

billboard Country Update

BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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The Grand Ole Opry Celebrates 100 Years With A Timely Embrace Of The Human Spirit

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When host **Blake Shelton** made his first appearance on NBC's *Opry 100: A Live Celebration* on March 19, he hailed it as a "party" honoring the **WSM-AM** Nashville radio show's "good times and great music."

Indeed, one of the objectives of the Opry has always been to make listeners feel so good that they want to return. It's a task that's daunting at times for the genre since its historic role is to represent America's working class, acknowledging the hard life its base faces while conveying hope for something better.

The Opry observed the century mark at a time when cultural forces have put much of blue-collar America on edge. The second Trump administration has spent its first two months threatening economically risky tariffs and using a figurative, erratic chain saw to cut down the federal government. In the process, it has contributed to a sharp decline in the stock market, thrown thousands of capable workers onto unemployment rolls and cut services for the lower- and middle-class while vowing to renew hefty tax cuts for the wealthy. And, most notably, it has left some fearful that the country's signature democracy could be sliding toward authoritarian rule.

It's hard for a large portion of the TV audience to feel like partying.

Still, the Opry succeeded in its mission, with its current

stars paying homage to previous generations. **Reba McEntire** opened the evening with an a cappella take on the **Patsy Cline** classic "Sweet Dreams." **Lainey Wilson** used the late **Hank Williams**' guitar while performing the hard-luck anthem

"Lost Highway" with **Marty Stuart**. **Keith Urban** delivered a Crystal-clear acoustic version of "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue" to **Crystal Gayle**, who was seated next to **Bill Anderson** in the front row at the Ryman Auditorium. **Post Malone** and **Ashley McBryde** covered the rollicking **Johnny Cash/June Carter** duet "Jackson."

Along the way, *Opry 100* delved into the show's 10 decades of history: Its Nov. 28, 1925, debut as *The WSM Barn Dance*; its renaming by founder **George D. Hay**; its 31-year run at the Ryman and its transfer of a symbolic circle of wood from that stage to the Grand Ole Opry House, the show's primary home for 51 years.

The special honed in on some of the key styles that inform the contemporary Opry. **Alan Jackson**'s "Chattahoochee," **Clint Black**'s "Nothin' but the Taillights," **Trace Adkins**' "(This Ain't No) Thinkin' Thing"

and Shelton's version of the late **Joe Diffie**'s "Pickup Man" emphasized the guitar-driven groove of '90s country. **Steven Curtis Chapman**, **The War and Treaty**, **Yolanda Adams** and **Amy Grant** took a dramatic side trip to church. And **Rhonda Vincent** voiced a bluegrass segment that connected the dots



MCENTIRE

JASON KEMPIN/GETTY IMAGES

MITCHELL TENPENNY

Same Moon

IMPACTING 4.7

RISE HOUSE

between **Bill Monroe & the Blue Grass Boys**' introduction of the genre 80 years ago and its modern evolution, represented by a haunting performance of "Let Me Touch You for Awhile" from **Alison Krauss & Union Station** featuring **Jerry Douglas**.

Additionally, *Opry 100* packaged tributes to some of its biggest stars. **Garth Brooks** and **Trisha Yearwood** explored the marital turmoil in the songs of **George Jones** and **Tammy Wynette**, whose six-year marriage ended with a D-I-V-O-R-C-E 50 years ago this March. **Barbara Mandrell** made a rare public appearance, taking a seat onstage as **Kelsea Ballerini** regaled her with Mandrell's 1981 signature "I Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool." And **Dolly Parton** — who noted in a video appearance that she has been an Opry member for 56 years — was honored with **Carly Pearce**'s smoky take on "Jolene" and a group sing-along of "I Will Always Love You" that concluded the night.

A tribute to **Charley Pride** felt particularly important. While the administration has stripped numerous items representing disenfranchised populations from its websites, the Opry brought out **Aloe Blacc** and **The McCrary Sisters** for "Kiss an Angel Good Mornin'."

"That sound broke barriers," Shelton chimed.

The three-hour special gave additional support with repeated glimpses of **Chapel Hart** and **BRELAND**, and several photographs of **DeFord Bailey**.

Still, the most impactful feature was, arguably, the music itself. Producers embraced some of country's most solemn titles, with Brooks covering Jones' funereal "He Stopped Loving Her Today"; **Luke Combs** delivering the Possum's ultra-lonesome abandonment theme, "The Grand Tour"; Krauss and **Brad Paisley** turning in the double-suicide ballad "Whiskey Lullaby"; **Vince Gill** memorializing past stars through "Go Rest High on That Mountain"; and **Eric Church** singing "Why Not Me," a song about the 2017 Las Vegas massacre of 58 concertgoers.

Even some of the uptempo material masked tough topics. McEntire's swampy "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia," which she sung with Yearwood, weaves a tale of small-town judicial corruption and an unjust execution. **Dierks Bentley**, **Jamey Johnson** and **Old Crow Medicine Show's Ketch Secor** worked up a sizzling rendition of **The Charlie Daniels Band's** "The Devil Went Down to Georgia," a tussle between good and evil.

That tug of war is a core value of country music, which vacillates between Saturday-night rabble-rousing and Sunday-morning redemption. Its resilience subtly came through in two performances. **Carrie Underwood** delivered "Three Wooden Crosses," in which a prostitute finds unlikely salvation, while the song's original hit-maker — **Randy Travis**, who survived a brutal 2013 stroke — beamed from the audience. And **Terri Clark** joined **McBryde** for "Girl Goin' Nowhere," a song of quiet, underdog defiance that encases a bit of the American dream.

The working man is under siege, and *Opry 100* didn't let viewers escape the turmoil. But in showcasing the show's century of diligence and its simple approach to complex emotions, it provided — intentionally or not — a reminder that the little man can still fight back. Or, at least — to quote an old **Ray Price** song title — find "A Way To Survive." ●



Vincent Mason (center) visited with **Mel Wheeler/**Roanoke (Va.) operations manager **Brett Sharp** and **WSLC** music director **Rachel Rodes Metcalf** when he performed March 13 at **Sidewinders Saloon**.



Billy Jam artist **Alex Miller** and **Tracy Byrd** visited **WSM-AM Nashville** on March 17 in conjunction with a video shoot for their forthcoming collaboration, "The Byrd." From left: **Miller**, **WSM-AM** co-host **Kelly Sutton**, **Byrd** and **WSM-AM** co-host **Charlie Mattos**.



Phil Vassar (left) joined songwriter **Jeffrey Steele** ("Raise 'Em Up") on March 3 at Steele's annual benefit for at-risk youth at the **Franklin Theatre** in **Franklin, Tenn.**

MATT WRONSKI

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OVER 4 BILLION CAREER ARTIST STREAMS



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WALLINGFORD, CT^{**^} 04.04
NEW YORK, NY^{**^} 04.05
CINCINNATI, OH^{**^} 04.10
YOUNGSTOWN, OH^{**^} 04.11
TORONTO, ON^{**^} 04.12
CLOVIS, CA 04.24
INDIO, CA 04.25
HENDERSON, NV 04.26

WITH SPECIAL
GUESTS
GEORGE*
BIRGE
DASHA*
& **GRAHAM***
BARHAM

05.01 BOISE, ID^{**^}
05.02 SALT LAKE CITY, UT^{**^}
05.03 DENVER, CO^{**^}
05.09 OMAHA, NE^{**^}
05.10 MILWAUKEE, WI^{**^}
05.15 ESTERO, FL^{**^}
05.16 ORLANDO, FL^{**^}
05.17 ST. AUGUSTINE, FL^{**^}

billboard Country Airplay

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

No 'Problem': Morgan Wallen Hits Country Airplay Top 10 With Forthcoming Album's Title Track

Morgan Wallen rolls up his 19th top 10 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart as "I'm the Problem" (Mercury/Republic/Big Loud) rises two spots to No. 9 on the tally dated March 29. It gained by 7% to 19 million audience impressions March 14-20, according to Luminate.



SPIDEY SMITH

The song follows "Love Somebody," which became Wallen's 16th Country Airplay No. 1, dominating for three weeks in February. "I'm the Problem" is the title song of his album that's due May 16. Two more new songs, "I'm a Little Crazy" and "Just in Case," were released at midnight ET on March 21.

"I have been a problem, for sure, and I've got no problem admitting that," Wallen said in a statement announcing the new LP. "But there are other sides to me as well. I've spent the last 11 months really trying to figure out, 'Do I still want to be the problem? Is it time to move past that phase in my life?' I think it probably is, and this might be the last time I get a chance to honestly say it."

Dating to his initial Country Airplay top 10, which was also his first leader, "Up Down" (featuring Florida Georgia Line), in June 2018, Wallen's 19 songs are the second-most to reach the tier, after Luke Combs' 20. Thomas Rhett ranks third, with 15 top 10s in that span.

SIX-CESS Jelly Roll's "Liar" (Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek) dominates Country Airplay for a sixth week, all logged back to back (27.4 million, down 12%). It's another new best among his seven total and consecutive leaders, having surpassed his previous longest No. 1 run set by "Need a Favor," which began a four-week penthouse lease in August 2023. ●

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)
HANDS OF TIME BigEC/EMI Nashville	Eric Church	+6.595
FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	+1.623
RUN Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert	+1.366
I'M THE PROBLEM Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.311
THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	+1.174
I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/Capitol Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson & Carrie Underwood	+1.125
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+1.102
THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	+1.098
HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	+1.071
HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	+1.061

MOST INCREASED PLAYS

TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN
HANDS OF TIME BigEC/EMI Nashville	Eric Church	+1560
I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/Capitol Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson & Carrie Underwood	+585
FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	+501
THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	+419
WEREN'T FOR THE WIND SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	+358
I'M THE PROBLEM Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+339
HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	+300
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+297
HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	+287
WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+283

RECURRENTS

THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	18.515
2	POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton	16.807
3	I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen	14.571
4	I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	14.085
5	BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	11.964
6	I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	11.202
7	AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	9.056
8	COWGIRLS Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen Featuring ERNEST	8.796
9	MILES ON IT Joytime Collective/RCA Nashville	Marshmello & Kane Brown	8.420
10	WORLD ON FIRE RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	7.782



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING MARCH 20, 2025

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	BORDERLINE CRAZY (Independent) ★★ 1 Week at 1 ★★	William Beckmann	1856	203	11	13	7	DAMN BABY (Independent)	Bubba Westly	1249	127
2	3	11	SHE GOES GOOD WITH TEQUILA (Independent)	Brian Mars	1628	85	12	15	9	THE WORKING MAN (Independent)	Cody Jinks	1075	30
3	4	26	HER WAY AIN'T THE HIGHWAY (Independent)	Jake Bush	1554	18	13	14	21	AUSTIN ANYMORE (Independent)	Brandi Behlen	1055	2
4	5	17	LUBBOCK (Independent)	Flatland Cavalry	1502	2	14	19	11	BUCKLE OR THE BRIDE (Independent)	Caleb Young	1040	70
5	6	11	ABILENE (LuckySky Music)	Tori Martin	1460	68	15	20	12	PUT IT IN REVERSE (Independent)	Ben McPeak	1033	80
6	7	11	5 TO 9 (Independent)	Hudson Westbrook	1436	91	16	17	17	WHAT'S LEFT OF MY HEART (No Big Deal)	Reckless Kelly	997	15
7	9	10	WEST OF FT WORTH (Independent)	Grant Gilbert	1388	111	17	25	6	ROLLIN' ON (Flying C)	Brooke Graham	951	204
8	8	21	GOOD AGAIN, AMEN (Independent)	Keller Cox	1318	8	18	21	9	WHAT I CAME TO DO (Independent)	Jesse Raub Jr.	908	20
9	11	10	SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1276	39	19	24	11	AIN'T THAT LOVE (Independent)	Bri Bagwell & Timber Wilde	869	96
10	12	9	DRIVE (Independent)	Jason Boland & The Stragglers	1276	75	20	10	27	ONE MORE FOR THE RIDE (Independent)	Ryder Grimes	847	-402

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 2025, Texas Regional Radio Report

billboard Country Airplay

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
1	1	19	LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	★★ No. 1 (6 Weeks) ★★ Jelly Roll	27.402	-3.589	7236	-1147	3
2	2	42	HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	26.506	+1.071	7636	196	2
3	3	25	I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CoJo/Warner Music Nashville/Capitol Nashville/WMN	Cody Johnson & Carrie Underwood	25.609	+1.125	8253	585	1
4	5	54	THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	23.447	+1.174	6822	419	4
5	4	22	LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	22.703	-1.034	5954	-234	6
6	6	36	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	20.573	-1.038	5423	-95	10
7	7	49	FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	19.872	+0.370	5728	174	7
8	10	48	FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	19.580	+1.623	5956	501	5
9	11	7	I'M THE PROBLEM Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	19.048	+1.311	5491	339	8
10	9	23	I NEVER LIE Leo33	Zach Top	18.460	+0.081	5437	175	9
11	12	18	TEXAS Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	16.232	-0.009	5133	103	11
12	13	34	WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	15.103	+0.821	4514	165	13
13	14	40	HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	14.886	+1.061	4582	287	12
14	15	31	AM I OKAY? Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	12.398	-0.112	4148	49	14
15	16	20	TOUGH PEOPLE Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge/Stoney Creek	Drew Baldridge	11.908	-0.291	3757	-34	15
16	18	20	BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	10.285	+0.318	3506	245	17
17	17	36	JUST TO SAY WE DID Blue Chair/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Kenny Chesney	10.180	-0.049	3656	73	16
18	20	12	WEREN'T FOR THE WIND SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	9.392	+0.735	3098	358	19
19	19	38	COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	9.246	-0.425	3400	97	18
20	21	51	SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	★★ Airpower ★★ Josh Ross	8.654	+0.785	3013	229	20
21	22	28	PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	7.962	+0.212	2498	-63	22
22	24	15	WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	7.738	+0.506	2556	283	21
23	23	34	TRUCK ON FIRE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	7.291	+0.026	2473	-18	23
24	25	39	THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	6.845	+1.098	2162	265	25
25	NEW		HANDS OF TIME BigEC/EMI Nashville	★★ Hot Shot Debut/Breaker/Most Increased Audience ★★ Eric Church	6.595	+6.595	1560	1560	33
26	29	31	COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	5.566	+1.102	2110	297	27
27	26	39	COWBOYS CRY TOO Black River	Kelsea Ballerini & Noah Kahan	5.509	-0.150	2332	-48	24
28	27	51	LIFE WITH YOU Curb	Kelsey Hart	4.993	+0.101	2144	106	26
29	28	41	FALL OF SUMMER Triple Tigers	Scotty McCreery	4.627	-0.132	1918	-51	28
30	30	19	FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	4.305	+0.043	1602	58	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 © 2025, 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.

billboard Country Airplay

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	28	FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	4.159	-0.074	1714	37	30
32	32	26	HEAVENSTO BETSY Big Machine	Jackson Dean	4.094	+0.402	1812	169	29
33	33	18	COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	3.839	+0.308	1575	71	32
34	34	8	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	3.722	+0.239	1406	91	36
35	35	27	WHAT KINDA MAN MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	3.617	+0.282	1406	67	37
36	36	41	EVERYTHING I NEED 19/Wheelhouse	Chayce Beckham	3.253	+0.094	1450	6	34
37	37	7	I DARE YOU Big Machine	Rascal Flatts & Jonas Brothers	3.175	+0.019	1421	77	35
38	38	5	SHE HATES ME Capitol Nashville	Dierks Bentley	3.133	+0.172	1140	62	39
39	39	5	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	3.118	+0.231	1188	106	38
40	41	21	RELAPSE 717/Warner/WEA	Warren Zeiders	2.327	+0.342	1015	120	40
41	40	10	STRAIGHT LINE Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	2.325	-0.115	932	33	43
42	RE-ENTRY		RUN Vanner/Republic/Big Loud ★★ Breaker ★★	Miranda Lambert	1.987	+1.366	700	244	49
43	43	18	WOULD IF I COULD Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	ERNEST	1.842	-0.027	952	0	42
44	49	2	3,2,1 Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Republic/EMI Nashville ★★ Breaker ★★	Tucker Wetmore	1.798	+0.622	716	257	48
45	42	8	IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	1.731	-0.148	1008	7	41
46	45	8	INDIGO Lockeland Springs/Atlantic/Magnolia Music	Sam Barber Featuring Avery Anna	1.532	+0.163	639	33	51
47	44	10	10-90 Stancaster/Thirty Tigers/Big Machine	Muscadine Bloodline	1.402	-0.163	631	44	52
48	NEW		HAPPENTO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	1.393	+0.811	577	300	55
49	46	11	COWGIRL Stoney Creek	Parmalee	1.362	+0.016	759	0	47
50	47	18	BETTER THAN YOU Quartz Hill/Stone Country	Joe Nichols / Annie Bosko	1.311	-0.019	841	13	45
51	51	16	DARLIN' Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	1.296	+0.138	657	31	50
52	48	13	TIME'S TICKING Valory	Justin Moore	1.279	+0.028	870	29	44
53	50	25	TRUCK STILL WORKS Loaded Goat/EMI Nashville	Brad Paisley	1.275	+0.109	570	-45	56
54	52	15	GOLDEN CHILD Riser House	Meghan Patrick	1.191	+0.092	823	31	46
55	53	11	WOLVES CRY Average Joes	Bryan Martin	0.837	+0.026	506	-1	58
56	58	3	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	0.723	+0.061	506	43	57
57	55	6	BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	0.695	-0.030	623	4	53
58	RE-ENTRY		FOREVER FROM HERE Monument	Tigirlily Gold	0.685	+0.153	622	74	54
59	54	5	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	0.676	-0.062	180	0	-
60	56	7	HUNG UP ON YOU Republic Nashville/Mercury Nashville	Bryce Leatherwood	0.665	-0.039	370	-9	-



Brett Young (center) met up with WJVL Janesville-Beloit, Wis., PD Justin Brown and Brown's wife, Mary, during a March 13 concert at the Coronado Theater in Rockford, Ill.



Koe Wetzel (right) headlined when *Billboard* presented a show at The Stage in Austin during South by Southwest on March 13. With him backstage are Parker McCollum and Ashley Cooke.

billboard



60TH ACM AWARDS PROGRAM GUIDE

The Academy of Country Music is a leading association for the country music industry that serves as a powerful advocate for country fans, artists and all facets of the business, as well as provides philanthropic aid through charitable partner ACM Lifting Lives. 2025 is a landmark year for the academy as it celebrates the 60th ACM Awards, which will be hosted by entertainment icon Reba McEntire. The May 8 awards return to the world headquarters of the Dallas Cowboys in Frisco, Texas, for a third consecutive year and stream live to a global audience on Prime Video.

Get your brand in front of 5,000-plus academy members, voters and music industry professionals in the ACM Awards program guide, produced by Billboard. The guide will be distributed at the ceremony at the culmination of ACM Awards Week.

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ANGIE RICHARDSON-NEWMAN



William Lee Golden & The Goldenes were among the North American Country Music Association Hall of Fame inductees on March 15 at the Country Tonite Theatre in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. From left: Chris Golden, William Lee Golden and Elizabeth Golden.

CMA AT WORK ACROSS CONTINENTS

The Country Music Association concludes a flurry of activity across three continents with the stateside announcement on March 25 of this year's Country Music Hall of Fame inductees.

Hosted by **Vince Gill**, the invitation-only press conference will be livestreamed at 10 a.m. CT on the CMA's YouTube Channel [here](#).

The announcement follows CMA efforts on two other continents. The organization took part in the annual C2C: Country to Country Festival, presenting a *CMA Songwriters Series* show on March 13 at indigo at The O2 in London. The concert boasted **Darius Rucker**, **Tucker Wetmore**, **Mickey Guyton**, **Wyatt Flores** and songwriter **Jessi Alexander** ("Light on in the Attic," "I Drive Your Truck").

Additionally, the CMA sponsored a spotlight stage in the London and Glasgow, Scotland, locations of the multicity event. Participating artists included **Bayker Blankenship**, **Drew Baldrige**, **Harper O'Neill**, **Kaitlin Butts**, **Kashus Culpepper**, **Kassi Ashton**, **Kezia Gill**, **Max McNown** and **Willow Avalon**.

During the Glasgow festivities, **Lainey Wilson** presented BBC Radio Scotland producer **Richard Murdoch** the CMA Wesley Rose international media achievement award on March 16.

CMA was scheduled to visit Australia March 21-23 to hold an industry reception during CMC Rocks.

The agency's efforts coincide with a dozen staff hires and promotions. Five existing team members received new titles. **Ben Balch** was promoted to vp of accounting and finance from senior director, **Aaron Hartley** was upped to senior director of business affairs from director, **Kevin Coffey** rose to director of brand partnerships development from assistant director, **Meredith Goucher** climbed to director of international relations and development from senior manager, and **Isabel Baldinger** moved to marketing manager from marketing project manager.

New additions include director of accounting and finance **April Edman**, who was formerly Sarah Cannon Research Institute senior director of finance, and director of ticketing and premium experiences **Jason Rost**, who had served as Penn State assistant athletic director of ticket initiatives and customer relations.

Also aboard are customer relationship manager **Anthony Sinnott**, who was formerly an Arizona Cardinals customer relationship management analyst; finance operations specialist **Cailey Parker**, who was boosted from a part-time role in the department; junior graphic designer **Emilie Dufresne**, who leaves her post as Ave East Mktg creative manager; production coordinator **Kylyn Healy**, a recent Belmont University music business graduate; and marketing coordinator **Jordan Maynard**, a former CMA communications part-timer.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Big Yellow Dog promoted three members of its label and publishing divisions. **Brannen Carter** climbed to catalog administrator/coordinator of label services from assistant roles, **Jonah Gordon** was bumped to manager of sync from senior coordinator, and **Alana Morgan** was raised to A&R coordinator from assistant coordinator ... SMACK hired director of marketing **Mak Symmonds** to work across its label, management and publishing divisions. She spent the previous six years as Piedmonte & Co. digital marketing manager, working with **Chris Tomlin** and **Redferrin** ... The Core Records installed **Zach Siegal-Eisman** as

head of audience development and insights. He was previously Big Loud Rock vp of digital marketing ... The estate of **Dan Seals** affiliated with Nashville label Melody Place, with plans to issue the previously unheard "Steal a Little Thunder" on April 4 in the first of several releases ... Frontiers Music signed **Lynyrd Skynyrd** with plans to deliver a live album and DVD, *Celebrating 50 Years – Live at the Ryman*, featuring the final performance of original guitarist **Gary Rossington** ... East Music Row Records and Deluge Music signed alternative/urban artist **Jyou** ... Audacy promoted three executives in upper management, with **Kelli Turner** taking over officially as president/CEO after holding the post on an interim basis. The company also boosted **Chris Oliviero** to chief business officer from Audacy/New York market president and upped **Bob Philips** to chief revenue officer from president of Audacy Networks and multimarket sales ... Stephens Media is selling four stations in Alexandria, La., to Globecom Media for \$350,000, RadioInsight.com reported. The quartet includes country **KLAA** and classic country **KBKK** ... **WTHT** Portland-Auburn, Maine, hired PD/morning personality **Jadd Naamani**, according to RadioInsight.com. He arrives after a four-year run at Townhouse/Portland, where his roles included afternoon host for country **WOKQ** Dover, N.H.

'ROUND THE ROW

Publicist **Quinn Kaemmer** launched an independent firm, The Quintessential. Kaemmer has been a fixture in the Nashville PR pool for more than 10 years, most recently as Big Machine senior director of communications. Reach her [here](#) ... Nashville-based **Tim Beeding** joined Wasserman Music as senior vp of fairs and festivals, leaving a CAA agent role after two decades ... **Billy Ray Cyrus** and manager/publicist **Scott Adkins** formed Roam Man Management and signed **Mickie Free** as their first client. Free, a former member of **Shalamar**, has previously been affiliated with **Gene Simmons** and **Diana Ross** ... **Omer Netzer** signed a management deal with White Knuckle Productions ... BMI has booked four of the five monthly installments of its summer *Rooftop on the Row* series featuring performances by new and developing artists for the Nashville music industry. The lineup includes **Colt Graves**, **Thomas Edwards** and **TheBrosFresh**, April 28; **Lukas Nelson** and **Kaitlin Butts**, May 28; **Tucker Wetmore** and **Tanner Adell**, July 15; and **Vincent Mason** and **Max McNown**, Aug. 12. An Americana-related edition remains open on Sept. 9 ... **Parker McCollum** will release his second fashion collection through Luchese on June 13. The line includes four new models of boots, caps and other apparel ... **Sister Hazel** raised over \$800,000 for cancer charities with the band's seventh annual Lyrics for Life: An Evening of Making Music Matter on March 8 in Gainesville, Fla. ... The Academy of Country Music's ACM Lifting Lives made grants to Music Health Alliance, Porter's Call and ECCHO Live ... Banjoist **Eddie Adcock**, 86, died March 20, BluegrassToday.com reported. He was inducted into the Bluegrass Hall of Fame in 1996 as an 11-year member of **The Country Gentlemen**. Adcock also did five albums with **Ind Generation**, which included vocalist **Martha Hearon**; in later years, she married Adcock and they teamed as duet partners. The two also worked as road musicians for **David Allan Coe** in the 1980s. Martha is among Eddie's survivors. ●



Riley Green made his Bluebird Cafe debut on March 19 in Nashville, where his foundation matched \$9,000 in funds raised for hurricane and fire relief by the Recording Academy's Nashville chapter. From left: Nashville Chapter executive director **Alicia Warwick**, songwriter **Jessi Alexander** ("Light on in the Kitchen"), Green, Nashville Chapter operations coordinator **Sydney Verge** and songwriter **Randy Montana** ("Pretty Heart").

billboard



2025

TOP MUSIC LAWYERS

Behind every artist, songwriter and music producer is a trusted group of advisers who provide guidance, advice and negotiate deals. *Billboard's* 10th annual Top Music Lawyers list will recognize the biggest names and most prominent legal minds in the world of music and entertainment law. They are the deal-makers behind the major contracts and lawsuits in the music industry.

This feature will also include a round-up of top law schools attended by the notable alumni on the premier Music Lawyers list.

Join us in congratulating the 2025 most powerful music lawyers. Advertise to present your law firm to *Billboard's* influential subscribers, which include A-list artists, artist managers, business managers and label, publishing and touring executives

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ISSUE DATE 4/19 | AD CLOSE 4/8 | MATERIALS DUE 4/10

billboard Country Airplay Index

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

10-90 Azalea Bloom Publishing, BMI/Summit Drive Publishing, BMI/Kendell Marvel Publishing Designee, SESAC (G.S.Stanton, C.Muncaster, K.Marvel) **47**

3,2,1 Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jomil 10 Music, BMI/Native Notes Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/SugarPlum Songs, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (J.Miller, S.Overstreet, J.Reynolds) **44**

A

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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.Dillon) **14**

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COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Songs Of Smack, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Party Of 3, ASCAP/Southern Kid Music, ASCAP (D.Alley, R.Beaver, N.A.Medley) **33**

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.Ballerini, A.Vanderheyem, N.Kahan) **27**

COWGIRL Tileyard Music Publishing Ltd., PRS/Sentric Music Ltd., PRS/Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/NewManic Music North, SOCAN/VaughnCo Music Publishing Inc., PRS/Cooking Vinyl Publishing Ltd., PRS/Thomas Frank Bidley Horsley Publishing Designee, PRS/8936 Music, BMI/Parmalee Music Publishing, BMI (J.D.Lewis, D.Fanning, P.D.Newman, R.Jay, T.F.R.Horsley, M.Thomas, B.Knox, J.McSwain, S.Thomas) **49**

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FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Corenet Music, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (N.Smith, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, L.Rimes) **30**

FOREVER FROM HERE Smack Back Music, BMI/Sleighbells Ring Publishing, BMI/Lily Lyrics Publishing, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Songs Of CTM Publishing, BMI/Smack Attack Music, SESAC/Melodies Of CTM Outlander, SESAC/Nash And Stella Songs, SESAC/Me Gusta Music, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/King Pen Songs, SESAC/Art of CTM Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Smackshot Music, GMR (K.J.Slaubaugh, K.J.Slaubaugh, S.McAnally, P.C.Good) **58**

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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.J.Huro) **51**

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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/Daddy's Home Music, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (J.Dean, B.Davis, D.Williams) **32**

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HOLY SMOKES Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/I Fart Creations, BMI/Concord Copyrights, BMI/This Is Chromatic Music, BMI/MT ROOM, SESAC/Melodies Of CTM 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) **13**

HOMETOWN HOME BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Weslinger 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.Abeno) **2**

HUNG UP ON YOU Blue Suede Boost Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Better Boat Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (B.Lay, J.Middleton, N.A.Medley) **60**

I

I DARE YOU Nick Jonas Publishing, BMI/PWZ Publishing House, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Seven Peaks Music, ASCAP/8Sixteen Music, ASCAP (N.J.Jonas, Tommy English, S.Mooney, D.Whitmore, Jr.) **37**

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/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (C.Stevens, K.Archer, T.Denning) **3**

I'M THE PROBLEM Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Jamie McLaughlin Publishing Designee, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (M.C.Wallen, G.W.Block, J.McLaughlin, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **9**

INDIGO Sam Barber Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Sparky Sky Songs, BMI/To A T Creative, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Firebird Country Tunes, BMI/Oakdale Market Publishing, BMI (S.R.Barber, A.Arma, A.Sheridan) **46**

I NEVER LIE Rio Bravo Music, Inc., BMI/Zach Top Music, BMI/Too Broke To Quit Music, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Music And Magazines Publishing, BMI (Z.Top, C.Chamberlain, T.Nichols) **10**

IT WON'T BE LONG Big Machine, ASCAP/Liz Rose Music, LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Songs Of Wild Cat Well Music, BMI/Sony Countryside, BMI (G.Birge, J.A.Fox, C.McGill, T.Anderson) **45**

J

JUST TO SAY WE DID Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Basuaere Music, BMI/Old Desperados, LLC, ASCAP/N2D 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.Dragstrom) **17**

L

LIAR Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Been 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-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (J.B.DeFord, B.J.Johnson, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips) **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/CTM Outlander Music Publishing, ASCAP/Concord Boulevard, ASCAP (K.Hart, K.Schienger, S.Stepakoff) **28**

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P

PARK T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane 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 Vibez, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (T.R.Hubbard, J.Frasure, A.G.Gorley, C.Smith) **21**

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RELAPSE Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/PA Cowboy Music, BMI/Rarre Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI (W.Zeidlers, B.Pendergrass) **40**

RUN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI (M.Lamber) **42**

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SHE HATES ME Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/DudeTunes, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Music Of CTM Outlander Music LP, BMI/Smackshot Music, BMI/Katie In Paris, BMI/Stereo Supersonic Music, ASCAP/Jordan Rocks Music, ASCAP (D.Bentley, R.Copperman, A.G.Gorley, C.McGill, J.C.Allen, W.Scantlin) **38**

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T

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THIS HEART Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/MadFun Music, BMI/Oconee River Bank Music, BMI/Bollingerse Shore, SESAC/T Vill Music, BMI/Speakers Bo Boom Songs, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/Peertunes, Ltd., SESAC/Titanium Music, SESAC/Melodies Of CTM Outlander, SESAC (T.Archer, W.B.Bollinger, J.A.Hackworth, M.Tyler) **24**

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billboard

GLOBAL POWER PLAYERS

2025

GLOBAL POWER PLAYERS

On May 17, *Billboard* will publish its annual Global Power Players Issue. This issue will profile leaders in the music industry outside the United States who are executives at record labels, music publishers, talent agencies and in live entertainment to recognize their achievements.

Advertise and congratulate this year's Global Power Players to reach an influential audience of decision-makers worldwide.

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ISSUE DATE 5/17 | AD CLOSE 5/6 | MATERIALS DUE 5/8

CODA

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

26 Years Ago Kenny Chesney Revved To No. 1 With 'How Forever Feels'

In 1999, the song that shouts out racecar legend Richard Petty began a six-week run in the Hot Country Songs chart's pole position

On March 27, 1999, **Kenny Chesney's** "How Forever Feels" started a six-week domination on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart.

The song was authored by **Wendell Mobley** and **Tony Mullins**; **Buddy Cannon** and **Norro Wilson** produced it. "Hands on the wheel, cruising down the interstate," Chesney sings in the feel-good anthem. "Now I know how **Richard Petty** feels." In

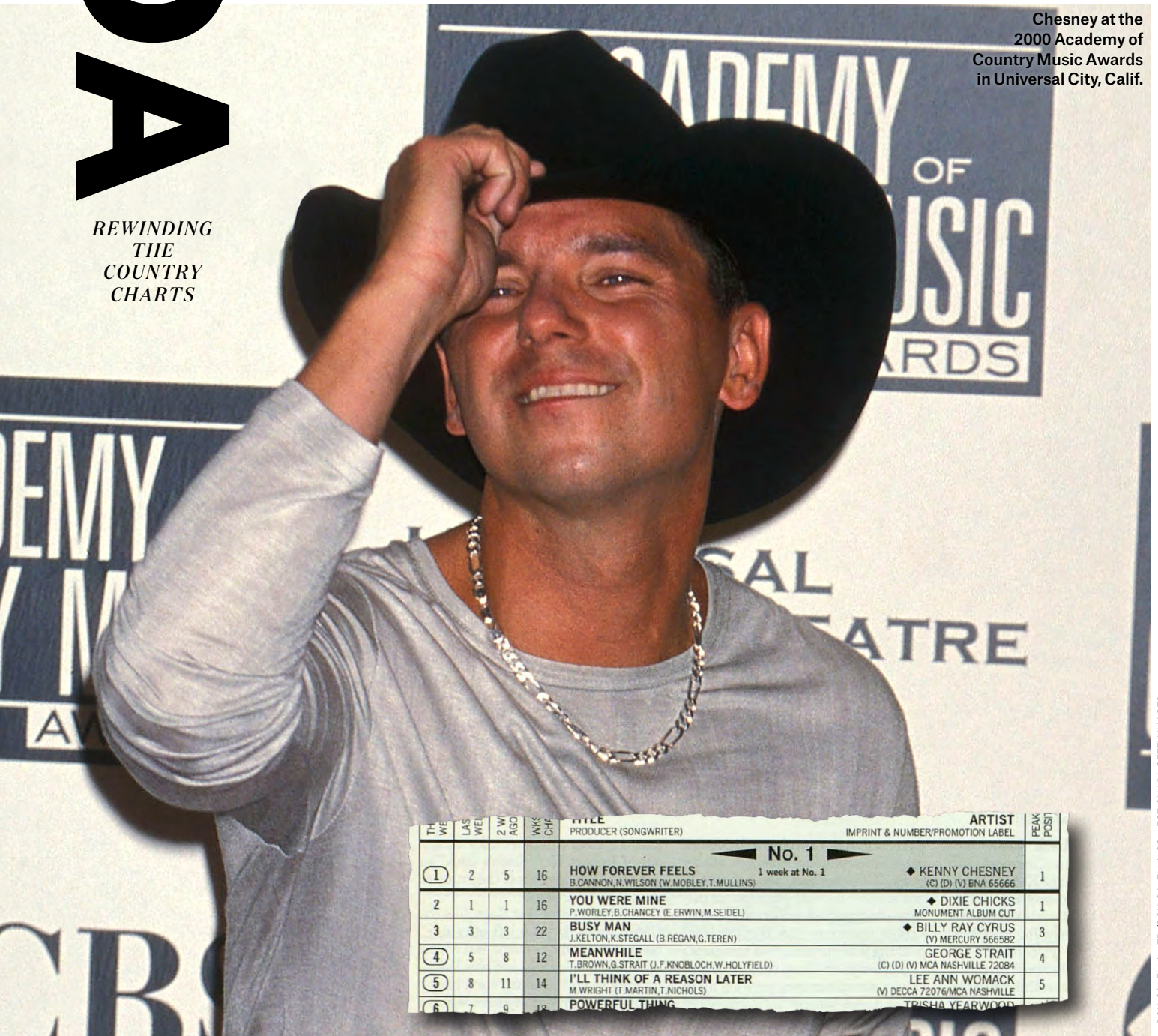
addition to the racing legend, **Jimmy Buffett** gets an on-brand mention (in praise of "margaritas" and "tanning señoritas").

The track was released as the lead single from Chesney's LP *Everywhere We Go*, which hit No. 5 on Top Country Albums, his highest rank at the time. The superstar has gone on to tally 17 No. 1s, a run that began with his next entry, 2000's *Greatest Hits*.

Chesney, who was born March 26, 1968, in Knoxville, Tenn., has banked a record 33 No. 1s on the Country Airplay chart, as well as 23 Hot Country Songs leaders. Known for his major stadium concerts in recent years, he will take a different turn in 2025 by helming a 15-date residency at Las Vegas' Sphere May 22-June 21.

—JIM ASKER

Chesney at the 2000 Academy of Country Music Awards in Universal City, Calif.



TH WK	LAS WK	2 WK AGO	WKS ON CH	TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	IMPRINT & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL	ARTIST (C) (D) (V) BNA 65666	PEAK POSIT
1	2	5	16	HOW FOREVER FEELS B. CANNON, N. WILSON (W. MOBLEY, T. MULLINS)	No. 1 1 week at No. 1	◆ KENNY CHESNEY (C) (D) (V) BNA 65666	1
2	1	1	16	YOU WERE MINE P. WORLEY, B. CHANCEY (E. ERWIN, M. SEIDEL)		◆ DIXIE CHICKS MONUMENT ALBUM CUT	1
3	3	3	22	BUSY MAN J. KELTON, K. STEGALL (B. REGAN, G. TEREEN)		◆ BILLY RAY CYRUS (V) MERCURY 566582	3
4	5	8	12	MEANWHILE T. BROWN, G. STRAIT (J. F. KNOBLOCH, W. HOLYFIELD)		GEORGE STRAIT (C) (D) (V) MCA NASHVILLE 72084	4
5	8	11	14	I'LL THINK OF A REASON LATER M. WRIGHT (T. MARTIN, T. NICHOLS)		LEE ANN WOMACK (V) DECCA 72076/MCA NASHVILLE	5
6	7	9	12	POWERFUL THING		TRISHA YEARWOOD	