

Academy Of Country Music Honors Jimmie Allen, Gabby Barrett With Early Wins



The Academy of Country Music revealed **Jimmie Allen** as its New Male Artist of the Year and **Gabby Barrett** as its New Female Artist of the Year for the 56th ACM Awards. The announcement was made Thursday morning (April 8). Both artists were surprised with a video from ACM Awards co-host, Keith Urban.

Signed to BBR Music Group's Stoney Creek Records, Platinum-selling singer-songwriter Allen made history as the first Black artist to launch a career with two consecutive No. 1 hits on country radio—"Best Shot" and "Make Me Want To."

Warner Music Nashville's Barrett broke out onto the scene with her 5X-Platinum debut "I Hope," which was the most-streamed country song of 2020. Her Platinum single, "The Good Ones," is currently climbing at country radio. Barrett is also nominated for Single of the Year for "I Hope."

"We are thrilled to present Jimmie Allen and Gabby Barrett with their first ACM Award wins. Jimmie and Gabby have experienced tremendous success at both country radio and streaming already, and we are proud to recognize them for such an extraordinary start to their careers," says CEO of the Academy of Country Music, **Damon Whiteside**. "A huge

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THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

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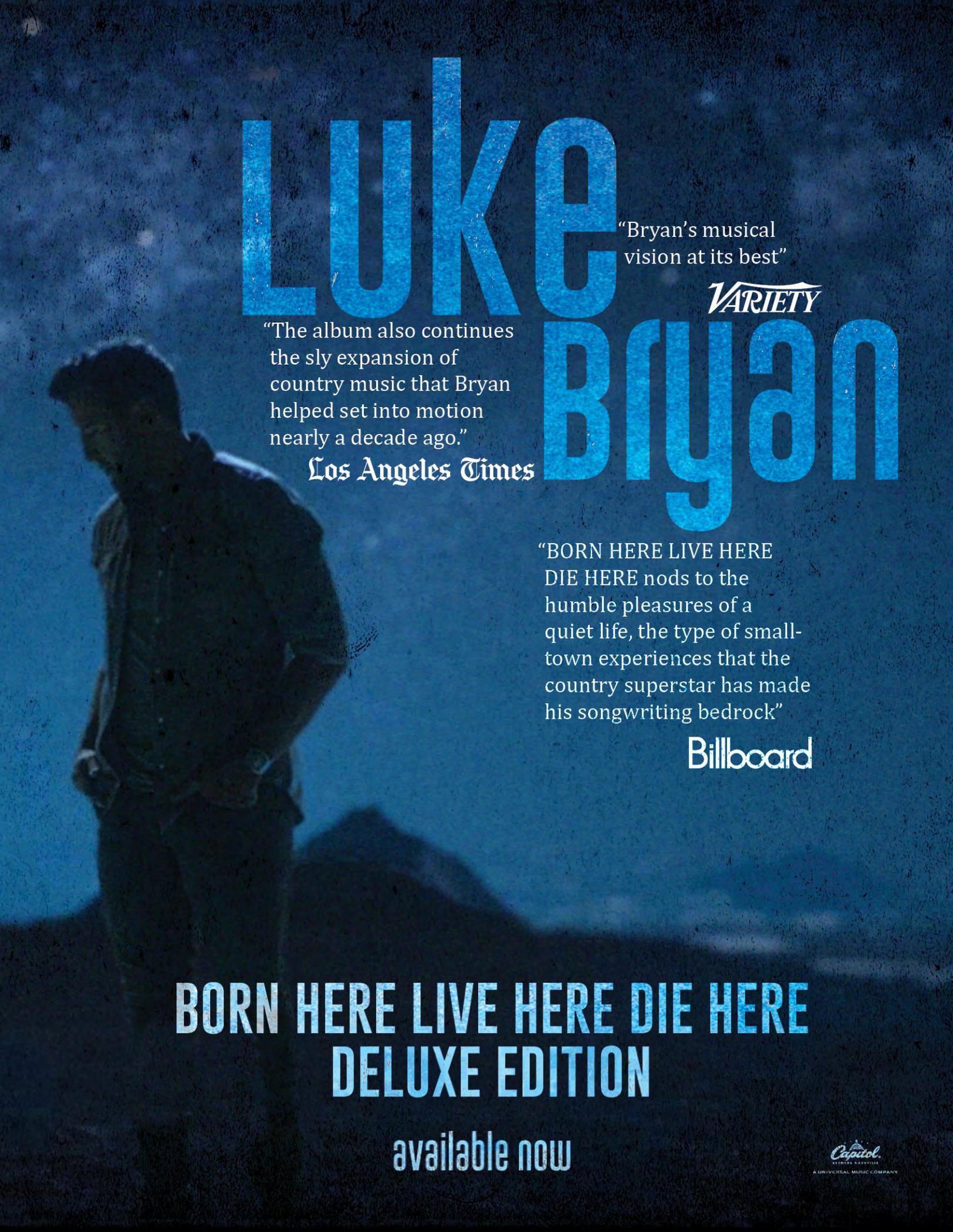
Alan Jackson's First New Album In Six Years Set For May

Jake Worthington Signs Management, Publishing Deal With Big Loud

Joe Nichols Signs With Quartz Hill Records

DISCLAIMER Singles Reviews

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LUKE

"Bryan's musical
vision at its best"

VARIETY

"The album also continues
the sly expansion of
country music that Bryan
helped set into motion
nearly a decade ago."

Los Angeles Times

Bryan

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DIE HERE nods to the
humble pleasures of a
quiet life, the type of small-
town experiences that the
country superstar has made
his songwriting bedrock"

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congratulations to each of them for this well-deserved win, and to all of our nominees for being recognized for their incredible contributions to country music. We look forward to welcoming Jimmie and Gabby to the ACM Awards stage on April 18.”

The *56th ACM Awards* will air live on Sunday, April 18 (8:00-11:00 PM, live ET/delayed PT) on the CBS Television Network. Allen and Barrett will join more than 25 performers, including Kelsea Ballerini, Dierks Bentley, Lee Brice, Brothers Osborne, Kane Brown, Luke Bryan, Kenny Chesney, Eric Church, Luke Combs, Dan + Shay, Mickey Guyton, Ryan Hurd, Jack Ingram, Alan Jackson, Elle King, Miranda Lambert, Little Big Town, Ashley McBryde, Maren Morris, Carly Pearce, Jon Randall, Thomas Rhett, Blake Shelton, Chris Stapleton, The War and Treaty, Keith Urban, Carrie Underwood, CeCe Winans, and Chris Young.

Urban and Mickey Guyton will serve as hosts, and televised event will broadcast live from three iconic country music venues: the Grand Ole Opry House, Nashville’s historic Ryman Auditorium and The Bluebird Cafe. **MR**

Eric Church Reveals Fall Dates For The Gather Again Tour

Eric Church is returning to the road this fall for a full arena tour. The reigning CMA Entertainer of the Year and current ACM Entertainer of the Year nominee announced dates for The Gather Again Tour this morning (April 7).

Church will adopt an in-the-round set up, with the stage at the center of each arena floor in order to accommodate as many fans as possible at the selected 55 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada, culminating at Madison Square Garden in the spring of 2022.

“When I talked to you back in February I told you that a North American tour was coming,” Church said in a video message to his fans. “We were still waiting on the right time to release the details. I’m excited to share that the time is now.”

Tickets to all U.S. dates go on sale to the general public Friday, May 7 at 10 a.m. local time at EricChurch.com. Church Choir members may access tickets early via pre-sale on Tuesday, May 4 at 10 a.m. local time. On sale information for the Canadian dates will be announced soon.

Church will appear in an upcoming PSA promoting vaccine education, produced by ACM Lifting Lives, The Ad Council and COVID Collaborative, which will premiere during the ACM Awards broadcast on Sunday, April 18. He will release his triple album project, *Heart & Soul*, in the coming weeks.

[Click here to view The Gather Again Tour dates.](#)



Photo: Joe Pugliese

Sony Music Nashville Promotes Margaret Tomlin To VP, A&R



Photo: Angelina Oliva

Sony Music Nashville has announced the promotion of **Margaret Tomlin** to Vice President, A&R, Sony Music Nashville. Tomlin will report directly to Senior Vice President, A&R, **Taylor Lindsey**.

Tomlin has been with the label for six years, and previously held the positions of Representative, Manager and Director for the label group's A&R Department. She has been directly involved with development of artists such as Tenille Townes, Adam Doleac, Andrew Jannakos, Kameron Marlowe, Willie Jones, Miranda Lambert, Kane Brown and Chris Young, among others.

She graduated from Syracuse University's Bandier Program and moved to Nashville in 2013. Her first job in the music industry was Catalog Assistant at BMG Nashville.

"Margaret has been an important pillar of our department since she started in 2015. She's been instrumental in the development and breaking of so many artists at Sony Music Nashville. Her song sensibilities and passion for artists have been integral contributions to our success. There is no one more deserving of her new stripes," Lindsey says.

Tomlin adds, "Since joining Sony Music Nashville, I have been inspired by our extraordinary roster of artists and our innovative, collaborative team. I have immense gratitude for Jim Catino and Taylor Lindsey for their leadership, guidance, and confidence. I am thrilled to take on this new role and continue to work alongside our incredible A&R department." **MR**

Paul Sikes Renews Publishing Deal With Endurance Music Group



Pictured (L-R): EMG President Michael Martin, EMG Sr. Creative Director Josh Saxe, Paul Sikes, EMG Sr. Vice President Mark Ahlberg, EMG Creative Manager Courtney Kruckeberg. Photo: Ed Rode.

Endurance Music Group has renewed its worldwide publishing agreement with chart-topping songwriter and producer **Paul Sikes**.

Sikes co-wrote recent hits by fellow EMG writers, including Stoney Creek Records artist Jimmie Allen's second consecutive No. 1 song, "Make Me Want To," and RECORDS/Arista Nashville artist Matt Stell's second consecutive chart-topper, "Everywhere But On." He has cuts on upcoming releases by Allen, Endurance writer and RECORDS artist Chase Martin, Cody Johnson and others. Sikes also co-wrote Johnny McGuire's current single, "100 MPH."

Sikes says, "I'm really happy to be continuing this journey with my family at Endurance. They are driven, hardworking, and forward-thinking, all while maintaining a culture of integrity and fairness. I'm just so thankful I get to write songs for a company that's made up of people that believe in me the way I believe in them. That's tough to beat."

"I met Paul back when I was with Extreme Writers Group, and it didn't take long to recognize how talented a musician and a young writer he was," says Endurance Music Group president **Michael Martin**. "And now he's a triple threat as a hit songwriter, in-demand producer and touring musician. Everyone at Endurance loves working with Paul and we all are very excited to continue our journey together." **MR**

COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

CHART ACTION

New On The Chart —Debuting This Week

song/artist/label—Chart Position

Might As Well Be Me/Dew Pendleton/HippieRedneck Gospelove — 62

Lonely Girl/Danny Kensy/Rad Records — 75

Villain/Lily Rose/Big Loud Records — 76

It Goes So Fast/Dwain Messer/N Crowd Music — 78

If I Wanted Your Opinion/Michaela Anne/Yep Roc Records — 79

Why Can't It Be Tonight/Mercy Shine/CCB Nashville — 80

Greatest Spin Increase

song/artist/label—Spin Increase

Might As Well Be Me/Dew Pendleton/HippieRedneck Gospelove — 214

Forever After All/Luke Combs/River House Artists/Columbia Nashville — 156

ABBY/Travis Denning/Mercury Nashville — 145

Like A Lady/Lady A/BMLG — 109

Breaking Up Was Easy In The 90's/Sam Hunt/MCA Nashville — 99

Most Added

song/artist/label—No. of Adds

Might As Well Be Me/Dew Pendleton/HippieRedneck Gospelove — 21

ABBY/Travis Denning/Mercury Nashville — 11

Then A Girl Walks In/Shenandoah & Blake Shelton/Foundry Records — 9

Cold Beer Calling My Name/Jameson Rodgers feat. Luke Combs/River House Artists/Columbia Nashville — 6

On Deck—Soon To Be Charting

song/artist/label—No. of Spins

Timber/Lindsey Lane/Purple Sage Records — 154

That Ain't Me No More/Matt Stell/RECORDS/Arista Nashville — 147

Nothing's Better/Filmore/Curb — 145

Show Off/Queeva/CMD Music — 139

NO. 1 SONG



In just 12 weeks, **Blake Shelton** bolts to No. 1 on the *MusicRow* CountryBreakout Radio Chart with “Minimum Wage.” The single, co-written by **Nicolle Galyon**, **Jesse Frasure**, and **Corey Crowder**, will appear on Shelton’s latest album, *Body Language* set for release on May 21.

April 16, 2021 will mark the 20th anniversary of the day Shelton released his No. 1 debut single, “Austin.” To commemorate the occasion, he is releasing limited edition 7” vinyl on his website featuring “Austin” on the A-side and “Problems At Home” on the B-side.



Each songwriter and artist earning No. 1 credit on the *MusicRow* Chart receives a *MusicRow* Challenge Coin. Click [here](#) to view a full list of recipients.

MusicRow CountryBreakout Chart Reporting Stations

WHMA Anniston, AL
 WXFL Florence, AL
 KHBZ Harrison, AR
 KQUS Hot Springs, AR
 KDXY Jonesboro, AR
 KWCK Searcy, AR
 KRAZ Santa Barbara, CA
 WPAP Panama City, FL
 WUBB Savannah, GA
 KXIA Marshalltown, IA
 KIAI Mason City, IA
 KBOE Oskaloosa, IA
 KTHK Idaho Falls, ID
 WOOZ Carterville, IL

WAAG Galesburg, IL
 WMCI Mattoon, IL
 WYOT Rochelle, IL
 WRTB Rockford, IL
 WCCI Savanna, IL
 WIFE Connersville, IN
 KAIR Atchison, KS
 WKDZ Cadiz, KY
 WBKR Owensboro, KY
 WDHR Pikeville, KY
 KRRV Alexandria, LA
 WUUU Covington, LA
 WKPE Hyannis, MA
 WVMD Cumberland, MD

WTCM Traverse City, MI
 KYSM Mankato, MN
 KZPK St. Cloud, MN
 KWWR Mexico, MO
 KFAV Warrenton, MO
 KZZY Devils Lake, ND
 KRVN Lexington, NE
 Jersey Shore Country
 KQBA Santa Fe, NM
 WDNB Monticello, NY
 WOLF Syracuse, NY
 WCJW Warsaw, NY
 WFRY Watertown, NY
 KWHW Altus, OK

KITX Hugo, OK
 KWEY Weatherford, OK
 KWOX Woodward, OK
 KRKT Albany, OR
 WNBT Mansfield, PA
 WCFT Selinsgrove, PA
 WFGE State College, PA
 WMIR Myrtle Beach, SC
 WUCZ Carthage, TN
 WDKN Dickson, TN
 WLLX Lawrenceburg, TN
 KAYD Beaumont, TX
 KFTX Corpus Christi, TX
 KYKX Longview, TX

KMRK Odessa, TX
 KYKY Palestine, TX
 KXOX Sweetwater, TX
 WAKG Danville, VA
 WAXX Altoona, WI
 WJVL Janesville, WI
 WGLR Platteville, WI
 WQPC Prairie du Chien, WI
 WCOW Sparta, WI
 WTNJ Beckley, WV
 WDDG Huntington, WV

COUNTRYBREAKOUT RADIO CHART

Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
12	2	1	Minimum Wage / Blake Shelton / Warner Music Nashville	1732/60	2	37
24	4	2	Breaking Up Was Easy In The 90's / Sam Hunt / MCA Nashville	1692/53	6	99
26	3	3	Next Girl / Carly Pearce / Big Machine	1681/64	1	17
20	5	4	Blame It On You / Jason Aldean / Broken Bow	1587/56	2	32
7	9	5	Forever After All / Luke Combs / River House Artists/Columbia Nashville	1554/57	11	156
58	6	6	Nobody / Dylan Scott / Curb	1496/50	-1	-9
14	8	7	Famous Friends / Chris Young & Kane Brown / RCA Nashville	1471/57	6	79
23	12	8	We Didn't Have Much / Justin Moore / Valory	1423/63	5	68
29	1	9	Settling Down / Miranda Lambert / Vanner Records/RCA Records	1375/48	-22	-389
48	11	10	Made For You / Jake Owen / Big Loud Records	1355/36	1	18
64	10	11	Somebody Like That / Tenille Arts / 19th & Grand	1312/42	-3	-35
42	13	12	Hard Days / Brantley Gilbert / Valory	1190/49	5	62
9	15	13	Glad You Exist / Dan + Shay / Warner Music Nashville/WAR	1146/50	7	74
21	14	14	Memory I Don't Mess With / Lee Brice / Curb	1127/56	3	34
60	16	15	Momma's House / Dustin Lynch / Broken Bow	1046/34	3	35
13	17	16	Tequila Little Time / Jon Pardi / Capitol	1043/54	7	68
24	19	17	If It Wasn't For Trucks / Riley Green / BMLG	974/45	3	29
41	18	18	Wine, Beer, Whiskey / Little Big Town / Capitol	971/43	1	11
22	22	19	Just About Over You / Priscilla Block / Mercury Nashville	914/46	9	72
22	20	20	Heaven On Dirt / Teddy Robb / Monument	907/49	1	5
32	23	21	Single Saturday Night / Cole Swindell / Warner Music Nashville	899/41	8	69
16	24	22	Drinkin' Beer. Talkin' God. Amen. / Chase Rice feat. Florida Georgia Line / Broken Bow/Dack Janiels	877/46	7	54
13	25	23	Give Heaven Some Hell / HARDY / Big Loud Records	876/49	7	55
24	21	24	Where I Find God / Larry Fleet / Big Loud Records	867/40	2	19
6	26	25	Knowing You / Kenny Chesney / Blue Chair Records/Warner Music Nashville	812/45	8	60
13	27	26	My Boy / Elvie Shane / Wheelhouse Records	809/43	10	74
4	28	27	Like A Lady / Lady A / BMLG	808/49	16	109
17	31	28	Cold Beer Calling My Name / Jameson Rodgers feat. Luke Combs / River House Artists/Columbia Nashville	752/44	12	81
19	29	29	Anybody Else / Mira Goto / ArtistMax/Copperline	719/34	3	21
8	33	30	Things A Man Oughta Know / Lainey Wilson / Broken Bow	702/44	13	82
8	32	31	Lonely Drum / Aaron Goodvin / Reviver Records/Warner Music Canada	684/43	5	31
11	34	32	To Be Loved By You / Parker McCollum / MCA Nashville	668/39	13	75
7	39	33	Getting Over Him / Lauren Alaina feat. Jon Pardi / Mercury Nashville	594/38	19	96
9	41	34	Okfuskee Whiskey / James Robert Webb / Bison Creek Records	571/42	19	92
10	35	35	Freedom Was A Highway / Jimmie Allen & Brad Paisley / Stoney Creek Records	569/33	8	40
21	38	36	You Time / Scotty McCreery / Triple Tigers Records	542/33	9	43
16	46	37	Extra / Kylie Trout / Kylie Trout Music	534/27	21	92
18	37	38	Heartland / Hailey Whitters / Big Loud Records/S&D	517/30	1	3
25	40	39	I Can Tell By The Way You Dance / Josh Turner / MCA Nashville	511/28	6	29

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Weeks On Chart	Last Week	This Week	Song / Artist / Label	Spins / Reports	% Spin Power	Spins +/-
14	44	40	You're Gonna Love Me / Tim Dugger / Curb	499/34	10	46
14	43	41	Chain Breaker / Zach Williams / Provident Label Group	489/33	7	34
6	45	42	I Can't / Caitlyn Smith feat. Old Dominion / Monument Records	465/36	6	25
14	42	43	Just Friends / Caylee Hammack / Capitol	461/29	-1	-5
12	47	44	Right Place Now / Hudson Valley / Hudson Valley	449/23	5	20
7	51	45	Gettin' Her Over You / Bobby Wills / Willing	388/27	11	39
3	54	46	My Masterpiece / Darius Rucker / Capitol	384/28	22	69
9	50	47	What The Whiskey's For / Tom Sexton / Lots To Do Music	368/30	5	17
9	52	48	Together / for KING & COUNTRY feat. Hannah Ellis, Jackson Michelson / Curb Word Entertainment	366/28	7	23
19	49	49	Worship You / Kane Brown / RCA Nashville	364/20	3	10
5	55	50	Under It With You Tonight / Smith & Wesley / Dream Walkin/Audium Nashville	353/26	22	63
10	48	51	Shallow / Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood / Pearl Records	350/23	-11	-44
2	77	52	ABBY / Travis Denning / Mercury Nashville	327/23	80	145
2	67	53	Then A Girl Walks In / Shenandoah & Blake Shelton / Foundry Records	309/27	46	98
12	57	54	No Body, No Crime / Taylor Swift feat. Haim / MCA Nashville	298/17	8	22
11	56	55	Can't Stop / Chloe Collins / Collins House Music	292/19	4	12
10	58	56	Head Over Wheels / Joe Hanson /	274/17	4	10
16	59	57	Whiskey And Rain / Michael Ray / Warner Music Nashville	271/14	3	7
6	60	58	It's All Yours / Dave Wilbert / Wilbilly Records	270/21	5	13
3	63	59	God Save The World / Jeff Carson feat. Lisa Brokop / MCC/Curb	257/16	8	19
12	61	60	I Do Thing / Kylie Frey / Deep Frey'd Music Group	257/20	1	3
5	64	61	Good Day / Brett Eldredge / Warner Music Nashville	249/17	10	22
1	138	62	Might As Well Be Me / Dew Pendleton / HippieRedneckGospeLove	240/24	127	214
4	65	63	Homesick / Veronika / Whattaguy Music	234/21	7	15
3	68	64	Treasure / Mary Heather Hickman / Rolling River Records	232/22	10	22
10	66	65	He Looks Good On Her / Michael McCall / MDM Entertainment	232/15	9	19
6	72	66	Gotta Go Rodeo / Darlinghurst / Helium	230/18	18	35
6	71	67	Home Sweet / Russell Dickerson / Triple Tigers Records	220/15	12	23
6	70	68	Same Dirt Road / Eric Lee / Blue Hill Records	217/19	9	18
2	80	69	Lady Like / Ingrid Andress / Warner Music Nashville	215/14	33	53
2	79	70	Chasing After You / Ryan Hurd w/ Maren Morris / Arista Nashville	207/16	26	43
17	30	71	Just Like You / Paige King Johnson / PCG Artist Development	205/13	-70	-483
2	75	72	Old School's In / Heath Sanders / Valory	194/14	6	11
3	78	73	Camp Jackson / Michael B. Whit /	191/14	6	11
5	76	74	Let It Flow / Dave McElroy / Greg Stevens Promotions/Tatum Town LLC	189/11	3	6
1	82	75	Lonely Girl / Danny Kensey / Rad Records	179/14	15	23
1	83	76	Villain / Lily Rose / Big Loud Records	170/17	13	19
8	74	77	Do Ya / Tiffany Woys /	167/9	-13	-25
1	81	78	It Goes So Fast / Dwain Messer / N Crowd Music	166/12	4	7
1	91	79	If I Wanted Your Opinion / Michaela Anne / Yep Roc Records	165/12	31	39
1	85	80	Why Can't It Be Tonight / Mercy Shine / CCB Nashville	157/12	11	15

No. 1 Song
 Greatest Spin Increase
 Highest Debut



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Kane Brown To Headline NBA Arenas On New 35-City Tour



Kane Brown announced he is launching his headlining Blessed & Free Tour on October 1, which will visit 35 cities including all 29 NBA basketball arenas. He made the announcement from the American Airlines Center in Dallas during one of his surprise promotional stops in the upcoming tour markets.

Kicking off in Sacramento, Brown's Blessed & Free Tour will visit the NBA basketball arenas throughout 2021 and 2022, making him the first country artist in history to headline every NBA basketball arena in a single tour. A life-long basketball fan and former 4-sport high-school athlete, Brown first hinted at the tour during the 2020 NBA All-Star game in Chicago, where he played in the NBA celebrity All-Star game. The country star is set to visit milestone venues from coast-to-coast, including Brown's first headlining dates at New York City's Madison Square Garden and Brooklyn's Barclays Center.

Brown will also return to play the STAPLES Center in L.A. on the tour, and is among only a handful of country artists in the arena's 20-year history to sell out the venue. In addition to the NBA arenas, Blessed & Free will make stops in Nampa, State College, Louisville, Pittsburgh, and Seattle before wrapping in Las Vegas. **Jordan Davis** will join Brown as support for all 2021 tour dates, with

Chase Rice joining the tour in 2022. **Restless Road**, who Brown signed to his label, 1021 Entertainment, will open all shows throughout the full tour.

Registration for the pre-sale begins today at 10 a.m. CT at kanebrownlive.com. Tickets for Blessed & Free will go on-sale to the general public Friday, April 16th, at 10 a.m. local time at kanebrownmusic.com. A limited number of VIP Packages will be available that include an amazing selection of tickets, early-access to the General Admission Pit, limited edition merchandise and much more.

[Click here to view the Blessed & Free Tour Dates.](#)

Priscilla Block Announces Debut EP

Priscilla Block has announced that her debut self-titled EP with Mercury Nashville is set for April 30.

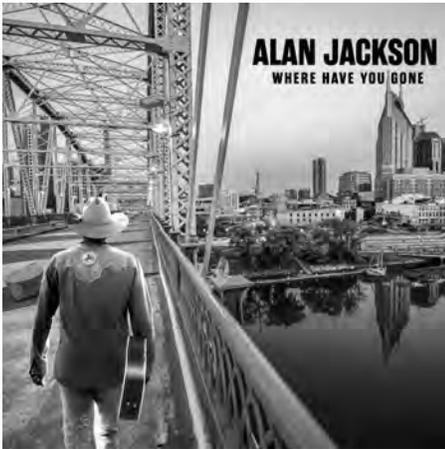
Block quickly earned a rabid fanbase on TikTok with songs like "Thick Thighs," "PMS" and "Just About Over You." She signed with Mercury Nashville in 2020 and was named as part of *MusicRow's* Next Big Thing Artists Class of 2021, along with other artists to watch lists.

The six-song EP includes her viral hit that is climbing at country radio, "Just About Over You," and new single "Wish You Were the Whiskey," which dropped on April 7. Block wrote each of the six songs on the record.

"This EP is such a vulnerable side of who I am and where I've been," says Block. "It's my story of falling apart in order to find myself again. I hope that when you hear these songs, they make you feel that it's ok to not be perfect and realize that sometimes we need the lows to value the highs... And once you regain that confidence... Let it show baby!" **MR**



Alan Jackson's First New Album In Six Years Set For May



Alan Jackson is returning with his first album of all new music in six years this spring when *Where Have You Gone* arrives Friday, May 14.

The expansive collection includes 21 tracks, 15 penned by Jackson himself, and was produced by Jackson's longtime producer **Keith Stegall**. The project is his 16th studio album, and the 25th in a storied career that includes two Christmas albums, two gospel albums, three Greatest Hits collections, a bluegrass album, and one boxed set.

Led by the self-penned title track, *Where Have You Gone* is highlighted by songs like the poignant "Things That Matter" and the heartache-filled "Way Down in My Whiskey." In a more personal vein, "You'll Always Be My Baby" and "I Do" were both written for Jackson's daughters' weddings, while "Where Her Heart Has Always Been" was penned for his mother's funeral and includes a recording of her reading from The Bible. There's also plenty

of fun to be had on barnburners like "Livin' On Empty," "Back" and "Beer:10." And, in the spirit of the album's overall sound, "That's the Way Loves Goes (A Tribute to Merle Haggard)" is a bonus track.

"It's a little harder country than even I've done in the past," Jackson says. "And it's funny, I was driving and listening to the final mixes Keith sent me, and I started to tear up. I was surprised to get so overly emotional, but I just love this kind of music. When I write, I visualize back home and growing up. Real country songs are life and love and heartache, drinking and Mama and having a good time...but it's the sounds of the instruments, too. The steel and acoustic guitar, the fiddle – those things have a sound and a tone...and getting that right, the way those things make you feel, that's country, too."

"Alan's taken his experiences over the last six years and implemented his poet's perspective to weave together a masterful love letter to country music," says UMG Nashville President **Cindy Mabe**. "This is Alan's story but it's also the story of country music. This music love letter was written about the most universal experiences in life, almost exclusively with Alan's own pen, and it's once again a reminder of what a one-of-a-kind creator he truly is." **MR**

Jake Worthington Signs Management, Publishing Deal With Big Loud

Jake Worthington has signed with Big Loud for management and publishing.

Hailing from La Porte, Texas, Worthington was a finalist on Season 6 of NBC's *The Voice* in 2014, and is ready to introduce his own brand of authentic country, drawing from inspirations like George Jones, Merle Haggard, Alan Jackson, and Randy Travis. New music is expected from him in the coming months.

"As a Texan myself, adding Jake to the Big Loud roster is truly a full-circle moment for me," says Big Loud Management's **Troy "Tracker"**

Johnson. "There's just something about him, and I'm excited for everyone to hear it. He's real, he's country—plain and simple."

"We are thrilled to welcome Jake into the Big Loud Publishing family as well," says Big Loud Publishing's **Travis Carter**. "We can't wait to continue building upon the already incredible catalog of country music he is bringing to the table."

"I am so proud to make country music happen with this group of trailblazers," says Worthington. **MR**



Joe Nichols Signs With Quartz Hill Records



Joe Nichols has signed a label deal with Quartz Hill Records. Nichols will release his brand new single, “Home Run,” on April 23. The anthem about reconnection and rebirth was written by award-winning songwriters Ashley Gorley, Dallas Davidson and Ross Copperman.

The move reunites Nichols with veteran label head **Benny Brown**, with whom he enjoyed two multi-week No. 1 songs, “Yeah” and “Sunny and 75,” from his album *Crickets*, that was released in 2013 on Red Bow Records.

Nichols is currently in the studio recording his full-length debut project for Quartz Hill, reuniting with producers **Mickey Jack Cones** and **Derek George**, who helmed his album *Crickets*. Cones

also produced Nichols’ follow-up album, *Never Gets Old*.

“Joe has one of the purest and most timeless voices in country music. He’s an incredible artist whose songs come from the heart. I couldn’t be more excited to reunite with Joe and welcome him to the Quartz Hill Records family,” says Brown.

“I’m so excited to be a part of the Quartz Hill Records family. Benny Brown has always been an amazing person to me and my family and I can’t wait to make many memories and hits with the whole Quartz Hill team!” says Nichols. **MR**

Kendell Marvel Signs With Concord Music Publishing

Kendell Marvel has signed a new worldwide publishing agreement with Concord Music Publishing.

A Southern Illinois native, Marvel began playing shows in bars at 10, and eventually moved to Nashville to pursue a career in songwriting. Shortly after arriving in Music City he penned Gary Allan’s first Top 5 hit “Right Where I Need to Be” and went on to have cuts by Chris Stapleton, Blake Shelton, Brothers Osborne, Jake Owen, George Strait, Jamey Johnson, Lee Ann Womack, Aaron Watson, and more.

In 2017, Marvel released his debut solo album, *Lowdown & Lonesome* and in October 2019, followed up with his second album *Solid Gold Sounds*, which he wrote and recorded in a matter of days and was co-produced by Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys and David R. Ferguson.

“As a songwriter and as an artist, Kendell represents the very core of country music. His way of writing about life’s raw truths, heartache and pain, life, love, and having a good dang time, is what it’s all about,” says SVP A&R at Concord Music Publishing in Nashville, **Brad Kennard**. “After admiring his work for years, I’m thrilled that we get the chance to work with him.”

“I’m fired up to be joining the diverse roster of writers and artists that make up the Concord family. I’ve known Brad Kennard for the better part of 15 years and look forward to working with him and his crew,” says Marvel.

MR



DISCLAIMER Single Reviews: Logan Mize, Chrissy Metz, Canaan Smith, Chevel Shepherd



Logan Mize. Photo: John Shearer

Today belongs to country's newcomers and baby acts.

First timers to Disclaimer include John PayCheck, Sydney Mack and our DisCOVERY Award winner, Timmy Brown.

One of our up-and-comers goes home with the Disc of the Day prize. That's the endearing Logan Mize with his coming-of-age tune "Practice Swing."

[Click here to read Robert K. Oermann's reviews of Logan Mize, Chrissy Metz, Canaan Smith, Chevel Shepherd, John PayCheck, Sydney Mack, and more.](#)

MORE TOP STORIES

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[Nate Smith Signs With CAA](#)

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[Weekly Register: Carrie Underwood's 'My Savior' Tops Country Albums Chart](#)

Dolly's Mentor Bill Owens Passes

Bill Owens, best known as the man who launched Dolly Parton's career, died at age 85 on Wednesday (April 7).

He wrote more than 800 songs, including the country standard "Put It Off Until Tomorrow," which he co-wrote with Dolly, his niece. Owens was an entertainer, an environmentalist and a bon vivant.

Born in 1935, he was the younger brother of Dolly's mother, Avie Lee Owens Parton. He began performing in the 1950s in East Tennessee, initially billed as "Little Billy Earl with the Spitz Curl."

Noting that niece Dolly showed an interest in music, he began teaching the 8-year-old to play guitar and took her to his small-town gigs. They sang together at supermarket openings, rallies, fairs, talent contests and other local events.

When she was 10 years old in 1956, he took her to Knoxville to appear on the local radio show of supermarket entrepreneur Cas Walker. She became a regular on it. *The Cas Walker Farm & Home Hour* soon became a TV series and was Dolly's first big break in show business.

In 1959, Dolly Parton recorded "Puppy Love" for the Louisiana label Goldband Records as her disc debut. She and Bill co-wrote the song, and "Little Billy Earl" recorded for the label, as well.

Uncle Bill Owens also began ferrying her back-and-forth between East Tennessee and Nashville. Using "Puppy love" as an entrée, he sought song-publishing and record-company opportunities for them both. He finagled an appearance for the youngster on the Grand Ole Opry.

In 1962, they co-wrote "It's Sure Gonna Hurt," which became a Dolly Parton single on Mercury Records. This was a result of Owens landing them a contract with Tree Publishing. Back home in East Tennessee, he formed a small band to be fronted by the two of them and arranged bookings at regional clubs and little honky tonks.

While Dolly finished high school, Uncle Bill Owens moved to Nashville and was hired as a touring guitarist by Carl & Pearl Butler and other stars. When she moved to Music City to board with him, they landed songwriting contracts at Combine Music, as well as a recording contract for Dolly with Monument, the company's record-label affiliate. Dolly and Bill co-wrote several of her Monument recordings.

They also co-wrote songs for Kitty Wells ("More Love Than Sense"), Skeeter Davis ("Fuel to the Flame"), Bill Phillips ("The Company You Keep," "I Only Regret") and other artists. Phillips recorded their "Put It Off Until Tomorrow," which became a major hit in 1966 and earned Dolly and Bill a BMI Award.

Bill Owens and Dolly Parton formed Owepar Music to publish their songs in 1967. This was the commencement of Dolly owning her compositions, the foundation of her business empire.

They continued to write together after Dolly joined Porter Wagoner's show and moved to RCA Records in 1967. Bill Owens contributed a half dozen songs that became Porter-and-Dolly duets.

Usually billed as Billy Earl Owens, he recorded for a number of independent labels in the 1970s and 1980s. His songs were recorded by Tammy Wynette, Bob Beckham, Red Sovine, Al Ferrier, Kris Kristofferson, Loretta Lynn,



The Kendalls, Porter Wagoner, Jeannie Seely, Ricky Skaggs, Brenda Lee, Willie Nelson, Johnny Dollar and other artists.

In addition to Dolly, Bill Owens was a mentor and producer for many other young acts. For Circle B Records, he produced Ralph Loveday, Jim Wyrick, Larry Cooke, Don Handy, Johnny Ringo and Tom Hackney, as well as his brother Henry, billed as "John Henry III."

When Dollywood opened in 1986, he and Henry both became musical headliners at the park. He also starred at his own venues nearby. Bill Owens was noted for his ebullience, good humor, charm and enthusiasm as an entertainer.

He planted approximately 70,000 of the trees at Dollywood. In later years, he became passionate about reintroducing chestnut trees to Appalachia. Bill Owens planted thousands of saplings resistant to the blight which had nearly wiped out the chestnut.

Funeral arrangements have not been announced.

Dolly Parton wrote a eulogy for her mentor, which is published below.

I've lost my beloved Uncle Bill Owens. I knew my heart would break when he passed, and it did. I'll start this eulogy by saying I wouldn't be here if he hadn't been there. He was there... there in my young years to encourage me to keep playing my guitar, to keep writing my songs, to keep practicing my singing. And he was there to help build my confidence standing on stage where he was always standing behind me or close beside me with his big ol' red Gretsch guitar.

He was there to take me around to all of the local shows, got me my first job on the "Cas Walker Show." He took me back-&-forth to Nashville through the years, walked up-&-down the streets with me, knocking on doors to get me signed up to labels or publishing companies.

It's really hard to say or to know for sure what all you owe somebody for your success. But I can tell you for sure that I owe Uncle Billy an awful lot.

Uncle Bill was so many things. He loved the music, loved to play, loved his guitar and loved to write and sing. He wrote great songs, at least 800 of them through the years. We wrote several songs together, the biggest one being "Put It Off Until Tomorrow." We won our first big award on that one back in 1966. It was the BMI Song of the Year.

He wrote songs that were recorded by Loretta Lynn, Porter Wagoner, Ricky Skaggs, Kris Kristofferson and many others. He also traveled the road with many big artists playing his guitar, including playing on stage with me in my early years in Nashville.

Uncle Bill worked at Dollywood from the time we opened in the family show for many years. He was funny, friendly and generous. He always had a kind word for everybody and gave good advice to young people starting in the business. He joined forces with Dollywood, The American Chestnut Foundation, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and The American Eagle Foundation to bring back the endangered chestnut tree to the Great Smoky Mountain area. That was his passion. He also championed the cause of protecting the natural environment at Dollywood in 1986. During that time, he took it upon himself, with his wife Sandy, to plant 70,000 trees on the Park property.

I bet a lot of our own relatives don't even know all of the great things that Uncle Bill did behind the scenes through his life. But the greatest thing he ever did for me was to help me see my dreams come true and for that I will be forever grateful. I'm sure that Uncle Bill's friends, fans, his wife Sandy, his kids, grandkids and great-grandkids will join me when I say that we will always love you.

Rest in peace, Uncle Bill.

TOP SONGWRITER CHART

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
1	1	Jesse Frasure	What's Your Country Song Almost Maybes Minimum Wage Whiskey And Rain	Thomas Rhett Jordan Davis Blake Shelton Michael Ray
2	2	Corey Crowder	Long Live Minimum Wage Famous Friends Drinkin' Beer. Talkin' God. Amen	Florida Georgia Line Blake Shelton Chris Young + Kane Brown Chase Rice feat. Florida Georgia Line
3	3	Josh Osborne	Sand In My Boots Breaking Up Was Easy In The 90's How They Remember You Next Girl	Morgan Wallen Sam Hunt Rascal Flatts Carly Pearce
4	4	Tyler Hubbard	Lil Bit Long Live Undivided	Nelly & Florida Georgia Line Florida Georgia Line Tim McGraw & Tyler Hubbard
5	6	Ashley Gorley	Sand In My Boots Warning What's Your Country Song Single Saturday Night	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Thomas Rhett Cole Swindell
6	8	Mike Henderson	Starting Over	Chris Stapleton
7	9	Chris Stapleton	Starting Over	Chris Stapleton
8	13	Nicolle Galyon	Gone Minimum Wage	Dierks Bentley Blake Shelton
9	5	Luke Combs	Better Together Forever After All	Luke Combs Luke Combs
10	14	Ernest Keith Smith	Wasted On You Warning Dangerous Somebody's Problem Breaking Up Was Easy In The 90's	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Sam Hunt
11	18	B. Davis	Made For You Memory I Don't Mess With	Jake Owen Lee Brice
12	7	Jon Nite	Lady	Brett Young
13	15	Kevin Bard	Just The Way	Parmalee x Blanco Brown
14	16	N.W. Sipe	Just The Way	Parmalee x Blanco Brown
15	17	Matt Thomas	Just The Way	Parmalee x Blanco Brown
16	20	Ross Copperman	Lady	Brett Young
17	21	Brett Young	Lady	Brett Young
18	24	Dallas Davidson	Down To One	Luke Bryan
19	25	Kyle Fishman	Down To One	Luke Bryan
20	26	Justin Ebach	Down To One	Luke Bryan
21	27	Niko Moon	Good Time Gone	Niko Moon Dierks Bentley
22	19	Michael Hardy	Sand In My Boots Livin' The Dream Still Goin Down Single Saturday Night	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Cole Swindell
23	23	Chris Loocke	Undivided	Tim McGraw & Tyler Hubbard
24	28	Allison Veltz Cruz	Somebody Like That	Tenille Arts
25	29	Tenille Arts	Somebody Like That	Tenille Arts
26	30	Alex Kline	Somebody Like That	Tenille Arts

This Week	Last Week	Songwriter's Name	Song(s)	Artist
27	31	Rodney Clawson	Somebody's Problem Momma's House	Morgan Wallen Dustin Lynch
28	36	N. Medley	Made For You	Jake Owen
29	37	Jeffery Hyde	Made For You	Jake Owen
30	32	Eric Church	Hell Of A View	Eric Church
31	33	Monty Criswell	Hell Of A View	Eric Church
32	34	C. Beathard	Hell Of A View	Eric Church
33	38	Rhett Akins	What's Your Country Song Tequila Little Time To Be Loved By You Beers To Catch Up On	Thomas Rhett Jon Pardi Parker McCollum LOCASH
34	12	Randy Montana	Better Together We Didn't Have Much	Luke Combs Justin Moore
35	10	Gabby Barrett	The Good Ones	Gabby Barrett
36	11	Zachary Kale	The Good Ones	Gabby Barrett
37	41	Emily Landis	The Good Ones	Gabby Barrett
38	42	J. McCormick	The Good Ones	Gabby Barrett
39	43	Dallas Wilson	Nobody	Dylan Scott
40	44	Dylan Scott	Nobody	Dylan Scott
41	45	Matt Alderman	Nobody	Dylan Scott
42	47	Drew Parker	Forever After All	Luke Combs
43	48	Robert Williford	Forever After All	Luke Combs
44	35	Ryan Vojtesak	Wasted On You Warning Still Goin Down Worship You	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Kane Brown
45	39	Hillary Lindsey	Almost Maybes	Jordan Davis
46	40	Jordan Davis	Almost Maybes	Jordan Davis
47	56	Luke Dick	Settling Down	Miranda Lambert
48	57	Miranda Lambert	Settling Down	Miranda Lambert
49	58	Natalie Hemby	Settling Down	Miranda Lambert
50	49	Justin Wilson	Momma's House	Dustin Lynch
51	50	Michael Lotten	Momma's House	Dustin Lynch
52	51	Dylan Schneider	Momma's House	Dustin Lynch
53	46	Morgan Wallen	Wasted On You Dangerous Livin' The Dream Somebody's Problem Still Goin Down	Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen Morgan Wallen
54	53	Allen Shamblin	How They Remember You	Rascal Flatts
55	54	M. Beeson	How They Remember You	Rascal Flatts
56	59	Ben Johnson	Gone	Dierks Bentley
57	52	Thomas Rhett	What's Your Country Song	Thomas Rhett
58	55	Parker Welling	What's Your Country Song	Thomas Rhett
59	63	Cary Barlowe	Famous Friends	Chris Young + Kane Brown
60	64	Chris Young	Famous Friends	Chris Young + Kane Brown

CALENDAR

Singles

April 9

Keith Burns/*These Tryin Times*/Aria Tree Music

David DeVaul/*Not Sorry*

April 12

Ian Munsick/*Long Haul*/Warner Music Nashville

Jon Wayne Hatfield/*Growing Up Too Fast*/Soundstage Music

Donny Lee/*Got Me This Far*/Donny Lee Music

Kyle English/*One Night Romeo*/SMG-Nashville

April 16

Stephanie Ryann/*Broken Heart*

Albums

April 9

Luke Bryan/*Born Here Live Here Die Here (Deluxe)*/Capitol Records Nashville

Tim Montana/*Long Shots*/Music Knox Records/BBR Music Group

Brett Kissel/*What Is Life?*/OneRPM

April 16

Eric Church/*Heart*/EMI Music Nashville

April 20

Eric Church/*&*/EMI Music Nashville

April 23

Eric Church/*Soul*/EMI Music Nashville

Justin Moore/*Straight Outta The Country*/The Valory Music Co

Elvie Shane/*County Roads EP*/BBR Music Group/Wheelhouse Records

April 18

The 56th Academy of Country Music Awards

April 27

AIMP Nashville Awards