies, BMI/Tunes Of TrailerParker, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI (R.Dickerson, C.LaCorte, P.Welling, C.McGill) **53**

BOYS BACK HOME Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of PIA Entertainment, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Songs From The Rose Hotel, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/Real Bad Songs, SESAC (D.Marlowe, S.Ennis, J.A.Fox) **12**

BREAKIN' IN BOOTS Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/T24 Records, ASCAP/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/BRRCOFFEE, BMI/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/Lil Sebastian Music, BMI/Young Guns Publishing, LLC, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Real Bad Songs, SESAC (M.Stell, N.Cyphert, J.A.Fox, B.M.Stennis) **25**

C

COMING HOME WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Bird And Bean Music, ASCAP/Twelve6 Dogwood, ASCAP/Trevor's Advocate Publishing, ASCAP/Tiny Handstand, ASCAP/Sharkules Music, ASCAP/Megusta Music, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Lurs And Chorus, ASCAP/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Art Of CMT Music Outlander LP, GMR/Smackworld Music, GMR (M.Ramsey, T.Rosen, W.Sellers, G.Sprung, B.F.Juris, S.McAnally) **38**

COUNTRY HOME Twelve6 Red Oak Songs, BMI/Still Between The Pines, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/Katie In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs For Indv And Owl, ASCAP/Works Of CMT Outlander, GMR (M.Lotten, R.Copperman, J.Sosome, S.L.Hunt) **50**

COWBOYS CRY TOO Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Feel Your Way Through Publishing, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Vandeezy Songs, SESAC/Songs Of Rhythm House Black, SESAC/Sony Allegro, ASCAP/Secret Meadow Songs, ASCAP (K.Ballerin, A.Vanderneym, N.Kahan) **43**

COWBOY SONGS Wide Open, ASCAP/Endurance Alpha, ASCAP/Peermusic III, Ltd., BMI/Songs Of Smack, BMI/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Cong Songs, SESAC/Boom Town Songs, SESAC/More McGinn Intellectual Property, SESAC (G.Birge, M.Tyler, M.McGinn, L.Guzman) **9**

D

DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Flatland Boy Music, BMI/Hits Of 50 Egg Music, ASCAP/Wildhawk Publishing, BMI/Spirit Nashville Two Crescendo, ASCAP/Spirit Vault Songs, ASCAP/Prestige Countrywide, ASCAP (R.Green, E.Rik Dylan, J.D.Singleton, N.Walsh) **18**

DARKEST HOUR (HELENE EDIT) Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Longer And Louder Music, BMI (E.Church) **36**

DEVIL YOU KNOW ZDyer Publishing, BMI/Silly Sweater Publishing, ASCAP/Group Projects Writers, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Writersonthecon Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Turntable Music Pub, ASCAP/HALLPASS, ASCAP (G.Barham, Z.Dyer, J.Hall, S.Martinez) **57**

E

EVERYTHING I NEED Songs By 19 Publishing, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Brumby Cooper Otis Music, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI (C.Beckham, J.Pierce, L.Rimes) **49**

F

FALL OF SUMMER Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Dagum Music, BMI/Songs Of Spirit One Nashville, BMI/Tunes Of Fluid II, BMI/Heavy Lefty Music, BMI/Spirit Two Music Crescendo, ASCAP/Fluid Tunes, ASCAP/Spirit Vault Songs, ASCAP/Songs Of Spirit II Nashville, ASCAP/Fluid Tunes II, ASCAP/Burley Bishop Music, ASCAP/Beats By Baby Brent, ASCAP (S.C.McCreary, M.Criswell, F.Rogers, D.George, B.Anderson) **41**

FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Music, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (N.Smith, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, L.Rimes) **60**

FOREVER TO ME Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Colden Rainey Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Hold On Can I Get A Number 1 Music, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (C.Swindell, G.James, R.H.Black) **24**

FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Tompkins Family Vacation, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Finally Got Some Publishing, BMI/The Buffalo Catalogue, BMI (J.Miller, C.Tompkins, J.J.Dillon, D.Ross, R.Huro) **48**

FRIENDS LIKE THAT Triple Play Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For Margo, ASCAP/Sea Gayle Pub House Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Writersonthecon Publishing, BMI/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Ksway Publishing, BMI (J.Morgan, B.Anderson, L.Vaughan) **27**

G

GONNA LOVE YOU Sony Countryside, BMI/Songs By Slip Joint, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/Camp James Music, BMI/Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Major Bob Productions, BMI (M.Thomas, D.Fanning, A.Deane, A.Sheridan) **7**

GUY FOR THAT Posty Publishing, GMR/Universal Music Works, GMR/Bell Ear Publishing, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Young Man Publishing, BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI (A.R.Post, L.B.Bell, Charlie Handsome, L.Combs, J.McNair, E.K.Smith, J.J.Hoskins) **19**

H

HEAVENS TO BETSY Little Louder Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Well That Was Awkward Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Luckaway Music, BMI/Laddy's Home Music, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (J.Dean, B.Davis, D.Williams) **46**

HIGH ROAD Yellabush Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Kenny + Betty Tunes, LLC, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Gabe Simon Pub Designee, ASCAP/Escondido House Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Jessie Murph Publishing Designee, BMI/Millicent Hill Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Josh Serrato Publishing Designee, ASCAP (R.Wetzel, A.R.Allen, G.Simon, C.Karpinen, J.Murph, L.J.Veltz, J.Serrato) **11**

HOLY SMOKES Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/1 Fart Creations, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/This Is Chromatic Music, BMI/MT ROOM, SESAC/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC/Dead Aim Music, BMI/Lil Sebastian Music, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (A.R.Shawn, B.Zimmerman, B.M.Stennis, L.Hungate, M.Tyler) **29**

HOMETOWN HOME BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Welshinger Publishing, BMI/Lovelegend Songs, BMI/Concord Boulevard, ASCAP/Concord Sounds, ASCAP/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (C.Lucas, P.C.Brust, A.Albert, Z.Arend) **30**

I

I AIN'T SAYIN' Concord Copyrights, BMI/Creative Pulse Music, BMI/Trash Man Songs, SOCAN/Highway 76 Songs, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Jett Wilde Songs, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Bid Lid Songs LLC, SOCAN (T.P.Wood, S.Moskier, M.L.Holman, E.Reid) **22**

I AM NOT OKAY Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Track & Feels Publishing, Desingee, SESAC/Tape Room Tunes, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC (J.B.DeFord, T.Phillips, A.G.Gorley, C.Brown) **2**

I'M GONNA LOVE YOU Meaux Mercy, BMI/Moody Producer Music, BMI/Capitol CMG Paragon, BMI/Concord Road, BMI/Stars And Stripes And Maple Leaf Music, BMI/Crack The Glass Songs, BMI/I'm About To Go Red On Ya Music, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing I, BMI (C.Stevens, K.Archer, T.Denning) **28**

I NEVER LIE Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Top Broke To Quit Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Music And Magazines Publishing, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, T.Nichols) **45**

J

JUST TO SAY WE DID Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Basare Music, BMI/Old Desperados, LLC, ASCAP/NZD Publishing Company, Inc., ASCAP/Carol Vincent And Associates, LLC, ASCAP/Songsofbi, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Super Big Music, ASCAP/M Drag Songs, ASCAP (K.Chesney, D.L.Murphy, Brett James, M.Dragstrem) **32**

L

LIAR Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/TDP Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (J.B.DeFord, B.J.Johnson, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips) **44**

LIES LIES LIES Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Finally Got Some Publishing, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Cascade Road Songs, ASCAP/Tompkins Family Vacation, ASCAP (J.J.Dillon, J.Miller, D.Ross, C.Tompkins) **1**

LIFE WITH YOU Mike Curb Music, BMI/Hits From The Hart, BMI/Curb Songs, ASCAP/Indeciso Publishing, LLC, ASCAP/Smackville Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/CMT Outlander Music Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Boulevard, ASCAP (K.Hart, K.Schlenger, S.Stepakoff) **34**

LOVE SOMEBODY Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/1317 Music, ASCAP/Elof Loely Publishing Designee, ASCAP/LMC Is The Place For Me Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Stellar Sun Songs, ASCAP/Famous Virgins, Inc., SOCAN/Regicide Entertainment, SOCAN (M.C.Wallen, J.Bryon, A.G.Gorley, J.K.Nastolin, E.Loew, Charlie Handsome, N.J.Gale, N.Sorbara, S.C.Frank, S.F.R.Nastolin, Y.Guzman) **15**

LOVE THE LEAVIN' Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Cowboy Cuts Music, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Sony Accent, ASCAP/Nepasongs, ASCAP (D.Parker, M.J.Rogers, L.Rimes) **51**

M

MESSED UP AS ME Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Tempo Investments, GMR/Smackstack Music, GMR/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Quivira Road Songs, BMI/Twelve6 Red Oak Songs, BMI/Still Between The Pines, BMI (J.J.Dillon, S.McAnally, R.Clawson, L.Lotten) **16**

MILES ON IT Marshmello Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Family Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Torrey Songs, BMI/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Artist Publishing Group West, ASCAP/Circuit Breaker Ventures, ASCAP/Tarcastle Music Publishing, BMI/Chumba Music, BMI/Kobalt Music Services Ltd., PPS/Songs Of Spirit UK Ltd, PPS/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI (Marshmello, K.Brown, J.Torrey, R.McDonough, C.McDonough, Castle, N.J.Gale, T.Erkisen) **4**

O

ONE BAD HABIT Smacksters Music, ASCAP/Holy Ship Music, ASCAP/Smackville Music, ASCAP/Ice House Tunes, ASCAP/CMT Outlander Music Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Bellamaria, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP (M.Beeson, A.Eshuis, T.Lane) **5**

OVER WHEN WE'RE SOBER Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Indiana Angel Music, BMI/Don't Be A Gypsy, BMI/Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Magnolia Dawn Music, SESAC (B.Gilbert, B.Bernhill, J.B.DeFord, J.Wilson) **54**

P

PARK T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For The Munch Music, BMI/Songs Of Influence, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Georgia Song Vibe, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (T.R.Hubbard, J.Frasure, A.G.Gorley, C.Smith) **52**

POUR ME A DRINK Posty Publishing, GMR/Universal Music Works, GMR/Bell Ear Publishing, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Long And Curly Entertainment, BMI (A.R.Post, L.B.Bell, Charlie Handsome, J.Bryon, R.H.Black, J.Dozzi) **3**

R

RELAPSE Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/PA Cowboy Music, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI (W.Zeiders, B.Pendergrass) **56**

S

SINGLE AGAIN W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Allen Hill Songs, GMR/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/The Core Publishing, LLC, BMI/Josh Ross Publishing Designee, BMI/Real Bad Songs, SESAC (J.Ross, J.A.Fox, B.Rempel) **40**

SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Top Broke To Quit Music, BMI/Little Ace Music, BMI/50 Egg Music, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, W.McCubbin) **17**

T

THINK I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU I Wrote These Songs, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (C.Stapleton) **20**

THIS HEART Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Madison Music, BMI/Oconee River Bank Music, BMI/Bollingersey Shore, SESAC/Vill Music, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/Peertunes, Ltd., SESAC/Titanium Music, SESAC/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC (T.Archer, W.B.Bollinger, J.A.Hackworth, M.Tyler) **59**

THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb Songs, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Ken Rainey Music, BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI (D.Scott, A.G.Gorley, Charlie Handsome, J.Bryon, T.Phillips) **26**

TOUGH PEOPLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI/Root Hill Lyrics, BMI/Burpin Does Music, BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI (D.Baldrige, J.Walker, A.Sanders, L.Combs) **47**

TRUCK ON FIRE BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Redfeather Publishing, ASCAP/For The Kids Gold, ASCAP/Universal Tunes, SESAC/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/RADIOBULLETPublishing, BMI (C.Pearce, J.A.Ebach, C.Kelley) **42**

TRUCK STILL WORKS Sea Gayle Distillery Music, ASCAP/Papaw's Whiskey Music, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Taperoom Music, ASCAP/Series 1, ASCAP/Hunter Phelps Pub Designee, ASCAP/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Music Of The Corn, ASCAP/Quivira Road Songs, BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Water Woods Music, ASCAP (B.Paisley, H.Phelps, W.L.Bundy, R.Clawson, C.DuBois) **55**

W

WHATCHA SEE IS WHATCHA GET Anthem Red Vinyl Music, BMI/Buckkilla Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Hubcap Music, BMI/T Tree Music, BMI/Ingram House Music, BMI/Queens Write Hits, BMI/Songs Of Hit Vibe Music, BMI (C.Janson, R.Hubbard, T.R.Hubbard, J.Ingram, RaelLynn) **35**

WHAT KINDA MAN Parkermar Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Abundantiam Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/WRUCKENROLLMUSIC, BMI/Music Of CMT Outlander Music LP, BMI (P.McCollum, J.N.Spillman, N.Hemby) **58**

WHISKEY DRINK BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Double Down Music, BMI/Triples Play Music, BMI/High Noon Yellow Stars Music, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irishsonic Music, BMI (K.M.Allison, J.Edwards, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan) **33**

WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/Back Block Music, BMI/Combustion Music, BMI/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC (T.Archer, T.P.Wetmore, C.LaCorte) **13**

WRANGLERS WC Music Corp., ASCAP/AMAE, ASCAP/Ryan Keith Carpenter Publishing Designee, ASCAP (A.M.Butts, E.McKeever, R.K.Carpenter) **37**

Y

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamela Publishing Corp., BMI/ONE TOOTH PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Riley Green Publishing Designee, BMI (C.Langley, A.Ratiere, R.Green) **8**

CODA

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

10 Years Ago
Sam Hunt's 'Leave The Night On'
Rallied To No. 1

In 2014, the former football star scored a Hot Country Songs chart-topper with his first hit

On Nov. 15, 2014, **Sam Hunt**'s breakthrough hit, "Leave the Night On," ascended to No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Hot Country Songs chart. The Hunt co-write was released as the lead single from his debut album, *Montevallo*, which produced five hits. The LP arrived at the Top Country Albums summit, also on Nov. 15, 2014, and reigned for nine weeks.

To date, Hunt boasts 10 Country Airplay No. 1s, from "Leave the Night On" through "Outskirts" in May 2024; four Hot Country Songs No. 1s; and two Top Country Albums chart-toppers.

Now 39, the Cedartown, Ga., native was a star quarterback in high school and at Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

In 2014, he signed with MCA Nashville. Before rattling off his own hits, he was an accomplished songwriter, penning tracks for **Kenny Chesney**, **Billy Currington** and **Keith Urban**, among others.

Hunt's latest single, "Country House," ranks at No. 50 on Country Airplay (1.7 million in audience, up 2%, according to Luminate).
—JIM ASKER

Hunt sits for a 2014 portrait in New York.

WEEK	WEEK	WEEK	PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL	POS.	CHART
3	2	1	#1 DG LEAVE THE NIGHT ON Sam Hunt Z.CROWELL,S.MCANALLY (S.HUNT,S.MCANALLY,J.OSBORNE)	MCA NASHVILLE	1	20
1	1	2	BURNIN' IT DOWN Jason Aldean M.KNOX (C.G.TOMPKINS,R.CLAWSON,B.KELLEY,T.HUBBARD)	BROKEN BOW	1	16
4	4	3	NEON LIGHT Blake Shelton S.HENDRICKS (A.DORFF,J.KEAR,MARK IRWIN)	WARNER BROS./WMN	3	12
2	3	4	DIRT Florida Georgia Line J.MOI (C.G.TOMPKINS,R.CLAWSON)	REPUBLIC NASHVILLE	1	18
7	6	5	SOMETHING IN THE WATER Carrie Underwood M.BRIGHT (C.UNDERWOOD,C.DESTEFANO,BRETT JAMES)	19/ARISTA NASHVILLE	2	6
11	9	6	SOMEWHERE IN MY CAR Keith Urban	HIT RECORDS	6	17