



**ACM  
WEEK**  
with  
**RADIO  
WINNERS**  
and  
**SAM  
HUNT**



**BRAD  
PAISLEY**  
THE INTERVIEW

**RATINGS &  
REVENUE  
INSIDE!**



**COUNTRY**  
**AIRCHECK**

JUNE 2015

**JOHN COUGAR**

**JOHN DEERE**

**JOHN 3:16**

**KEITH URBAN**

DEBUT SINGLE FROM HIS FORTHCOMING ALBUM

**AIRPLAY NOW!**

His Debut Red Bow Records Single...

*Craig Campbell*

# TOMORROW TONIGHT

## IMPACTING RADIO NOW!

"It's an undeniable hit" *-Tim Richards/KMLE*

"His new music has kicked it up even further...WOW...HITS! An evolution that can't be ignored!" *-TJ McEntire/KBEQ*

"QDR listeners tell us time and time again they love his songs--Every research project we do, Craig Campbell comes back a winner." *-Lisa McKay/WQDR*

"His music serves as the perfect balance with today's country. Plus he's one heck of a nice guy!" *-John Shomby/WGH*

"You'll have zero regrets playing 'Tomorrow Tonight' unless your competitor airs it yesterday!" *-Bill Black/WKSJ*

"Craig is EVERYTHING GREAT about Country Music. He Lives it. 'Tomorrow Tonight' is next level and a definitive love song relating to all levels of love and celebrating being in that moment."

*-Gator Harrison/WUSY*

"It's Craig at his core but at another level."

*-Mark Grantin/KTTS*





# (BE A...) SHOW GROW PRO

**S**ummer is concert season – fairs, festivals, tours and more, which means it’s the perfect time for stations to be thinking about their own events ... in 2016. Concerts are an increasingly important source of revenue for radio and, in at least one company, are a pillar of the business model. Even for stations with one big annual show, the effort can consume months of attention. Country Aircheck tapped show grow pros across the industry for thoughts on succeeding in an increasingly competitive landscape.

The dream of a stand-alone station stepping into a crowded festival marketplace isn’t completely far-fetched. Leighton/St. Cloud OM and KZPK PD **Matt Senne** is in the home stretch on their July 25 show, which grew from a small station event into what is now called *FireFest*. “We’re now in our ninth year of booking and executing that with the fire department,” he says. “We’ve ascended to a festival that has gone big-time.” Darius Rucker and Chris Young headline this year.

“Matt’s station has done an amazing job growing from small baby acts in a club to the big summer show they do,” says William Morris Endeavor agent **Becky Gardenhire**. “We love when radio stations really get that and we can work together to help listener-

ship and branding in the market. But it’s definitely a growing business and there’s a learning curve. Those that are more established have the advantage. New ones have to know what the competition is – fairs, festivals and even smaller clubs and theaters. It goes back to how much the consumer can spend. If it’s sponsor-driven, that’s helpful.”

And patience may be required. “If you think you’re going to make \$100,000 in NTR right off the bat, well, it depends on the market,” Senne says. “For us, having so many volunteers allowed us to be profitable from the beginning because we didn’t have to pay a bunch

of labor. And keep your eyes open to how much work there is. Don’t be afraid to start small and build off that.”

#### FEST PRACTICES

Outgoing WKIS/Miami PD **Ken Boesen** has spent the last eight years helping orchestrate the now-30-year-old *Kiss Country Chili Cook-Off*, and was previously involved in big events at WPOC/Baltimore and KSKS/Fresno. “You can have different models,” he says. “You can get a big headliner or spread it out with midlevel acts. We always went for a monster headliner.”

Successful festivals make money in many areas: tickets, vendors, sponsors and of course, beer. “Tickets are worth a lot because once you’re sold out you can do ticket activations at a nightclub or Best Buy,” Boesen says. “If you can get a few hundred people to show up, that’s of real value. One of the things we sell is the ticket outlet to a local supermarket. Stores will pay a premium to get five or eight thousand tickets people have to go into their store to buy.”

“The biggest lesson is you can’t just have a concert or festival,” Boesen continues. “You have to attack it from all angles and you need multiple revenue sources. If you’re incurring all the costs, putting the show on yourself, you have to get all the revenue streams. If you’re playing at a venue that is absorbing some of the costs, maybe you



**Matt Senne**

# (BE A...) SHOW GROW PRO

don't have to have all the beer sales, for instance. But if it's just you, you need every stream you can get to make it work.

"Watching Jim Dolan's team at WPOC or Carole Bowen at WKIS, they squeeze dollars from so many places. If they didn't, we'd barely be profitable, or not profitable at all. And nobody's in business to break even."

## GO PRO

Perhaps the best tip is to hire the experts. "I don't know how to fly planes, run radio stations or write for Country Aircheck," Live Nation President/Country Touring **Brian O'Connell** says. "I do one thing. So it's usually a really good idea to pick up the phone and call somebody who does this for a living. That allows you to continue to be a great station and a great sales department."

One strategy is to bring an existing tour into the tent. "The radio show is a sales vehicle and the great ones bridge the gap between that and maintaining the integrity of the show," O'Connell says. "Rather than smash together something they want, they'll take the guts of an existing tour and augment it with a few baby acts. That's a win for everyone."

"You have to be sure you can put on a show," Gardenhire adds. "Logistically it's not as easy as some people think. That's why there are professional promoters and producers out there. When a station or someone else puts on a show and doesn't really know what they're doing, you end up with an unhappy artist and an unhappy buyer. So one of our first questions is, 'Who is providing production?' It can even be the GM at the local arena. You may not want to pay the cost, but you'll save on last-minute spending. It will be worth it in the end."

Senne says booking agents are a tremendous resource. "Know your agent and get them a budget in enough time to put routing together," he says. "They're talking to all the other shows, too. They know the needs and wants in your radius and are a huge ally. You want to have good relationships. Be open and honest about everything, including your budget. Don't try to sneak one by them."

Those calls can avoid train wrecks. "We track our clients and others outside of our agency," Gardenhire says. "We can look and tell you if there's a new festival down the street – even if they're not in the same genre. It's important to have an idea of how to compete with that."

For example: "Someone came to us in April wanting to put on a new festival in a competitive time-frame," she says. "We called the local stations who told us that the new event could buy advertising, but they wouldn't get full support because it would be competing with other events. We did that research and, ultimately, that show didn't happen."

## SQUARE ROUTE

For one company largely associated with radio, festivals and other live events are much more than NTR. "We look at our company and its content as existing in a wheel in which radio reinforces the live component, which reinforces digital, which reinforces radio." That's Townsquare EVP/Live Events **Dhruv Prasad** discussing the company's three-spoke strategy.

Among 312 stations and upwards of 500 events drawing 600,000 fans annually, Townsquare is strongest in country. In fact, the name of the company's country brand is drawn from WYRK/Buffalo's annual *Taste Of Country* concert established more than a decade ago. "When we bought Regent, we took that brand and made it the centerpiece of our entire country music offering," Prasad says. Key festivals include the *Taste Of Country Music Festival* at Hunter Mountain, NY; *Country Jam* in Grand Junction, CO; and *WeFest* in Detroit Lakes, MN.

"It has played out largely the way we expected, though I'm not sure we thought there would be quite as much competition as there's been over the last two years," Prasad says of the company's live events strategy. "When we started acquiring or launching events, there weren't a lot of other people focused on it. Certainly no other media companies. By and large it was independent promoters and shows that had evolved from radio concerts. We had a first-mover advantage when we started focusing on festivals in 2011."

Four years in the field have yielded a crop of les-

sons. "To some extent, it's about having a short memory and a strong stomach," Prasad says. "Someone told me early on that 25% of live events are dumb winners you didn't think would work out. Another 25% are dumb losers, things you had conviction about but for whatever reason don't do well. And where you make your money is the other 50%."

## DOLLARS & SENSE

Everyone interviewed for this story said looking for shortcuts is not sound strategy. "Stations always think they can get a deal," Boesen says. "And while you might be able to get a friendly deal, you're not going to get a steal. If you're not coming with big dollars for the highest level acts, you're not going to get there. I'm talking several hundred thousands – serious, serious money upward of seven figures. And if you're going to book midlevel and new folks, you have to be ready to do it on a night with less impact. Sunday afternoon or a Monday-Tuesday."

Gardenhire says expectations from radio are sometimes inflated. "There are still people who call thinking they will get an artist drastically less than what they're going for. The other one we see is looking for an artist in your price range and expecting them to fill a stadium when that artist is just not going to be able to do that. We don't want to put you or the artist in that spot. That doesn't do anyone any good."

"It's important to know there is a value to that artist in that market, a lot of which depends on their history," Gardenhire continues. "Let's utilize that to the radio station's advantage, but also be competitive. Artists make most of their money on touring, so let's not cannibalize that."

An industry exec who asked not to be named says it's becoming more prevalent for stations to seek a free show from a tour's baby act – sometimes on the day of

the tour stop. "It puts artists in an awful position and forces everyone to make a decision. We're the only format that holds our own artists hostage."

Prasad asserts that stations or companies pressing for discounts or freebies are wearing out their welcome. "Artists, managers and agents appreciate that we come to the table from the standpoint of a promoter," he says. "We don't really look for favors. When we first started, artists came to us in a spirit of partnership and we met them on that same basis. To have a sustainable live events business, which we have created, you have to play it straight. Those tactics only lead to resentment on the part of the manager, agent, label or whoever got browbeat into it."

## HOME TEAM THIS COUNT

If there's a bright star in the fortunes of those seeking to launch or expand station events, it's found in the attitudes of those who create and market the music they play. "One thing that really allowed us to grow this over the last several years is the way the country music community embraces radio, more so than any other genre," Prasad says. "Draw your own conclusions on how successful country is versus other formats. That also highlights the power and relevance of radio in a fragmented media environment."

He illustrates, "Early on – when we had no track record as a promoter and producer of multi-day festivals – artists, labels, managers and agents saw what we were trying to do and embraced it. What we really had was the calling card of radio and because the industry cared so much about radio and companies like ours, they really rallied around us. I remember Lady A's Charles Kelley saying onstage at the first *Taste of Country Festival* that he wanted this event to be around for 30 years. We work across a lot of different formats and you just don't see that anywhere else."

CAC



**Brian O'Connell**



**Ken Boesen**



**Becky Gardenhire**



**Dhruv Prasad**

The booming festival market has many wondering about sustainability. Is there an end in sight? "That is the million-dollar question," says WME's **Becky Gardenhire**. "Next year will be the test as there are a lot of shows coming on board. The market is getting very competitive and there's a lot of speculation, but none of us really know the answer."

Whether it's radio stations or live events companies, festival promoters are as eager to open the gates as fans seem to be to run through them. "We've been successful and a lot of people are going to see that model and try their own thing," says Leighton/St. Cloud's **Matt Senne**. "A town about an hour away from us booked Montgomery Gentry, who we had last year, for their own fire fighter benefit festival the same day as ours."

# Fest Is Full?

In the short term, the phenomenon is draining the talent pool and filling artist coffers. "When there weren't as many festivals, it was a lot easier to get a headliner, as well as emerging bands and artists that would fill out a lineup," says Townsquare's **Dhruv Prasad**. "It is a seller's market for artists right now."

More than just rising prices for talent buyers, routing is a concern. "There are a lot of regional festivals and every one has four, five, nine artists that all have a radius clause," says WKIS/Miami's **Ken Boesen**.

Senne says the problem is compounded in his area. "WeFest, WinStock, Country Jam, Country Fest, Moondance – we're smack dab in the middle of all those radius clauses. Plus, a lot of them are advertisers with the station and we can't make them mad. They're allies and friends. So we talk about who they're going after and who we're going after. We don't want to get in a bidding war and we don't want to irritate them."

The larger issue is whether the bubble of the last few years will pop. "It's been exploding for a lot longer than that," says Live Nation's **Brian O'Connell**. "If you looked at it like the stock market, since the late '90s it hasn't been going down too much. Fairs are in the hundreds of years old. A lot of these festivals been around 30-plus years, they've all just got better publicists now. And they're popping up in bigger markets. Are there too many? The fans will tell us."

If growth continues, there could be consequences for other types of shows. "Will a festival draw people away from a hard ticket date at an arena?" Gardenhire asks. "If they drive an hour or two to a festival grounds and see 12 artists, will it knock them out of going to see six concerts? How far does that dollar stretch?"

So far, O'Connell isn't seeing those signs. "Someone may not want to spend three days living in an RV, but may want to see Joe Blow playing the local amphitheater," he says. "One doesn't preclude the other. The problem will come when you start building festivals that are too expensive. There is a price point, a value people are looking for. We haven't exceeded that yet. When you start hearing of cancellations, when they start going away, that's going to send a lightning bolt through everybody."

In the meantime, the audience wins. "These are great events and there aren't many other ways to see so many great artists in one place," Prasad says. "It makes it harder to be a promoter, but for fans it's almost an embarrassment of riches."



# KELSEA BALLERINI

“LOVE ME LIKE YOU MEAN IT”



- ▶ “Love Me Like You Mean It” Top 5 at Country Radio and Climbing
- ▶ The new CD *The First Time* is a Top 5 Debut on the Billboard Country Charts
- ▶ Each track on *The First Time* is written or co-written by Kelsea
- ▶ Performed “Love Me Like You Mean It” live on TODAY 
- ▶ Kelsea Ballerini is one of CMT’s Next Women of Country
- ▶ CMT Award Nominee for “Breakthrough Video” 
- ▶ 2015’s “One To Watch”

THE HUFFINGTON POST  
  
 



Thank you country radio!

## ON TOUR NOW

June 4	Bangor, ME	w/ Lady Antebellum
June 6	Pittsburgh, PA	w/ Taylor Swift
June 12	Nashville, TN	CMA Fest
June 13	Southaven, MI	w/ Lady Antebellum
June 14	Rogers, AR	w/ Lady Antebellum
June 19	Vineland, CO	w/ Toby Keith
June 26	Cadott, WI	w/ Tim McGraw
July 23	Monte Vista, CO	w/ Trace Adkins
July 29	Paso Robles, CA	w/ Keith Urban
July 31	Sweet Home, OR	w/ Dierks Bentley
Aug 14	Alberdeen, SD	w/ Brett Eldredge
Aug 15	Imperial, NE	w/ Brett Eldredge
Aug 19	Kallispel, MT	w/ Kristian Bush
Aug 22	St. Joseph, MO	w/ Charlie Daniels Band
Aug 27	Charleston, WV	w/ Sam Hunt
Aug 28	St. Paul, MN	w/ Keith Urban
Aug 29	Grand Island, NE	w/ Keith Urban
Sept 6	Filer, ID	w/ Jerrod Niemann
Sept 12	Greenville, SC	w/ Lady Antebellum

BLACK RIVER  
ENTERTAINMENT

POWER UP

# Olivia LANE

## You Part 2

"Trust me when I say, I think Olivia Lane is one of the brightest stars out there!" – *Bill Reed, KTST/Oklahoma City, OK*

"I think Olivia Lane could be part of the 15% played on the radio...heck she might even expand it to 16 or 17%." – *Keith Hill, consultant*

"Olivia Lane is one of Country's bright future stars." – *Dave Marsh, WFMB/Springfield, IL*

"Olivia Lane has a great presence on stage and on the record too. It cuts through." – *Tim Roberts, WYCD/Detroit, MI*

"Olivia Lane IS that girl, spectacular and extremely talented, Olivia IS the next BIG THING!!!!" – *Captain Jack, Renegade Radio Nashville*

"I dig it! I dig her! I think she's really talented! Honestly!" – *Mike Kennedy, KBEQ/Kansas City, MO*

### TOUR

JUNE 26 - Springfield, IL

JUNE 27 - Muscle Shoals, AL

JUNE 28 - FT Collins, CO

JULY 1 - Buffalo, NY

JULY 2 - Syracuse, NY

JULY 4 - Frederick, MD

JULY 23 - Minot, ND w/Kip Moore

JULY 26 - Holland, MI

AUG 4 - Davenport, IA w/Kip Moore

AUG 6 - Lincoln, NE w/Easton Corbin

AUG 12 - Owensboro, KY

AUG 21 - Caldwell Rodeo, Boise, ID

OCT 6 - Ft Wayne, IN

OCT 8 - Long Island, NJ

OCT 23-30 - Miami, FL  
w/Neal McCoy, Joe Nichols,  
Trace Adkins, Thompson Square  
and more

[OliviaLane.com](http://OliviaLane.com)



# Country Radio HALL OF FAME

*KAJA morning co-host **Randy Carroll** spends his days playing the music of Country's biggest stars. But ask anyone in San Antonio and they'll tell you Carroll is the one who's famous. He's been on the air at KAJA for more than 32 years and is a member of the San Antonio Radio Hall of Fame. Former PD Don Gosselin explains why Carroll is more than deserving of this year's Country Radio Hall Of Fame honor. "What I love about Randy is his true passion for his family, great music, and crafting an entertaining morning show every day," says Gosselin. "He comes to work looking for feedback and working on ways to improve. He is truly never satisfied and it's amazing to see him at events. He has been a part of people's lives for so long, he is a true celebrity in this area."*

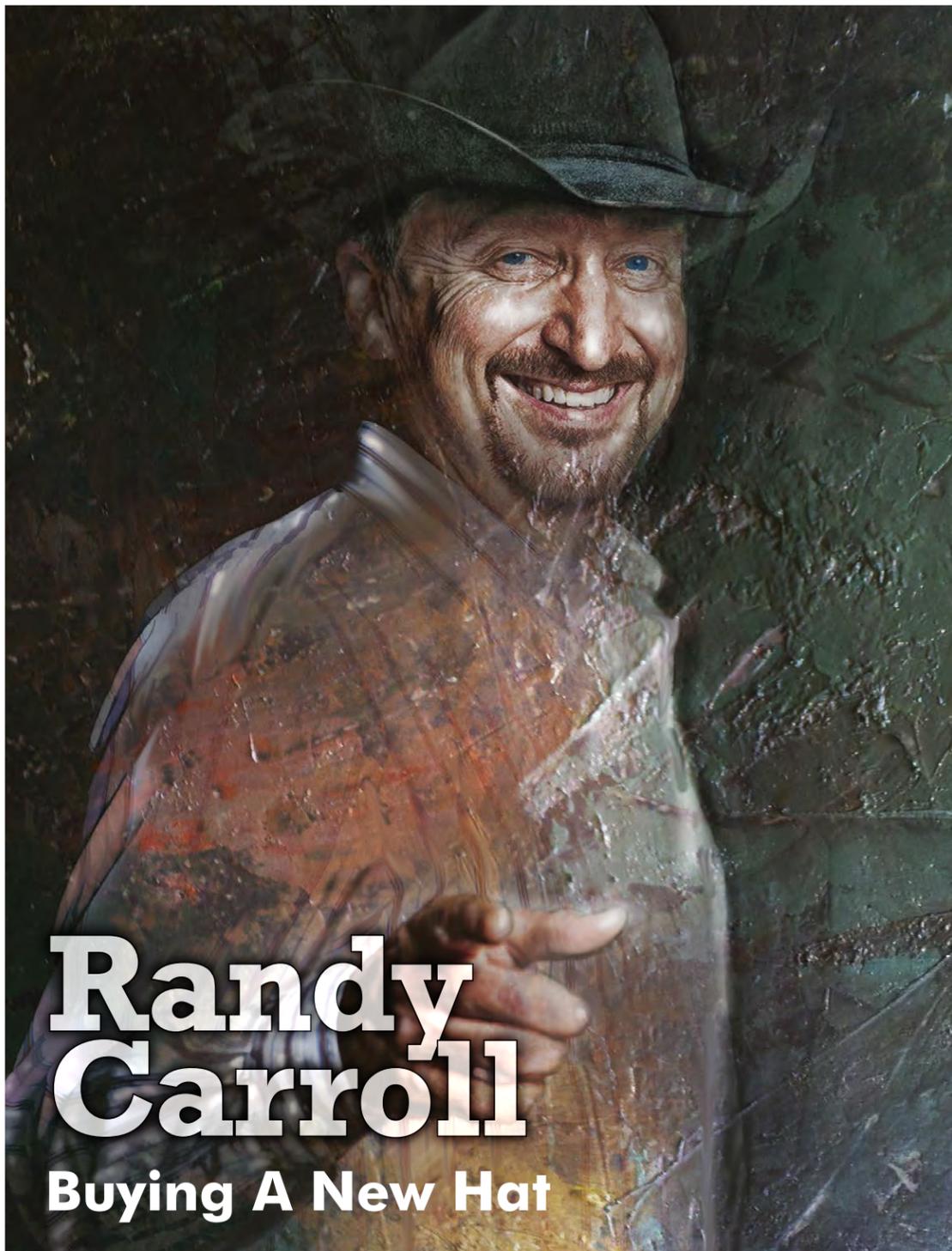
**I accidentally ended up** on the radio. I was looking for a part-time job when I was in high school in this small town south of San Antonio called Pleasanton that had a station called KBOP. Willie Nelson had worked there as a DJ in the '50s. One of my teachers said, "Hey they need somebody to run errands over at the radio station." I thought, "Well shoot, that might be interesting." Eventually, I pretty much ran that radio station.

A couple of years into that, I got a part-time job at KBUC/San Antonio. That was my first introduction to on-air personalities. I can still remember some of the bits these guys did to this day – and that's back when I was in high school in the '70s. That's when I decided, "This is what I want to do – we'll see if I'm any good at it."

**There were so many mentors.** I think of the PDs I had when I first came to KAJA – that's when people really began to mentor me. Johnny O'Neil was one. Jon Town was another who helped me along, helped me figure out what radio was really all about and showed me how to do it well. Ted Stecker was a consultant and a former PD at KSCS/Dallas. He provided a lot of invaluable input through the years until his passing. His wife Doris Thompson also provided a lot of input in the early days.

**We live in the same city** as George Strait. My biggest "I Love My Job" moment was being at a function and not approaching George Strait – but George Strait walking up to me and saying, "Hey Randy, how are you?" He asked about my family and my kids. I remember walking away going, "Wow. This guy's a legend and he just came and spoke to me."

**Around 1991, a label rep** brought a new artist by the station – young guy, pretty quiet, kind of awkward. I watched this kid grow from a young artist on an independent label, really scared to death to be walking into a PD's office, to selling out stadiums all over the United States – and that's Kenny Chesney. Around 1995 when he signed with BNA, his career began to take off. I actually played music in the nightclubs here in town and Kenny came in a couple of different times and sat in with our band. So we have a little bit of a musical background together from the early days of his career. It's been fun to watch him become the superstar that he is today.



**The best piece of advice** I ever received is: Who I am is not what I do for a living. I grew up in a very performance-oriented household. That's how you earned approval from my dad. My sense of self-worth as a human being was based on my performance. And of course in radio you're judged every single day by your performance – with ratings, when you're in public. It took me a while and maybe a little counseling to figure out that hey, my worth as a human being is not based

early days named John Barker. I learned a lot from him. And I've got to thank [CRB Exec. Dir.] Bill Mayne, who's been a friend for more years than either of us want to mention. And all the morning show partners I've worked with through the years. I think about Mark "Hawkeye" Lewis, who's now helming mornings at KSCS/Dallas. Julie Williams was my first partner in mornings 30 years ago. And there are so many others. A girl named Julie Rich,



**Strait Talk:** Talking roping with King George in his arena near San Antonio.

“Music is a bond with the artists that's different than just the radio bond, because I can relate to them.”



**Statue Of A Cool:** With morning show partner Jamie Martin after winning the 2012 CMA Large Market Personality of the Year award.

**My dad bought me a guitar** when I was nine years old. I learned to play it mostly by sitting in front of a little record player we had, listening to Merle Haggard. Music was always big around our house. Any time there was a family gathering there were guitars and somebody was singing. My brother, who is nine years younger, is a professional guitar player. I've always played guitar. I loved entertaining, loved singing. That's a fun part of my job, too – making parody songs. When Randy Travis had his naked episode, that's when I wrote my favorite parody – it's "I Told You So" [adapted as] "They Stole My Clothes." I have a lot of love for Randy, but I had to do it.

**Music** is a bond with the artists that's different than just the radio bond, because I can relate to them. I had the opportunity on a couple of different occasions to do an acoustic thing with Trisha Yearwood and Martina McBride, where we did a couple of songs on the air. It's a lot of fun for a frustrated musician to get to do that with a big artist.

on my latest performance. Who I am as a man is not what I do. And I've been able to separate those things.

**You can trace some of [my longevity]** back to the things I learned from my dad: work ethic, respect for authority. You're not always going to agree with the people in charge, but they're the authority and you need to respect that. Those are some of the things that have kept me around. And divine intervention, too. I figured the good Lord wanted me to be there, so He's kept me there. It's been a wonderful place to be. I'm in a city that is filled with incredible people. They show genuine love for me and I genuinely love and care for every one of them, too.

**When I didn't have faith and trust** in myself, others did. Bob Cohen [former KAJA Market Mgr.] showed a lot. There's a gentleman named Ed Shane who recently passed away. Ed and his wife Pam have Shane Media. We had a manager in the

who put up with me for a lot of years. And my current partner, who I love to death, Jamie Martin. She and I were fortunate enough to win the 2012 CMA Large Market Personality of the Year. She's a delight and really, really good at her craft.

**I was pumping gas** in my truck when my cell phone rang. It was Bill Mayne. He said, "Man, I just wanted to personally tell you you've been selected to be inducted into the Country Radio Hall of Fame this year." And I about fell over, for a couple of reasons. One, it was pretty cool that it happened, but also that Bill would personally take the time to call and let me know himself. That meant a lot to me.

**When we won the CMA** in 2012 I bought a new [cowboy] hat. I thought, "You know, every time I get some kind of an award, I'll buy one." That encourages me to try to get a new award – so I can get a new hat. **CAC**

# Country Radio HALL OF FAME

*If there is a man who could quiet a room full of radio managers arguing over how to build great radio stations, it might be Sammy George. He did it more than once during his 38 years in the business and the list of broadcasters he's mentored along the way reads like a Country radio who's-who. Most worked with him at WUSY (US 101)/Chattanooga, TN, a station George joined as an upstart in 1986 and led until his retirement in 2008.*

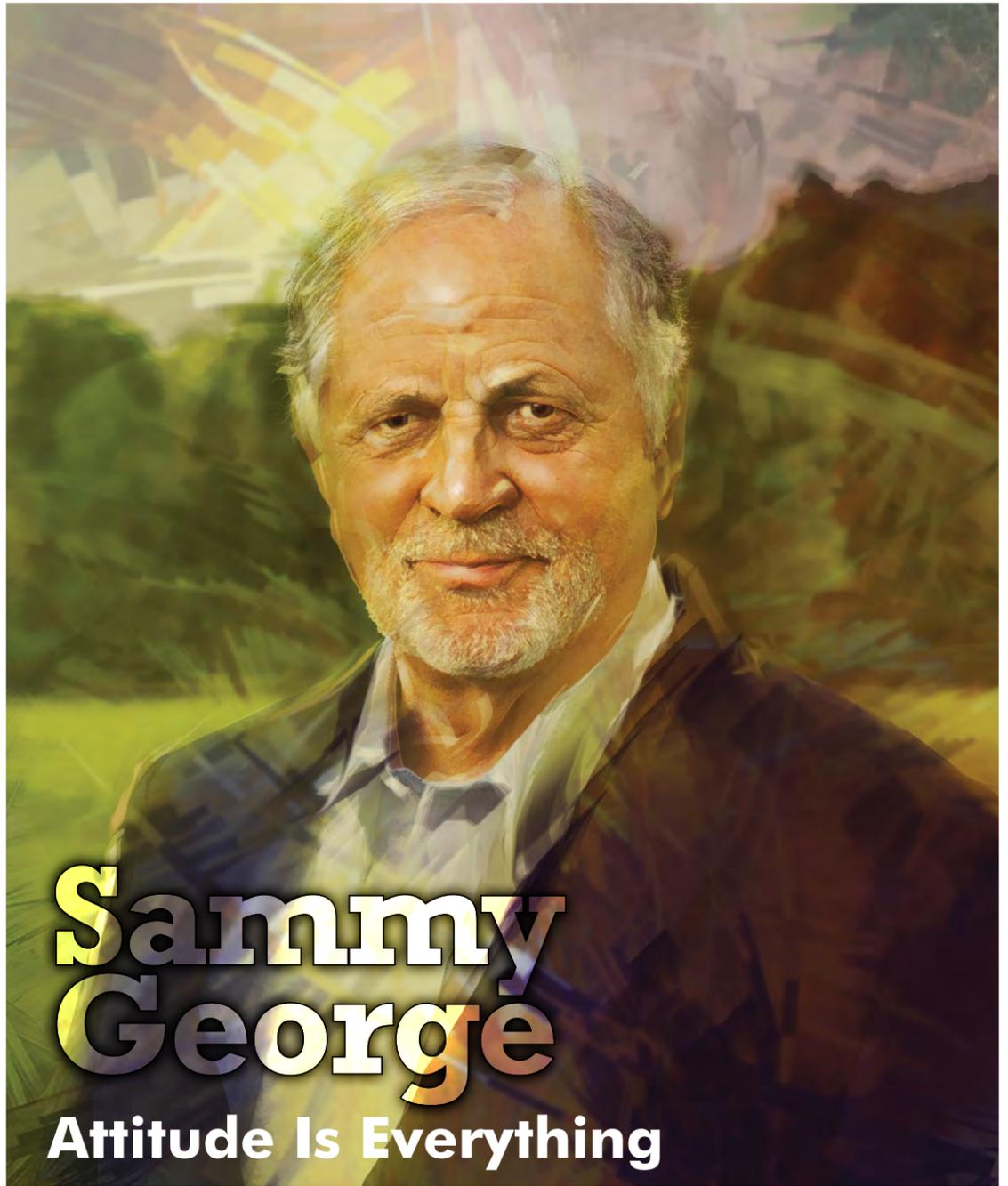
**I grew up in a very small mining** community just south of Birmingham. There was no radio station in the county then, so the exposure I got came from Birmingham and Tuscaloosa listening to people like [Country Radio Hall of Famer] Joe Rumore at WVOK-AM/Birmingham. It lit my fire. WVOK's studio was open to the public and they actually had chairs set up in front of the control room where you could sit and watch the guy on the air. When I was 12 or 13 and my mom and dad went to Birmingham to shop, they would drop me off and I'd hang out at the station. I knew then that's what I wanted to do. Both of my grandfathers and my dad were coal miners and I didn't want to go down that hole.

**My first job** in the business came in 1964 when a broadcaster named Houston Pearce put WBIB-AM/Centreville, AL on the air. It was about 12 miles from my hometown. There were only two high schools in the county at the time and Houston had the idea to have a student reporter come in and record a 15-minute sports segment about their school. I auditioned, got the job and fell in love with it. After graduation, I attended the Atlanta School of Radio and Television.

**My first real radio job** was at WYAM-AM/Birmingham, a little 500-watt station where Tammy Wynette recorded demos. She was a beautician in Birmingham and wanted to become a singer. She was doing a live television show in town and at night would come over to record some things for my PD Fred Lehner, who gave me my first job on the air right out of radio school. I was on at night and got to watch and hear her do all of those demos she was taking to Nashville.

**In 1967 I went into the** U.S. Marine Corps. I was in three years and served one tour in Vietnam with an artillery unit. They would move us to the USS Okinawa, where we'd make our landings from. The ship had a radio station and I asked for a job playing country music because nobody was doing it at the time. Armed Forces Radio would send compilation albums with the latest hits from the States. I'd play Merle Haggard, George Jones, Buck Owens and all those guys. The Marines loved country music, so it was a huge hit.

**I went to work in** Selma, AL for Julius Talton. He's in the Alabama Broadcasting Hall of Fame, owned two stations there and had bought WBIB. I went on the air with him at WHBB-AM for a whopping \$65 a week and was happy to get it. That's also when I married my wife Shelia. We were in the poor house, but having a good time. He had a manager he wasn't happy with back at WBIB and asked if I'd go in and run it. He said, "You know the county, the people

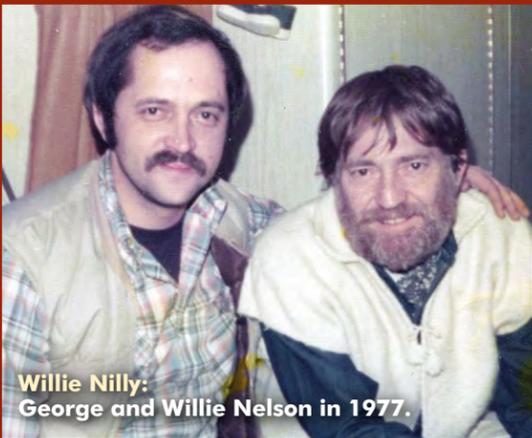


**We made history in 1977.** A guy named Bobby Lowder was putting on the first FM Country station in Alabama. I went down and talked to Don Markwell, who was the GM and one of those great, old radio guys with a voice of God. He intimidated everybody in the building except me and we hit it off. Before I left that day, he offered me a job in the news department, the sales department and on-air. FM Country radio back then was a stretch and people didn't give us much of a shot, but we nailed it. WLWI/Montgomery took off like a rocket and became the No. 1 station in the market. I eventually became GSM and, later, GM. It was still No. 1 when I left for Chattanooga in '86.

**WUSY/Chattanooga was owned** by the same company, Colonial Broadcasting. Mr. Lowder was in the banking business and one of his partners said, "Look, here's

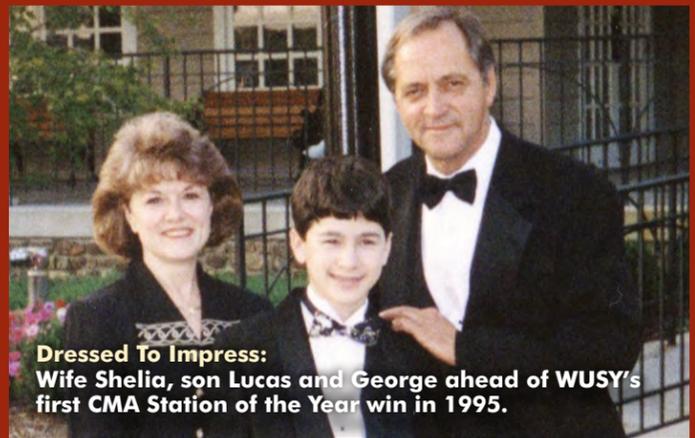
ing personalities] Ken and Bearman. Bearman recently passed away, but Ken's still there. Dex and Mo, too. The nucleus is still there. I'm so happy and proud to have somebody like [PD] Gator Harrison at the helm.

**After Mozingo left,** we were without a PD. There was a guy who had started as an intern who was then our Production Director. And I thought, "I'm going to make this kid PD." He was about 24 at the time and had never been on the air – had no experience whatsoever. People said, "This is a No. 1, CMA Award-winning radio station and you're going to turn to an untested guy?" I did it because Clay Hunnicutt had the same vision I did and shared my passion. He excelled at everything he did and you see where he is now [EVP/GM National Programming Platforms, iHeartMedia]. I'm so proud of him. It's always about the people and their attitude.



Willie Nilly:  
George and Willie Nelson in 1977.

Both of my grandfathers and my dad were coal miners and I didn't want to go down that hole.



Dressed To Impress:  
Wife Shelia, son Lucas and George ahead of WUSY's first CMA Station of the Year win in 1995.

and everybody in town. You don't have any sales experience to speak of, but I'll teach you." He really was the greatest mentor a young broadcaster could have. He put me in charge of the same station I'd started at and I got to do everything. That's almost an impossible experience to have these days and it prepared me well for what came later.

**I was on the air at WBIB** in 1976 when a tornado struck Centreville. It killed five in the community, knocked us off the air and just destroyed that little town. It also taught me the value of radio stations serving their community. I applied that knowledge and reasoning to everything I did afterwards. That's why we had the best news department at the stations I worked at and the most dependable weather coverage, no matter when something happened.

the investment I have in this station and here's what I expect to make. You figure out how to do it and go for it." Having total control as a GM was incredible and never happens today. And he was super supportive. If I needed something, I never heard him say no. We got beat by our crosstown rival WDOD in the first book that dropped on my desk after I hit town. Big Jon Anthony, who I had worked with before in Montgomery, was at that station. He was the guy kicking my butt. So I went to Mr. Lowder and said the first thing we need to do is get Big Jon back in mornings on US 101. We did and he's the guy that really shot it off the launch pad.

**I spent 22 years at WUSY** and that station is special because of its people. Take [late morning personality] David Earl Hughes, for instance, or [former] PD Greg Mozingo, who I brought over from Top 40. Same thing with [morn-

**Seeing communities respond to a need** – those are the best times. WUSY was one of the first on board when Randy Owen started *Country Cares for St. Jude Kids*. And there was the time a tornado wiped out a little town in South Carolina. We asked our listeners to give and told them that the folks there couldn't make it unless we stepped up. And they responded.

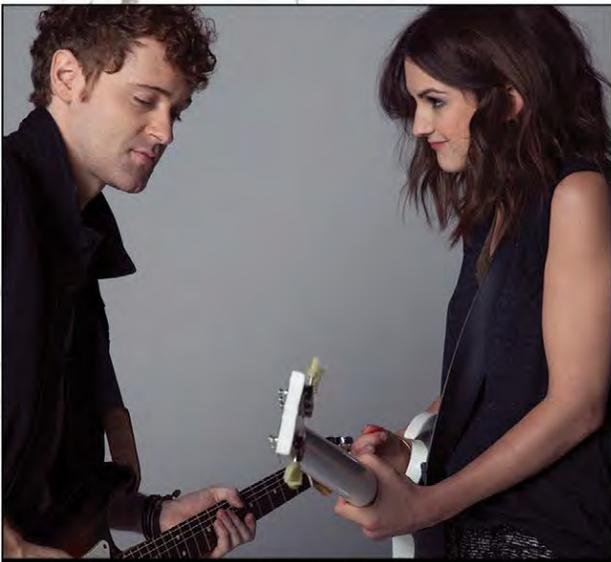
**I never suspected I** would go into the Hall of Fame. Dex is already there and there will be others who go in from that station. We had a great run, but it's not about me. It's about the people who helped me get there. I helped a little along the way, I pushed the right direction and I hired the right people. It's to their credit that I'm in the Hall of Fame.

CAC

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# Country Radio HALL OF FAME

WMIL/Milwaukee morning co-host Karen Dalessandro's career began in Michigan at age 19. She went on to co-host mornings at WYCD/Detroit, and later, crosstown WWWW. She's been with 'MIL since 1998.

**I grew up in the Detroit area.** There was a Top 40 station that came in from Windsor, Ontario – CKLW, the Big 8, in the late '60s/early '70s. I liked the music they played. Later, there was a woman on a Rock station named Karen Savelly who was actually a disc jockey. There were many women on the air but most of them were doing news. That's the first time I remember thinking radio was something you did for a living. Because I'm from Detroit, the first concert I attended at 17 years old was Bob Seger. He recorded *Live Bullet* at that show. The local DJ came out to emcee and *that's* when it all started coming together. I thought, "I would love to do that! I can do that! And I think it would be fun to be on the radio!"

I immediately signed up for a high school senior elective at a little tiny radio station that broadcast into the cafeteria. But as soon as I got into 12th grade, they canceled it in budget cuts. That's when I started going, "Well then how else can I get into this?"

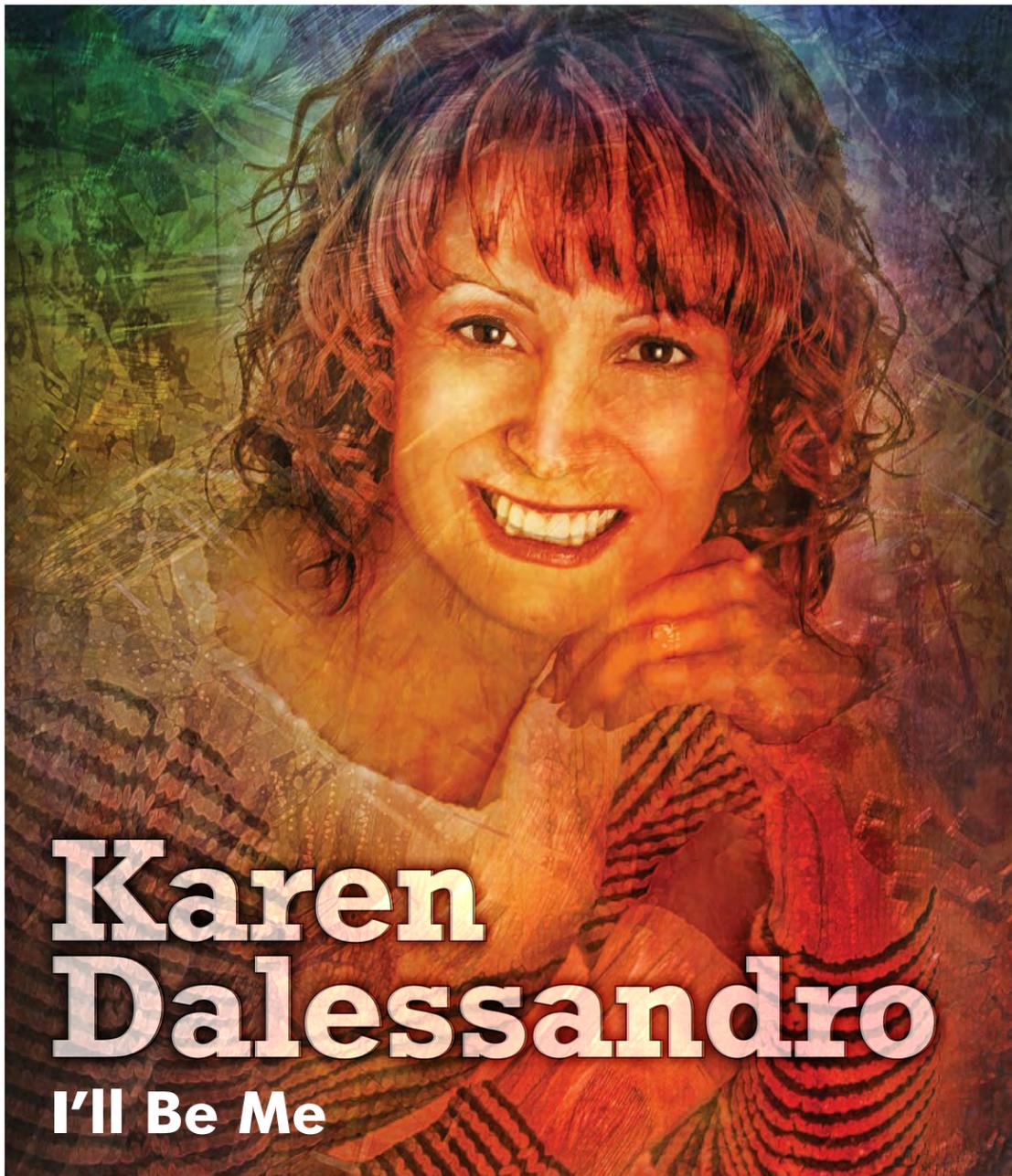
**My mom was not supportive initially.** She didn't think there was a way to make a living in radio. And sadly, there weren't many women on the radio so she wondered why I would go into a business like that. Being a rebellious teenager, it only fueled my passion. It was like, "Well now, let me *show* you that I can do this."

**My very first gig** was holiday traffic reports for AAA. The Specs Howard School of Broadcasting placement program got me that and, simultaneously, middays at a Country station in Ypsilanti, MI. I was 19. After my mom heard me on the radio coming through her speaker, she never again said it wasn't a way to make a living. In fact, she was thrilled and started bragging about her daughter. My dad, he just knew I loved to talk and loved music. He was okay with it; but my mom was worried. She always thought I should have a backup plan – but I didn't want one.

**Dick Kernen was a mentor.** He taught at Specs Howard. I really looked up to him because he seemed to know so much about radio. Every kid in the class was intrigued by this guy, because he had been a PD at one of the Rock stations in town. He was really smart and through it all has been so supportive of me. He never saw it as "girl vs. guy" – I was just somebody who was going into broadcasting. I really appreciated that. Ironically, he's who nominated me for the Hall of Fame.

**Consultant and fellow Hall of Famer** Jaye Albright's ability to guide talent with empathy is a special gift. Her advice and support through the years has been invaluable to me.

**Linda Lee, who does** afternoons now at WYCD/Detroit, was an employee on the line at Ford and wanted to get into radio. She got an internship with the morning show I was on there and was one of the first people to congratulate me when this was announced. A lot of women have come



the night Alan Jackson first did "Where Were You (When The World Stopped Turning)." It was the most emotional thing and a beautiful, fabulous night.

**Deer hunting is big** in the Midwest, so we'd do a Deer Hunter Broadcast Show every November. We'd give stuff to hunters at a truck stop. Before anyone knew who Lady Antebellum were, they came and played that event. There were maybe 15 people there. When they started to become very popular, they were quoted in a magazine saying one of their worst gigs was playing this Deer Hunter show in Wisconsin. So we gave them all kinds of grief and five years later they came back and played that same little gas station parking lot. We called it the "Worst Gig Ever Reunion."

**Before the 2001 opening of Miller Park,** the Milwaukee Brewers allowed us to spend three days in the stadium sitting in every seat to raise money for child abuse prevention. Wearing hardhats and

thing was, "Don't be concerned about call letters or all the rigid formats of it. Cut through it all and just try to be you." When you see me out, that's the person you see. I don't think there's a greater compliment from listeners than when they say, "Gosh, you're just like what you sound like." I'm like, "Yeah, because that's who I am."

**So many people move around.** I've been blessed to either be in Detroit, which is my hometown, or in Milwaukee, which is my adopted hometown now after 17 years. When I first got here, I don't know that I thought I'd be here that long. I knew I was working for an incredible programmer. Kerry Wolfe has made it very easy for me to grow. He lets me do my thing and he doesn't temper me in a way that's restrictive.

**Scott and Radar are my partners** in the morning. We have great chemistry and a good relationship – my work husbands. I love what I do. I love connecting with listeners. I love being a part of a community I know so well.



Rock City: Dalessandro on the air at "hot rocking, flame throwing" WHYT/Detroit.

“My mom was worried. She always thought I should have a backup plan – but I didn't want one.”



Campbell's Loop: Karen & Scott with Glen Campbell in 2005 during CMA Awards Week.

through WMIL, too, because we have an internship program. I'm so happy to think that maybe I created some sort of a path for the people who are coming up behind me.

**My No. 1 favorite moment** was the CMA award for Air Personality, which we got in 2001. Because it was right after 9/11, security was very high and audience members were required to be seated for the pre-show announcements. It's unusual for the artists to be seated at that time – and that's when they present the broadcast awards. I'll never forget looking at the front row and seeing George Strait, Faith Hill, Tim McGraw and Garth Brooks watching us accept our awards. I'll be an old lady in an assisted living center and I will always have that wonderful memory. That was also

broadcasting via Marti, we shared our experience with our listeners as we painfully moved from seat to seat. It was physically exhausting but we were supported by local media and even celebrity "sitters" including Kenny Rogers. Besides raising \$40,000 for charity, the best part of the story that no one knew was a local church was somehow interfering with our Marti shot so we were hearing their audio in our headphones throughout the broadcast.

**The best advice I've ever received** is to just be real. When we start out in this business, we try to emulate someone else. I wanted to pretend I was Karen Savelly because I didn't know how to be me. Through the years I started to find my way. I was hired at WYCD/Detroit in 1993 by a man named Al Casey. His whole

**I want to thank my amazing** husband Doug. He was doing mornings in Lansing when we met. Let's face it, this can be a career that challenges you with time. There are a lot of demands and he really understands. He and I will be married 30 years September 6.

**Kerry Wolfe left me a message** saying he had something he wanted to tell me. His voice was very serious. Right away you think, "Oh no is there something wrong?" When I called him back, Kerry gave me the Hall of Fame news. I started screaming into my Bluetooth. I was just going crazy because it came as a total surprise. I immediately called my husband and then I just lost it, because it was so emotional and such an honor.

CAC



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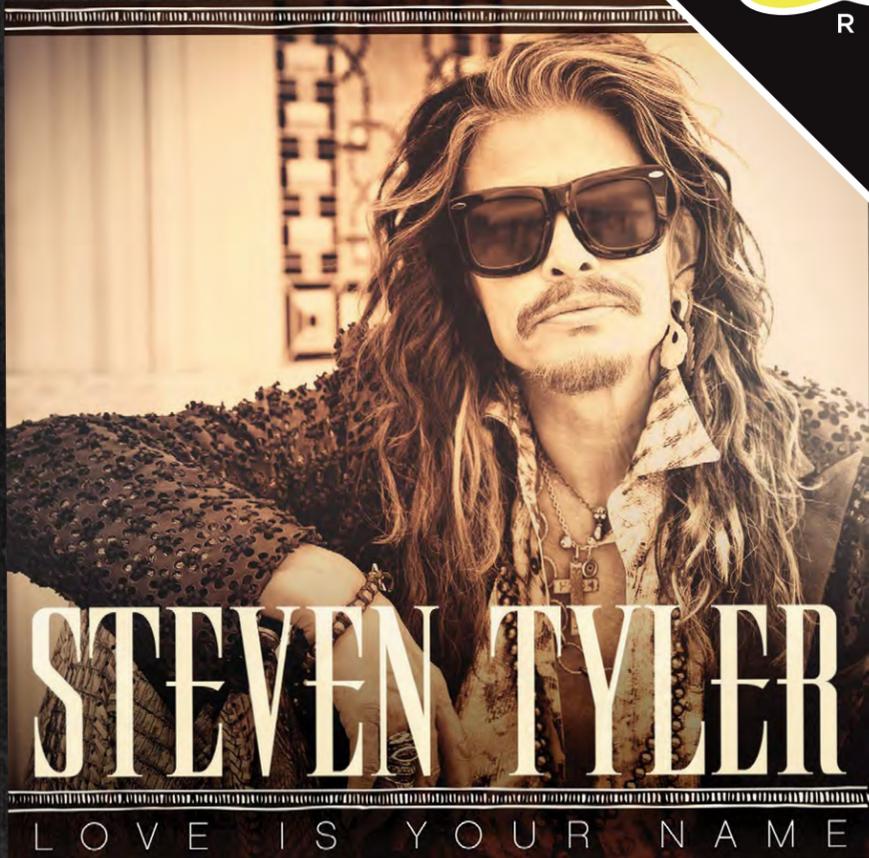
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**10 New Country Artists You Need To Know**

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"Infectious. Raw. Real. **Drake speaks the truth** and does it with so much conviction that you simply must believe him." - Michael Bryan, VP/Programming iHeartMedia Nashville



"Steven has always said he was a country writer and singer in his heart. Now he gives us his **unique voice** with a **clearly country song**. What a great combination to light up our airwaves."

- Clay Hunnicutt, EVP & GM National Programming Platforms  
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"The label is country. The actual sound is **100% Steven Tyler ass-kickin' music**. 'LOVE IS YOUR NAME' is further proof Steven's music knows no sonic boundaries. A hit is a hit." - Michael Martin, SVP of Programming and Music Initiatives, CBS Radio



**ASHLEY CAMPBELL:**  
**"Remembering"**

From the Oscar Winning Documentary  
**"Glenn Campbell: I'll Be Me Soundtrack"**

**IMPACTING 7/13**

# Country Radio HALL OF FAME

Don Law had one stipulation for his son Mike. "I don't care if you're a radio guy, a banker or a lawyer – you will have your college degree no matter what," recalls Kennedy. "So even though I was already two, three years into radio, there was no question that I was going to make sure I had my business degree, which I did get. And it worked out okay. It helped me start a couple of radio stations." Next February, the KBEQ/Kansas City PD/morning host will celebrate his 25th anniversary at the station. And there's no doubt his dad would be proud of his son the graduate – and one of the new members of the Country Radio Hall Of Fame.

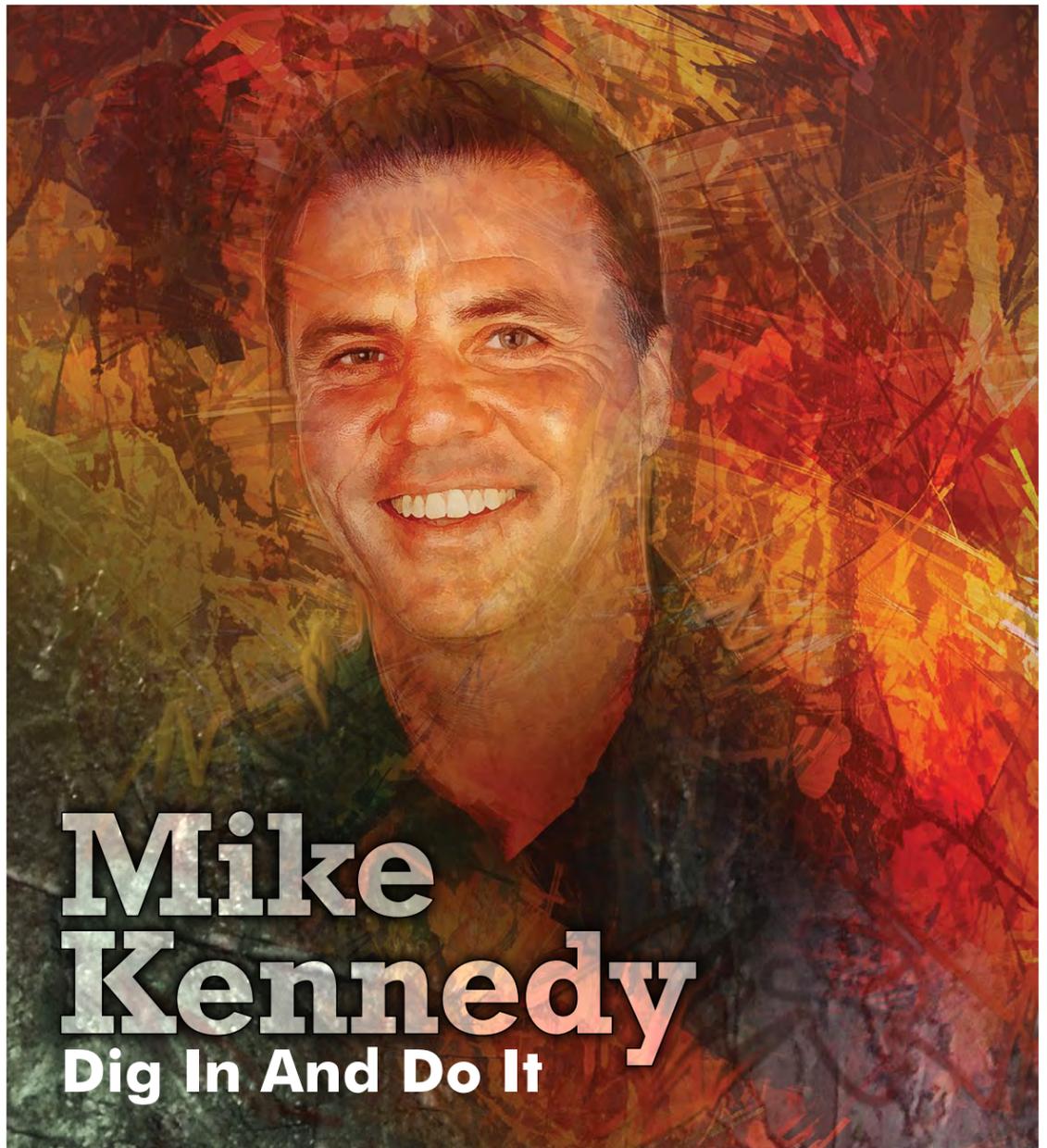
**My first job in radio** was in my hometown with my neighbor, Lyle Brown, who worked at KVOE/Emporia, KS. I helped him keep stats for a women's high school basketball game in 1976 when I was 16. As a kid I would always call the radio station request lines and bug the heck out of them. So to be able to jump into the car with a guy I had listened to on the radio, who just happened to be my neighbor, was pretty cool. I started out just tagging along and then they brought me in and paid me as a part-time guy.

**Besides playing golf** and going to class, radio was all I ever did. But it was not only radio; it was music. I was really into music. I remember saving up my money, running down to the dime store and getting a new 45 every week.

**Al Higgins was my Radio/TV instructor** in school. He was also the speech teacher. He really pushed me into getting in front of the camera. He was a serious voice and diction guy. We'd shoot video, I'd do ball games on cable TV and that eventually led to the radio, when I did play-by-play of college and high school football and basketball. He was a big influence.

**I'm proud of a bunch** of people I've worked with. There's a young man named Johnny Dare who worked for us as a van driver and AM board operator who's had the biggest show in Kansas City for probably 15 years at Active Rock KQRC. I hired [KXKT/Omaha MD] Hoss Michaels to help sign-on the first station I ever built from scratch. He was my GM, on-air and my right-hand man. When I sold that station, he also moved to Kansas City and became our promotions and marketing guy for many years before he went off to Lincoln and Omaha. T.J. McEntire and Zeke Montana have been with me the entire 22-plus years KBEQ has been Country. My wife, Nycki, who started with us as a teenager, is now in her 20th year in the business and doing mornings at Hot AC KZPT with another KBEQ alumnus, Kelly Ulrich. And what's funny and ironic is the entire staff of our Country competitor [WDAF] are all KBEQ alums and still in the market.

**I have a million stories.** My go-to favorite is when Garth Brooks played here at the Kemper Arena back in the '90s. My daughter was a young child. She came to the show with me and Garth was kind enough to hang with us backstage. But he was also kind enough to ask me if it was okay if my daughter had some of



All of my musical influences were basically late '60s and '70s. And of course I was a huge Commodores fan so Lionel Richie was *the* guy.

**The most challenging moments** were not leaving. A lot of guys dream of going to Chicago, Dallas, Houston or Phoenix. "Okay I'm going to start in the smaller markets and work my way to Kansas City, and maybe the next stop is Chicago." The biggest internal struggle was when some of those tremendous opportunities came up. But my daughter was growing up here and there was no way I was going to be apart from her. So I had to pass on some really cool jobs. You're thinking, "Oh my god, I really want to be in Dallas," but I continued on at KBEQ, which took off and became a big radio station. And big for me.

**We came up with this concept** from Lollapalooza we called *Y'allapalooza*. I know everybody does their own radio station concert, I get that. But to keep it going for 20 years is a big deal. It's been a successful event since we came up with it. And then something as simple as a

that every owner we've had ... it's like, "It's working well, the station's making money, our ratings will fluctuate here and there, but here's how we do it and I want to continue to do it in this way." That's where my passion is, that's where my team has their passion and our listeners. Knock on wood, we've been lucky everybody has bought into the philosophy and we've just let this thing ride.

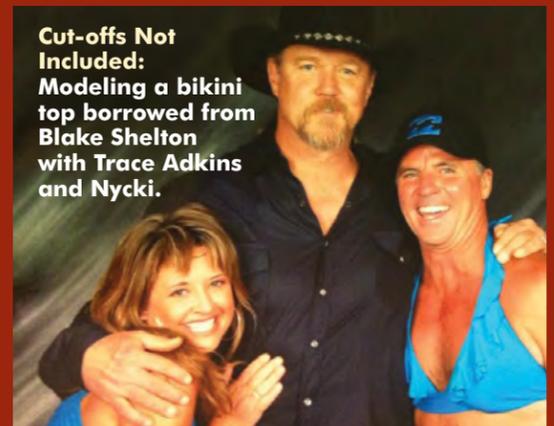
**We're on the air doing** an interview with Toby Keith to talk about his Songwriters Hall of Fame induction, or so I thought, but he keeps diverting the conversation. I really didn't know what the heck was going on until I looked up and my wife was there with a lot of people who are not normally here in the morning – our GM and GSM. Then Toby enlightened me to the fact that I had indeed been elected to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. And then John Rich called a few minutes after that. I was totally shocked and floored. There was champagne involved.

**I would thank Jesus** [for the HOF induction], but everybody already did that on the ACMs. There are



Lick It Up: With wife Nycki and Kiss in 2009.

The biggest internal struggle was when [major market] opportunities came up. But my daughter was growing up here ... and KBEQ became a big radio station.



Cut-offs Not Included: Modeling a bikini top borrowed from Blake Shelton with Trace Adkins and Nycki.

the cookies they had made. He wasn't going to give them to her unless I gave my permission. I'm like, "Good Lord have mercy, yeah you sure can." That's always one that jumps out at me. It's just crazy.

Around 1991 Mick Jagger decided he was going to have a solo career. A bunch of radio guys and PDs flew in to New York City. We watched the show at Webster Hall and it was pretty cool. I've been a huge Rolling Stones fan my entire life. And then to go up into the VIP area with a very small group and see Mick in his element – which included what I believe to be a nice, white flowing gown ... he wore it well. You kind of go, "Wow." That was a "this is so cool and so weird" moment. A few years back when Lionel Richie did his country project, I had the opportunity to listen to it at his house and be within a couple feet of him for hours.

radio station golf tournament, which we've done now for almost 20 years. We raise money for the Children's Mercy Hospital. I'm proud of the signature events we've been able to create for the brand of the station and for the charities that benefit from what we do.

**The best piece of advice** I've ever received was "Dig in, do what you do, be true to yourself and what you love, and things will pay off for you." Most of the people I've worked with over these last few decades know this radio station has been a true believer in helping break new artists and new music. We try to be on the cutting edge and try to be exciting, even though – I will say this with confidence – there's a good bet I could have had better ratings over the years going the safe route. But that's not how we built the station. I've been so lucky

a few people who gave me the reins to do what I wanted to do. My original GM who signed me here was Kathy Stinehour. She told me to put the gloves on and get after what was then KFKF and WDAF 61 Country, which were our big competitors. She let me do what I wanted and needed to do to get this station going. The late Dan Wastler was our GM for many years, as was Herndon Hasty. I've got a gentleman named Marc Harrell who's my GM now. There's something about that position. They trust us and let us do our thing.

And you know, my dad's not with us any longer but I definitely want to thank my mom and dad – Mary Ann and Don Law – for letting me play disc jockey in the basement of the house and make a lot of noisy music – and for not making me go get a real job. **CAC**

**Q104**  
**AND**  
**STEEL CITY MEDIA**  
**WANT TO CONGRATULATE**  
**MIKE KENNEDY**

**ON HIS INDUCTION  
TO THE COUNTRY  
RADIO HALL OF  
FAME**

**WE ARE  
VERY  
PROUD  
OF YOU!**



**Q104**

**#1 FOR NEW COUNTRY**



STEEL CITY MEDIA

# Country Radio HALL OF FAME

From contest winner to programmer to consultant, **Joel Raab** has gotten closer to the music he loves the best way he knows how. And after 40 years in the business, he still loves it just as much.

**I grew up on Long Island** and as a teenager was a little bit of an oddball in liking country music. I listened to AM daytime Country station WTBE and played their contests. So I would actually go to the station to pick up my albums and got to know them. Eventually, I got to audition and be on the air, working there all through high school.

**Since I was eight** years old I knew I wanted to be in radio. I always listened, including to stations from other cities. WABC/New York and Dan Ingram were really my big influences. That great Top 40 radio of the day got my interest with its energy and pure magic.

**While at Northwestern** I got to deejay part-time at Country AM/FM combo WJJD & WJEZ – the station doesn't exist anymore. WJJD was actually one of the first major market FM Country stations, long before I ever worked there, back when the AM stations ruled the airwaves. After college I went to Pittsburgh as APD at what was then WEEP and later became WDSY. Then I programmed Country at WHK/Cleveland before a couple years at WHN/New York. I started my consultancy 30 years ago.

**After programming for eight** years I wanted to do something different and didn't want to become a GM. I wasn't interested in sales. So I decided to hang out a shingle and see how that would go. And it was slow at first, to be honest. In fact I want to give the late Ed Shane credit, because he was very nice and talked to me about it when I started. He said, "Joel, it can take 10 years to really get it going." And he was right. For me, it really kicked in at a higher level after 10 years. It's a different skill set, because you're working for the station but you're working with the programmers and you're really working with all the different departments and advising in different areas. It's something I had to learn how to do.

**We love the music.** That's the reason a lot of us got into radio and Country, especially. I wanted to be close to it and this was the way. I couldn't be a singer, but I loved radio so combining that with country music was really awesome. Radio was my hobby as a kid, then it became my job.

**In raising my family,** I have not had to move. My kids were able to grow up in the same house, but I'm not putting people down who have moved a lot. I saw a lot who had no choice but to move frequently. I just didn't want to do that and I'm proud I didn't have to. Secondarily, I'm proud of being able to mentor people.



**There are two artists** in 40 years – one male, one female, who just were not nice. Artists I liked a lot who were just kind of nasty, and that's disappointing. But that's a pretty good batting average.

**Changes in radio haven't** affected what I do as much as you would think. Companies that hire me still want to do good programming and great radio. So I'm still hyper-focused on the product and tune out the distractions as much as I can. I try to help programmers do that, too – focus on making great radio. That may sound cliché, but it's true.

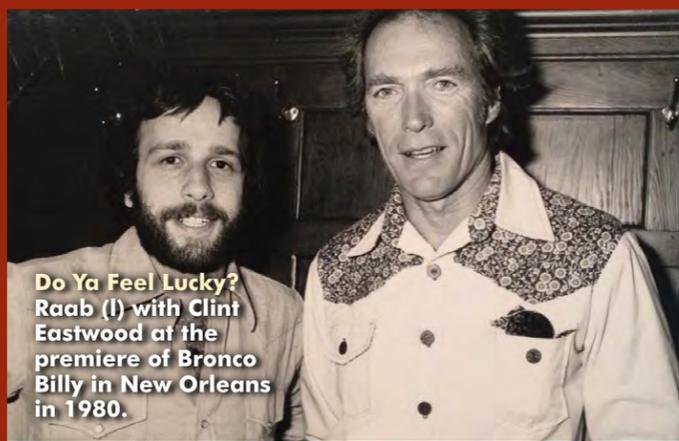
That's why they still want to meet the DJ. Even millennials want that, which is great. Also, nobody gives listeners access to the artists better than Country radio. There's no format where artists play a greater role and that's why we continue to thrive where others see greater challenges from other media. We keep that connection going.

**The bad part** for people who want to be in radio is that there aren't overnight shifts anymore. The good part is that if someone has talent, we're more likely to just



Raab (r) meets Merle Haggard at a press conference at Madison Square Garden while working at WTBE/Long Island in the '70s.

“Those who go the furthest are the ones who are inherently curious and learning every minute.”



Do Ya Feel Lucky? Raab (l) with Clint Eastwood at the premiere of Bronco Billy in New Orleans in 1980.

**Clint Eastwood helped me** get a job. He cut some liners on a junket I went on for one of his movies when I was PD in Pittsburgh. I included them in a presentation and they definitely helped land my next job. I didn't think it was that big a deal, but the place where I was applying thought, "Oh my God, how did he get Clint Eastwood?"

**Barbara Mandrell paid a visit** to the station just after she had really hit it big. I was on the air and didn't know. She was standing in the lobby while, over the intro of one of her songs, I was saying on-air how great she'd been doing and how popular she'd become. The song starts and she bursts into the studio. She actually sat on my lap for the rest of the show.

**The basics have changed** somewhat. PPM has clearly changed radio, in some ways for the better and in some ways for the worse. For the better, it's shown we cannot waste people's time. We have to get right to the point and give them the best product every second. For the worse, it may not give us as much time to experiment because if it doesn't register in the meter we may be given a shorter leash. In the diary world, you might get six months or a year. You might get three or four months now if you dare try something different.

**Air talent.** That's what's great about Country radio. Most stations are playing great music, but it's personalities who connect listeners to the music.

throw them right into the fire and see if they can swim. The more hats you can wear, especially regarding social media, the better. Be the person who gets things done quickly. And don't be afraid to say you don't know. Too many people hesitate to raise their hands, but those who go the furthest are the ones who are inherently curious and learning every minute.

**You wonder** if it's going to happen, and then when the induction call comes ... I can't really describe it. It's just a great feeling.

**I honestly can't imagine** doing anything else and I hope I never have to. **CAC**



# WHITE LIGHTNING

**“SEVEN-THOUSAND FANS SINGING ‘WHITE LIGHTNING’ AT WKLB’S STREET PARTY! THAT’S NOT A COINCIDENCE, IT’S THE POWER OF TC3. WE LOVE THESE GUYS.”**

**- GINNY ROGERS/WKLB -**

**“OHHHH I SMELL A BIG HIT!”**  
**- JT BOSCH/KAJA & KVET -**

**“‘WHITE LIGHTNING’ IS ONE OF MY NEW FAVORITE SONGS OF 2015.”**  
**- SHELLY EASTON/WXTU -**

**“THE SINGLE WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR. IT STANDS OUT ON THE AIR LIKE A BOLT OF LIGHTNING ON A DARK NIGHT. COOL AND SEXY...LIKE THE STEVE MCQUEEN IN ALL OF US...”**  
**- BRIAN GARY/KUAD -**

**“RAW AND REALLY FRIGGIN GOOD! THIS LIGHTNING’S GONNA STRIKE!!!”**  
**- GATOR HARRISON/WUSY -**

**“THIS SONG HAS CONTINUED TO GROW IN POPULARITY WITH OUR MUSIC COMMITTEE EACH WEEK. IT WILL DO THE SAME WITH THE LISTENERS!”**  
**- NATE DEATON/KRTY -**

**“‘WHITE LIGHTNING’ HAS BEEN ONE OF MY FAVORITE SONGS FOR A LONG TIME. IT SOUNDS GREAT! AND THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN AWESOME!!”**  
**- DJ STOUT/WSOC -**





Congratulations Dwight  
on your well-deserved  
Artist Career Achievement Award.



*From Burbank With Love.*

*Jeff Walker first came to Nashville from Australia to visit his father, noted producer/arranger Bill Walker. Armed with an accounting degree and a new job at Price Waterhouse in downtown Nashville, he soon found himself a few miles away on Music Row running a record label, becoming the CRB's Treasurer and launching AristoMedia – still going strong after 35 years. To paraphrase a Music City saying, it all begins with country songs.*



# Jeff Walker

## Understated Impact

**Radio was an important part** of growing up in Australia. At that time it was more AM than FM. There were no musical formats. Charlie Rich, Roger Miller, Johnny Cash and Tom T. Hall all got a lot of exposure on mainstream radio. The big country hits over here like Sammi Smith's "Help Me Make It Through The Night" or Donna Fargo's "The Happiest Girl In The Whole USA," were also big down there. I had a transistor radio and whether you were going to the beach in Sydney or just washing your car, music was never too far away.

**I went to Sydney University** and got my Bachelor of Economics degree with a major in accounting and law. Then I stayed on for another year and got my chartered accountant's certificate, which is equivalent to a CPA. In June 1974 I went up to Hong Kong and over to Europe. I took five months off and did Europe on \$10 a day, staying in tents and doing the whole traveling thing, having fun and meeting people.

**At that stage of my life**, I was wherever life was going to take me. I knew I liked putting on a suit and going to work every day and being structured. I've always been a very organized person. But when I got to Nashville I got caught up in the atmosphere and the music. That's when Music Row was Music Row. People were walking down the streets with guitars every day and there was a real feeling in the air of creativity. It was magical.

**Con Brio had considerable success.** We had 43 nationally-charted singles between '76 and '79. We were the Country Independent Label of the Year in 1977. For me it was trial and error,

**The CRB goal back then** was growth through sharing. It was still very much in its infancy. I'd attended CRS when it was at the Airport Hilton. At Con Brio, we'd had a couple of acts on the *New Faces Show*. It was smaller and there was a lot of camaraderie – great networking and educational opportunity. I couldn't imagine anything in any other format that helped people to grow within the business at the time. It was a must-attend for me. I learned from all of those people who have now gone into the Hall of Fame. They were an inspiration to the whole format.

Records in 1980 and they played at the *New Faces Show*, you could tell they were going to get a major label deal.

**Country Radio Seminar brings people** to town to not only experience the artists, but to get educated and network. It goes back to the original concept of growth through sharing. People go home, they get on the air and talk about Nashville. The economic impact of CRS has been huge to Nashville, and probably understated in many ways. They stay ahead of the game in terms of trends. This is where the agenda committee really works. They stay on top of all

“ I believe in country music, which has been very good to me and my family. I believe in giving back to the industry. ”



Just So Proud To Be Here: Walker says "Howdy!" to Opry member Sarah Cannon (a.k.a. Minnie Pearl).

**I arrived in Nashville** in early December 1974. While I was in Sydney finishing my CPA degree I was working for an accounting firm called Touche Ross, which is now Deloitte & Touche. They had arranged for me to start work April 1 in Los Angeles. When I got here in December, I'd planned to spend some time with my dad. But when I called the L.A. office they said, "We want you here immediately." They were very nasty to me and said, "If you don't come now we don't know if the job will still be available." So I went to downtown Nashville and got a job with another accounting firm, Price Waterhouse. I called my firm in Sydney and promptly resigned.

**While I was working** for the accounting firm my dad started Con Brio Records. He asked me to do the books at night, which I agreed to because I didn't think there'd be a lot involved in it. But once you get into the music business – this was mid-1975 – it's like a big vacuum cleaner. It brings you right in and it's hard to get away from it. It's my drug of choice, I guess (laughs).

learning the business. Here's a boy coming from Australia with an economics degree running a small record company, learning what PROs were, learning licensing, just learning the business from the bottom up. It was fun.

**When the recession of 1980** came along, our distributor went bankrupt. They sent us a letter saying they were going to pay us six cents on the dollar so dad said, "Let's close the record label." In February I was asked to join the board of the Country Radio Broadcasters by two people – Biff Collie, who had been our radio promotion head in the early days of Con Brio, and Charlie Monk. They both asked me to become Treasurer of the CRB. I thought to myself, "Well, I'll do this for a year." Biff had seen me in action from working at the record company. He knew I could handle money. Charlie was the Treasurer and didn't want to do it anymore. (laughs) So in February 1980 I got elected to the board as Treasurer – and in April I formed AristoMedia.

**Biff Collie was a mentor** and a really good friend. In the early days, just watching the work ethic of Frank Mull, who was the Executive Director at the time, was a big influence. Mike Oatman, who was president of the CRB for several years, was a great friend and ally. There have been so many great people through the years.

**In 1999 Garth Brooks** was at the Hall of Fame dinner. He'd come to introduce Dandalion Seese and stayed until the very end signing autographs. Finally, at two in the morning, it was just Garth and me. I walked him to his truck because everybody else had left after he'd signed the final autograph.

**In 1989 Alan Jackson and Garth Brooks** both performed on the ASCAP Luncheon. What a moment, to see two superstars being launched. It was amazing. I still get goose bumps. When Tim McGraw sang "Don't Take The Girl" on the 1994 *New Faces Show*, you just knew a star was being launched that night. When Alabama were on MDJ

the current events and they have to predict what will be the hot issues coming next February or March.

**I believe in country music**, which has been very good to me and my family. I believe in giving back to the industry. I was in Charlotte at a CMA board meeting and [CRB's] Charlie Morgan said, "Hey I need to talk to you privately." He said, "I just want you to know that we've recognized all your hard work and energy and enthusiasm over the years and you're going to be getting this award, and I'm very excited to be presenting it to you."

**I want to first thank the CRB board** and staff. I want to thank my family, too, because the time I give to CRB and the late-night board meetings or showcases is time spent away from them. I'd like to thank my AristoMedia staff for the same reason. And I'd like to thank my industry friends and believers. It's really special to know that the people around you recognize and appreciate you. **CAC**



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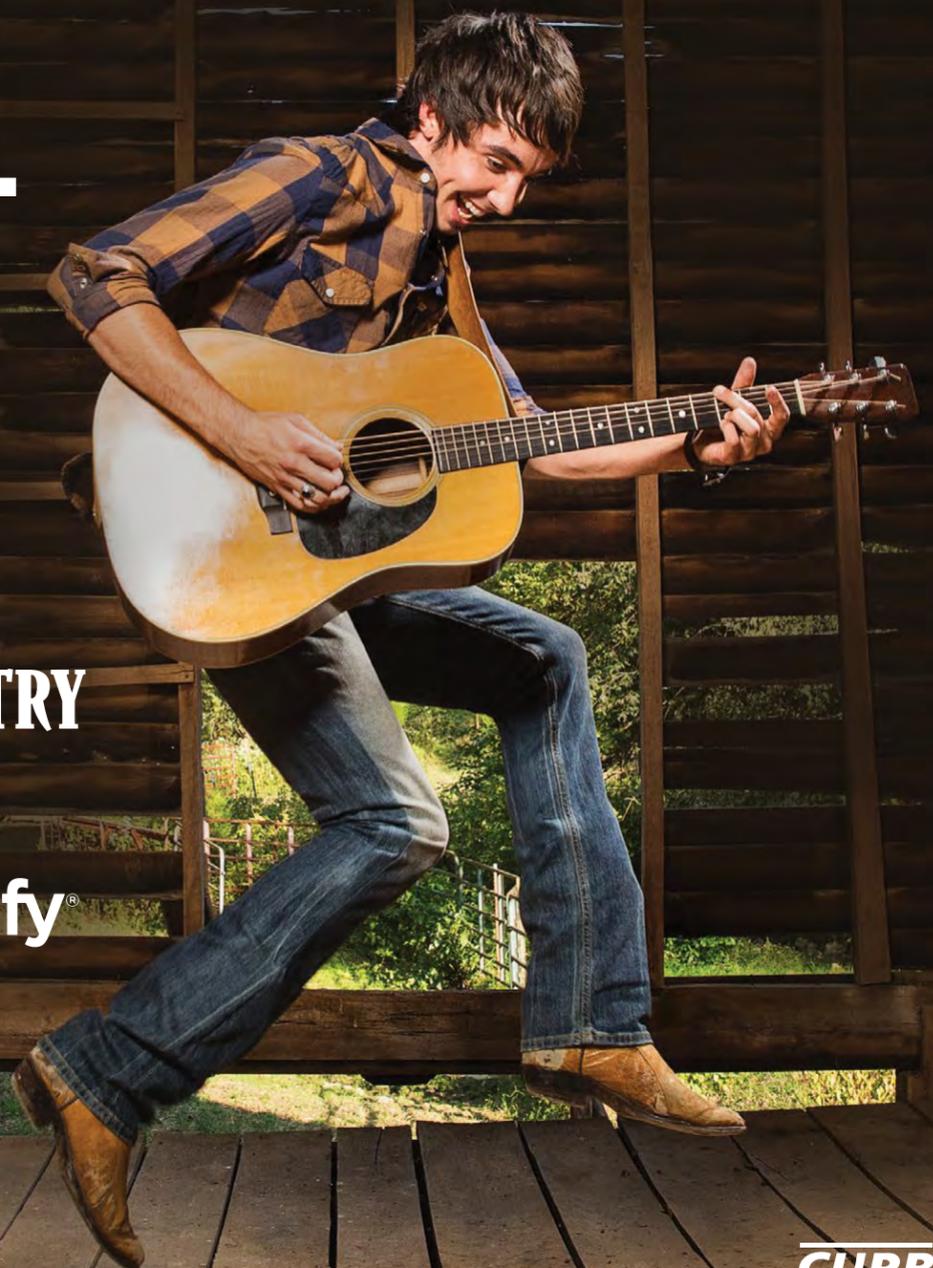
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# 50 SHADES OF YAY!

## Radio Wins As ACM Celebrates

### Full Circle Moment

National Personality  
Big D, Bubba, Patrick Thomas

Doing radio on their own terms continues to pay off big for the Big D & Bubba show. High-fives, hugs and cowboy hats capped a pretty good year with Compass Media following eight with Premiere.

**Bubba:** Winning means legitimacy. We broke away from Clear Channel, Premiere and iHeart, whatever you want to call them now. There were a lot of question marks. Would it work? Would this be viable? Not only was it financially viable for us, but it's a little recognition that we're doing the right thing. Not only for us, but for the industry, to not be tied with anyone.



**All Hat, No Cattle:** Bubba (channeling Rodney), Compass' Adam Wilbur and Peter Kosann, Thomas and Big D (l-r) do it Texas style.

**Patrick Thomas:** This was the first time my name has been on the nomination and on the trophy at the end. It feels really good and it was really special to be up there and recognized with the guys. Another highlight was buying Compass' Peter Kosann and Adam Wilbur, both New Yorkers, cowboy hats. That made Saturday night. Maybe the whole weekend.

**Big D:** And the awards experience was fun because my wife Kathy and Bubba's wife Stacey got to talk to each other about what they were going to wear, planning everything out and what they were going to do with their makeup and hair. But it was fun to watch them feel part of our success. They got to be there and see what we do and got to enjoy the fruits of our labor.

**B:** More than just going to the mall and spending the money we make!

**PT:** One thing I kept hearing through my family was how complimentary industry people they met were of us. Everybody was overwhelmingly congratulatory. Sometimes I think people are like, "Do the radio awards matter?" Yes, they do. They matter to us and to our peers, and that's what makes them so special.

**BD:** It was great to hang out with all of the other winners – from Chicago, Chattanooga and everywhere else. Some of them we already knew, but some we met for the first time. We really are all in this together and it's a small and close-knit family. It was good to be able to congratulate them on their awards.

**B:** And Big D found a picture of Rodney Dangerfield wearing the exact same jacket as mine at the awards ceremony. So there's that.

### It's The Climb

Major Market Personality  
Lisa Dent & Ramblin' Ray, WUSN/Chicago

A milestone award at a milestone show is a repeat performance (2009) for Lisa Dent and "Ramblin'" Ray Stevens.

**Ray Stevens:** Obviously when you enter to win an ACM award, you think you're good enough. That's why you try. And I always thought it was so trite when people say, "It's just an honor to be nominated," but it really is. There are so many good radio shows out there and it was nice to get that recognition for doing our job. I'm doing radio in the town I grew up in. I remember when this radio station signed on. I was sitting in my Chevy truck in my high school parking lot and US 99 signed on the air. All these years later, to win an ACM on that station is just too much.

**Lisa Dent:** I was stunned when I found out we won. I've been going to the ACMs since 1989. It's the organization I've always been a part of and I was just stunned.

**RS:** Working with Lisa has been a treat. We have a lot of fun together, and when we were in Texas our families hung out together. We went to the Fort Worth Stockyards. It's great to be able to have success, because you never know when it might end. We enjoy it and we never take it for granted.

It was odd watching the performances from behind the stage, but we were sitting with Scott Borchetta, Jimmy Harnen, Mike Dungan, Kevin Herring – all of our record label friends and a lot of artists were in that area as well.

**LD:** It gave us a different viewpoint than what we normally see. Not great as far as watching the performances, but I got caught up in watching all the stars.

**RS:** It was 1am, the show is over, my kids have walked all over AT&T Stadium and we have to walk a mile to get back to our car. We get back to the downtown Sheraton where we're on the 24th floor, and the elevator is broken. We trekked up 24 flights of stairs. I said to my daughters, "You see, this is what winning an ACM award means."

**LD:** At the radio awards ceremony the bartender had some kind of exclusive Jack Daniels, so John Rich and I tried it at the same time. That was fun to sit down with him and catch up. I love him.

**LD:** I'll keep the trophy right next to my kid's football trophies. His are in front of mine because Lee Ann Womack told me one time, "I'd never put them in front of my kids', theirs come first." She's right. Kids go in front, your trophies go in back.

**RS:** I know only a certain amount of people in the world will understand this: I competitively race snowmobiles. In 2013 I won the Eagle River World Championship Snowmobile Derby on the 50th anniversary of the running of the race. And we won the ACM on its 50th anniversary.



**Dressed to Thrill:** Liam and Lisa Dent and Ray, Cassie and Cheyenne Stevens ready for the awards.

versary. So I will designate somewhere in my house for those awards to sit next to each other. It's a tribute to work funding your fun, except you don't know which one is the work because they're both a blast.

### A Star Turn, Save The Suit

Large Market Personality  
Big Dave, Chelsie, Stattman, WUBE/Cincinnati

Stalking or being stalked, the Cincy morning crew came away with the big game – a shiny new trophy.

**Stattman:** We were only there for 56 hours, but we crammed as much into it as we possibly could.

**Chelsie:** We got our award, went to the Duets show for a little bit until the storm moved in and we had to go sit in the concourse for a few hours.

**Dave:** Sunday night, we were right behind and between the two stages.

**S:** So we watched the show by looking to the right for one stage and then to the left for the other stage. It was amazing.



**Duck And Cover:** Stattman's stalking of Willie Robertson (r) pays off.

**That Red-Haired Girl:** (r) Big Dave's dream comes true with a Reba selfie.



**D:** It was kind of like watching a tennis match. I told my wife, "There's Dierks Bentley in front of that red-haired lady." That red-haired lady turned out to be Reba McEntire. I was absolutely star-struck. We were stopped on the steps and she's right in front of me, and I say, "Reba, I'm Dave from B105 in Cincinnati. Can I take a selfie with you?" I got absolutely the best selfie you could take. Statt and Chelsie will attest, I floated, looking down from cloud nine for the rest of the night.

**S:** I saw this bearded fella go up and down the aisles and I was like, "That looks like one of the Duck Dynasty guys. Next time he comes by I'm chasing him down." Sure enough, he went by again and I had to go all the way up the stairs, through a hallway, up another set of stairs. He's going to get beer and I stopped him before he got his beer and was like, "I'm a huge fan, can I get a pic?" It was Willie Robertson, the Duck Commander himself. And I tracked him like a deer. He looked like an antelope fleeing from a lion.

**D:** When Statt has a suit on, he kind of looks like Brett Eldredge.

**S:** It was neat being confused for him a few times. I was tempted to sign autographs. I did get a picture with him so we could show who wore it better.

**C:** When we got the release that we'd won, I kept re-reading the email to make sure I wasn't wrong, and then I texted these guys and said, "Hey, guess what? We won!"

**D:** I was in the pickup line at my kids' school. I called my wife and told her, and then I told my kids when they got in the car. There's a funny video of that on our Facebook page.

**S:** First I called my wife and said, "Hey honey, we've got to get new clothes for Dallas!" Then I called my mom and she was so happy, and then she reminded me my brother's got a wedding coming up and I should use that suit for the wedding. She grounded me pretty easily.

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## Dreaming With Eyes Open

Medium Market Personality  
Steve Lundy, Gina Melton, KXKT/Omaha

*They weren't shopping for it, but the morning duo from KXKT got something money can't buy in Texas.*

**Steve Lundy:** The banquet for radio award winners was really neat. We didn't know who was going to be presenting, and then they brought out Big & Rich. That was cool because we think very highly of them. They've helped us with events including our *Concert for Hunger*, so it was good to connect with them again.

**Gina Melton:** We actually got to walk the red carpet. I didn't think I was ever going to get Steve out of there because there were Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders, so he walked really slow ... and backwards.

**SL:** I'm a Chiefs fan but I'm also a cheerleaders fan.

The show – oh my goodness. That was 70,000 people packed into that place, all of them country fans. It was definitely sensory overload.

**GM:** Our seats were amazing. We got to sit near the *Duck Dynasty* guys and right behind RaeLynn and Taylor Swift's mom. Scotty McCreery walked right past us. It really was like a dream come true.

**SL:** I'm still star-struck by John Rich, going all the way back to his days with Lonestar. I'm a big Lonestar fan and I think a lot of John as a writer and with Big & Rich.

**GM:** It's the first time we've won and we're just thrilled. It was surreal accepting that award. I did my ugly cry. We're really grateful and accepted it on behalf of our listeners. It means they listen to us every morning, they've helped with things in the

community and they love country music. It's just one of those things that we will not soon forget.

**SL:** It's not really our intention to get awards, but it's such a nice gesture. And the ACM goes all out to make us feel appreciated. When they were announced I was in a meeting and my phone kept buzzing. I had it on silent, but I guess I thought something bad must have happened. When I finally got out of the meeting our OM said, "Have you been checking your email? Congratulations, you won!" I said, "Won what?" I was pretty floored.

**GM:** I had left work a little bit early and was shopping. Our MD called me and said, "Guess what? You guys won an ACM." I just couldn't believe it.

**SL:** Yeah, go ahead and say that I was in a meeting and Gina was shopping.



Seeing Red: Gina Melton and Steve Lundy walk the red carpet like the stars they are.

## Country Music Cheerleading

Small Market Personality  
Gator, StyckMan and Cowboy Kyle

*Red carpets, toll roads and sushi aren't the kinds of things Tennessee folks are used to. That's not to say they can't have fun with 'em, though.*

**Gator Harrison:** My favorite thing about being in Texas was that I finally got to fulfill my sixth grade fantasy of meeting a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader. They golf-cart us over to the red carpet, and we're like, "No way! We're supposed to walk on *that*?" So we do, turn the corner and see it is lined with the Dallas friggin' Cowboy Cheerleaders. We knew we had to be in the wrong place, so we side-stepped the red carpet, ghermed one of the cheerleaders for a picture and slipped through a side door. Of course it turns out that we were supposed to walk through the cheerleaders. It was definitely a



Fantasy Football: A cheerleader finds her way over to (l-r) StyckMan, Gator and Kyle.

"What the crap is a kid from Sparta, Tennessee doing here?" The least favorite part of the trip was my Uber bill.

**Cowboy Kyle:** As we were leaving Kid Rock's Warner event Saturday night, that huge storm rolled in and all these tornado sirens started going off. "Very Texas," I thought. I asked

the security guy at the bar what the siren was for. He said it was "just" a tornado siren! When I hear that in Chattanooga, it's time to run like heck.

**StyckMan:** My "definitely in Texas moment" came as we drove up to the stadium. Wow that place is massive!

It's even bigger than I thought it would be. Another Texas moment came as Cowboy Kyle and I drove the toll roads. We never paid a toll! The sign said, "Keep moving, we'll bill you!" We still haven't been billed.

**CK:** Just watching StyckMan try to drive a rental around a major city was quite hilarious.

**GH:** I had a lot of fun watching StyckMan eat sushi at Nobu with new artist Cam. He's a meat 'n' tator Smithville, Tennessee boy who typically orders cheese sticks when we eat out. It was fun to see him choke down squid, not wanting to hurt Cam's feelings and end up *liking* it. My little boy is growing up so fast.

**S:** I told the group if it don't happen at McDonald's, I'm not sure how to do it. As it turns out, most of the food was really good. Eggplant, not so much.

**GH:** As far as the show, I loved Little Big Town's "Girl Crush" performance and having Garth back on the ACM Stage saluting the troops and honoring the life of American Sniper Chris Kyle. Ironically, I watched *American Sniper* for the first time the day before. There's no way to not bawl at the end of that movie. What an incredible life that will continue to encourage and challenge lives for years to come.

## Long Time But Well-Timed First

Major Market Station: WUSN/Chicago

*Taking the station's first ACM honor was especially meaningful for PD Jeff Kapugi, not least because of who was there to share in the moment.*

Radio Row really knocked it out of the park. The list of top talent was very impressive. You're interviewing Rascal Flatts and Eric Church is waiting to be next. It's like, do I hurry up Flatts so I can get to Church? It was almost like a thousand ping pong balls got dropped from the ceiling and you didn't know which one you wanted to catch, but you wanted as many as possible. It was amazing and exhausting.

One of the neatest moments for me was bumping into three ladies from Naperville, which is a suburb of Chicago. They'd bid on an auction and won the Full-Monty treatment in Dallas – backstage, rehearsal, after-party, the whole thing. They were really excited to be there and big fans of US 99.5 and country music. We were in the bar having drinks with Canaan Smith, they took a picture with him and it was a neat little moment to be part of.

Our outgoing CBS Radio President Dan Mason was in attendance, which was special. Dan actually launched US 99.5 back in the day and fired that first



Presidential Honor: Dan Mason (c) joins (l-r) Jeff Kapugi, Big Kenny, Lisa Dent, John Rich and Ray Stevens to celebrate the station's wins.

button, so it was a good moment for him, too. After 33 years of doing Country in Chicago we finally pulled off our first ACM award.

It was the station's first nomination and our first win. We've really made a concerted effort to showcase ourselves well for the ACM every year. We worked on the audio portion all year long and we've been very active in the community and the industry. When I clicked "submit" on the final package, I was probably the most proud of what we put together. We really had a great 2014 in ratings and revenue. We did some great things in the community and the radio station went through what could have been looked at as an interesting evolu-

tion in some talent changes and shift changes. So when I clicked "submit" I said to my wife, "You know, I would take the nomination. It would feel like a win to me."

When the nominations came out, I've got to be honest, tears welled up in my eyes. I was taken aback a little bit. People recognize what we're doing here. But then once you get the nomination, you've gotta have the win, right?

I had just finished up an early morning panel at CRS and knew the awards were going to be announced around 11, so I ran up to the hotel room and was hitting "refresh" on the email to the point where I was wearing my index finger out. When it came in I clicked

it open and just went, "Yes!" Then I couldn't even keep up with the text messages and the email congratulations that were coming in. I couldn't even pick up the phone and call everyone on my team – which was my goal, to call them and tell them personally, "We *did* it. We did it together and I'm so proud of you and proud of us."

I told my team it's similar to the Stanley Cup. We're going to let everyone have a week with the trophy. They can take it with them to show it off as theirs. And then we'll showcase it here in the radio station next to a bunch of other amazing things we've compiled over the last 33 years of WUSN.

## A Good Reason To Celebrate

Large Market Station  
WWKA/Orlando

*A staff committed to getting the job done whatever it takes helps PD Drew Bland sign off on a few extra expense report outings.*

They don't lie – everything's bigger in Texas. It was pretty neat the way everything happened in different locations, with the football stadium, baseball stadium, the conference center and the hotel where our morning show stayed. Pretty compact, but still huge. Especially coming off of Vegas where everything's in one spot and you never see daylight.

Some of the parties were a lot of fun. The Kid Rock deal was pretty cool, but it's a little scary once the tornadoes start rolling through Texas. You don't mess around with tornadoes, that's for sure. And apparently, tornadoes don't mess around with Kid Rock. All it did was knock out the power. Everyone kept drinking.

The seats at the show were interesting. Being behind everything – I mean, they were great seats, they were very comfortable. Half the people were up at the bar backstage, a little area with couches and stuff. But I'm glad the show took a focus toward the viewers and the people who paid a lot more



Raise 'Em Up: Dir./Marketing Amy Lynch demonstrates the proper way to hold the station's "Stanley Cup."

money for their seats.

I really liked the very beginning when Eric Church did "Pledge Allegiance To The Hag." Opening the most-watched ACM awards show since the late '90s with a song actual Eric fans know but the mainstream probably doesn't – that was a pretty bold move.

Leading an ACM-winning station feels pretty good. The amount of pride you have for your staff comes from seeing everybody's hard work and sweat – sleepless days, weekends and time away from family and friends pays off. We have such a tremendous staff that's willing to run through walls for this radio station. To be able to bring home awards like this is pretty amazing.

It's a huge award but feels sort of weird. I guess if you're Taylor Swift or Luke Bryan that feeling you get when you win must be natural, but it's interesting for the rest of us. We've used it a lot as an excuse to go out and celebrate. There have been a few expense reports with "ACM Awards celebration" on them. I'm actually bummed we can't use that anymore. But I guess when the trophy arrives we'll have another excuse.

We're excited to be able to bring the trophy out and share it with the fans of K92.3. We are absolutely going to take it out on a world tour like it's the Stanley Cup. I don't think you can drink out of it, but maybe we'll find a way to make that happen. Then it will probably go right at the front of the radio station when you walk in. You'll see our sister station's Marconi and then you'll see K92.3's 2015 ACM.

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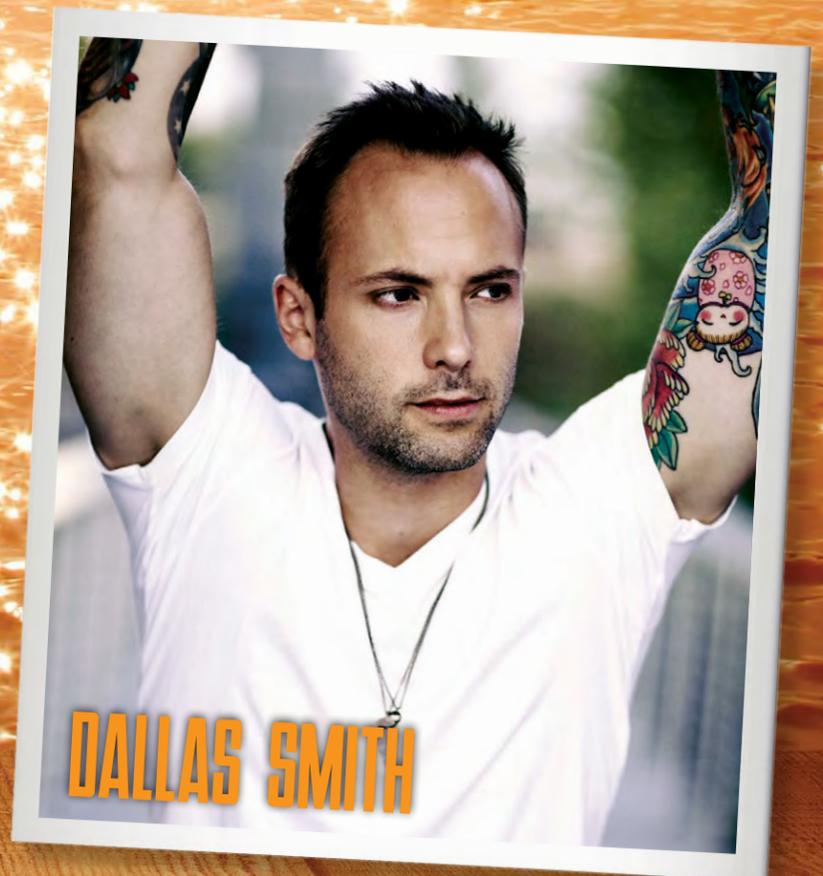
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## Plans Are Made To Be Broken

**Medium Market Station  
WQMX/Akron**

*Fun can happen at a bar, blow in with a storm or roll by sporting a big set of steer horns. WQMX VP, Dir./Operations and morning co-host Sue Wilson explains.*

We're locally owned and when we won the award, I went to the owner, who's also the VP/GM, and said, "This is actually your award, so do you want to go to Dallas and accept it?" He was very gracious and said, "This is you and your team's award and you can accept it." So our Dir./Promotions Jody Wheatley and myself went.

Sometimes the things that are unplanned are the most fun. Several of our industry friends were staying at the Hilton Anatole, so we went over one evening. And a bunch of people from a variety of labels ended up going out to dinner. From there we collected at the bar. It was almost like CRS at the Bridge Bar. It was industry, but not a planned event and that was fun.

The radio awards presentation was very

nice and we got dressed up like girls do because we didn't know if they might show our picture on TV. From the awards ceremony, we got on a bus and went down the road to the Kid Rock event. Being a big rock star, he wanted to do it at some dive bar that was real casual. And believe me it was a *dive bar*. You don't get to smoke anywhere in any bars in Ohio, but everyone was smoking these big cigars while we're in our fancy schmancy dresses. And Kid Rock, as usual, wasn't wearing a shirt. I'm kidding, he did have a shirt on.

The storm hit and tornado sirens in Arlington started to go off. The bus we had gotten on to return to the hotel suddenly started shaking and Jody thought we might have to stay at the bar and hide under the pool table. About that time the lights went off in the bar! Saturday was the interesting day of the trip.

And there was the time I was on the phone outside the hotel talking to somebody back home. It was a beautiful day and the breeze was blowing when this big black SUV, like an Expedition or something, drove by with one of those steer things, or antlers or whatever they're called on the front of it. I tried to get a picture but missed it. It was like, "Oh my God, clearly I'm in Texas."



**Kiss This:** Wheatley and Wilson snuggle up to the heavy metal.



**Padding The Bill:** Mac and Flat Bill take in the sights.

## Flat Bill For A Phat Time

**Small Market Station  
KCLR/Columbia, MO**

*A big and sometimes tough year for KCLR staffers and listeners made for an even sweeter win at the 50th ACMs. The station lost a veteran, did great things for the community and enlisted a first grade tag-a-long to help tell the story, according to PD Jamie Mac.*

Cara Denis from *Scotty & Cara in the Morning* went, as well as myself, my Sales Manager and my Market Manager. This was for the year we lost our longtime PD Teresa Davis. It happened in August about three months after she'd retired which, looking back, was a godsend because she got to spend that time with her family and friends. She'd been with the station since Clear 99 debuted in 1991, so we dedicated the award and the whole process to her and her memory.

It really circles back around to our number one objective, which is just to serve our listeners and community. We hold our heads high, for example, over the work we do with Children's Miracle Network. We helped raise more than \$241,000 for them this year. As I was sitting inside the "Jerry World Dome" and taking it all in, I was thinking how I'll be watching clips from the 50th awards

show and know we were there. It was a big year and a special win.

The hospitality from everybody in Dallas was top-notch and I hope they look at doing it again down there. The experience in Las Vegas is always fun, too. I was asking myself during the show what moments our listeners would be talking about the next day and Garth's performance was a big one. The Brooks & Dunn reunion was great as well. Alan Jackson's performance of "Where Were You (When The World Stopped Turning)" was a good one for me personally. The funniest tweet I saw that night was someone who said, "Okay, so what we've learned in the past 24 hours is that '90s country is a lot better than today's country!" Cara pointed out that among contemporary performers, there was really only one female, Miranda Lambert. That speaks to how tough things are for females right now.

That's Flat Bill you see in my pictures. There's a local school in New Franklin, MO, which is actually the home of Sara Evans, that invited me to read to its first grade class a few months back. They originally sent me a Flat Stanley to take on an earlier trip to Texas, but when I got back from that one I forgot to take him out of my pants pocket. So Flat Stanley took a bath in the washing machine. The teacher sent me another one called Flat Bill, and that's who joined me for the *NAB Show* in Las Vegas and the ACMS in Dallas.

**CAC**

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09/12 • COMERICA PARK DETROIT, MI

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# COUNTRY'S TOP RATINGS & REVENUE COMPANIES

Country Aircheck's annual overview of America's top radio companies shows that 19 groups each generated at least \$10 million in revenues from their Country stations in 2014. Collectively, the 449 stations owned by these 19 operators entertained almost 45 million people, up from last year's slightly more than 41 million from 375 stations. For only the second time since we have been compiling this data, operators generating more than \$10 million in annual revenue from Country outlets topped the \$1 billion mark. They posted \$1.02 billion compared to last year's \$1.13 billion.

As you look at these tables, an asterisk (\*) indicates stations in PPM markets. For PPM stations, the Fall shares represent the Nielsen Audio Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 12+ average for both 2014 and 2013. PPM cume figures are from Nov. 2014. This report provides year-to-year trends in both categories and stations owned by each operator, plus ratings, cume and revenue comparisons from Fall 2014 to 2013. If your company or station has inadvertently been omitted, please let us know.

## COUNTRY COMPANIES REVENUE RANKER

Here's how the companies listed on these pages rank by 2014 Country revenue (in millions of dollars). The data is compiled from individual station revenues for each year as provided by BIA. For comparison purposes, previous years' total company revenues and revenue rankings follow, with each company's rank for that year following the revenue figure.

Owner	2014	2013	2012	2010	2008	2005	2003
1 iHeartMedia	\$336.0	\$393.3/1	\$309.8/1	\$295.0/1	\$376.8/1	\$440.6/1	\$412.3/1
2 Cumulus	\$172.7	\$161.9/2	\$172.9/2	\$85.8/4	\$107.0/4	\$66.9/5	\$62.3/5
3 CBS Radio	\$124.2	\$122.3/3	\$122.5/3	\$118.2/2	\$151.8/2	\$218.7/2	\$225.0/2
4 Townsquare Media	\$84.5	\$52.0/4	\$58.9/4	\$45.9/6	...	...	...
5 Cox	\$56.3	\$46.6/5	\$53.8/5	\$64.1/5	\$71.3/5	\$70.1/4	\$68.4/4
6 Entercom	\$28.6	\$27.7/7	\$27.8/8	\$32.6/7	\$37.7/6	\$22.5/12	\$20.7/12
7 Beasley	\$26.0	\$33.7/6	\$30.3/7	\$26.5/8	\$35.0/7	\$37.6/8	\$28.6/10
8 Hubbard	\$20.6	\$20.3/8	\$20.4/9	...	...	...	...
9 Alpha Media	\$19.5	\$10.2/19	...	...	...	...	...
10 Dignity	\$18.1	...	...	...	...	...	...
11 Lincoln Financial Media	\$17.7	\$18.4/9	\$18.9/10	\$20.9/9	\$27.8/9	\$33.1/10	\$35.3/8
12 Saga	\$16.9	\$15.0/14	\$14.8/13	\$14.4/14	\$14.1/15	\$13.1/15	\$9.9/17
13 SummitMedia	\$16.4	\$16.4/11	...	...	...	...	...
14 Midwest Communications	\$16.3	\$12.7/16	...	...	...	...	...
15 EW Scripps (formerly Journal)	\$15.8	\$15.6/12	\$15.1/12	\$15.0/13	\$15.0/13	\$16.4/13	\$16.0/14
16 Hall	\$13.3	\$13.2/15	\$13.6/14	\$12.3/15	\$14.4/14	\$14.4/14	\$11.2/15
17 MTGF	\$11.3	...	...	...	...	...	...
18 Curtis Media	\$10.8	\$10.8/17	\$11.4/15	...	...	...	...
19 Mt. Wilson	\$10.5	\$10.7/18	\$10.7/16	na	\$12.5/17	...	...

## COUNTRY COMPANIES AUDIENCE RANKER

Here's how the companies listed on these pages rank by 2014 metro weekly Country 12+ cume audience, according to Nielsen Audio information provided by BIA. Previous years' cume and cume rankings follow, with the company's rank for that year following the cume figure.

Owner	2014	2013	2012	2010	2008	2005	2003
1 iHeartMedia	14,593,800	13,147,200/1	13,757,700/1	14,380,900/1	11,078,700/1	10,917,900/1	10,156,500/1
2 Cumulus	8,467,400	7,959,700/2	7,326,000/2	3,323,000/5	3,196,700/4	1,565,800/6	1,660,800/5
3 CBS Radio	6,715,000	6,268,700/3	6,953,900/3	6,619,700/2	5,044,100/2	5,035,900/2	4,976,300/2
4 Cox	2,849,700	3,079,100/4	3,852,600/4	3,400,300/4	2,924,700/5	1,854,900/4	1,798,400/4
5 Entercom	1,920,500	1,727,000/5	1,928,300/5	2,298,500/6	1,642,600/6	733,400/10	697,300/10
6 Townsquare Media	1,812,820	1,498,700/6	1,448,900/7	1,252,600/8	...	...	...
7 Beasley	1,253,200	1,458,700/7	1,584,000/6	1,535,600/7	1,255,900/7	1,039,300/8	791,800/8
8 Hubbard	1,114,800	1,074,500/9	1,214,900/8	...	...	...	...
9 Lincoln Financial	922,400	949,800/11	951,500/11	966,300/11	564,300/11	625,300/11	631,800/12
10 Mt. Wilson	889,900	1,036,700/10	1,208,100/9	na	1,037,200/8	...	...
11 Alpha Media	809,600	511,400/14	...	...	...	...	...
12 MTGF	633,800	...	...	...	...	...	...
13 Hall	554,500	523,500/13	527,200/12	559,900/12	448,300/14	414,300/14	382,800/16
14 SummitMedia	523,400	525,200/12	...	...	...	...	...
15 Dignity	430,600	...	...	...	...	...	...
16 Midwest Communications	397,800	291,700/18	...	...	...	...	...
17 EW Scripps (formerly Journal)	344,100	471,100/15	482,600/13	470,300/14	415,100/15	470,100/13	391,800/15
18 Curtis Media	327,400	305,800/16	325,700/15	...	...	...	...
19 Saga	184,300	193,000/19	180,700/17	238,900/16	159,100/18	163,400/17	133,800/18

**LEGEND:** Following each station's call letters and market are Nielsen Audio 12+ shares and cume figures from Fall 2014 and 2013. After that are the station's 2014 and 2013 revenues, shown in millions, except in "Totals," where actual figures for cume and revenue are listed.

BIA is the source for all ownership, revenue and Nielsen Audio share and cume data. The "Number of Stations" column shows stations owned by each operator at the end of 2014. HD stations' revenue and audience are included in the totals.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
Alpha Media						
WGBL/Biloxi, MS	1.6	na	162	na	\$0.2	na
WHKX/Bluefield, WV	14.0	10.9	225	206	\$0.8	\$0.7
WHQX/Bluefield, WV	0.0	0.0	na	na	\$0.0	\$0.0
WKEZ-AM/Bluefield, WV	0.0	0.0	na	na	\$0.0	\$0.0
WCLI/Dayton+ 1	1.4	na	475	na	\$0.9	na
WFLS/Fredericksburg, VA	11.0	na	727	na	\$3.1	na
KUBB/Merced, CA 2	6.9	na	288	na	\$0.5	na
WXCL/Peoria 3	7.7	8.7	575	587	\$1.7	\$1.8
KUPL/Portland, OR*	5.1	6.7	3,857	3,483	\$5.7	\$5.9
WARV/Richmond	0.0	na	0	na	\$0.1	na
WLFV/Richmond 3	1.7	1.8	591	591	\$2.8	\$3.0
WWLB/Richmond+	1.4	na	535	na	\$0.5	na
WGCO/Savannah	2.5	4.3	240	247	\$0.9	\$0.8
WUBB/Savannah 3	5.3	4.0	na	na	\$0.7	\$0.7
KYKX/Tyler, TX 4	1.9	na	182	na	\$1.1	na
KKUS/Tyler, TX 4	3.6	na	263	na	\$0.8	na
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	17	65.9	809,600	\$19,500,000	
	2013	5	32.4	511,400	\$10,255,000	

1. WCLI changed from Modern AC to Country as "Icons of Country" in Oct. 2014. 2. Alpha acquired KUBB from Buckley in Oct. 2014. 3. Alpha acquired these stations from Main Line Broadcasting in July 2014. 4. Alpha acquired these stations from Access 1 in Dec. 2014. Their ratings and revenues are not included in the 2014 company totals.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
Beasley						
WKXC/Augusta, GA	8.8	10.8	869	912	\$3.6	\$3.4
WSOC/Charlotte* 1	7.9	6.6	4,890	4,211	\$5.9	\$5.6
WKML/Fayetteville, NC	10.8	11.6	795	850	\$3.7	\$3.7
KCYE/Las Vegas*	3.7	3.0	1,707	1,920	\$2.9	\$2.9
WQYK/Tampa* 1	5.3	5.1	4,271	4,174	\$9.9	\$10.4

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2014	5	36.5	1,253,200	\$26,000,000
	2013	5	33.3	1,428,700	\$33,700,000
	2012	5	30.8	1,584,400	\$30,300,000
	2010	5	29.2	1,535,600	\$26,500,000
	2008	6	25.1	1,255,600	\$35,000,000

1. Beasley added WQYK and WSOC in an Oct. 2014 station swap with CBS Radio.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
CBS Radio						
WUSN/Chicago*	4.1	4.1	11,142	10,857	\$21.2	\$23.2
WYCD/Detroit*	4.8	7.6	7,520	7,343	\$11.5	\$11.4
KILT/Houston*	3.7	3.2	9,120	8,925	\$19.6	\$19.7
WKIS/Miami* 1	2.7	2.9	4,245	4,530	\$8.2	\$8.7
KMNB/Minneapolis*	5.8	5.9	6,598	6,292	\$9.1	\$9.4
WXTU/Philadelphia* 1	5.4	5.0	8,012	6,075	\$14.5	\$15.0
KMLE/Phoenix*	3.9	4.1	5,706	6,097	\$9.5	\$9.3
WDSY/Pittsburgh*	5.3	8.1	4,050	4,493	\$7.0	\$7.2
KFRG/Riverside*	3.3	4.2	2,519	2,633	\$9.2	\$8.7
KXFG/Riverside*	0.1	0.1	144	na	\$0.0	\$0.0
KNCI/Sacramento*	4.2	4.6	2,976	2,963	\$5.4	\$5.4
KMPS/Seattle*	3.1	2.9	5,118	4,699	\$9.0	\$9.7

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2014	12	46.4	6,715,000	\$124,200,000
	2013	12	56.4	6,268,700	\$122,300,000
	2012	12	55.4	6,953,900	\$122,500,000
	2010	12	54.4	6,619,700	\$118,150,000
	2008	15	52.8	5,044,100	\$151,825,000

1. CBS Radio added WKIS and WXTU in an Oct. 2014 station swap with Beasley. CBS Radio also operated 11 HD Country stations, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
Cox						
WHKO/Dayton	12.8	11.2	1,955	2,002	\$6.8	\$6.6
KKBQ/Houston*	5.2	5.7	10,603	12,136	\$23.3	\$19.0
KTHT/Houston*+	1.9	2.2	5,229	5,137	\$0.8	\$0.6
WWKA/Orlando*	6.4	6.0	3,090	3,248	\$10.3	\$8.3
KCYX/San Antonio*	5.9	6.6	5,093	5,709	\$7.4	\$6.8
KKYX-AM/San Antonio*+	1.9	1.4	1,424	1,310	\$0.2	\$0.4
KWEN/Tulsa	6.8	7.2	1,103	1,249	\$4.6	\$5.2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	8	40.9	2,849,700	\$56,300,000	
	2013	8	40.3	3,079,100	\$49,200,000#	
	2012	12	62.7	3,852,600	\$56,400,000	
	2010	13	62.2	3,400,300	\$64,125,000	
	2008	13	60.0	2,924,700	\$71,300,000	

Cox also owned one Country station in a non-rated market, two HD Country stations and one translator, according to BIA. #2013 revenue totals updated in BIA's 2014 report.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
Cumulus						
KBCY/Abilene, TX	6.9	5.9	199	201	\$0.7	\$0.8
WKAK/Albany, GA	3.1	5.1	131	167	\$0.3	\$0.4
WNUQ/Albany, GA NI	1.2	na	83	na	\$0.1	na
KBZU/Albuquerque NI	1.8	na	341	na	\$0.2	na
KRST/Albuquerque	4.1	5.5	875	937	\$3.1	\$3.2
WCTO/Allentown	10.5	12.2	1,265	1,261	\$5.1	\$4.9
KPUR/Amarillo, TX	1.3	0.7	107	71	\$0.1	\$0.1
WWWW/Ann Arbor, MI	5.6	6.2	330	315	\$2.8	\$2.5
WPKR/Appleton, WI	2.1	3.5	276	334	\$1.1	\$1.1
WKHX/Atlanta*	3.5	4.4	6,880	10,175	\$10.2	\$10.1
KAYD/Beaumont, TX	2.3	3.6	249	291	\$0.9	\$0.8
WZRR/Birmingham NI	1.5	na	678	na	\$0.6	na
WBWN/Bloomington, IL	9.0	7.1	273	294	\$1.5	\$1.7
WJBC/Bloomington, IL NI	7.1	na	201	na	\$1.5	na
KIZN/Boise	3.5	4.2	468	550	\$1.8	\$2.1
KQFC/Boise	3.1	4.2	391	453	\$0.8	\$1.0
WIWF/Charleston, SC	4.1	3.8	470	719	\$0.7	\$0.7
WOGT/Chattanooga NI	2.9	4.4	202	na	\$0.7	\$0.7
WNNF/Cincinnati	2.6	3.3	2,654	2,313	\$1.1	\$1.1
KATC/Colorado Springs	5.7	6.5	721	651	\$2.0	\$1.8
KBBM/Columbia, MO	0.7	0.6	69	na	\$0.4	\$0.2
WOMG/Columbia, SC NI	1.3	na	257	na	\$0.3	na
KPLX/Dallas*	4.9	5.3	10,857	11,797	\$19.2	\$17.9
KSCS/Dallas*	4.4	3.2	8,055	8,033	\$12.3	\$14.4
KHKI/Des Moines	5.4	6.7	1,025	1,040	\$3.1	\$2.4
KJJY/Des Moines NI	4.6	5.3	734	741	\$1.5	\$1.4
WDRQ/Detroit**	1.9	na	4,188	na	\$1.8	na
WMIM/Detroit	0.1	na	200	na	\$0.4	na
WXTA/Erie, PA	5.2	8.5	317	427	\$0.8	\$0.9
KAMO/Fayetteville, AR	1.6	2.3	196	225	\$0.3	\$0.3

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Cumulus (continued)</b>						
KRMW/Fayetteville, AR NI	0.0	na	0	na	\$0.1	na
WFBE/Flint, MI	5.2	6.7	364	511	\$1.6	\$1.3
KLSZ/Ft. Smith, AR NI	0.6	na	50	na	\$0.3	na
KOMS/Ft. Smith, AR+	8.7	9.4	455	457	\$0.8	\$0.6
WYZB/Ft. Walton Beach, FL	4.4	4.6	197	237	\$0.4	\$0.5
KSKS/Fresno	4.9	5.2	945	na	\$3.6	\$3.6
WTNR/Grand Rapids	3.1	3.7	738	709	\$1.1	\$1.4
WPCK/Green Bay	2.6	2.6	231	230	\$0.2	\$0.2
WHGB-AM/Harrisburg NI	0.6	na	104	na	\$0.3	na
WZCY/Harrisburg	2.0	2.0	286	384	\$0.8	\$1.0
WWFF/Huntsville, AL NI	0.7	na	124	na	\$0.2	na
WFMS/Indianapolis*	6.8	7.5	2,775	2,529	\$6.0	\$6.6
WKOS/Johnson City, TN NI	0.8	1.3	90	186	\$0.1	\$0.1
WIVK/Knoxville	16.9	14.3	2,113	2,064	\$8.1	\$8.1
KXKC/Lafayette, LA	4.2	4.3	667	633	\$1.0	\$1.2
KQLK/Lake Charles, LA NI	5.0	na	239	na	\$0.3	na
KYKZ/Lake Charles, LA	9.4	11.3	335	415	\$2.1	\$2.0
WIOV-FM/Lancaster, PA	9.5	8.8	697	785	\$4.1	\$3.9
WLXX/Lexington	3.7	4.6	617	632	\$1.3	\$1.0
WVLC/Lexington NI	0.7	na	150	na	\$0.1	na
WDEN/Macon, GA	11.0	9.3	718	739	\$2.0	\$2.0
WHKR/Melbourne, FL	3.1	3.9	454	506	\$1.0	\$1.3
WGKX/Memphis*	5.3	5.6	2,030	1,978	\$4.2	\$3.9
KATM/Modesto, CA	9.5	10.7	782	931	\$5.1	\$5.0
WLWI-FM/Montgomery, AL	6.7	5.1	518	532	\$1.5	\$1.6
WMDH/Muncie, IN	10.0	12.3	350	411	\$1.3	\$1.4
WLAW/Muskegon, MI NI	3.8	4.7	119	145	\$0.2	\$0.2
WLFY/Myrtle Beach, SC	2.6	3.1	228	296	\$0.4	\$0.3
WKDF/Nashville*	5.2	4.2	2,678	2,553	\$2.6	\$3.2
WSM-FM/Nashville* NI	5.5	4.5	2,730	2,360	\$2.5	\$2.9
WRKN/New Orleans* 1	1.3	2.3	532	na	\$0.3	\$0.7
WNSH/New York	1.7	1.7	8,021	8,612	\$6.5	\$4.8
KHAY/Oxnard, CA	4.3	5.3	381	460	\$2.9	\$2.9
KRRF/Oxnard, CA NI	0.0	na	0	na	\$0.3	na
WXBM/Pensacola, FL	5.3	4.7	531	521	\$1.2	\$1.5
WFYR/Peoria, IL	4.6	3.8	376	346	\$1.0	\$1.0
KBUL/Reno, NV	6.7	5.0	467	619	\$2.0	\$1.9
KUBL/Salt Lake City*	4.0	5.2	3,165	3,127	\$4.5	\$4.2
KSJO/San Jose* 2	0.5	na	1,434	na	\$3.0	na
WJCL/Savannah, GA	5.0	4.6	375	378	\$1.6	\$1.8
WZAT/Savannah, GA NI	1.4	na	135	na	\$0.1	na
KRMD/Shreveport, LA	5.9	5.9	389	473	\$1.8	\$1.9
WKKO/Toledo, OH	10.7	10.5	990	997	\$3.9	\$3.7
KTOP/Topeka, KS	2.9	3.9	153	207	\$0.4	\$0.3
KIIM/Tucson	8.7	9.3	1,251	1,474	\$6.0	\$6.2
KLUR/Wichita Falls, TX	9.8	12.2	246	271	\$1.1	\$1.1
KOLI/Wichita Falls, TX	2.5	0.8	50	60	\$0.2	\$0.3
WSJR/Wilkes Barre	1.7	1.4	403	331	\$0.3	\$0.2
WORC/Worcester, MA NI	1.6	na	229	na	\$0.3	na
WQXK/Youngstown, OH	10.3	10.2	837	818	\$3.6	\$3.2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	89	353.5	8,467,400	\$172,702,000	
	2013	70	330.3	7,959,700	\$161,904,000	
	2012	80	405.9	7,326,000	\$172,900,000	
	2010	52	300.2	3,323,000	\$85,752,000	
	2008	52	297.7	3,196,700	\$107,000,000	

1. WRKN flipped to Country Jan. 2014. 2. KSJO debuted Country in May 2014.  
 Cumulus also owned seven Country stations in non-rated markets, three HD Country stations and two translators, according to BIA.  
 NI Cumulus changed stations with the NI designation to '90s-Country based Nash Icon in 2014.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Curtis Media</b>						
WPCM-AM/Greensboro*1	0.4	na	214	na	\$0.1	na
WQDR/Raleigh*	10.7	9.5	3,060	3,257	\$10.7	\$10.8
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	5	11.1	327,400	\$10,800,000	
	2013	2	9.5	305,800	\$10,800,000	
	2012	2	7.0	325,700	\$11,400,000	

1. Classic Hits WPCM-AM and its companion translator flipped to Country in Dec. 2014.  
 Curtis Media also owned three Country stations in non-rated markets and one translator, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Digit</b>						
WCCQ/Chicago* 1	0.6	0.4	2,185	2,109	\$1.4	\$1.5
KCOB/Des Moines	0.0	0.0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
WQSL/Greenville-New Bern	1.2	1.4	0	0	\$2.9	\$2.9
WQZL/Greenville-New Bern	0.0	0.0	0	0	\$0.8	\$0.8
WRNS-AM/Greenville-New Bern 1	0.0	0.0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
WRNS/Greenville-New Bern 1	11.9	12.9	1,052	1,211	\$2.9	\$2.9
KZKX/Lincoln	6.6	5.4	417	414	\$1.6	\$1.5
WCEN/Saginaw, MI 1	9.0	na	652	na	\$1.8	\$1.8
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	29	29.3	430,600	\$18,060,000	

1. Digit acquired these stations from NextMedia in Feb. 2014  
 Digit also owned 21 Country stations in non-rated markets and one translator, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Entercom</b>						
WPAW/Greensboro*	7.0	8.4	2,489	2,334	\$3.1	\$3.1
WDAF/Kansas City*	4.9	5.9	2,974	3,003	\$4.0	\$3.9
WLFP/Memphis* 1	1.7	na	925	na	\$1.2	na
KWJJ/Portland*	5.5	4.2	4,114	3,433	\$5.7	\$6.1
WBEE/Rochester, NY	11.3	12.7	2,025	1,922	\$6.1	\$6.0
KKWF/Seattle*	4.5	4.2	5,528	5,300	\$5.3	\$5.6
WGGY/Wilkes Barre	7.2	9.3	1,150	1,278	\$3.2	\$3.0
WGGI/Wilkes Barre	0.0	0.0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	8	42.1	1,920,500	\$28,600,000	
	2013	7	44.7	1,727,000	\$27,700,000	
	2012	7	41.9	1,928,300	\$27,800,000	
	2010	9	38.5	2,298,500	\$32,575,000	
	2008	9	34.6	1,642,600	\$37,700,000	

1. Entercom flipped Classic Hits WKQK to Country in Sept. 2014 as WLFP.  
 Entercom also operated one HD Country station and one translator, according to BIA.  
 Entercom bought KYGO/Denver and KSOQ & KSON/San Diego from Lincoln Financial in Dec. 2014. The deal has not yet closed.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>EW Scripps</b>						
WCYQ/Knoxville	5.3	4.1	826	679	\$2.1	\$1.7
KTTS/Springfield, MO	10.8	14.4	803	1,024	\$4.2	\$4.2
KVOO/Tulsa	4.6	4.8	1,033	1,067	\$3.3	\$3.3
KXBL/Tulsa+	5.8	4.2	641	616	\$1.9	\$1.9
KFDI/Wichita	8.3	11.5	998	1,012	\$3.8	\$4.0
KFTI-AM/Wichita+ 1	2.7	na	138	na	\$0.5	na
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	6	29.2	344,100	\$15,800,000	
	2013	6	42.5	471,100	\$15,600,000	
	2012	6	45.3	482,600	\$15,100,000	
	2010	7	41.2	470,300	\$14,975,000	
	2008	6	39.1	415,100	\$15,000,000	

1. Journal merged with EW Scripps in Dec. 2014. As part of that, Classic Country KFTI-FM was sold to Envision in Oct. 2014. Concurrently, Scripps flipped Spanish Sports KLIQ-AM to Country as KFTI-AM.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Hall</b>						
WOKO/Burlington, VT	13.5	13.4	876	844	\$2.6	\$2.8
WPCV/Lakeland	10.3	10.9	895	964	\$4.2	\$4.1
WCTY/New London, CT	13.9	11.8	534	523	\$2.1	\$2.1
WCTK/Providence*	8.0	6.8	3,240	2,904	\$4.4	\$4.2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	4	45.7	554,500	\$13,275,000	
	2013	4	42.9	523,500	\$13,200,000	
	2012	4	47.2	527,200	\$13,600,000	
	2010	4	45.4	559,900	\$12,325,000	
	2008	4	46.9	448,300	\$14,400,000	

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Hubbard</b>						
WUBE/Cincinnati*	7.6	7.0	4,221	4,144	\$11.5	\$11.1
WGY/Cincinnati*	1.9	2.2	1,648	1,677	\$1.4	\$1.3
WIL/St. Louis*	6.2	6.2	5,279	4,924	\$7.7	\$7.9
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	9	15.7	1,114,800	\$20,550,000	
	2013	3	15.4	1,074,500	\$20,300,000	
	2012	4	15.8	1,214,900	\$20,400,000	
	2010	3	14.8	1,221,400	\$19,150,000	
	2008	3	13.5	705,700	\$22,050,000	

Hubbard also operated six Country stations in non-rated markets and three HD Country stations.  
 Hubbard acquired six Country outlets in non-rated markets from Omni in Nov. 2014.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>iHeartMedia</b>						
WOBB/Albany, GA	6.2	6.2	168	181	\$0.5	\$0.5
KBQI/Albuquerque	2.7	3.6	759	793	\$1.2	\$1.1
KASH/Anchorage, AK	5.0	2.9	299	237	\$1.0	\$1.0
WKSJ/Asheville, NC	17.7	19.9	823	943	\$4.7	\$4.5
WUBL/Atlanta*	5.2	4.3	7,383	6,344	\$9.5	\$9.8
WSCG/Augusta, GA	4.8	3.6	590	na	\$1.0	\$1.0
KASE/Austin*	6.3	7.2	3,354	3,369	\$6.8	\$6.7
KVET-FM/Austin*	6.5	6.4	3,272	3,070	\$5.6	\$5.3
WPOC/Baltimore*	8.2	9.0	4,509	4,208	\$11.8	\$12.3
WYNK/Baton Rouge	4.0	4.8	904	707	\$2.5	\$2.8
KYKR/Beaumont, TX	6.1	5.3	552	495	\$1.2	\$1.1
WKNN/Biloxi, MS	4.6	5.6	455	426	\$1.0	\$1.0
WBBI/Binghamton, NY	2.0	1.9	124	147	\$0.1	\$0.2
WINR-AM/Binghamton, NY+ 1	na	na	na	na	na	na
WDXB/Birmingham	4.5	5.9	1,234	1,525	\$1.6	\$1.5
KBMR-AM/Bismarck, ND	11.0	9.1	124	122	\$0.5	\$0.3
KQDY/Bismarck, ND	9.4	5.8	219	184		

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Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>iHeartMedia</b>						
<b>KHGE/Fresno</b>	2.5	2.9	660	601	\$1.1	\$1.1
<b>KIIX-AM/Ft. Collins, CO</b>	0.0	na	0	na	\$0.1	na
<b>KXBG/Ft. Collins, CO</b>	2.7	3.9	383	403	\$0.8	\$0.7
<b>WCKT/Ft. Myers</b>	3.5	2.9	918	789	\$1.0	\$1.0
<b>WAVW/Ft. Pierce</b>	4.9	7.3	549	741	\$2.0	\$2.1
<b>KMAG/Ft. Smith, AR</b>	7.7	10.1	603	667	\$0.9	\$1.0
<b>KSNR/Grand Forks, ND-MN</b>	4.8	5.5	135	153	\$0.5	\$0.6
<b>WBCT/Grand Rapids</b>	10.4	9.3	1,578	1,347	\$4.7	\$4.5
<b>WTQR/Greensboro*</b>	7.0	7.4	3,020	2,587	\$2.9	\$3.0
<b>WESC/Greenville, SC</b>	6.0	7.2	1,430	1,467	\$3.3	\$3.3
<b>WSSL/Greenville, SC</b>	7.5	8.6	1,471	1,755	\$3.7	\$3.6
<b>WRBT/Harrisburg</b>	5.4	7.4	753	877	\$3.2	\$3.3
<b>WKCY/Harrisonburg, VA</b>	13.5	12.5	268	285	\$2.1	\$2.0
<b>WWYZ/Hartford*</b>	8.1	8.0	2,211	2,168	\$6.7	\$7.1
<b>WTCR/Huntington, WV-KY</b>	9.9	9.6	563	515	\$2.0	\$2.0
<b>WDRM/Huntsville, AL</b>	13.4	12.6	1,034	1,048	\$4.4	\$4.5
<b>WMSI/Jackson, MS</b>	5.3	6.1	538	584	\$2.7	\$2.7
<b>WQIK/Jacksonville*</b>	7.2	6.3	2,670	2,669	\$4.5	\$4.3
<b>KWNR/Las Vegas*</b>	2.4	2.0	1,831	2,076	\$2.4	\$2.4
<b>WBUL/Lexington</b>	10.9	12.3	1,436	1,325	\$3.6	\$3.5
<b>WIMT/Lima, OH</b>	17.6	16.1	479	507	\$1.7	\$1.6
<b>KMJX/Little Rock+</b>	8.2	4.7	724	823	\$2.2	\$2.3
<b>KSSN/Little Rock</b>	6.5	10.0	920	968	\$5.1	\$5.4
<b>WAMZ/Louisville</b>	7.2	7.1	1,856	1,852	\$6.5	\$6.5
<b>WMAD/Madison</b>	3.9	3.6	474	456	\$1.8	\$1.8
<b>KTEX/McAllen</b>	10.2	9.7	2,235	2,027	\$3.0	\$2.9
<b>WMIL/Milwaukee*</b>	10.6	10.2	4,144	4,011	\$10.2	\$10.0
<b>KEYY/Minneapolis*</b>	6.3	7.1	6,590	6,635	\$15.7	\$16.6
<b>WKSJ/Mobile</b>	8.2	8.6	1,029	852	\$4.6	\$4.5
<b>KTOM/Monterey</b>	3.2	3.0	376	447	\$0.9	\$0.9
<b>WMUS/Muskegon, MI</b>	8.8	8.2	271	247	\$1.0	\$1.1
<b>WGTR/Myrtle Beach, SC 3</b>	8.6	na	548	na	\$1.2	na
<b>WSIX/Nashville*</b>	4.3	6.1	2,437	2,475	\$3.8	\$3.9
<b>WNOE/New Orleans</b>	4.6	5.8	1,533	1,722	\$4.6	\$4.8
<b>KTST/Oklahoma City</b>	5.6	4.7	1,576	1,638	\$4.7	\$4.6
<b>KXXY/Oklahoma City+</b>	3.7	3.8	1,040	983	\$1.9	\$1.6
<b>KXKT/Omaha</b>	9.4	9.5	1,109	1,208	\$5.3	\$5.0
<b>KFFF/Omaha</b>	2.5	4.1	546	471	\$0.9	\$0.8
<b>WPAP/Panama City, FL</b>	9.0	10.8	280	310	\$1.0	\$1.2
<b>WNUS/Parkersburg, WV</b>	11.3	13.2	310	311	\$0.6	\$0.6
<b>KNIX/Phoenix*</b>	4.5	4.6	5,563	6,628	\$11.6	\$11.3
<b>WPGB/Pittsburgh* 5</b>	3.2	na	2,734	na	\$3.8	na
<b>WMYF-AM/Portsmouth, NH+ 6</b>	0.0	na	0	na	\$0.0	na
<b>WTBU/Portsmouth, NH</b>	0.8	na	102	na	\$0.5	na
<b>WRWD/Poughkeepsie, NY</b>	4.4	5.4	264	321	\$2.3	\$2.4
<b>WLLR/Quad Cities, IA-IL</b>	17.5	18.2	977	1,017	\$3.3	\$3.3
<b>WNCB/Raleigh</b>	3.6	2.9	1,869	na	\$3.0	na
<b>WYYD/Roanoke, VA</b>	5.1	5.5	544	520	\$1.6	\$1.6
<b>KMFX/Rochester, MN</b>	7.4	7.0	280	254	\$1.2	\$1.2
<b>WNBL/Rochester, NY 7</b>	0.0	na	233	na	\$0.1	na
<b>KBEB/Sacramento* 8</b>	2.3	na	1,948	na	\$3.0	na
<b>WWFG/Salisbury, MD</b>	10.6	8.2	669	625	\$1.7	\$1.7
<b>KAJA/San Antonio*</b>	6.3	8.2	5,202	5,433	\$8.2	\$8.6
<b>KRPT/San Antonio+*</b>	0.1	1.1	206	680	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>WCTQ/Sarasota</b>	5.5	4.9	751	795	\$1.5	\$1.5
<b>KIIX/Spokane 9</b>	1.8	na	357	na	\$0.8	na
<b>WRNX/Springfield, MA</b>	5.9	5.6	665	697	\$0.9	\$1.0
<b>KSWF/Springfield, MO</b>	4.4	5.9	520	527	\$1.0	\$1.0
<b>KSD/St. Louis*</b>	4.8	4.7	5,546	4,716	\$4.8	\$5.1
<b>WBBS/Syracuse</b>	10.7	9.2	1,268	1,302	\$5.5	\$5.6
<b>WTNT/Tallahassee, FL</b>	4.2	5.8	309	437	\$1.6	\$1.5
<b>WFUS/Tampa*</b>	4.6	5.7	4,612	4,921	\$5.7	\$5.9
<b>WCKY/Toledo</b>	2.1	1.3	313	281	\$0.9	\$0.9
<b>KYWD/Tucson*</b>	1.4	1.0	308	437	\$1.4	\$1.5
<b>KTGX/Tulsa</b>	3.9	4.8	786	823	\$1.6	\$1.4
<b>WWZD/Tupelo, MS</b>	12.2	8.6	533	434	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>WTXT/Tuscaloosa, AL</b>	5.6	6.3	304	296	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>WACO/Waco, TX</b>	10.1	11.5	463	466	\$1.8	\$1.8
<b>WMZQ/Washington, DC*</b>	3.5	3.8	6,339	5,619	\$9.5	\$10.8
<b>WOVK/Wheeling, WV</b>	15.4	19.0	355	401	\$1.1	\$1.0
<b>KZSN/Wichita</b>	6.1	6.0	797	745	\$1.9	\$2.0
<b>WBYL/Williamsport, PA</b>	5.1	6.9	118	149	\$0.4	\$0.3
<b>WDSB/Wilmington, DE</b>	2.4	3.6	483	494	\$2.3	\$2.2
<b>WUSQ/Winchester, VA</b>	17.1	16.9	497	518	\$2.5	\$2.5
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	140	715.6	14,593,800	\$336,035,000	
	2013	123	705.6	13,147,200	\$308,285,000	
	2012	122	706.6	13,757,700	\$309,800,000	
	2010	122	#REF!	14,380,900	\$294,980,000	
	2008	125	657.2	11,078,700	\$376,670,000	

1. Classic Hits WINR-AM flipped to Classic Country in Dec. 2014. 2. Top 40 WEDX/Boston adopted Country as WBWL in June 2014. 3. In May 2014 iHM acquired WEGX, WNYR and WGTR from Qantum. 4. Regional Mexican WNUA changed to Country WEBG in Jan. 2015. 5. News/Talk WPGB went Country in Aug. 2014. 6. WMYF-AM changed from Sports to Classic Country Feb. 2014. WTBU flipped to Country from Adult Hits WSKX Aug. 2014. 7. Classic Hits WODX became Country WNBL in Sept. 2014. 8. Classic Hits KHLX flipped to Country KBEB in Jan. 2014. 9. KIIX dropped Top 40 for Country in Jan. 2014.

iHM also owned 25 Country stations in non-rated markets, 63 HD Country stations and 11 translators, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Lincoln Financial</b>						
<b>KYGO/Denver*</b>	5.2	5.0	4,757	4,699	\$11.4	\$10.1
<b>KSON/San Diego*</b>	4.8	6.6	4,467	4,799	\$8.3	\$8.3
<b>KSOQ/San Diego*</b>	0.0	0.0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	3	10.0	922,400	\$17,700,000	
	2013	3	11.0	949,800	\$18,400,000	
	2012	3	10.1	951,500	\$18,900,000	
	2010	3	8.2	966,300	\$20,925,000	
	2008	3	9.3	564,300	\$27,800,000	

Lincoln Financial also operated two HD Country stations and one translator, according to BIA.

Lincoln Financial sold these three stations to Entercom in Dec. 2014. The deal has not yet closed.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>MGTF Media</b>						
<b>KBEQ/Kansas City</b>	4.3	3.9	2,993	3,122	4.9	4.9
<b>KFKF/Kansas City</b>	7.5	8.7	3,345	3,332	6.4	6.4
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	2	11.8	633,800	\$11,300,000	

MGTF Radio company bought KBEQ & KFKF/Kansas City from Wilks Broadcasting in June 2014.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Midwest Communications</b>						
<b>WNCY/Appleton, WI</b>	12.2	13.8	844	877	\$5.5	\$5.6
<b>WGEE/Appleton, WI+ 1</b>	4.4	na	305	na	\$1.4	na
<b>KTCO/Duluth</b>	4.5	4.7	242	261	\$0.5	\$0.5
<b>WLFW/Evansville, IN 2</b>	3.5	4.1	251	na	\$1.1	\$1.1
<b>KVOX/Fargo</b>	6.0	6.1	344	329	\$1.9	\$1.9
<b>WNWN/Kalamazoo, MI</b>	2.9	4.6	134	206	\$0.9	\$0.8
<b>WVRX/Knoxville+ 3</b>	1.7	na	462	na	\$0.9	na
<b>WQTX/Lansing, MI</b>	0.9	1.1	158	148	\$0.3	\$0.3
<b>WBFM/Sheboygan, WI</b>	11.3	9.1	200	191	\$0.7	\$0.6
<b>WDKE/Terre Haute, IN+ 4</b>	5.1	na	158	na	\$0.3	\$0.3
<b>WDWQ/Terre Haute, IN</b>	7.1	8.1	321	306	\$0.5	\$0.5
<b>WDEZ/Wausau, WI</b>	10.2	9.6	559	576	\$1.4	\$1.4
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	14	69.8	397,800	\$16,300,000	
	2013	11	57.6	291,700	\$12,705,000	

1. Rock WRQE flipped to Classic Country WGEE "The Duke" Sept. 2014. 2. Midwest closed on its purchase of WLFW from South Central May 2014. 3. Active Rock WVRK became Classic Country "The Duke" May 2014. 4. Alternative WXXR flipped to Classic Country WDKE "The Duke" May 2014.

Midwest owned two Country stations in non-rated markets and one translator, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Mt. Wilson</b>						
<b>KKGO/Los Angeles*</b>	2.1	2.9	8,715	10,367	\$10.2	\$10.7
<b>KYZZ/Monterey, CA 1</b>	1.0	na	184	na	\$0.3	na
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	2	3.1	889,900	\$10,500,000	
	2013	2	2.9	1,036,700	\$10,700,000	
	2012	1	2.9	1,208,100	\$10,700,000	

1. Classical KMZT became Country KYZZ in May 2014.

Mt. Wilson also operated one HD Country station and one translator, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Saga</b>						
<b>WIXY/Champaign, IL</b>	10.8	11.6	369	410	\$2.3	\$2.2
<b>WYXY/Champaign, IL+</b>	4.8	3.9	123	135	\$1.0	\$1.0
<b>KDXY/Jonesboro, AR</b>	16.1	17.2	464	447	\$1.8	\$1.6
<b>WPOR/Portland, ME</b>	7.4	7.4	798	863	\$2.1	\$1.8
<b>WNAX/Sioux City, IA</b>	2.5	3.6	89	75	\$0.6	\$0.6
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	12	41.6	184,300	\$16,900,000	
	2013	12	43.7	193,000	\$15,010,000	
	2012	12	37.1	180,700	\$14,810,000	
	2010	12	40.8	238,900	\$14,350,000	
	2008	10	56.5	159,100	\$14,100,000	

Saga also owned seven Country stations in non-rated markets and three translators, according to BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>SummitMedia</b>						
<b>WZZK/Birmingham</b>	5.6	7.0	1,613	1,787	\$6.3	\$6.3
<b>WQNU/Louisville</b>	4.7	4.8	1,171	1,108	\$2.7	\$2.7
<b>WRKA/Louisville</b>	3.3	2.5	836	741	\$0.2	\$0.2
<b>WKHK/Richmond</b>	9.2	9.6	1,614	1,616	\$7.2	\$7.2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>No. Stations</b>	<b>Fall Shares</b>	<b>Cume</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
	2014	4	22.8	523,400	\$16,375,000	
	2013	4	23.9	525,200	\$16,400,000	

Calls/City	12+ Shares		12+ Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '14	Fa '13	Fa '14	Fa '13	2014	2013
<b>Townsquare Media</b>						
<b>KEAN/Abilene, TX</b>	7.5	9.2	268	298	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>KSLI-AM/Abilene, TX</b>	1.3	2.0	28	38	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>WGNA/Albany, NY</b>	8.1	9.2	1,345	1,505	\$6.1	\$6.0
<b>KATP/Amarillo, TX</b>	6.9	4.7	363	314	\$0.5	\$0.4
<b>WPUR/Atlantic City, NJ</b>	5.9	7.0	411	476	\$1.8	\$1.8
<b>WEBB/Augusta, ME</b>	9.8	9.8	199	199	\$0.8	\$0.8
<b>WQCB/Bangor, ME</b>	12.9	12.1	438	405	\$2.0	\$1.8
<b>KCTR/Billings, MT</b>	11.0	9.4	276	272	\$1.6	\$1.4
<b>WHWK/Binghamton, NY</b>	12.7	15.2				

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# Having A Ball

ACM Week With Sam Hunt



**A** few days prior to the biggest week of his career, MCA's Sam Hunt says he's not spent much time going over the itinerary. "My approach is to take everything as it comes and keep the details as unknowns," he says. "I'm walking in without expectations. But I am looking forward to seeing lots of people from Nashville I don't get to see a lot since I've been on the road." As for a major awards show performance in front of a record-setting crowd? "That's the part I try not to think about." Nominated for New Artist of the Year at the 50th Annual ACM Awards, Hunt will perform three times in roughly 48 hours – two of them for national television. And while his takeaway may not include a trophy – this time – it will include something much more personal.



**ROW NO**

Unlike most new artists, Hunt didn't partake of the ACM radio remotes ... but not by choice. As his manager explained weeks before the event, Hunt's profile rose faster than expected and his Dallas schedule was pinched by a Phoenix show Thursday (4/16) – a commitment made well before the ACMs were on the radar. A cramped timeline on the front end of ACM weekend was mitigated by an unexpected pleasure, however.

"We jumped on a plane after the [Phoenix] show, came directly in and just crashed," Hunt says. "But it was cool to wake up and see the basketball court." That hoops setup in the artist bus compound outside AT&T Stadium proved to be a big draw.

"All the boys were already out there playing so we went out and started shooting around," Hunt says. "Luke Bryan came walking by, Cole Swindell and some other artists were right there in that little compound. It was nice catching up with a couple of guys I had only met a few times. I'm looking forward to getting to know them a little more as we're back there hanging the rest of the weekend."

By 11am, it's off to Globe Life Park and rehearsal for his *ACM Presents: Superstar Duets* performance with Dwight Yoakam. Hunt isn't sure how the pairing happened, but he's glad it did. "When they brought it to me it was a quick 'yes,'" he says. "As a big fan of his I was all for it. I left the details up to them – whatever accommodates him and his crew. I think



Fast As Who: Duet with Dwight.

## A Day In The Life

- Friday, April 17
- Early am Red-eye from Phoenix
- 11am Call time at Globe Life (Sam w/ Dwight)
- 11:15am Soundcheck, rehearsal, camera block
- 12:15pm Festival interview
- 12:45pm Wrap at Globe Life
- 2:15pm Call time at AT&T Stadium (Sam)
- 2:30pm Awards rehearsal, camera block (Sam, stand-ins for band)
- 3pm Wrap at AT&T
- TBD Suit fitting
- 7:30pm Call at Globe Life (Sam w/Dwight)
- 8:15pm Stage (Sam, Dwight w/house band)

Dwight said yesterday he thought 'Fast As You' would be a good choice and I think so, too. I'm glad it worked out."

**WE'LL DO IT LIVE**

In the midst of a packed schedule, he also had to find time for a suit fitting and a run-through of his awards show performance at AT&T Stadium. "It was just about where I'm starting, what my cues are, when

to jump up and start singing," he says. "I'll play a piece of 'Take Your Time.' They have a pretty cool runway and different stage areas. I get to walk through the crowd and the pit area down front where there are a lot of fans. That will really help that live experience."

And then it was back to Globe Life, for an actual live experience with Yoakam. A day's notice on song choice extended into very little time for working up the duet. "It was pretty much just on the fly," he says. "Show up and, 'Hey, Dwight, I'm Sam, let's go out there and sing.' We did get to chat a little bit before and he's a really nice, humble, down-to-earth guy. Easy to talk to and hang out with. Hopefully I'll cross paths with him again sometime."

The performance itself worked out, but not before weather intervened. "They had us set up in a little hang spot backstage, over in what seemed to be the Rangers players' lounge," Hunt says. "The rain was a bummer, but it finally cleared up. I thought it would run everybody off but there were a lot of fans in there. We got going again around 9:30 and it turned out really cool."

Of course, it's hard to go wrong when the A-team is onstage. "I recognized the band guys from Nashville, having done demos a few years ago with some of them. If you look at their resumes, they're the guys who have played on tons of No. 1 songs in the past 10, 20 years. So it was really great to play with them."

**HOME SLICE**

Saturday's late-morning call at the *Party For A Cause Festival* culminated in a 25-minute set that gave visual evidence of just how rapidly Hunt's appeal has spread. Globe Life's North Lawn was packed with fans eager to see, hear and in a few cases, take selfies with him, after he jumped down into the crowd mid-song. Once the show was over, Hunt visited with a few service members and fans backstage. And then a reunion was on.



Service With A Smile: Meeting with veterans backstage.



**Crowd Sourcing:**  
Party For A Cause performance  
outside Globe Life Park.

**HOUSE PARTY**

Like many of the 70,000 people in the room, Hunt was impressed by the show's scope and its dual reach. "I've been able to play for some pretty big audiences lately, but that was by far the most people I've ever played in front of," he says. "It was so huge, I actually felt a little disconnected from all the people. It didn't really feel like a live show the way we normally play them. Obviously, you're not just playing for the stadium, but also the people at home watching. It wasn't long ago I was one of those people sitting at home, so the fact that we were able to reach people all across the country was great."

Nerves hit about a half hour prior to his performance. "It probably had more to do with all the hustle and bustle," he says. "I wouldn't call it confusion, but there was definitely chaos backstage. There wasn't the serenity of the pre-show hang I'm used to. I was more concerned about making sure we were on time. Let's not screw this whole show up. But by the time we started, the nerves were gone. You get close to the people in the pit, see them smiling and singing the song back and it makes those nerves go away."

The awarding of New Artist snuck up on Hunt. "I came back from the bathroom and just about missed it," he says. "I would have been excited to win, but by no means was I disappointed. I was proud to see Cole win. He's put out great music and done well the past few years. Thomas was equally deserving. The fact that people voted for any of us is exciting. That fans go out of their way to register and vote online is a big deal."



**ACM WEEK WITH SAM HUNT**

"My parents flew in, so after I stepped offstage, I saw them for the first time in several months," Hunt says. "We hung out backstage for a bit, then took golf carts back to the bus compound." Mom and dad looked on as Sam and crew spent a couple more hours playing ball. Then it was off to the hotel for the whole team.

"It was my tour manager's birthday," Hunt says. "We had a big sit-down dinner with him, my producer and his family, my parents, the band and crew. We celebrated the birthday and being a part of the ACMs for the first time."

Show day included a full dress rehearsal and, not surprisingly, more hoops. "We went back to the bus compound for lunch after we were done at the stadium. I was pretty obsessed with the basketball court, so we shot around a little more and killed a couple hours waiting on the show."

The red carpet was a blur, Hunt says, but helped by getting to spend time with his date ... mom. "They throw you in a ride over there, you get out and there are people and cameras everywhere. I didn't really know where to go or what to do. I was just hanging with my mom, catching up with her. I got direction from some people with the label and started chatting with different folks from the media. Everybody was nice, all dolled up and looking good. That whole camera world isn't my favorite thing, but I'm glad they were interested in talking to me."

**TAKING TIME**

His first ACM experience being the organization's 50th anniversary meant some special moments. "Being there for the Milestone performances was cool because I grew up listening to them," Hunt says. "Sitting amongst them was pretty surreal ... probably my favorite part of the whole show. Coincidentally, when I went home for Christmas last year, my brothers and I turned our parents on to *Modern Family*. So having Sofia Vergara sitting so close to us was fun."

Likewise, UMG/Nashville's post-show party gave Hunt a chance to share with family. "I caught up with [UMG/Nashville Chairman/CEO Mike] Dungan and everybody from the label," he says, "and my parents got to meet a lot of people I work with, and it was cool to make those introductions."

Other than basketball, the melding of those worlds proved to be the theme for Sam Hunt's ACM experience. "The biggest thing was getting to experience it with my mom, who has been my biggest fan and supporter since I moved to Nashville," he says. "Standing on the red carpet with her, seeing how excited she was sitting in that crowd and seeing me as a part of it - especially considering how much work it took to get there - means a lot. I love my parents to death."

"From Georgia, they never really understood what I was doing and what it all meant, but in Dallas they could see me in that world in a way I never could have explained. The ACMs helped them understand what I'm now a part of." **CAC**



**Eat & Greet:** Chatting with mother Joan at dinner.



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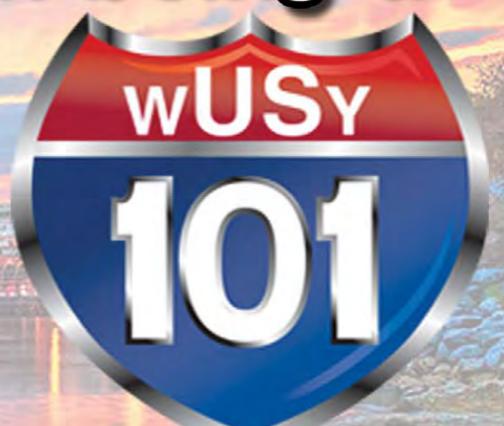
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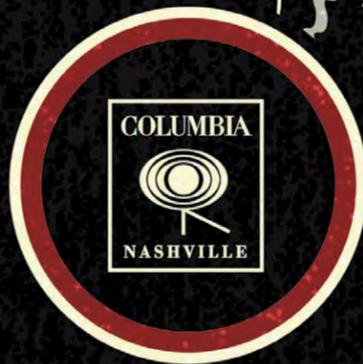
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# Brad Paisley

## Letting Art Lead The Way

**I**f it has Brad Paisley's name on it – literally or figuratively – there's a pretty good chance he's had a strong hand in putting it together. As a songwriter, recording artist, headlining performer and, now, stem-to-stern video producer and animator, his creative aptitude is evident and growing. The CMA Awards co-host is creating new channels for flexing those comedic commentary muscles, but he's only willing to go so far into other media. In a candid chat at his personal pub, Paisley discussed his career, his record label, the future and the power of the edit. He also displayed a firm grasp of everything going on in his world ... just don't ask him to add it all up.

### THE INTERVIEW

**Country Aircheck: How involved are you in the business side of your career?**

**Brad Paisley:** I'm definitely involved on the creative side. A really good example of how I operate is the new music video. I drew every bit of it. Someone asked how my team assembled it when I was done drawing and I said, "Nope. It never left my laptop."

I've always been able to picture what I want visually. That goes back to doodling a caricature or spaceship on the back of church bulletins. My math tests looked more like cartoons – there was always something going on in the margins. That shows up now in how hard it is for me to let go of something we're sending out that doesn't look right. Even when I feel like it's great. They'll show me an ad-mat for a tour poster and nine times out of 10 I'll have a tweak. It can be something as simple as, "The last tour had a lot of blue, so let's use a different color on this." Obviously I'm hands-on with music, but also very much visually. On the business side, they'll only hear from me when I don't like something. I don't crunch numbers at all.

**Has that changed over the course of your career?**

No. I've always been that way. I was lucky enough to be given a lot of rope with that in the beginning and I've kept that amount of rope. Decisions have ended up splitting equally, overall. Some of my decisions were really good and then there were some the label made that worked out well. "I'm Gonna Miss Her" was mine; the label was adamantly opposed to singling that. After two No. 1 ballads, I was in danger of having a show full of them. And then you [risk] hearing, "That's your box, stay in it." On the other hand, "Whiskey Lullaby" was not my idea as a single. I wanted it as a single, but not necessarily at that moment. I thought it was a big risk, but they wanted to take it. I was coming off a hit ballad with "Little Moments" and we're going to go for another one? But this one is about suicide? You guys are out of your minds. They weren't and no one was happier about that than me.

**What do you think your strengths and weaknesses are as CEO of Brad Paisley, Inc.?**

We should probably start with weaknesses. Relinquishing control is difficult when your name's on it. I think I'm as easy to work with as any artist in that sense, but it's a very difficult thing. When something looks subpar, nobody says, "Ha, look at [Fitzgerald-Hartley's] Bill Simmons. He looks like an idiot!" Although, maybe somebody does on Music Row. But in general that's completely and totally my problem. So I have to learn to trust and delegate a little bit more and I'm reminded of that from time to time.

I feel like I'm completely objective creatively, but I don't think I'm as objective when things aren't going right or when I feel hampered. I'll get dark in a way you only do if your name is on it. I make my living looking at people who came to hear these songs that I wrote and have a good time on a weekend. If you sense you're doing something that's not delivering on their expectations or is being met with a reaction other than what was intended, which is something every artist goes through ... the manager gets to go home to their family on a Friday. They're probably worried about it, but it's, "I'm going to have to get back to work on that Monday. But hey, what are we going to do this weekend?" Meanwhile, I go out and stand in front of these people.

Bad weeks are relative – they're not the kind of bad week a prison guard has, but it might be losing a single. A weird one recently was that everybody loved the ["Crushin' It"] video, but the label wouldn't sign off on it. We went a week or two before I just put it out without them. Finally, they sorted through the legalities, but I knew all along as a fan of these parodies that I was completely in the right. But as you can imagine, corporations have to think about a lot of stuff. That was a long week. And as the artist, there's no degree of separation from the blunt smack in the face. The buck stops at the microphone at center stage. So, that's another thing you have to learn to compartmentalize on a Friday night. None of those people are aware of that. They just came to have a good time.

**Strengths?**

Performing. At this point, we know how to put an entertaining show together. I'll sound like a broken record because media school tells you to always say it's your best show. But you gotta see this show! It's the best one! I say that knowing very few fans will read this – it's programmers and whoever else reads Lon's gossip rag.

We came up with some things I can't believe nobody ever did. One of them is a bar on the stage, which is just the greatest thing ever. My manager was very skeptical. "So, you're going to stick a bunch of people you don't know behind you onstage every night? No audition, they're not sort of scoped out? Just radio winners and Justin and his band and Mickey and her band, road crew and whoever?" My manager was like, "This is possibly the best idea ever and more likely the worst idea ever." The first night he came backstage and said it's the best idea ever. Against the video wall, they're just silhouettes and never more interesting than me, the band or the video. If your eye

“  
When something looks subpar, nobody says, 'Ha, look at Bill Simmons. He looks like an idiot!' That's my problem.  
”



wanders over to them, it's people drinking ... which is kind of what you expect to see at a country show.

Another fun, creative moment is the instrumental. For years I've done a cartoon. But I made the music video this time, so I didn't do a cartoon for the concert. I had this idea during rehearsal and asked MooTV's Scott Scoval, "Anybody ever hooked a Wii up to a video wall?" He cocked his head and said he didn't think so, but it might work. And it does. So every night my Dad or somebody finds a kid in the audience, asks if they know how to play Mario Kart and they get to try to beat Justin Moore on a 60" screen.

**The Sony ship's without a captain right now. What's your relationship with the label?**

Everyone I work with is still there, so it's good. I believe in and love these people. It's a little heartbreaking for everybody because I love [former Chairman] Gary Overton. It's a transition, but we're going ahead

**THE INTERVIEW**

with everything we have planned and it's working. The timing is fine because I'm on the third single going on the fourth off this record. And I purposefully haven't written or recorded anything yet for the next album – the longest I've ever gone without having something in the pipeline. I'd like them to figure out where they're going and then I'll let whoever comes in be a part of that. They'll more than likely have watched my career from afar and will have a good perspective. I really like the collaborative part of the job. But I do feel for artists who are in a more precarious position than me – waiting to release a first single or to hear if they get another single.

**Any thoughts about a little Chet Atkins action? Would you ever run a label?**

I don't think so. Never say never, but the idea of having to go into an office daily ... maybe when I'm an old man. Bored. (Smiles) I don't think so. There's probably way too much financially. You asked what I'm not good at? I'm horrifyingly bad at math.

**You do have a lot of endeavors outside of performing. Is that about looking forward to a time when you're not performing anymore? Do you plan to ever stop?**

I'm bad at end-of-life planning. I'm one of those people that hasn't thought that far ahead. I try to make sure my family's in good shape, but I don't have a master plan for how this winds down. That's probably futile and bad energy to say, "In five years, when this is over ..." Really? You might have a five-year plan then have the biggest hit of your career. I don't like to look back either; I love the next challenge and don't keep awards. There are a few that are really important, but my parents have most of them. If you make the mistake of looking back too much you aren't focused on the road in front of you.

**You started Sea Gayle right out of college with some friends. How involved are you and how has that changed over the years?**

Sea Gayle was way more successful than any of us could have planned or hoped and still is. That's largely thanks to Chris DuBois who took it upon himself to run it from day one. Myself and Frank Rogers were doing what we do more so than running that company. He was writing hit songs and producing and I was writing hit songs and singing. Chris was writing just as many hits and going in every day. The first few years I would get a couple of demos on a writer he was thinking about signing. "Hey, what do you think about this guy?" It was probably the third person Chris sent me and realized I hadn't listened, so he just stopped sending. "I'm signing this guy Chris Stapleton, you're not going to believe it." And he was right. He has a better sense of a songwriter's potential than anyone I've ever seen. The idea that this company became hugely successful and gave him a home and a job in a town where he deserved to have that is one of the most rewarding things. Chris DuBois is running a company we started as opposed to becoming part of the machine.

**And Frank stopped producing you a couple albums back and has now left Sea Gayle. Just different directions?**

Yeah, it just evolved that way. We could see it coming. I was going to work with him again on the last album, but we differed and it was completely amicable. He said, "That's not the album I would make on you right now." I asked what he would want to make and that wasn't what I wanted to do at that point. So let's do that later.

**What did you learn from ABC-TV's Rising Star?**

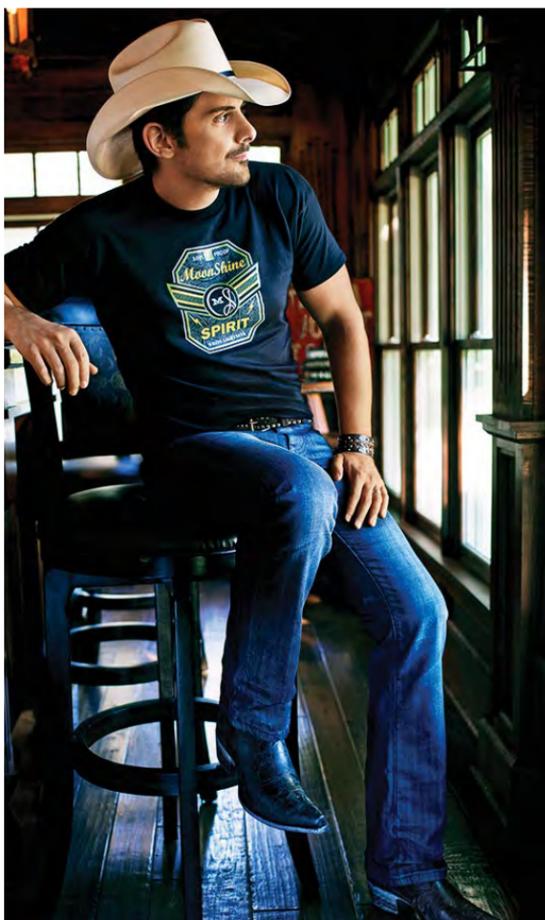
One thing ... that I loved that kind of outlet for being a smart aleck. I couldn't have had more fun, and the camaraderie with Ludacris and Josh Groban – they're really good people, a blast to be around, unique and brilliant. Same with Keshia. She's hilarious and insane in a good way. It was a really fun experiment. The only thing that was difficult was we first sat down together the day before the first show. In retrospect, we should have had a couple of weeks of bonding because by the third show, you could see us starting to pick on each other.

The most rewarding part was working with aspiring artists. First of all, they're all so cute at that age. Really agreeable, normally. Who wouldn't like sitting in a chair as people walk up and say, "Oh my goodness, I

love you! You're amazing! And what do you think of what I'm doing?" It's such an ego boost – you feel like the Wizard of Oz. And we really had something interesting and fun halfway through and toward the end. You need a year on a show like that to work out the bumps. I was hoping it would come back this year.

**You hosted a comedy show in Nashville recently and added comedians to your Hollywood Bowl show. Where are you going with that?**

I really like the outlet and don't think it's utilized enough in any form of music. You can probably imagine the absurdity that happens when we're writing songs. A lot never get heard. Sometimes I wish people could hear what gets thrown on the floor when we're writing "Perfect Storm." If she was a drink, she'd be Drano – that's another song and you can see how we laugh all the way through it. We file some of those away. And I'll call in Chris DuBois, Brett Anderson and few of my co-writers at CMA Awards time. That muscle has to be worked into shape, but why am I waiting until November to do some of these things that I really love? Comedy is an underrated art form and so necessary in today's society. So I started thinking about refining some of that stuff and going out on a limb instead of just standing in front of your contemporaries at an awards show with a whole bucket of current events to choose from. Like how does Louis CK do it? How does Jim Gaffigan do it? I guess they just write about life. "I'm Gonna Miss Her" isn't far from a stand-up sketch. I'll never forget playing the line in "Little Moments" about burning the food for my wife. She was howling



because she knew I was talking about blue cheese fish tacos from when we were dating, which were the worst thing I ever tasted but I never said anything. That song is probably what won her over. Comedy comes from that place. So we'll do some pop-up things either at my show where comedians will show up or tell people to come by the Improv after. We'll be telling jokes, there will be alcohol and you'll laugh.

**Relative to having a band behind and a guitar in front of you, how naked will it feel to just have a mic?**

You're pretty naked, but I always have a guitar. I'm like Adam Sandler that way and will always be able to grab that crutch. I don't necessarily need it; it's the insurance policy. One of the songs we did at the stand-up night here was written for this album and my mom wouldn't let me include it. She thought it was offensive. It's a completely harmless song where you sing the whole first verse and first chorus to a girl, but the second time around you strategically insert bleeps and it sounds like the dirtiest thing you've ever heard in your life. It's called "Bleep." It will be a lot of fun exploring those kinds of things.

**You're been on a few TV shows – dramas and sitcoms. Any aspirations of crashing into the wife's business?**

Not really. That scares me more than anything. I would attempt stand-up comedy anywhere, anytime. I'm a kamikaze. But I feel so powerless acting. When I'm writing, directing or producing something, overseeing the edit is a big deal to me. I personally edit a lot of what you see me do. The cartoon is a really good example. The edit is everything. Like the cut to Florida Georgia Line. If you do it too fast, or go from close-ups to two shots a bunch, you lose it. You need that perfect half-second pause to make it work. That's the edit.

Reese Witherspoon is an amazing actress and wonderful person I'm glad to have met and know a little bit. Sophia Vergara is also a great actress and always funny. How is it that those two get together and score

an eight on Rotten Tomatoes? It's either the director, the producer or the studio. Any movie that works is a miracle. Same with TV shows. It's nothing short of parting the Red Sea when one of those is good. So if it's not a Will Ferrell movie or a Dwight Yoakam role in *Sling Blade*, I would be scared to death to do it. I could be a jerk, or I could be the idiot cowboy singer in a Will Ferrell movie. As far as taking acting lessons or doing what Tim McGraw's done – which is very inspiring – that's not for me.

**Do you watch the charts?**

No, I stopped watching charts a while back because it's like watching the stock market. You could kill yourself and, obviously, people do jump out of buildings when they get bad news on Wall Street. You want to say, "Hey, lighten up. It'll probably go back up." Plus, the charts is the math thing again. That kind of minutia will drive you insane as an artist. I'd really rather just be involved in the creative. That's where I'm comfortable.

**You don't watch the charts, but do you stay abreast of the industry? Lettuce and tomatoes?**

A friend called and told me about that and I tweeted something. [Ed. Note: "When did we become Veggie Tales? And can I be the cucumber?"] That blew up in a weird way, but I like tomatoes a lot better than lettuce. And it interests me in multitudes of ways. I have a song on this album that is meant to empower women called "Shattered Glass" and I really hope it's a single because it's something that women need to hear.

I've taken a break from a screenplay I was writing, but one of the things I learned about is the Bechdel test. A film passes if at any point it shows two women having a conversation about something other than a man. You would not believe how low the percentage is for movies passing that test – Oscar nominees and winners. Run down a list of your favorite movies. You can't write it off for circumstances, because movies are full of men having conversations about very meaningful things. And you can't write it off to the way life is either because women do not sit around just talking about men.

We've come a long way as a society and I'm not sure art has kept up, which is weird because you would think art would lead the way. But don't for a second think that it's country music's fault alone. It's never a bad idea to discuss if there is a bias or anything we can do. Mickey Guyton is as talented a singer as I've heard in years and I get to sing "Whiskey Lullaby" with her every night. She knocks it as far out of the park as you can knock it. Let's discuss how to get her played. I'll help any way I can.

**To the digital issue, do you think about Spotify, any of that stuff?**

No, but I'm a bad businessman that way. I would like to see everyone compensated who works in music. An equal desire of mine is to see music reach people. It's hard to fault fans for grabbing it any way they can. We need to figure this out as an industry, but I don't think enough about it. I ask myself, are there butts in the seats? Are they singing along? Are they singing along to the new single? Nobody wants to hear millionaires complain. I don't either.

**How do you see your relationship with Country radio?**

I have a music video I'm really proud of that cost \$900 to make, which is a good \$59,000 less than the next cheapest video. And it was \$900 just because I had to buy a couple backgrounds and that ocean footage that would have taken me another four hours to draw. And with all that went into it, as good a way as any to let people know it's out is your favorite DJ. That's why we've done a couple weeks of satellite radio tours. I love the questions and comments from radio – hearing what made them laugh. We have such a unique thing in our format. I don't take this relationship with radio for granted. I'm again reminded of what a great way it is to reach fans. They're great partners.

**It is a pretty straight line from artist to radio to fans.**

Yeah. And there's a tight-knit community feeling I don't think you have in other formats. They feel bigger, less connected, even though we probably outnumber them. But Country radio still feels like a niche, in a good way. It feels small, even though it isn't. Maybe it's because they all come to town every year, get stuck on a steamboat listening to me and get drunk. Do pop artists play music for top PDs early on? For all the challenges there can be, when you're talking to a programmer or a DJ and they ask if you're working on anything new, I really feel like they care. They want to hear it. It makes me want to make good records for them.

**Or shock half the industry with the bluest onstage performance in CRS history?**

Lon Helton on the boat is maybe my third favorite CRS moment of all time aside from a couple major victories ... and it almost surpasses those. That was around the time I started working on the comedy stuff. We went for coffee and he said, "What do you have me doing?" I said, "You're basically going to name-check some of the larger personalities of our town and turn it into a porno." (Laughs)

Getting to stand next to him and see him deliver that ... He was so nervous he probably could have made diamonds in his butt. He loves it, though. He's a ham, make no mistake about it. And I loved that the crowd was into it. A stiffer audience would have been mad, but I got notes from some of them later – Kapugi, Eddie Haskell. Too funny.

**CAC**



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