When Brooks & Dunn met with their manager, Maverick Management partner Clarence Spalding, to discuss the April 5 rollout for their Reboot album at Ronnie Dunn’s barn, an unexpected visitor popped into the conference with news that provided a rare bit of promotional enhancement.

Country Music Association CEO Sarah Trahern surprised them with word that they would be part of the 2019 class of Country Music Hall of Fame inductees. The Hall press conference, as it turned out, would precede the Reboot release by 18 days, heightening the duo’s profile in a key marketing period — not that they were thinking about the business ramifications for the album as Trahern revealed the honor.

“It was just a pregnant pause,” remembers Dunn. His duo partner, Kix Brooks, “was more openly moved,” he recalls, but for Dunn, “it was just like, ‘Whoa, I need to take this home and think about it for a while.’ He started mentioning all the people that are in. I don’t see me on a plane with Johnny Cash and Merle Haggard.”

Promotion for Reboot worked well — the project debuts at No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart dated April 20 — bringing attention to an album that partnered Brooks & Dunn with the likes of Luke Combs, Brothers Osborne and Jon Pardi, younger artists who, perhaps, view the duo with the same reverence Brooks & Dunn feel for Cash and Haggard. Reboot is the highest-profile entry in a minor wave of country and country-connected duets albums. Ronnie Milsap assembled a guest list that includes Luke Bryan, Montgomery Gentry and the late Leon Russell for The Duets, a 13-song package that arrived Jan. 18. Sheryl Crow seeded a forthcoming collaborative album with such country artists as Vince Gill, Kris Kristofferson and the late Johnny Cash, in addition to non-country acts Brandi Carlile, Keith Richards and James Taylor. And Rodney Crowell just announced Texas (Aug. 15), a portrait of the Lone Star State that features such guests as Lee Ann Womack, Ringo Starr and Randy Rogers on seven of its 11 tracks.
“After we finished [Reboot], I read somewhere there was a Ronnie Milsap collaboration out, and I immediately called Clarence because I was under the impression this was a unique idea and concept right now at this time in the business,” says Dunn. “I thought, if anything, that’s where the project would have an edge.”

Both Brooks & Dunn and Milsap endeavored to cut their projects with the guest artists in the room. That’s part of the reason that Milsap needed a good two years to piece The Duets together.

“A lot of the trouble,” he says, “was trying to coordinate schedules with other artists.”

Pulling together their classic hits with a new set of creative eyes helped bring attention to the breadth of their careers. In Milsap’s case, that means a mix of Southern rock (ZZ Top’s Billy Gibbons joins him on “Southern Boys and Detroit Wheels”), traditional country (George Strait guests on “Houston Solution”) and nostalgic titles (Little Big Town assists on “Lost in the Fifties Tonight”). Milsap’s stylistic elasticity was, in fact, one of the reasons he signed in 1973 with RCA’s country division, led at the time by Jerry Bradley, who ironically joins Brooks & Dunn as a new Hall of Fame inductee.

“He signed me to RCA, and I couldn’t believe it when it happened,” notes Milsap. “He said, ‘That son of a bitch can sing country.’ He thought I was a rock ‘n’ roll singer, R&B singer, and I was.”

Reboot similarly demonstrates the wide-ranging impact of Brooks & Dunn. The album knits together Midland’s ultra-country vibe on “Boot Scootin’ Boogie,” Kane Brown’s gospel inflections on “Believe” and Kacey Musgraves’ vocoder-tinged digitization of “Neon Moon.” Thomas Rhett introduced modern loops and finger snaps into “My Maria” in a way that still works. Brett Young makes a blue-eyed soul connection on “ Ain’t Nothing ’Bout You.”

Neither Brooks & Dunn nor Milsap used previous collaborative projects as a reference, though there have been plenty through the years. Willie Nelson has several, including 1985’s Half Nelson, a compilation of mostly previously released duets; three live Willie Nelson & Friends albums in the mid-2000s pulled from USA Network concert specials; and 2013’s To All the Girls..., featuring 18 pairings with females. Ray Charles banded a series of country acts together for his Nashville-built mid-’80s album Friendship and later won an album of the year Grammy for the collaborative Genius Loves Company. Waylon Jennings, John Prine, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Elvis Presley and Tammy Wynette had multiguest duet albums, too.

In more recent years, Lionel Richie’s Tuskegee reimaged his solo hits and Commodores songs with country partners, while The Doobie Brothers put a Nashville spin on their catalog with Southbound. Reba McEntire’s Duets matched her with country and pop artists on mostly new material.

There’s a big promotional value to such projects—it’s part of the reason that the Academy of Country Music Awards teamed Jason Aldean with Florida Georgia Line, Ashley McBryde with Eric Church, Miranda Lambert with Strait and actress Chrissy Metz with four country acts and a gospel choir on the April 7 CBS telecast.

Still, two artists don’t always mesh, particularly when it comes to finding the right key for a song. Dunn recalls working in vain with Alison Krauss on a version of “Seven Bridges Road” that Don Henley had tracked that was outside of Dunn’s range. He and Henley agreed that it better suited Gill in the long run.

“It’s good to be there when the tracks go down so you can figure that stuff out,” surmises Dunn, “not after the fact.”

The mystery that’s inherent in duets is part of the reason that artists, and fans, keep returning to collaborative albums. The ones that don’t work are often locked in vaults. The ones that do sometimes bring a new dimension to familiar music. Dolly Parton did that for Milsap’s The Duets by rewriting “Smoky Mountain Rain” to slip a jilted female perspective into the mix. (“She always refers to me as her blind date,” says Milsap with a laugh. “That’s my Dolly.”) Cody Johnson’s Reboot version of “Red Dirt Road” similarly turns Brooks & Dunn’s driving landmark into a reflective, acoustic blues/folk ballad.

The successes reinvigorate the artists’ feelings about songs they’ve played perhaps thousands of times. And the new versions invite listeners to look at artists and their body of work in a different way.

“That’s been one of my favorite things through this Reboot process is the fact that people are talking about this music and how it stood the test of time,” says Brooks. “Nobody’s talking about confetti and inflatables and balloons. We spent thousands of dollars making these big messes [in concert] every night, and nobody’s talking about it. They’re talking about the music.”
Midland

71 FIRST WEEK STATIONS

KAJA / KASE / KBEQ / KCCY / KCYE / KCYY / KEEY / KFRG / KHAY / KHGE / KJKE
KJUG / KKBQ / KKIX / KKWF / KNCI / KNIX / KPLM / KRTY / Krys / KSD / KSOP
KSSN / KTEX / KTST / KTTS / KUBL / KUPL / KUZZ / KVOO / KWBL / Kwen / KWNR
KXLY / KYGO / W1HC / WBWL / WCOL / WCTQ / WDSY / WDXB / WEBG / WFUS / WGTY
WIVK / WJVC / WKLH / WCLI / WKMk / WKML / WXXC / WILK / WML / WNOE / WOGK
WPGB / WPOC / WPOR / WQIK / WQMX / WQYK / WSOQ / WSSL / WTHT / WUSJ
WUSY / WXYE / WXTU / WYCD / WYCT / WYNK / SIRIUSXM THE HIGHWAY
Brett Young’s ‘Here Tonight’ Leads Country Airplay; Brooks & Dunn Reboot At No. 1 On Top Country Albums

Brett Young notches his fourth No. 1 on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart as “Here Tonight” (Big Machine Label Group) rises from No. 2 to the top of the April 20-dated tally. It advances with a 2% gain to 37.1 million audience impressions in the week ending April 14, according to Nielsen Music.

The song is the lead single from Young’s sophomore major-label album, Ticket to L.A., which launched as his first No. 1 on Top Country Albums in December.

“Here” dethrones Luke Combs’ “Beautiful Crazy” (River House/Columbia Nashville) after seven weeks atop Country Airplay (36.3 million, down 6%). The latter song remains tied for the second-longest rule in the chart’s history, a week from matching the two longest-leading No. 1s, both with eight weeks in charge: Alan Jackson and Jimmy Buffett’s “It’s Five O’Clock Somewhere” (2003) and Lonestar’s “Amazed” (1999).

Still, “Crazy” controls the multimetric Hot Country Songs chart for an eighth week, up 48% to 17,000 sold and 4% to 14.4 million U.S. streams in the week ending April 11 after Combs performed it on the 54th Academy of Country Music Awards on April 7.

REBOOT’ SCOOT TO NO. 1

Brooks & Dunn soar in at No. 1 on Top Country Albums with Reboot (Arista Nashville/Sony Music Nashville), which bows with 31,000 equivalent album units earned (21,000 in traditional album sales) in the week ending April 11.

The all-star collaborative effort finds Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn covering their hits with the such artists as Luke Combs, Kacey Musgraves and Thomas Rhett. Eight of the set’s 12 songs are updates of the tandem’s 20 Hot Country Songs No. 1s, tallied between 1991 and 2005.

“When the stars just line up, and good things happen,” says Dunn. “The success of this record is a tribute to the power of collaboration, which allowed this record to sing.” Adds Brooks, “It is hard to believe after all these years that this music is at the top of Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart. I love these songs, and we owe a big thanks to all the amazing artists who brought them to life again. I don’t remember ever having more fun in the studio. Everybody says that, but I really think the proof is in the grooves!”

REBOOT is Brooks & Dunn’s seventh Top Country Albums No. 1 and first since their 2009 best-of package #1s and Then Some. On the all-genre Billboard 200, the collection arrives at No. 8, marking the pair’s 10th top 10 and breaking it out of a tie with Rascal Flatts for the most among country duos/groups in the chart’s 63-year history.

REBA RETURNS

Reba McEntire debuts at No. 4 on Top Country Albums with Stronger Than the Truth (Rockin R/Big Machine/BMLG), which opens with 21,000 equivalent album units (20,000 sold). The set launches as her 27th top 10, a sum that includes 13 No. 1s.

Dating to McEntire’s first week in the top 10 almost 33 years ago (April 19, 1986), when her debut leader, Whoever’s in New England, rose 11-8, she boasts the most top 10s among women; Dolly Parton and Trisha Yearwood follow with 14 each in that span. Among all artists, McEntire trails George Strait (37) and matches Alan Jackson for the most top 10s in that stretch.

IN THE TOP 10

Thomas Rhett blasts back to the Hot Country Songs top 10 — and a new peak (13-4) — with “Look What God Gave Her” (Valory). After he performed the song on the April 7 Academy of Country Music Awards and was named male vocalist of the year for a second time, the song surges by 136% to 19,000 sold and 36% to 7.8 million U.S. streams as it bounds 5-2 on Country Digital Song Sales and 18-7 on Country Streaming Songs. The track also bullets at No. 14 on Country Airplay, up 3% to 17.9 million in radio reach.

Plus, Old Dominion adds its seventh Hot Country Songs top 10 as “Make It Sweet” (RCA Nashville) climbs 12-9. The song advances 5-4 on Country Airplay (32.7 million, up 9%).

This column was written by Billboard senior director of charts Gary Trust.
CONGRATULATIONS

KELSEA BALLERINI

ON BECOMING THE
NEWEST MEMBER
OF THE
GRAND OLE OPRY!

BLACK RIVER
ENTERTAINMENT
WHAT HAPPENS IN A SMALL TOWN
SOMETHING THAT GOT AWAY
HERE TONIGHT
ON MY WAY TO YOU
KNOCKIN' BOOTS
THERE WAS THIS GIRL
MISS ME MORE
MISS ME MORE
WHISKEY GLASSES
RAISED ON COUNTRY
SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER
MISS ME MORE
WEEKLY CHART
THIS WEEK
AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS)
PLAYS
RANK
---
1. 2 30
2. 1 23
3. 4 40
4. 5 27
5. 6 35
6. 3 39
7. 7 44
8. 8 15
9. 9 38
10. 10 25
11. 11 33
12. 12 36
13. 13 32
14. 15 31
15. 16 41
16. 17 13
17. 18 9
18. 19 15
19. 20 24
20. 21 53
21. 22 14
22. 23 18
23. 24 9
24. 25 3
25. 26 24
26. 27 8
27. 28 9
28. 29 38
29. 30 23
THIS WEEK | LAST WEEK | WEEKS ON CHART
--- | --- | ---
35 | 33 | 21
32 | 31 | 39
35 | 32 | 20
36 | 34 | 10
35 | 34 | 19
39 | 36 | 26
39 | 37 | 21
40 | 39 | 11
40 | 41 | 24
43 | 42 | 22
42 | 43 | 7
43 | 42 | 7
45 | 44 | 13
46 | 45 | 12
47 | 46 | 18
48 | 47 | 12
49 | 48 | 3
50 | 49 | 8
51 | 50 | 3
52 | 51 | 2
53 | 52 | 5
54 | 53 | 12
55 | 54 | 2
56 | 55 | 7
57 | 56 | 5
58 | 57 | 4
59 | 58 | 7
60 | 59 | 4

**Title** | Imprint/Label | Artist
--- | --- | ---
**Breaker** | **Breaker** | **Breaker** | **Hot Shot Debut**
CLOSE TO YOU | Big Machine | Carly Pearce | 4.696 | +0.191 | 1743 | 205 | 26
WHAT WHISKEY DOES | Stoney Creek | Randy Houser Featuring Hillary Lindsey | 4.610 | -0.082 | 1653 | -70 | 28
LOVE YOU TOO LATE | Warner Bros/WMN | Cole Swindell | 4.484 | -0.152 | 1335 | 56 | 33
BACK TO LIFE | Big Machine | Rascal Flatts | 4.310 | +0.371 | 1507 | 69 | 31
EVERY LITTLE THING | Triple Tigers | Russell Dickerson | 3.984 | -0.120 | 1385 | 95 | 32
DAY DRUNK | Warner Bros/WEA | Morgan Evans | 3.942 | +0.148 | 1156 | 19 | 37
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU | Big Loud | Chris Lane | 3.742 | -0.096 | 930 | 1 | 40
THOUGHT ABOUT YOU | McGraw/Columbia Nashville | Tim McGraw | 3.682 | +0.234 | 1087 | 69 | 38
LADIES IN THE '90S | 19/Mercury | Lauren Alaina | 2.960 | +0.093 | 976 | 26 | 39
I DON'T REMEMBER ME (BEFORE YOU) | EMI Nashville | Brothers Osborne | 2.648 | +0.224 | 838 | 28 | 42
RE-ENTRY | Tree Vibez/Big Loud | HARDY | 2.413 | +0.086 | 824 | 43 | 43
LIVING | Capitol Nashville | Dierks Bentley | 2.325 | -0.267 | 715 | 56 | 47
GOOD VIBES | Warner Bros./WAR | Chris Janson | 2.282 | +0.198 | 779 | 115 | 45
NOTHING TO DOTOWN | Curb | Dylan Scott | 2.115 | +0.147 | 915 | 21 | 41
PRIED FOR YOU | Wide Open/RECORDS/Good Company | Matt Stell | 2.095 | +0.116 | 611 | 95 | 48
GIRL GOIN' NOWHERE | Atlantic/WR | Ashley McBryde | 2.089 | +0.490 | 740 | 64 | 46
MAKE ME WANTTO | Stoney Creek | Jimmie Allen | 2.002 | +0.414 | 808 | 79 | 44
MY MIRACLE | Arista Nashville | Brad Paisley | 1.707 | +0.247 | 533 | 54 | 49
TO AT | RCA Nashville | Ryan Hurd | 1.505 | +0.109 | 377 | 33 | 56
RIDIN' ROADS | Broken Bow | Dustin Lynch | 1.396 | +0.189 | 424 | 59 | 54
AFTER A FEW | Mercury | Travis Denning | 1.118 | +0.190 | 485 | 33 | 51
BETTER OFF GONE | Big Yellow Dog | Logan Mize | 1.086 | -0.155 | 424 | -11 | 55
ROCKIN' ALL NIGHT LONG | Buena Vista/Capitol Nashville | Adam Hambrick | 1.078 | +0.125 | 503 | -33 | 50
THE BULL | MCA Nashville | Kip Moore | 1.037 | +0.117 | 315 | 41 | 58
ALCOHOLYOU LATER | Riser House/Columbia Nashville | Mitchell Tenpenny | 0.943 | -0.011 | 434 | 18 | 53
IN BETWEEN | Triple Tigers | Scotty McCreery | 0.912 | +0.335 | 323 | 101 | 57
MR. LONELY | Big Machine | Midland | 0.908 | +0.398 | 219 | 100 | -
SOMEONE I USED TO KNOW | Southern Ground/Wheelhouse | Zac Brown Band | 0.906 | +0.054 | 444 | 32 | 52
HOUSTON, WE GOT A PROBLEM | River House/Columbia Nashville | Luke Combs | 0.796 | +0.033 | 78 | -1 | -

**New**

4/22

JORDAN DAVIS
Slow Dance In A Parking Lot
MCA Nashville

KOLT BARBER
Cowboy
Jerry Dunlap

LANCO
Rival
Arista Nashville

LUCAS HOGE
That’ll Be The Day
Forge

MARTY HEDDIN
A Little Less Lonely
Nightlife/Barefoot

ROB MAYS
Closer
AristoMedia

WILL CARTER
Good Bad Idea
Way Back

4/29

ADAM CRAIG
If You’re Lucky
Stoney Creek

HIGH VALLEY
Single Man
Atlantic/WEA

SOUTHERN HALO
Sunshine
Southern Halo

5/6

CHANCE MCKINNEY
Backyard
Study26/Big Machine

TENILLE ARTS
Call You Names
Reviver

TUCKER BEATHARD
Better Than Me
Big Machine

**Midland Mr. Lonely**

Following Midland’s first three Country Airplay entries — including the No. 3 hits “Drinkin’ Problem” and “Burn Out” — the group’s new single bows at No. 58 with 908,000 impressions.
BILLBOARD COUNTRY UPDATE
APRIL 15, 2019 | PAGE 8 OF 20

Country Airplay

MOST ADDED®

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE Imprint/Label</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>ADDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>KNOCKIN' BOOTS</td>
<td>Capitol Nashville</td>
<td>Luke Bryan</td>
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<td>GOD'S COUNTRY</td>
<td>Warner Bros./WMN</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
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<td>Warner Bros./WAR</td>
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<td>MacKen/Broken Bow</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
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<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE

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<td>MISS ME MORE</td>
<td>Black River</td>
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<td>GOOD AS YOU</td>
<td>Zone 4/RCA Nashville</td>
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<td>ALL TO MYSELF</td>
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MOST INCREASED PLAYS

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NEW AND ACTIVE

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<td>Atlantic/WMN</td>
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<td>Dillon Carmichael</td>
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<td>LOCASH</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>KISS THAT GIRL GOODBYE</td>
<td>Big Label</td>
<td>Aaron Watson</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>Jordan Davis</td>
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<td>Warren Morris Feat. Brothers Osborne</td>
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RECURRENTS

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<td>1</td>
<td>THIS IS IT</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>BEST SHOT</td>
<td>Stoney Creek</td>
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<td>GIRL LIKE YOU</td>
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BILLBOARD COUNTRY BOXSCORE

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<td>$158,833</td>
<td>JOHN PRINE</td>
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TEXAS REGIONAL RADIO REPORT

WEEK ENDING APRIL 14, 2019

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 817-283-7984. Copyright 2019, Texas Regional Radio Report
RILEY GREEN
#1 “THERE WAS THIS GIRL”
THANK YOU TO ALL THE BELIEVERS!

To all my friends at Country Radio:
Thank you for believing in me and my music. I still can’t believe “There Was This Girl” is the #1 song in the country this week! Can’t wait to thank you in person on the road this summer.

See you soon!

NEW SINGLE “IN LOVE BY NOW” IMPACTING 4/29
Genre-bending Big & Rich mistakenly became “gender-bending” Big & Rich when the duo was introduced as surprise national anthem singers as the Nashville Predators started their NHL playoff run against the Dallas Stars on April 10. From left: Big Kenny Alphin, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee, John Rich and Nashville Mayor David Briley.

EARL THOMAS CONLEY REMEMBERED

Thirty years, months after Earl Thomas Conley’s recording of “What She Is (Is a Woman in Love)” had hit No. 1 on Hot Country Songs, Conley still had reservations about whether he’d nailed the track.

He had changed some of the vocal rhythm and inflections, and it had become popular enough that fans mimicked his exact nuances as they sang along with the final recording. And yet, Conley still felt he owed an apology to songwriter Bob McDill for messing up the phrasing.

“He took it to another level,” McDill reflected later. “No apologies were required.”

Conley died April 10 in Nashville, leaving behind a carefully crafted body of work that was vastly underappreciated. From 1981-1991, he was a veritable hit machine, lofting 26 singles into the top 10 with an impressive 18 reaching No. 1, and yet it’s likely that a majority of contemporary country fans were unfamiliar with his name — let alone his work — when the news of his passing rippled across the genre’s websites. Many of those stories focused on his chart precedent — Don’t Make It Easy for Me was the first country album to yield four No. 1 singles — or on “Holding Her and Loving You,” a love-triangle ballad penned by Walt Aldridge and Tommy Brasfield that earned song of the year from the Nashville Songwriters Association International in 1983.

But Conley was an accomplished writer in his own right, able to elevate the wordplay that was in vogue at the time for country and to mine the complexities of songwriters. Tom T. Hall wrote that the listener could go years before bothering to unpack the lyrical specifics. With working producers Nelson Larkin and Randy Scruggs, Conley spun out a string of radio-ready gems featuring an identifiably suiﬂy twang. The arrangements and emotions were easily digested by casual listeners but highly rewarding for fans who dove deeper, earning Conley a reputation for making “thinking-man’s country.”

His work intersected with numerous artistic careers — he penned hits for Conway Twitty and Mel Street; picked up duet hits with Emmylou Harris, Gus Hardin, Anita Pointer and Keith Whitley; and even employed a couple of Elton John’s musicians (Dee Murray and Nigel Olsson) as background vocalists on some mid-’80s recordings.

Conley’s work likewise intertwined so well with mainstream country in the 1980s that he placed at least one hit-bound title on the chart in every single year that started 198_. He was adventurous enough — regularly employing Eagles-tinged harmonies and embedding “Somewhere Between Right and Wrong” with a lyric (essentially an electronic sax) — that he fit during the genre’s post-flavored Urban Cowboy years. But Conley was also country-centric enough that he continued without a hitch even after the format ﬂipped to New Traditionalism.

Conley was an important linchpin in those eras. The only apology required was for messing up the phrasing.

‘ROUND THE ROW

Valence Media promoted Deanna Brown to Billboard-Hollywood Reporter Media Group president from managing director ... CDX Records and label services relaunched under the direction of CDX president Joe Kelly ... Law ﬁrm O’Neil Hagaman promoted attorney Tiffany Wiggers to manager ... Universal Music Publishing Group Nashville signed singer-songwriter Catie Oﬀerman to a publishing deal ... SNG Music inked songwriter-producer Lee Starr to a publishing contract ... Texas-bred country artist Chris Colston joined the roster at Big Blind Management, owned in part by Randy Rogers ... Sam Sanders agreed to a management/booking contract with CN Productions ... Bluegrass band Nefesh Mountain added two new members: mandolinist David Goldberg and bass player Max Johnson ... Actor Dennis Quaid joined the media roster at Adkins Publicity, which will focus on his recording career ... Digital Data Exchange plans a May 24 seminar on expected developments in music metadata at Vanderbilt University in Nashville ... Society of Leaders in Development bestowed its previous fundraising record by generating $58,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters during its Music Row Madness event.

RADIO & RECORDS

Cory “Fitz” Fitzner takes over mornings at KNUC Seattle on April 22, returning to the daypart in the market two years after he ended a run at crosstown KKWF. The move accompanies Scott Mahalick’s arrival as director of brand content. Mahalick was previously Alpha Media executive vp programming. Fitzner, who hosts three syndicated shows for Sun Broadcast Group, also signed with Creative Artists Agency, represented by Michael Bryan ... Cumulus/Youngstown, Ohio, welcomes Charlie Connolly as operations manager for the cluster and PD for country WQKX, effective April 16. Connolly recently concluded a nine-year run as WGAR Cleveland PD ... Townsquare/Amarillo, Texas, hired Carolyn Carver as market president/chief revenue officer for the five-station cluster, including country KATP. She arrives from iHeart Media/Greensboro-Winston-Salem, N.C., where she was senior vp/sales for a station group that includes country WTQR ... Peter W. Burton was hired as Beasley/Las Vegas vp/market manager, leading a group that includes country KYCE. He was previously Converge Media/Huntington Beach, Calif., COO ... Cumulus/Memphis, Tenn., operations manager Danni Bruns re-signed with the cluster. Signals under her oversight include country WGKX ... Tammy Rugosa rejoined Premiere Networks’ Nashville oﬃce as country prep writer/producer after seven years away. Her last stop came as Rare Country senior correspondent/community manager ... WLHK Indianapolis parted ways with morning host Dave O’Brien after 14 years, The Indianapolis Star reported ... Brooks Williams signed on as KVOO Tulsa, Okla., midday host, according to InsideRadio.com. He arrives from KTTS Springfield, Mo., where he worked as assistant PD/music director/morning co-host ... Loyd Ford launched April 15 as WCYG Knoxville, Tenn., PD/afternoon host, InsideRadio.com reported. He moves to the market from Greenville, S.C., where he owned Rainmaker Pathway ... Alpha /Portland, Ore., promoted Cressy Walton to director of sales from general sales manager, according to Talkers.com. She replaces Amy Leimbach, who joined iHeartMedia/Phoenix as director of sales. Leimbach’s new responsibilities include country KNIX Phoenix.
MUSIC NOTES

Craig Morgan recently returned from his 11th USO tour, a seven-day trip that included shows in Germany, Qatar, Iraq and Italy. It marked the final senior military tour for vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Paul J. Selva. Morgan will continue to celebrate the armed forces by appearing May 21 when the Grand Ole Opry has its annual Salute to the Troops, appearing alongside Trace Adkins, Brantley Gilbert, Mark Wills, The Wild Feathers and Lee Greenwood. They’re not alone in recognizing America’s soldiers —

Justin Moore will perform his current single, “The Ones That Didn’t Make It Back Home,” at the 15th annual National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., on May 27.

The Country Music Association has enlisted two student groups from the Nashville School of the Arts to deliver the national anthem at separate stages on June 6, the opening day of CMA Music Festival in Nashville. BBR Music Group acts will handle the honors at Nissan Stadium on succeeding days: Lindsay Ell, on June 7; Runaway June, June 8; and Jimmie Allen, June 9. In adjacent festival news, Chely Wright, Daughtry and Harper Grace signed up for Ty Herndon’s June 6 Concert for Love & Acceptance, held in conjunction with GLAAD at the Wildhorse Saloon. And the Grand Ole Opry has scheduled Carrie Underwood, Chris Janson and Travis Tritt to play June 4 in advance of CMA Fest.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed a bill on April 11 that will earn Johnny Cash a place in the U.S. Capitol. A statue of the Man in Black is planned for the National Statuary Hall. His likeness will be entered along with Arkansas civil rights leader Daisy Bates.

Songwriter Brett James (“I Hold On,” “Jesus, Take the Wheel”) was once signed to Arista as an artist, but hasn’t played a show with a full band in two decades. That will change when he plays Nashville’s City Winery on May 2, kicking off with “Folsom Prison Blues.” The show, which features guests Glen Campbell, Jeannie C. Riley and Joe Tex, becomes the fifth episode aired.

April 16
- 1994 — Toby Keith breaks his right ankle during the last play of a University of Oklahoma alumni football game.
- 1969 — “Hello … I’m Johnny Cash.” Cash tapes the first of his ABC-TV weekly shows at the Ryman Auditorium, kicking off with “Folsom Prison Blues.” The show, which features guests Glen Campbell, Jeannie C. Riley and Joe Tex, becomes the fifth episode aired.

April 17
- 2017 — Capitol releases Jon Pardi’s “Heartache on the Dance Floor” to radio.

April 18
- 2010 — Lady Antebellum wins in three categories — top vocal group and single record and song of the year, for “Need You Now” — during the 45th Academy of Country Music Awards, held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.
- 2014 — Dan + Shay’s first album, Where It All Began, debuts at the top of the Billboard Top Country Albums chart.
- 1979 — Willie Nelson records “Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground” at the Jack Clement Studios in Nashville.

April 19
- 2014 — Dan + Shay’s first album, Where It All Began, debuts at the top of the Billboard Top Country Albums chart.
- 1979 — Willie Nelson records “Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground” at the Jack Clement Studios in Nashville.

April 20
- 2018 — EMI releases Brothers Osborne’s album Port Saint Joe.

April 21
- 2016 — Tim McGraw takes part in the pre-game ceremony and Lee Greenwood sings “God Bless the U.S.A.” during the second intermission as the Nashville Predators host an NHL playoff game at Bridgestone Arena. The Anaheim Ducks skate to a 4-1 victory.
- 1949 — Roy Rogers has his handprints embedded in concrete in front of Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. His horse, Trigger, also has its hoofprints cast for posterity.

April 22
- 1999 — Steve Wariner performs “Holes in the Floor of Heaven” at Centennial Park in Nashville during a memorial that honors victims of the Columbine High School shooting in Littleton, Colo.
- 1989 — Clint Black makes his Grand Ole Opry debut.

Source: RolandNote.com, the Ultimate Country Music Database

Top Headlines from billboard.com
Click on headlines below for more details

Deborah Dugan Selected To Succeed Neil Portnow As Recording Academy President/CEO: Sources

Amazon In Talks To Launch Ad-Supported Music Offering

What Makes A Great Podcast Studio? Here’s A Hint: You Won’t Be Able To Hear It

iHeartMedia’s IPO Plans: Music Industry Skeptics, Optimists Weigh In

Why RECORDS CEO Barry Weiss Is Betting on Country — And Unproven Talent — In His Latest Act

Warner Music Nashville artist Cale Dodds (center) visited with Denver radio when he opened for Chase Rice at the Grizzly Rose. He’s pictured with KYGO music director Patrick Knight (left) and WMN radio and streaming coordinator Justin Newell.
### Billboard Hot Country Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>One Week Ago</th>
<th>Two Weeks Ago</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Label(s)</th>
<th>Country Airplay Rank</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>BEAUTIFUL CRAZY</td>
<td>Luke Combs</td>
<td>River House/Columbia Nashville</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>TEQUILA</td>
<td>Dan + Shay</td>
<td>Warner Bros/War</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>HERE TONIGHT</td>
<td>Brett Young</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>LOOK WHAT GOD GAVE HER</td>
<td>Thomas Rhett</td>
<td>Warner Bros/War</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>GOD’S COUNTRY</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Warner Bros/War</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>EYES ON YOU</td>
<td>Chase Rice</td>
<td>Dack Janiels/Broken Bow</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>GOOD AS YOU</td>
<td>Kane Brown</td>
<td>Zone 4/RCA Nashville</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>SPEECHLESS</td>
<td>Dan + Shay</td>
<td>Warner Bros/War</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>MAKE IT SWEET</td>
<td>Morgan Wallen</td>
<td>Big Loud</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>WHISKEY GLASSES</td>
<td>Kelsea Ballerini</td>
<td>Black River</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>THERE WAS THIS GIRL</td>
<td>Riley Green</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>NIGHT SHIFT</td>
<td>Jon Pardi</td>
<td>Capitol Nashville</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>GIRL</td>
<td>Maren Morris</td>
<td>Columbia Nashville</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>TALK YOU OUT OF IT</td>
<td>Florida Georgia Line</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>LOVE AIN’T</td>
<td>Eli Young Band</td>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>ON MY WAY TO YOU</td>
<td>Cody Johnson</td>
<td>CCJ/WMN</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>LOVE WINS</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>LOVE SOMEONE</td>
<td>Brett Eldredge</td>
<td>Atlantic/War</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>CAUGHT UP IN THE COUNTRY</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins Featuring The Fisk Jubilee Singers</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>EVERY LITTLE HONKY TONK BAR</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>ALL TO MYSELF</td>
<td>Dan + Shay</td>
<td>Warner Bros/War</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>SOME OF IT</td>
<td>Eric Church</td>
<td>EM/Nashville</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**After the band debuted its new track at the 54th ACM Awards on April 7 and released its official video on April 11, it enters Hot Country Songs at No. 29, sparked by its No. 4 start on Country Digital Song Sales (14,000).**

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**Crowned entertainer of the year for the first time at the ACM Awards on April 7, Urban debuts at No. 38 on Hot Country Songs with the ballad (new at No. 9 on Country Digital Song Sales; 10,000 sold), which is a cover of Foy Vance’s 2016 song.**
### Hot Country Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)</th>
<th>IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>RAINBOW</td>
<td>Kacey Musgraves</td>
<td>R. COPPERMAN (Z. KALE, J. MOORE, A. GORL)</td>
<td>RCA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>THE BONES</td>
<td>Maren Morris</td>
<td>D. HUFF (B. GILBERT, R. AKINS, B. BERRYHILL, D. LYNCH)</td>
<td>COLUMBIA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU</td>
<td>Chris Lane</td>
<td>J. ALBRIGHT, M. MCDONALD, P. ROGERS</td>
<td>BIG LUCY</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>THE DAUGHTERS</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn With Kacey Musgraves</td>
<td>Z. CROWELL (J. MOORE, A. GORL)</td>
<td>ARISTA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>RAISED ON COUNTRY</td>
<td>Chris Young</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>RCA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>REARVIEW TOWN</td>
<td>Tenille Townes</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>COLUMBIA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SOMEBODY’S DAUGHTER</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn With Luke Combs</td>
<td>J. DEE, G. LEVOX, J. D. RONEY</td>
<td>ARISTA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>WHAT HAPPENS IN A SMALL TOWN</td>
<td>Brantley Gilbert &amp; Lindsay Ell</td>
<td>C. CROWDER, T. HUBBARD (P. BRUST, C. LUCAS, T. HUBBARD, C. CROWDER)</td>
<td>WARNER BROS./WMA</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>NOTHING TO DO TOWN</td>
<td>Cole Swindell</td>
<td>C. CROWDER, T. HUBBARD (P. BRUST, C. LUCAS, T. HUBBARD, C. CROWDER)</td>
<td>WARNER BROS./WMA</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>YOU LOVE TOO LATE</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>CAPITOL NASHVILLE</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>CLOSER TO YOU</td>
<td>Carly Pearce</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>BIG MACHINE</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>REDNECKERS</td>
<td>Dan + Shay Featuring Kelly Clarkson</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>WARNER BROS./WAR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>BUY MY OWN DRINKS</td>
<td>Runaway June</td>
<td>D. HUFF (H. MULHOLAND, J. JUDD, N. E. BURKE, J. LINDSEY, J. KEAR)</td>
<td>WHEELHOUSE</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>TO A T</td>
<td>Ryan Hurd</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>RCA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>EVERY LITTLE THING</td>
<td>Russell Dickerson</td>
<td>C. CROWDER, T. HUBBARD (P. BRUST, C. LUCAS, T. HUBBARD, C. CROWDER)</td>
<td>TRIPLE TIDE</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>COVER ME UP</td>
<td>Morgan Wallen</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>BIG LUCY</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BACK TO LIFE</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>WHEELHOUSE</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>FEELS LIKE A PARTY</td>
<td>LOCASH</td>
<td>J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>WHEELHOUSE</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I HOPE</td>
<td>Gabby Barrett</td>
<td>Z. KALE, J. MOORE, A. GORL</td>
<td>BAD TO THE BONE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Country Market Watch

**A Weekly National Music Sales Report**

**YEAR-TO-DATE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALBUMS</th>
<th>DIGITAL ALBUMS*</th>
<th>DIGITAL TRACKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>302,000</td>
<td>109,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
<td>268,000</td>
<td>79,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
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**Physical**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,861,000</td>
<td>2,134,000</td>
<td>-25.4%</td>
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**Digital**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,154,000</td>
<td>974,000</td>
<td>-15.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

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**Country Chart**

For inquiries about any Nielsen Music data, please contact Josh Bennett at 615-807-1338 or josh.bennett@nielsen.com

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*For week ending April 11, 2019. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by Nielsen Music.*

*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.*
### Billboard Country Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Artist/Song Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taylor Swift - “Folklore”</td>
<td>Big Machine Records</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “when the party’s over”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “Bad Guy”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “Therefore I Am”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “ilomilo”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard Streaming Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Artist/Song Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “when the party’s over”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Billie Eilish - “Bad Guy”</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
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### Billboard Digital Song Sales

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When Scotty McCreery went out for a recent dinner with his wife, Gabi, the restaurant owner, who counts himself a fan, decided to play McCreery’s first album, *Clear As Day*, in tribute to the singer.

It was a sentimental move, but it was also jarring for McCreery, who found himself reliving a portion of his life when he hadn’t yet figured out his identity.

“It wasn’t tough to listen to,” he says, “but holy cow, it’s a lot different now.”

McCreery, of course, came to prominence in 2011 as a green 17-year-old *American Idol* contestant with a preternaturally deep voice and an affinity for low-pitched country songs. Eight years later, he now sees the halfway point from then to now — the in-between spot in his national journey — as a key moment in which he began edging his way from a raw, unvarnished talent to a polished, convincing storyteller.

“I don’t know if it was forced twang or if I had just a lot of twang in my voice,” he says. “I feel like now, I’m just singing. I don’t know if I felt like I had to be country when I was 17, but I feel like now I’m just kind of being me.”

In 2015, a 21-year-old McCreery documented his life in a personal way. Just weeks after his grandfather died, he paid tribute by writing “Five More Minutes” at the Pool House, a studio owned by producer Frank Rogers (Bradh Paisley, Darius Rucker). One week later, he came back to Rogers’ place for a songwriting session with Jessi Alexander (“I Drive Your Truck,” “Turnin’ Me On”) and Jonathan Singleton (“You’re If You Want It,” “Why Don’t We Just Dance”), and they spent a substantial amount of time talking about his then-current lifestyle as a college student who shared a house with a few other 20-somethings but would jet away periodically for a concert or to walk an awards-show carpet.

“Scotty was at a big transitional period in his life,” recalls Rogers. “People were looking at him one way, and in his head he was heading another way, but he was kind of in between a lot of things. It just kind of came from natural conversation.”

That “in between” phrase had a ring to it, and they eyed it as the title they were working toward. The opening images — “A little bit ballcap/Little bit of pearl-snap button-down shirt” — showed the competing pieces of his personality: casual and dressed-up, but an understated, regular guy either way. All four writers began playing with the contrasts in their own personalities, and operated for a time as an underground casino. The musicians seemed to share McCreery’s feelings about “In Between,” too.

“I love writing ‘who I am’-type songs,” says Alexander. “It’s hard to do without the artist in the room. You don’t know exactly their story. So I remember looking to Scotty like, ‘Is that OK? Can we say that? You OK with that? Is that real? Is that true for you?’ Every line in that song went through that filter.”

The second couplet, which balances “big-city concrete” and “small-town dirt,” rang true for McCreery, who grew up on the outskirts of Raleigh, N.C. It also made sense as an image for a big chunk of the country audience, which has transformed from mostly rural listeners to a population centered in the suburbs: in between the city and the country.

Still, they needed a reason for McCreery to bullet-point the opposites in his personality. That came in the pre-chorus, as they established a conversation with a woman who is trying to determine whether he might be willing to turn his “me” viewpoint into a “we” perspective. The pre-chorus thus unintentionally mimics the song’s “In Between” title while providing its subtle glue.

“That is a very important line of the song, and it’s in between the verse and the chorus,” says McCreery. “That’s actually pretty cool.”

It was McCreery who provided the setup line near the end of the chorus — “I ain’t all holy water/And I ain’t all Jim Beam”— that keyed his own personal story into country’s long-established dichotomy: Saturday-night sinner and Sunday-morning saint. It put a bow on all those contradictions.

“It makes him more complex in some ways because a guy that is just either/or, you’re only dealing with a couple of colors in the palette,” surmises Alexander. “If you’re in between, you can take a little red, a little blue, a little green, a little pink, a little purple. It’s just everything. I think it makes you more interesting.”

They recorded a guitar/vocal demo, and Rogers packaged it with four or five other songs, including “Five More Minutes,” for a demo session. As “In Between” took shape, he carved out a light start with at least one guitar or other stringed instrument plucking at each eighth note to create separation from “Five More Minutes.”

“In Between” and “Five More Minutes” were Scotty’s favorite songs, and going in, you could really tell he wanted those to be singles,” says Rogers. “I wanted to make sure that if they were back-to-back singles that ‘In Between’ had a little more movement to it.”

They recorded the master at The Castle, a studio in suburban Franklin, Tenn., that was founded in part by gangster Al Capone during the Depression and operated for a time as an underground casino. The musicians seemed to share McCreery’s feelings about “In Between,” too.

“Some songs just mean a little more than others, and this was one that folks around the room were kind of looking around and they were smiling at each other while they were playing it,” recalls McCreery. “Once we came back and listened to it, it was just fist bumps and that kind of thing going around the room.”

It was definitely bumpy for McCreery when he recorded his final vocal. It was one of the first songs where he started exploring his upper register and saving the lower notes to maximize their impact. The syllables fall in a way that requires him to use some power in the most vulnerable range of his voice.

“The ‘I’m in between’ — that long ‘eeeen’ note — it’s just a different note to sing,” he says. “It’s very brassy, an in-the-front-of-your-face kind of thing, which isn’t how I normally sing.”

McCreery was still signed to Mercury Nashville at the time, but the label’s reaction varied from the musicians’ response — and from McCreery’s. The company selected “Southern Belle” over “Five More Minutes” and “In Between” as a single, and when it stopped at No. 45 on Country Airplay, he parted ways with the label. Eventually, he was able to purchase some of his unreleased masters, and he independently dropped “Five More Minutes” in tandem with Triple 8 Management. Triple Tigers picked him up as its second artist and pushed that song (and follow-up “This Is It,” which he penned for his engagement) to No. 1.

Triple Tigers released “In Between” to country radio via PlayMPE on March 18. It topped the New and Active list dated April 13 and debuts on the Country Airplay chart dated April 20 at No. 57. McCreery obviously hopes it might become a third straight No. 1.

“I’ve always believed in it from the minute we wrote it,” he says. “It’s a song I feel like tells folks who I am, and I feel like a lot of folks will listen to this song and think, ‘Man, that kind of sounds like me.’ You never know what’s going to catch on or not. That’s TBD, but I just believe in it. I’m excited that it’s getting its chance.”

Scotty McCreery Paints From A Full Palette With ‘In Between’
ON MY WAY TO YOU

RAISED ON COUNTRY

REARVIEW TOWN

HERE TONIGHT

LEAVE AIN'T

MISS ME MORE

ON MY WAY TO YOU

BEAUTIFUL CRAZY

LOVE WINS

WHISKEY GLASSES

LOOK WHAT GOD GAVE HER

LOVE SOMEONE

EVERY LITTLE HONKY TONK BAR

RUMOR

TALK YOU OUT OF IT

GIRL

SOME OF IT

GOD'S COUNTRY

CAUGHT UP IN THE COUNTRY

WHAT HAPPENS IN A SMALL TOWN

RAISED ON COUNTRY

REARVIEW TOWN

BUY MY OWN DRINKS

KNOCKIN' BOOTS

ALL TO MYSELF

RIGHOU MCA Nashville

WHAT WHISKEY DOES

LIVING
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<td>** Hot Shot Debut ** 93 0.354</td>
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<td>MAKE ME WANT TO Stoney Creek</td>
<td>Jimmie Allen</td>
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**CHARTS LEGEND**

**RANKINGS**
Country Airplay is ranked by total audience impressions for the week ending Sunday based on monitored airplay of 149 stations by Nielsen BDS. Audience totals on the chart are derived, in part, using certain Arbitron Inc. copyrighted Persons 12+ audience estimates (under license © 2019, Arbitron Inc.) Country Indicator is tabulated using reported playlists and Nielsen BDS-monitored airplay at 109 stations, ranked by total plays.

**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%. Bullets are awarded on Country Indicator to titles gaining plays or remaining flat from the previous week.

**TIES**
On Country Airplay, if two songs are tied in total audience, the song with the larger increase in audience is placed first. On Country Indicator, if two songs are tied in total plays, the song with the larger increase in plays is placed first.

**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 week. On Country Indicator, descending, non-bulleted titles below No. 10 are moved to recurrent after 20 weeks or if they post a third consecutive week of decline in plays after 10 weeks.

**MOST INCREASED AUDIENCE/PLAYS**
Most Increased Audience on Country Airplay and Most Increased Plays on Country Indicator list the songs with the greatest week-to-week increases in total audience or plays, respectively.

**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 Index

**Title** | **Publishing/Licensing Org.** | **(Songwriter)** | **Chart Position**
--- | --- | --- | ---
**A**

**GIRL** | **EVERY LITTLE THING** | **SONGWRITERS, ASCAP** | **30**

**BEAUTIFUL CRAZY** | **SONGWRITERS, ASCAP** | **31**

**BACK TO LIFE** | **SONGWRITERS, ASCAP** | **32**

**B**

**H**

**I**

**J**

**K**

**L**

**M**

**O**

**P**

**Q**

**R**

**S**

**T**

**W**

**X**

**Y**

**Z**

---
**Billboard Hot Country Songs Index**

**A**

**GIRL GOIN’ NOWHERE** Song: *Some Song Factory*, BMI/Universal Music, LLC, ASCAP (Jennifer, Jared) 47

**COUNTRY GODDAMN** Song: *(Request A Group*, BMI/Universal Music, LLC, ASCAP (Theo Bourne, Don) 48

**ALCOHOL YOU LATER** Song: *Snow* Country, ASCAP (Charles, Don) 52

**THE BACK LIF** Song: *Music Management*, BMI/Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/You Want How Much Of Me, BMI/SongFactory (A.McBryde, J.Bussey) 59

**BETTER OFF GONE** Song: *The Dog Music*, BMI/Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/You Want How Much Of Me, BMI/SongFactory (A.McBryde, J.Bussey) 60


**I DON'T REMEMBER ME (BEFORE YOU)** Song: *Al R. Baker*, BMI/Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/You Want How Much Of Me, BMI/SongFactory (A.McBryde, J.Bussey) 61

**KNOCKIN' BOOT** Song: *BBR Music, ASCAP/BMG Gold Songs*, BMI/ASCAP (J. Young, B. Sprague, M. Stikeleather) 56

**LOVE WINS** Song: *Carrie-Underwood Music*, BMI/Universal Music, LLC, ASCAP (D. D. Dennison, K. Armer, J. Weaver) 31

**REVIEW TOWN** Song: *Songs Of Peer Ltd., ASCAP*, BMI/Mike Curb Music, BMI/Curb Songs, ASCAP (D. C. McReynolds) 40

**REDNECK** Song: *Buck Light Beer Music*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 29


**ROCKIN’ ALL NIGHT** Song: *Old Red Shoulder*, BMI/Mike Curb Songs, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 30

**SOMEBODY’S DAUGHTER** Song: *You’re On A Roll*, BMI/Management (UK) Ltd., PRS/You Want How Much Of Me, BMI/SongFactory (A. McBryde, J. Bussey) 57

**SOMEONE TO KNOW** Song: *Rory Cochran*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 31

**TALK YOU OUT OF IT** Song: *Silver midi*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 27

**THERE WAS THIS GIRL** Song: *Glen Payton Publishing*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 28

**THOUGHT ABOUT YOU** Song: *Women-Terre*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 32

**WHAT HAPPENS IN A SMALL TOWN** Song: *Buck Light Beer Music*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 26

**WHAT MAKES YOU TALK** Song: *Buck Light Beer Music*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 26

**WHISKEY GLASSES** Song: *Warner-Terre*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 25

**WISH YOU WERE HERE** Song: *Buck Light Beer Music*, BMI/ASCAP/Big Loud Music, BMI/Big Loud Songs, BMI/Big Loud Music (N. Thrasher, N. Thrasher) 24
On April 19, 1969, Glen Campbell’s “Galveston” jumped 7-1 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart for its first of three weeks in the top spot. It followed his first two leaders, “I Wanna Live” and “Wichita Lineman,” in less than a year’s span.

Penned by Jimmy Webb, “Galveston” became one of Campbell’s signature hits. It also reached No. 4 on the all-genre Billboard Hot 100 and was released as the lead single from his same-named LP, which led Top Country Albums for 11 weeks.

After first appearing on Hot Country Songs in 1966, Campbell notched five No. 1s among 26 top 10s. He made his most recent visit in 2014 with the No. 21-peaking “I’m Not Gonna Miss You,” a chronicle of his battle with Alzheimer’s disease after he was diagnosed in 2011. During his career, the Delight, Ark., native earned a reputation as a proficient guitarist, as well as a TV host and actor; he won a Golden Globe for his supporting actor role in the 1969 film True Grit. Campbell was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2005. He died on Aug. 8, 2017, at age 81.

—JIM ASKER