

billboard Country Update

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BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE

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A Wave Of New Country Artists Is Singing The Blues

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Everybody's had the blues.

Merle Haggard's observation was true in the 1970s, and it still resonates in 2025 in country music as the genre welcomes a new wave of blues-tinged artists.

Valory released **Preston Cooper's** first radio single — “Weak,” bolstered by **Stevie Ray Vaughan** guitar tones

and Hammond B-3 — to broadcasters via PlayMPE on April 23. RECORDS Nashville took Texas singer-songwriter **Ty Myers** to radio on April 10 with “Ends of the Earth,” a spacious, almost churchy ballad. And Big Loud's Alabama-born **Kashus Culpepper** has steadily rolled out tracks over the last year

with videos that feel akin to the Mississippi Delta circa 1945. Culpepper's catalog invites comparisons to **Keb' Mo'** and **Leon Bridges**, and his latest track — “Southern Man,” released March 27 — features sweaty slide guitar from bluesy Americana figure **Marcus King**.

“I think the blues is the root to every genre out there,” Ohio-bred Cooper says. “You always have to have a rhythm, you know. You always have to have a beat. And I think blues starts that for all genres.”

The rise of the blues makes sense in a genre like country that appeals primarily to a working-class audience. The nation has experienced years of division, and economic uncertainties are turning the screws even tighter on the average pocketbook. Consumers are already singing the blues.

“Blues connects with the human emotion,” Culpepper reasons. “It's our deepest emotions, it's pain and sometimes love. And I think blues is always going to be around. I think it's always going to recirculate and come back around.”

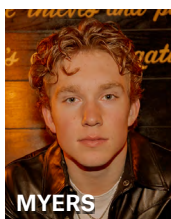
The blues grew directly from pain. Black workers in the mid-1800s — both slaves and free men — were primarily limited to

difficult jobs with no possibility of upward mobility, and they used music to keep a consistent pace at their labor and express their misery. **W.C. Handy**, crafting such titles as “The St. Louis Blues” and “The John Henry Blues,” established the genre's commercial potential in the early 1900s, and **Mamie Smith's** 1920 recording

“Crazy Blues” became the first blues recorded by a Black woman. New York record executives assumed that only African Americans would appreciate the music and established a “race” records market. When country was subsequently committed to disc, it was frequently referred to as “the white man's blues.”

While the labels segregated the music in their promotional efforts, the sound itself wasn't that different. The songs recorded by the father of country music, **Jimmie Rodgers**, in the 1920s and 1930s overlapped in sound with the music of **Robert Johnson** in the 1930s.

“I love Robert Johnson and **Hank Williams**,” Culpepper says. “I think at the core, both of them [were about] great storytelling, raw emotion, the real man's music talking about real emotions. You could have a song talking about the bar, and that's great.”



MYERS



CULPEPPER



COOPER

MYERS: JAMIE WENDT; CULPEPPER: CEDRICK JONES; COOPER: DAVID MCCLUSTER

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They both had songs [about] being with a lover, or just hanging out, or going down a road and feeling great, or a song about just feeling so down low that you don't even want to be on this Earth."

Country's blues influence was particularly evident in Western swing, and it continued to pop up in the music of **Willie Nelson** (especially in his song "Night Life"); in Southern rock, which would influence such country acts as **Travis Tritt**, **Hank Williams Jr.**, **Confederate Railroad** and **The Cadillac Three**; and in the Texas soul of **Lee Roy Parnell**.

Much has been made of **Chris Stapleton**'s incorporation of outlaw country and R&B over the last decade, but the new acts all say the blues component of his music had an impact on them.

"A lot of people who are going down the path that I am—you know, country, but also adding a little bit of the old blues and soul influences—would not be able to do what we do without Stapleton," Myers says. "That artistic flair that he added to country music expanded the lines a little bit, made the box a little bigger."

Indeed, **The Red Clay Strays**—which are nominated for two honors at this year's Academy of Country Music Awards—incorporate a blues thread in their rootsy country sound, and **Stephen Wilson Jr.**'s performance of the national anthem before the NFL draft on April 24 in Green Bay, Wis., was a rough-cut, gnarly, acoustic country-blues.

While the sound reflects the current sociopolitical mood, it's also a reaction to the increasing influence of technology on 21st-century life. Many Americans spend more than half their waking hours tied to an iPhone, a computer and/or a TV. With those impersonal devices commanding people's attention, it's natural for consumers to gravitate toward music that more closely reflects humanity and all its imperfections.

"Kids my age, we're starting to like vintage stuff," Myers, 17, says. "Old cars, old shoes, old clothes, old fashion—even old lingo is coming back. And especially old music. I think we've realized that they did shit better in the '60s and '70s. That's why not only is blues and soul coming back, but also old country. Look at **Zach Top**. I mean, that's old, straightforward country, and it makes my heart happy that it's coming back."

One of the reasons the blues seem to hang around is that the hard times they address are always present, and the listener is reminded that their heartbreak and heaviness are not unique. Knowing someone else shares their pain frequently helps revive their spirit.

"Blues is a tonic for whatever ails you," **B.B. King** once said. "I could play the blues and then not be blue anymore."

That's why Culppepper came to appreciate the blues. He heard King, as well as **Jimi Hendrix** and **Albert King**, in his household, right alongside **Kenny Rogers** and **Bob Seger**. He hopes that, as stylistic walls drop and once-segregated music recombines, his generation of blues-based country artists will provide an emotional tonic for music fans the way that his predecessors influenced him.

"I got an old soul," Culppepper says, "and I hope that my music is an inspiration for young, upcoming musicians to continue to put that blues and that old rock stuff in new music. That's my whole [thing]: to be an inspiration." ●



MORGAN JERKINS

Madeline Edwards (center) performed when the Society of Leaders in Development held its fourth annual University Scholarship Competition April 12-13. With Edwards are SOLID co-chairs TC Courtney and Becky Parsons.



Luke Combs interviewed with WSM-AM Nashville personality Kelly Sutton in conjunction with the grand opening of his club, Category 10, on April 15.



Riley Green (right) welcomed Jamey Johnson among the participants for his inaugural Buford Bonds Golf Tournament in Jacksonville, Ala., on April 17. The event raised over \$150,000 for the charitable fund he named after his grandfathers.

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2025

COUNTRY POWER PLAYERS

Billboard's 12th annual Country Power Players issue will profile the people who have driven another solid year for country music in sales, streaming and publishing. This special feature will highlight those who have had the greatest impact in the genre, including recorded music, live entertainment and publishing, in the past year.

Advertise in *Billboard's* Country Power Players issue to congratulate this year's honorees while reaching key decision-makers who are driving the music business.

BONUS DISTRIBUTION

Billboard Country Power Players Cocktail Party & Awards on June 4, TBD in Nashville

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billboardCountry Airplay

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

Kane Brown Accepts ‘Backseat Driver’ Directions To Country Airplay Top 10

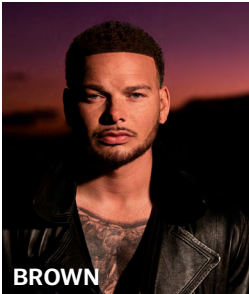
Kane Brown nets his 14th top 10 on *Billboard*’s Country Airplay chart as “Backseat Driver” (Zone 4/RCA Nashville) rides a spot to No. 10 on the survey dated May 3. The song increased by 7% to 16.4 million audience impressions April 18-24, according to Luminate.

Dann Huff produced the single, which **Jacob Davis** and **Jordan Walker** co-wrote. It’s from Brown’s LP *The High Road*, which arrived at its No. 2 high on Top Country Albums in February.

The 31-year-old Brown is enjoying an active streak of seven Country Airplay leaders, tying him for the longest such run with **Jelly Roll**, whose “Liar” ruled for six weeks starting in February. Brown last led with “Miles on It,” with **Marshmello**, for one week in November, marking his 12th chart-topper. Brown kicked off his streak with “Famous Friends,” with **Chris Young**, in July 2021 and followed with “One Mississippi” (March 2022); “Like I Love Country Music” (August 2022); “Thank God,” with **Katelyn Brown** (February 2023); “Bury Me in Georgia” (September 2023); and “I Can Feel It” (March 2024).

Meanwhile, **Jelly Roll** will attempt to continue his streak with “Heart of Stone” (Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek), which ranks at No. 39 on Country Airplay (2.5 million, up 9%), and “Hard Fought Hallelujah” (Brandon Lake/Essential/Lyric Ridge), his team-up with Christian music star **Brandon Lake** that lifts 60-56 (853,000, up 17%).

NO ‘PROBLEM’ STAYING ON TOP **Morgan Wallen**’s “I’m the Problem” (Mercury/Republic/Big Loud) rules Country Airplay for a second week (29.5 million, up 2%). It’s the ninth multiweek leader among his 17 No. 1s. The song is the title track from Wallen’s 37-song album due May 16. Two additional cuts from the set are scaling Country Airplay: “Just in Case,” his latest single promoted to radio, rises 22-21 (7.9 million, up 19%) and “I’m Not Coming Back,” with **Post Malone**, enters at No. 36 (2.6 million). ●




DENNIS LEUPOLD

MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN (IN MILLIONS)	
FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	+2.712	
I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen & Post Malone	+2.655	
WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+1.444	
JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+1.273	
COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	+1.246	
FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	+1.161	
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+1.158	
COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	+1.130	
WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+1.128	
BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	+1.035	

MOST INCREASED PLAYS			
TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	GAIN	
FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Cole Swindell	+1030	
I AIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen & Post Malone	+673	
WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	+555	
BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	+421	
JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	+419	
WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	+399	
COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	+340	
COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	+290	
SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	+277	
FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	+252	

RECURRENTS			
THIS WEEK	TITLE Imprint/Label	Artist	TOTAL AUD. (IN MILLIONS)
1	LOVE SOMEBODY Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	18.925
2	HIGH ROAD YellaBush/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph	18.243
3	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	14.505
4	POUR ME A DRINK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton	14.248
5	I HAD SOME HELP Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Post Malone Featuring Morgan Wallen	14.042
6	THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US Curb	Dylan Scott	13.882
7	I AIN'T SAYIN' MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	10.376
8	I AM NOT OKAY Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	9.148
9	BOYS BACK HOME PIA/Curb/Columbia Nashville	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott	8.658
10	AUSTIN VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	8.303



TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING APRIL 24, 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	22	LUBBOCK (Independent)	★ ★ 1 Week at 1 ★ ★ Flatland Cavalry	1821	151	11	12	14	THE WORKING MAN (Independent)	Cody Jinks	1197	49
2	3	16	5 TO 9 (Independent)	Hudson Westbrook	1664	11	12	13	9	GREEN IN COLORADO (Independent)	Casey Donahew	1191	88
3	5	15	SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS (Independent)	Tristan Roberson	1646	106	13	14	8	NOTHIN' BUT TEXAS (Bowen Sounds/Thirty Tigers)	Wade Bowen	1135	71
4	4	15	WEST OF FT WORTH (Independent)	Grant Gilbert	1618	57	14	15	16	AIN'T THAT LOVE (Independent)	Bri Bagwell & Timber Wilde	1110	49
5	6	12	DAMN BABY (Independent)	Bubba Westly	1568	69	15	16	10	HURRICANE (CDX)	Sandee June	1097	45
6	7	14	DRIVE (Independent)	Jason Boland & The Stragglers	1476	14	16	17	14	WHAT I CAME TO DO (Independent)	Jesse Raub Jr.	1072	23
7	8	26	AUSTIN ANYMORE (Independent)	Brandi Behlen	1355	136	17	18	7	BREAK ITSELF (Tommy Jackson/Thirty Tigers)	Randy Rogers Band	1034	40
8	9	11	ROLLIN' ON (Flying C)	Brooke Graham	1338	141	18	20	11	WHO'S HANGING THE MOON (Independent)	Josh Weathers	947	42
9	11	17	PUT IT IN REVERSE (Independent)	Ben McPeak	1221	51	19	1	16	ABILENE (LuckySky Music)	Tori Martin	905	-819
10	10	16	BUCKLE OR THE BRIDE (Independent)	Caleb Young	1213	32	20	24	14	I DON'T APOLOGIZE (Independent)	James Lann	863	91

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

billboardCountry 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	12	I'M THE PROBLEM Mercury/Republic/Big Loud ★★ No. 1 (2 Weeks) ★★	Morgan Wallen	29.537	+0.696	8309	-82	1
2	5	54	FOREVER TO ME Warner Music Nashville/WMN ★★ Most Increased Audience ★★	Cole Swindell	24.994	+2.712	7791	1030	2
3	2	53	FRIENDS LIKE THAT Night Train/Broken Bow	John Morgan Featuring Jason Aldean	23.130	-4.448	6837	-1507	3
4	6	39	WHISKEY DRINK Macon/Broken Bow	Jason Aldean	22.901	+1.444	6746	555	4
5	3	47	HOMETOWN HOME BMG/Galaxy Label Group	LOCASH	22.737	-3.424	6172	-1119	6
6	4	24	LIAR Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	22.126	-1.127	5710	-382	8
7	7	28	I NEVER LIE Leo33	Zach Top	20.494	+0.087	6268	66	5
8	8	23	TEXAS Ten Point/Wheelhouse	Blake Shelton	18.911	+0.563	6030	236	7
9	9	36	AM I OKAY? Megan Moroney/Columbia/Columbia Nashville	Megan Moroney	17.831	+0.508	5522	131	9
10	11	25	BACKSEAT DRIVER Zone 4/RCA Nashville	Kane Brown	16.413	+1.035	5241	421	10
11	10	45	HOLY SMOKES Elektra/Warner Music Nashville/WEA	Bailey Zimmerman	15.793	-0.098	4961	-23	11
12	14	20	WORST WAY Nashville Harbor	Riley Green	13.292	+1.128	4189	399	15
13	12	25	TOUGH PEOPLE Patoka Sounds/Lyric Ridge/Stoney Creek	Drew Baldridge	13.078	+0.516	4381	135	12
14	13	17	WEREN'T FOR THE WIND SAWGOD/Columbia/Triple Tigers	Ella Langley	12.998	+0.552	4279	228	14
15	16	44	THIS HEART Combustion Masters/RCA Nashville	Corey Kent	12.211	+0.967	3721	89	17
16	15	33	PARK Hubbard House/EMI Nashville	Tyler Hubbard	12.025	+0.548	3707	188	18
17	18	43	COMING HOME Three Up Three Down/Columbia Nashville	Old Dominion	11.809	+1.246	4280	340	13
18	17	56	SINGLE AGAIN The Core/Universal Music Canada/Mercury Nashville	Josh Ross	11.773	+0.830	3896	277	16
19	19	36	COUNTRY HOUSE MCA Nashville	Sam Hunt	11.167	+1.158	3399	290	19
20	20	24	FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK RCA Nashville	Nate Smith	9.823	+1.161	3081	252	20
21	22	5	JUST IN CASE Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	Morgan Wallen	7.862	+1.273	2129	419	26
22	21	39	TRUCK ON FIRE Big Machine	Carly Pearce	7.634	+0.114	2741	1	21
23	27	23	COUNTRY SONG CAME ON Capitol Nashville	Luke Bryan	6.450	+1.130	2214	209	25
24	23	33	FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Capitol Nashville	Jon Pardi	6.396	+0.496	2377	96	22
25	24	10	AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED Fifty-One/Forty-Nine/Valory	Thomas Rhett	6.214	+0.401	2331	95	24
26	25	13	GOOD NEWS American Dogwood/EMPIRE/Magnolia Music	Shaboozey	6.198	+0.730	2336	230	23
27	28	31	HEAVENS TO BETSY Big Machine	Jackson Dean	4.893	+0.385	1930	32	27
28	32	6	HAPPEN TO ME Triple Tigers	Russell Dickerson	4.419	+0.479	1481	131	32
29	29	6	HANDS OF TIME BigEC/EMI Nashville	Eric Church	4.354	+0.118	1824	111	28
30	31	32	WHAT KINDA MAN MCA Nashville	Parker McCollum	4.196	+0.175	1735	137	29

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.

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 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	30	12	I DARE YOU Big Machine	Rascal Flatts & Jonas Brothers	4.065	-0.133	1688	-119	30
32	33	5	BAR NONE MCA Nashville	Jordan Davis	3.840	+0.409	1383	109	33
33	34	15	STRAIGHT LINE Hit Red/Capitol Nashville	Keith Urban	3.750	+0.408	1544	219	31
34	36	7	RUN Vanner/Republic/Big Loud	Miranda Lambert	3.292	+0.318	1000	87	39
35	35	10	SHE HATES ME Capitol Nashville	Dierks Bentley	3.189	-0.089	1356	42	34
36	NEW		IAIN'T COMING BACK Mercury/Republic/Big Loud ★★ Hot Shot Debut /Breaker ★★	Morgan Wallen & Post Malone	2.661	+2.655	676	673	51
37	40	5	HOUSE AGAIN River House/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	Hudson Westbrook	2.632	+0.483	822	138	47
38	37	7	3,2,1 Tucker Wetmore/Back Blocks/Republic/EMI Nashville	Tucker Wetmore	2.601	+0.036	1063	36	37
39	38	4	HEART OF STONE Bailee & Buddy/BMG/Republic/Stoney Creek	Jelly Roll	2.549	+0.213	1092	147	36
40	39	26	RELAPSE 717/Warner/WEA	Warren Zeiders	2.278	-0.046	995	-57	40
41	42	13	IT WON'T BE LONG RECORDS Nashville	George Birge	2.202	+0.199	1156	19	35
42	41	13	INDIGO Lockeland Springs/Atlantic/Magnolia Music	Sam Barber Featuring Avery Anna	2.112	+0.094	883	25	46
43	44	23	WOULD IF I COULD Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	ERNEST	1.969	+0.103	1045	56	38
44	45	21	DARLIN' Warner Music Nashville/WAR	Chase Matthew	1.904	+0.123	976	99	41
45	43	16	COWGIRL Stoney Creek	Parmalee	1.806	-0.101	930	21	44
46	46	2	FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Mercury/Republic/Big Loud	HARDY	1.540	-0.134	820	158	48
47	48	18	TIME'S TICKING Valory	Justin Moore	1.508	+0.071	927	3	45
48	47	23	BETTER THAN YOU Quartz Hill/Stone Country	Joe Nichols / Annie Bosko	1.480	-0.136	934	-16	43
49	49	20	GOLDEN CHILD Riser House	Meghan Patrick	1.373	-0.052	970	24	42
50	50	8	ENDS OF THE EARTH RECORDS/Columbia/RECORDS Nashville	Ty Myers	1.263	+0.083	361	114	-
51	51	4	NOT AT THIS PARTY VERSION III/Warner/WMN	Dasha	1.039	-0.011	652	7	53
52	54	11	BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Fugitive Recordings/Magnolia Music	Max McNown	1.012	+0.131	742	22	50
53	53	6	CRY Curb	Lee Brice	1.011	+0.082	451	14	57
54	52	15	10-90 Stancaster/Thirty Tigers/Big Machine	Muscadine Bloodline	0.973	+0.020	654	14	52
55	56	7	WISH YOU WELL Music Soup/Interscope/MCA Nashville	Vincent Mason	0.860	+0.016	606	2	54
56	60	2	HARD FOUGHT HALLELUJAH Brandon Lake/Essential/Lyric Ridge	Brandon Lake X Jelly Roll	0.853	+0.123	314	50	-
57	59	16	WOLVES CRY Average Joes	Bryan Martin	0.846	+0.048	436	-34	59
58	58	4	IF I DIE BEFORE YOU Red Street	Chris Lane	0.846	+0.036	515	0	56
59	55	3	TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Boss Moves/Black River	Chris Young	0.806	-0.072	587	28	55
60	57	7	FOREVER FROM HERE Monument/Sony Music Nashville	Tigritily Gold	0.796	-0.035	772	-9	49



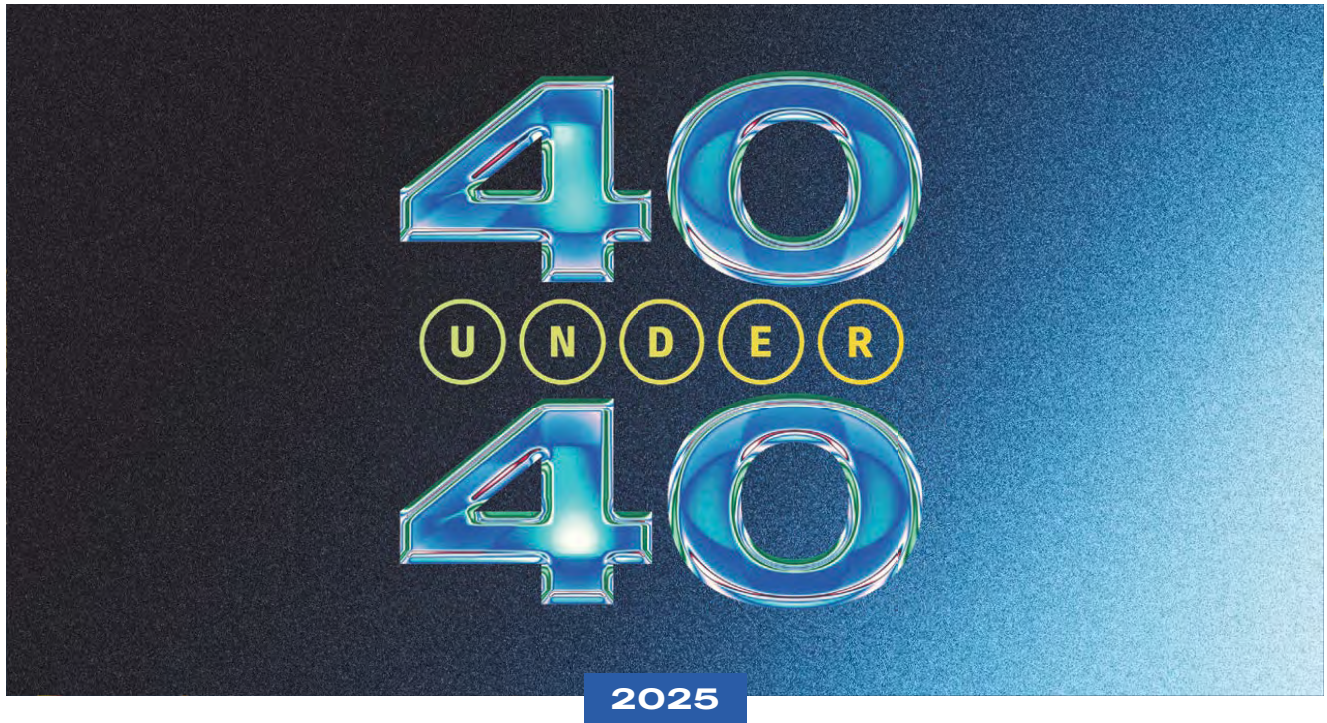
RYAN ANOLAN

The late Charlie Daniels' family partnered with 8 Track Entertainment for a series of projects celebrating his legacy, including recordings, concerts and a documentary. From left: 8 Track president Noah Gordon, son Charlie Daniels Jr., widow Hazel Daniels and 8 Track chief marketing director Jeff Goodwin.



Vincent Mason hung with WFMS Indianapolis staff when he performed April 19 at Hi-Fi. From left: Cumulus/Indianapolis promotions assistant Cassie Driver, WFMS PD Brooks O'Brian, Mason, MCA Nashville director of Midwest promotion Donna Passuntino and WFMS assistant PD Matt Malone.

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40 UNDER 40

On May 17, *Billboard* will publish its annual 40 Under 40 Issue, celebrating the next generation of leaders in the music industry. This issue will profile 40 power players who are making their mark in the business.

These progressive young leaders' innovation and creativity will continue to create excitement in the music industry.

Advertise in this issue to reach the music business' most influential and affluent, from the young disrupters to the seasoned veterans who paved the way.

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

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

Artist-writer Ray Fulcher performed April 21 for the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's annual Troubadour Kickoff Party. From left: Museum senior manager of corporate partnerships Marie Bradshaw, Fulcher, Troubadour Advisory Council chair Elizabeth Lombardi and Museum vp of development Ben Hall.

OUT WITH UMGN, IN WITH MCA

Universal Music Group Nashville rebranded, restructured and restaffed in a whirlwind series of moves.

The division will now operate as Music Corporation of America under CEO **Mike Harris** and chief creative officer **Dave Cobb**, with the promotion departments contracted into two teams in a decision announced April 25.

With that move, the EMI Nashville and Mercury Nashville artist rosters will be promoted to radio by a team headed by **Jimmy Rector**, while the Capitol Nashville and MCA Nashville rosters will be overseen by a parallel unit led by **Miranda McDonald**. Both teams continue to report to MCA senior vp of promotion **Damon Moberly**.

A spokesperson confirmed that seven regional promotion staff members and coordinators were let go.

Those alterations follow several previously announced changes. **Katie McCartney**, former GM of the recently shuttered Monument label, was named executive vp/GM, and The Trenches founder and CEO **Tom LaScola** is head of artist and audience strategy.

MCA also established a creative strategic alliance with songwriter **Jessie Jo Dillon** ("Friday Night Heartbreaker," "Am I Okay?"), who is appointed song buddy. Additionally, Cobb launched the Lucille label, sharing leadership for the imprint with MCA senior vp of A&R **Austin Jenkins**. Initial Lucille acts include **Lamont Landers**, **London Smith**, **Isabel Dumaa** and **Sons of Habit**.

'ROUND THE ROW

Messina Touring Group promoted six employees: **Nick Ayoub** rose to head of digital strategy and operations from director of digital, **Kara Smoak** was elevated to director of digital marketing from senior manager, **Meesha Kosciolk** climbed to MTG Nashville director of production from production promoter representative, **Alvin Abshire** stepped up to digital operations manager from digital marketing project manager, **Lucy Freeman** was lifted to digital marketing manager from paid media coordinator, and **Madison Machen** was boosted to manager of partnerships and branding from digital partnerships manager ... Former Big Machine Label Group publicist **Shelby Paul** launched her own firm, Evolvance PR. Reach her [here](#) ... **Mark Chesnutt** signed a management contract with Conway Entertainment Group/Ontourage Management and engaged Absolute Publicity for media representation ... Artist-writer **Caiden Wallace** signed a joint-venture publishing agreement with Sony Music Publishing Nashville and Out Yonder Music, founded by songwriter **Marv Green** ("Amazed," "Wasted") ... **Post Malone** earned eight nominations, including nods in country, to place second among finalists for the American Music Awards, announced April 23. **Shaboozey** tied for third with seven nominations. The show will air May 26 from Las Vegas on CBS ... **Zach Top** was named new male artist of the year by the Academy of Country Music (ACM) on April 24, two weeks ahead of the ceremony's May 8 telecast. **Alan Jackson**, **Brooks & Dunn**, **Chris Stapleton**, **Cody Johnson** and **Clint Black** are among the event's announced performers on Amazon's Prime Video ... **Mickey Guyton** will host the second annual Charley Pride: I'm Just Me Celebration of Inclusion on May 6, two days before the ACMs in Frisco, Texas. Honorees include **Lionel Richie**, **Brittney Spencer**, **Shaboozey** and **Opal Lee** ... **Rodney Crowell** will

be inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters during the nonprofit literary organization's 2025 conference on April 26. **Elizabeth Cook** will also receive a lifetime achievement award ... The state of Tennessee is issuing a Grand Ole Opry 100 specialty license plate. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Opry Trust Fund ... **Eric Church** joined **John Fogerty** in a reimagined version of **Creedence Clearwater Revival's** "Up Around the Bend" for a NASCAR on Prime anthem ... Nashville music veterans **Larry Butler** and **Neal Spielberg** will guest on WHO KNEW's *The Smartest People in the Room* web series at 1 p.m. CT on May 1. Register for free [here](#) ... Fiddler **Rob Hajacos** (**Garth Brooks**, **Shania Twain**) will be the subject of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's *Nashville Cats* series. He will make an appearance at the museum on June 21 ... The Hello in There Foundation partnered with Oxford Pennant to create a flag, patch and other merchandise honoring the late **John Prine**, with proceeds benefiting National Park rangers. Go [here](#) for more info ... **Craig Campbell's** annual Celebrity Cornhole Challenge and Concert is slated for June 3 at 6th & Peabody in Nashville, raising money for the Kenny Campbell Foundation. **Rascal Flatts' Gary LeVox** will be a first-time participant ... Influential keyboardist-studio owner **David Briggs**, 82, died April 22 following a stroke. A member of the Musicians Hall of Fame, he played on more than 160 hits, including **Sammi Smith's** "Help Me Make It Through the Night," **Barbara Mandrell's** "Sleeping Single in a Double Bed," **Elvis Presley's** "Way Down" and **Dolly Parton's** "Coat of Many Colors." He also co-founded Quadraphonic Studios in the 1960s. The facility's clientele included **Kris Kristofferson**, **Joan Baez**, **Neil Young**, **Dobie Gray**, **Johnny Cash** and **Eddie Rabbitt** ... **Lulu Roman**, 78, a gospel singer-comedian who earned national recognition as a *Hee Haw* cast member, died April 23 in Bellingham, Wash.

RADIO & RECORDS®

Dawn Gates left her position as Universal Music Group Nashville senior vp of digital business and creative development to launch management/consulting firm Seven Note Enterprises. Reach her [here](#) ... Black River added former consultant **LeAnn Bennett** as vp of label services ... Curb promoted **Allyson Gelnett (Massey)** to national director of promotion and strategic initiatives from director of promotion ... **KFRG** Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif., moved **Anthony Donatelli** to mornings, teaming with **Kelli Green**. **Heather Froglear** remains solo in afternoons ... **David Hillman** was named iHeartMedia executive vp/chief legal officer/secretary. He was chief legal officer for Venu Sports, a streaming joint venture among ESPN, FOX and Warner Bros. Discovery ... **WUBE** Cincinnati's morning team, **Jesse Tack** and **Anna Marie**, will also be heard on **WIL** St. Louis beginning April 28, RadioInk.com reported. As a result, **Kasey Washausen** segues from mornings on WIL to middays ... Federated Media/Fort Wayne, Ind., welcomed **Suzanne Carroll** as general sales manager for **WMEE** and country **WQHK**, according to RadioInk.com. She previously held the same role with Beasley/Charlotte ... **KATI** Jefferson City-Columbia, Mo., morning co-hosts **Kevin Hilley** and **Erin Hart** will launch the show on April 28 on a second station, classic country **KWTO** Buffalo-Springfield, Mo., RadioInsight.com reported ... **KNIX** Phoenix lifted **Reid Spivey** to PD from assistant PD/music director/afternoon host, according to RadioInsight.com ... Longtime **WKHX** Atlanta personality **William "Cadillac Jack" Choate**, 51, died April 17, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reported. The family has set a private service to honor him. ●



Chris Janson announced on April 15 that his label, Harpeth 60, had partnered with Warner Music Nashville, his former label home. From left: artist manager Kelly Janson, Janson, WMN co-chair/co-president Gregg Nadel and Honey Music co-founder Clay Hunnicutt.

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

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) **54**

3,2,1 Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jornil 10 Music, BMI/Native Notes Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/SugarPlum Songs, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP (J.Miller, S.Overstreet, J.Reynolds) **38**

A

AFTER ALL THE BARS ARE CLOSED

Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Be A Light Publishing, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Goat Island Bay Music, BMI/Songs By 10K HRS Publishing, BMI/1317 Music, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Dragon Bunny Music, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (Thomas Rhett, J.C.Bunetta, J.Byron, J.Free, J.K.Hindlin) **25**

AM I OKAY? Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/Gioiarnio 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) **9**

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) **10**

BAR NONE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Tape Room LLC, Series 1, ASCAP/Hunter Phelps Pub Designee, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Kwsay Publishing, BMI/WritersontheconPublishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (B.J.Johnson, H.Phelps, L.Vaughan) **52**

BETTER ME FOR YOU (BROWN EYES) Songs From The Penalty Box, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Max Mcnown Music, BMI/Carver Music Publishing, ASCAP/Tunes Of King Pen, BMI/Ready Set Publishing, BMI (M.Mcnown, J.Kenney, T.Dabbs) **52**

BETTER THAN YOU Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Brumby Cooper Otis Music, ASCAP/Spirit Nashville Two Crescendo, ASCAP/Pickin' Padre Music, ASCAP/Fluid Tunes, ASCAP (D.George, J.Pierce) **48**

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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/More Megusta Music, ASCAP/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Turs 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.Furst, S.McAnally) **17**

COUNTRY HOUSE Twelve6 Red Oak Songs, BMI/Still Between The Pines, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/EMI Blackwood Music Inc., BMI/Katie In The Sky With Diamonds, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs For Indy And Owl, ASCAP/Works Of CMT Outlander, GMR (M.Lotten, R.Copperman, J.Osbome, S.L.Hunt) **19**

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 Songs, ASCAP/Southern Kid Music, ASCAP (D.Alley, R.Beaver, N.A.Medley) **23**

COWGIRL Tileyard Music Publishing Ltd., PRS/Sentric Music Ltd., PRS/Reservoir 416, BMI/33 Creative, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/ManManiac Music North, SOCAN/VaughnCo Music Publishing Inc., PRS/Cooking Vinyl Publishing Ltd., PRS/Thomas Frank Ridley 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) **45**

CRY Songs of Litmus Music Publishing Holdings, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Universal Music - Brentwood Denson Publishing, ASCAP/Capitol CMG Genesis, ASCAP/Spirit Nashville Two Crescendo, ASCAP (D.Davidson, B.Hayslip, D.A.Garcia) **53**

D

DARLIN' Hunter Huff Publishing Designee, BMI/Ciaran Wilkie Publishing Designee, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Verse 2, BMI/Droptime Music, BMI/Chase Matthew Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Kobalt Music Services Ltd., PRS (Chase Matthew, A.Maxwell, H.Huff, C.Willkie, Jake Angel) **44**

E

ENDS OF THE EARTH Ty Myers Publishing Designee, BMI (T.Myers) **50**

F

FAVORITE COUNTRY SONG Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Relative Red Music, BMI/Bigger Bendable Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Tape Room Music Round Two, BMI/FBRI Country Tunes, BMI/Myron Bailey Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP (M.W.Hardy, Z.Aband, B.Bailey, A.G.Gorley) **46**

FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Corent Music, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (N.Smith, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, L.Rimes) **20**

FOREVER FROM HERE Smack Back Music, BMI/Sleighbells Ring Publishing, BMI/Lily Lyrics Publishing, BMI/Me Gusta Music, BMI/Songs Of CMT Publishing, BMI/Smack Attack Music, SESAC/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC/Nash And Stella Songs, SESAC/Me Gusta Music, SESAC/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/King Pen Songs, SESAC/Art of CMT Music Outlander LP, GMR/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Smackworld Music, GMR (K.J.Slaubaugh, K.J.Slaubaugh, S.McAnally, P.C.Good) **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-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (C.Swindell, G.James, R.H.Black) **2**

FRIDAY NIGHT HEARTBREAKER Concord Copyrights, BMI/Jornil 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/1 Finally Got Some Publishing, BMI/The Buffalo Catalogue, BMI (J.Miller, C.Tompkins, J.J.Dillon, D.Ross, R.J.Huro) **24**

FRIENDS LIKE THAT Triple Play Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Songs For Margo, ASCAP/Sea Gayle Pub House Publishing, ASCAP/Music Of The Corn, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/WritersontheconPublishing, BMI/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Kwsay Publishing, BMI (J.Morgan, B.Anderson, W.L.Bundy, L.Vaughan) **3**

G

GOLDEN CHILD Anthem Entertainment B, SOCAN/Iron Songbird Publishing B, BMI/Jackoby Songs II, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing 1, BMI/Sweet Baby RuRu Songs, BMI/World For Aaron Eshuis Concord Alto CCI, ASCAP (M.Patrick, J.Hyde, A.Eshuis) **49**

GOOD NEWS Kreshendo, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/S2 Songs LLC, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/Essancy Music Publishing, ASCAP/Torrey Songs, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/BMG Rights Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/Paco Place Songs, BMI (C.Chibweze, N.Sastry, S.C.Cook, J.Torrey, M.R.Pollack, ROMANS) **26**

H

HANDS OF TIME Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Longer And Louder Music, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Endurance Sierra Charlie, ASCAP/More Magic Carusoe Music, ASCAP (E.Church, Scooter Carusoe) **29**

HAPPEN TO ME Concord Copyrights, BMI/Big Hits N Gravy, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC/Hand Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI (R.Dickerson, C.LaCorte, J.J.Dillon, C.McGill, R.Hazard) **28**

HARD FOUGHT HALLELUJAH Brandon Lake Music, ASCAP/Music By Elevation Worship Publishing, BMI/Be Essential Songs, BMI/Benjamin Hastings Publishing Designee, ASCAP/Bailee's Ballads, BMI (B.M.Lake, S.Furtick, B.W.Hastings, C.J.Brown, J.DeFord) **56**

HEART OF STONE Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Round Hill Songs III, ASCAP/Foxwood Entertainment Group Music Division, ASCAP/Big Blue Nation Music, ASCAP/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/God Made Most Played Most Paid Publishing, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP (J.B.DeFord, Z.Crowell, B.Pendergrass, J.Sy Carter) **39**

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 Tuckaway Music, BMI/Daddy's Home Music, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (J.Dean, B.Davis, D.Williams) **27**

HOLY SMOKES Bailey Zimmerman Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/I 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.Taylor) **11**

HOMETOWN HOME BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Webslinger 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.Brut, A.Albert, Z.Aband) **5**

HOUSE AGAIN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Tuckaway Music, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Party Of 3 Songs, ASCAP/Southern Kid Music, ASCAP/Hudson Westbrook Publishing Designee, BMI (H.Westbrook, N.A.Medley, D.Alley) **37**

I

I AIN'T COMING BACK Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Bell Ear Publishing, ASCAP/Deemer Camp Publishing, BMI/Universal Music Works, GMR/Posty Publishing, GMR/Ern Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI (M.C.Wallen, L.B.Bell, M.W.Hardy, A.R.Post, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **36**

I DARE YOU Nick Jonas Publishing, BMI/PWZ Publishing House, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Shay Mooney Music, BMI/Seven Peaks Music, ASCAP/BSixteen Music, ASCAP (N.J.Jonas, Tommy English, S.Mooney, D.Willmore, Jr.) **31**

IF I DIE BEFORE YOU Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/WeisDwi, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Young Man Publishing, BMI/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/M & M College Fund, SESAC (E.L.Weisband, J.McNair, S.Mosley) **58**

I'M THE PROBLEM Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Em Dog Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/Jamie McLaughlin Publishing Designee, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Bo Jewell Club, BMI (M.C.Wallen, G.W.Black, J.McLaughlin, E.K.Smith, Charlie Handsome) **1**

INDIGO Sam Barber Music Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane 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.Anna, A.Sheridan) **42**

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) **7**

IT WON'T BE LONG Big Machine, ASCAP/Liz Rose Music, LLC, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane 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) **41**

J

JUST IN CASE Honey Hole Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Electric Feel Music, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Orange Music Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/John Byron Music, BMI/Big Loud Mountain LLC, BMI/1317 Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Red Bandana Publishing, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Ern Dog Music, BMI (M.C.Wallen, A.W.Bak, J.Byron, J.K.Hindlin, B.Pendergrass, J.P.Thompson, Charlie Handsome, E.K.Smith) **21**

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-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (J.B.DeFord, B.J.Johnson, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips) **6**

N

NOT AT THIS PARTY Ben There Wrote That Publishing, BMI/Artist 101 Publishing Group, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Dashville Publishing House, BMI/Sony Songs LLC, BMI/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Tape Room Hits, BMI (A.D.Novotny, A.G.Gorley, B.J.Johnson) **51**

P

PARK T Tree Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane 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) **16**

R

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

RUN Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Pink Dog Publishing, BMI (M.Lamberg) **34**

S

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 CMT 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.Allen, W.Scantlin) **35**

SINGLE AGAIN W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Situation Songs, SESAC/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Allen Hill Songs, GMR/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/The Core Publishing, LLC, BMI/Josh Ross Publishing Designee, BMI/Real Bad Songs, SESAC (J.Ross, J.A.Fox, B.Rempel) **18**

STRAIGHT LINE Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/MAROMA Music, BMI/Family Farm Songs, BMI/Twelve6 Dogwood, ASCAP/Flow Records & Tapes, ASCAP/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Sir Greg Wells Songs, ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP (K.Urban, C.McGill, J.Flowers, G.Wells) **33**

T

TEXAS Songs Of Smack, BMI/CTM Publishing, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Universal Music Corp., ASCAP/Kyle Sturrock Music, ASCAP/Smackworks Music, SESAC/Melodies Of CMT Outlander, SESAC/Kobalt Group Publishing, SESAC (J.Clawson, K.Sturrock, J.Dorr, L.Guzman) **8**

THIS HEART Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Madfun Music, BMI/Oconee River Bank Music, BMI/Bollingersey Shore, SESAC/T 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) **15**

TIL THE LAST ONE DIES Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Songs By Slip, ASCAP/Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/M & M College Fund, SESAC/Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI (B.Hayslip, S.Mosley, J.Walker) **59**

TIME'S TICKING Double Barrel Ace Music, BMI/Big Music Machine, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Wild Willy Music, ASCAP/Music Of The Corn, ASCAP/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Full Draw Publishing, BMI/Anthem Music Publishing II, ASCAP/Tunes From The Red White And Blue School, ASCAP (J.Moore, W.L.Bundy, R.Montana, J.S.Stover) **47**

TOUGH PEOPLE Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/940 Songs, BMI/Round Hill Lyrics, BMI/Burnip Does Music, BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI (D.Baldrige, J.Walker, A.Sanders, L.Combs) **13**

TRUCK ON FIRE BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Redfeather Publishing, ASCAP/For The Kids Gold, ASCAP/Universal Tunes, SESAC/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/RADIOBULLETPublishing, BMI (C.Pearce, J.A.Eback, C.Kelley) **22**

W

WEREN'T FOR THE WIND Sony Tree Publishing, BMI/Bridge 1 Music, BMI/Songs Of Smack, BMI/Songs Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI/Music Of CMT Outlander Music LP, BMI/Langley Publishing, BMI (E.Langley, J.Taylor, J.Clawson) **14**

WHAT KINDA MAN Parkermac Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Abundantiam Music, BMI/Songs Of Harpeth Valley, BMI/WRUCKEROLLMusic, BMI/Music Of CMT Outlander Music LP, BMI (P.McCollum, J.N.Spillman, N.Hemby) **30**

WHISKEY DRINK BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Makena Cove Music, ASCAP/Songs Of Double Down Music, BMI/Triple Play Music, BMI/High Noon Yellow Stars Music, BMI/Warner-Tamlerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/Irishsonmusic, BMI (K.M.Allison, J.Edwards, T.Kennedy, J.Morgan) **4**

WISH YOU WELL Big Music Machine, BMI/Works by Range Music Partners, BMI/Warbanger Publishing, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Rare Publishing Worldwide, BMI (G.Warburton, J.J.Dillon, B.Pendergrass, C.LaCorte) **55**

WOLVES CRY Average ZIS Music Publishing, BMI (B.Martin) **57**

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COUNTRY

REWINDING
THE
COUNTRY
CHARTS

50 Years Ago
Billie Jo Spears Climbed To No. 1
From The ‘Ground’ Up

In 1975, Spears scored her lone Hot Country Songs leader among five top 10s

On April 26, 1975, **Billie Jo Spears’** “Blanket on the Ground” snuggled up to No. 1 on *Billboard’s* Hot Country Songs chart. It marked her high point among five top 10s that she tallied in 1969-77. She logged 26 top 40 entries through 1984.

“Blanket on the Ground,” written by **Roger Bowling** and produced by **Larry Butler**, was released from Spears’ same-

named LP. It hit No. 4 on Top Country Albums, the highest rank of her 10 entries and the first of two top 10s.

Born **Billie Jean Moore** in Beaumont, Texas, on Jan. 14, 1938, Spears became a regular on the popular radio show *The Louisiana Hayride* as a teen. After heading off to Nashville in 1964, she often touted female empowerment in her

music, including in her first top 10, “Mr. Walker, It’s All Over.” She followed her American success with several albums on British labels in the 1980s and 1990s, and toured extensively in the United Kingdom.

After battling lung cancer, Spears died in Vidor, Texas, on Dec. 14, 2011, at age 73.

—JIM ASKER

Spears in concert,
circa 1975.



			(Writer), Label & Number (Cat. Label) (Publisher, Licensee)
1	2	13	BLANKET ON THE GROUND—Billie Jo Spears (Roger Bowling), United Artists 584 (Brougham Hall Music, BMI)
★2	4	9	ROLL ON BIG MAMA—Joe Stampley (D. Derst), Epic 8 50075 (Columbia) (Al Gallico/Algee, BMI)
★3	10	8	SHE'S ACTING SINGLE (I'm Drinkin' Doubles)—Gary Stewart (W. Carson), RCA 10222 (Rose Bridge, BMI)
4	5	10	STILL THINK 'BOUT YOU—Billy “Crash” Craddock (J. Christopher, B. Wood), ABC 12068 (Chriswood/Easy Nine, BMI)
★5	6	10	(Hey Won't You Play) ANOTHER SOMEBODY DONE SOMEBODY WRONG SONG—B.J. Thomas (C. Moman, L. Butler), ABC 12054 (Press/Tree, BMI)
★6	8	11	(You Make Me Want To Be)