

MARCH 2021

# SGN SCOOPS

MAGAZINE



THE

# Browders

DOWN EAST BOYS | JOHNNY & GALE ROWLETT | JUMP FOR JOY

# THE HYSSONGS



## THE HYSSONGS



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## Our Mission

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about gospel music. With integrity, we aspire to highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God.

Publisher- Rob Patz

Editor- Kristen Stanton

Layout/Design- Staci Schwager, Pete Schwager

Cover Design- Stephanie Kelley

Founder- Dr. Allen Smith

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# PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz



The crack of the bat, the snap of the leather as the ball enters the catchers hand.

I love March – it has always been one of my favorite months because it signals spring and new beginnings. I know I've written that before, but it's true.

For many of us 2021 is like a new beginning. 2020 is now in the rear-view mirror, and I think we can all safely say we're all excited about that.

For me, March also marks the return to the road on a full-time basis with two events: Southern Gospel Weekend in Oxford, Alabama, March 18-21 and our brand new event Creekside Revival taking place March 24-27. I want this to be your personal invitation to join me at one or both of these events.

For many of you, the last year has been a `difficult time. There has been a great deal of fear and a great deal of loss. To those of you that have lost a loved one, I am so sorry. To those of you that have been scared, you are not alone, for God is with you.

My question for you this month is what would you do if you had no fear?

Yes, God put fear in us to save us from our own demise. I truly believe that, especially as a man and reliving

most of my youth and some of the many dangerous things I did. Thankfully, for most of those, the statute of limitations have run (that's a joke!). But I want to go back to the question I asked: what would you do if you knew you wouldn't be fearful at all?

Would you start a new business? Would you start a new ministry? Would you move across the country?

Isaiah 41:10 says, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you."

A few days ago the verse above was my devotion. I would love to tell you that I live my life completely without fear – that I never think about failure, that I never think about the things that scare me – but that would be a complete and utter lie.

I will tell you there are many nights that I'm awake wondering how things are going to get accomplished, or if the finances will be there. So the other night I prayed and finally went to sleep. When I woke up the next morning, my devotion started with the verse above. "Fear not for I am with you" actually makes everything very simple if we truly believe that God loves us and wants the best for us. If we are serving him according to his rules and laws, then why should we worry? Why should we fear?

I want to encourage you to be bold. I know it's easy to say and harder to live, but let's do it together. Let's take the rest of the month and be bold, be trusting and fear not because God is with you, and he is with me.

So let's make it a new beginning. Let's make it our spring of dealing with fear as we begin a new season living a bold and amazing life without fear.

Have an awesome month. We will check in together again next month. Join me for the great events above plus the event that started it all – Creekside 2021, October 24-28 in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. You can call me 360 933 0741 or email [events@sgnscoops.com](mailto:events@sgnscoops.com).



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# THE LOWE DOWN WITH JEFF LOWE



Tonja Rose

Me, Jesus & the Highway

Label: Bluegrass Valley Records/Mansion Entertainment

Producer: John Mathis/Tonja Rose

Release Date: July 6, 2018/Available Now

Songs on this project:

1. When the Mountain Can't Be Moved/Tonja Rose
2. Jesus On the Mainline/Public Domain
3. Me, Jesus & the Highway/Tonja Rose, John Mathis, Mark Narmore
4. Softly and Tenderly/William Thompson
5. Standing on the Rock/Sandy Carroll, Mark Narmore, Jim Gaines
6. Pass Me Not/Fanny J. Crosby
7. Walking Each Other Home/ Tonja Rose, John Mathis, Mark Narmore
8. Keep Walkin' On/Tricia Walker, Karen Staley
9. He Does/Tonja Rose, Mark Narmore
10. Hide Me Behind the Cross/ Tonja Rose, Mark Narmore
11. Call on God/AJ Masters, Ken Harrell, Phil Everly
12. I'm Not Who I Used to Be/Tonja Rose, Erin Ashleigh

I received this project late last year, and with all the other CDs I received before it, I am just now getting around to reviewing it. I did a little research as I always do when I sit down to write my reviews. The first thing I found out is that this project is Bluegrass. My first thought was "oh, bluegrass." Now don't get me wrong I like Bluegrass, but I like it when it's done right. So when I found out I would be listening to a bluegrass singer, in my mind, I was a little less than excited.

I found out that each of the songs have a personal connection to Tonja and her husband. First, Tonja co-wrote seven of the twelve songs. More importantly, Me, Jesus & the Highway is part of the couple's story of how God gave them strength to climb the mountain that stood before them – a climb that made them stronger on the other side. The mountain this couple faced was the stroke Tonja's husband suffered and his recovery.

As you listen to the project, each song is a progression of that climb beginning with the first song written by Tonja entitled "When the Mountain Can't Be Moved." There's a line in the song that says, "when the mountain can't be moved, God will give you the strength to climb." How many times have we all been there? How many times has God given you that strength to climb a mountain that seemed so tall and wide?

We can hear and feel the progression of their struggle and the steps in that climb right up to the last song, "I'm Not Who I Used to Be" which was co-written by Tonja Rose and Erin Ashleigh. As we go through life and fight through each struggle and trial, as God leads us over each mountain top, it

changes us. It makes us stronger. We can look back up to that mountain and see the changes that God has made in us. Our faith is stronger, our walk with Him much closer.

I can say with certainty that as you listen to this CD, you will be blessed. The songs will take you back to a time when you faced your own mountain. Maybe it was health. Maybe it was the sudden loss of a job. Maybe it was the loss of a family member. We all face different mountains – but we all face them. Additional blessings for Tonja and her debut project Me, Jesus & the Highway are the numerous Bluegrass Gospel Top 10 songs, 5 Diamond Award Nominations, and winning 2 Diamond Awards, along with multiple other acknowledgments and credits for the album release.

Because of these accolades, I looked at Spotify where fans and listeners have shown what their favorite songs are off this project. The Top 5 streamed songs on Spotify from Tonja Rose are:

1. "When the Mountain Can't Be Moved"
2. "Walking Each Other Home" (feat. Benjy Gaither)
3. "Jesus On the Mainline"

4. "Hide Me Behind the Cross"
5. "Call on God"

#### Wrap Up

Me, Jesus & the Highway is so much more than just another collection of Bluegrass songs. This is a well-thought out story. A story of struggle, strength through God, and praise. You can tell that Tonja prayed over the song selection – that God gave her the words for the seven songs she wrote.

If you're a fan of Bluegrass Gospel, you are really go-



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ing to enjoy this project. Even if you've never really cared for bluegrass or never heard it, I encourage you to get Me, Jesus & the Highway.

Download the CD or stream it on your favorite service. I know you're in for a blessing!

You can learn more about Tonja Rose and her music on her website <https://www.tonjarose.com>



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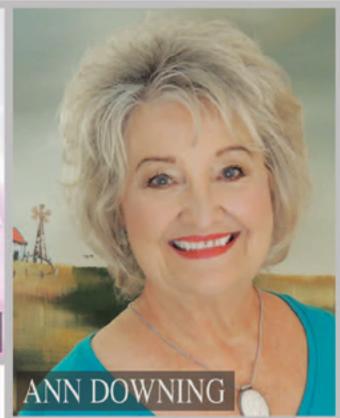
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Life is often compared to a journey -- hills, valleys, and mountains make up each day. Each step. Each moment of our lives. How do you live each moment of your life? Do you trust him for each step, or do you rely on yourself? Are you running from God as fast as your feet will go? Or are you living a life on the run? Towards God. Towards Heaven. Towards the life God has planned for you.

According to David Browder, of the Southern Gospel Group The Browders, "We step out on faith, walk by faith, sing by faith, hit the road by faith. God's taken care of us every step of the road, every mile of the trip. We give all the glory to God. We would not be where we are today if it hadn't been for God."

It hasn't always been easy for the Browders, but when faced with opposition in life, they rise to the top. Their family has been steeped in prayer and have kept their eyes fixed on Jesus throughout their journey.

The Browders come from humble beginnings, and as David Browder said, "God took hicks from the sticks."

Browder recounted the family's story of faith that gave rise to their ministry.

"When Dad was a small child he had polio. They told his parents it would be a miracle if he lived, and if he lived to be 18, it would be a miracle too". Their Papaw (their dad's dad) got underneath the bed of his truck and cried out to God. He said, "If you'll just let my little boy live, God, I'll do anything that you'll have me to do. I'll preach for you; I'll serve you; I'll do anything you want me to do." He preached and served the Lord until he was in his 80's.

This was the catalyst in the Browders' journey, and it happened before many of them were born or even thought of. You see, God knows the plans that he has for each one of us, and He prepares our way. David Browder had this to say: "This has always blew me away. My mom had two miscarriages before she had me and my brother. Each of us are called for such a time as this. My mom was not even supposed to be able to have children anymore. God used us."

Each one of us just has to be willing to trust God for each step that we take and keep trusting for every step after.

As his Dad grew, polio affected him, but his dad believes that he was healed. He was even able to become a police officer. Some years afterward, he heard a word from God that he needed to take his family and begin serving in full time ministry.

were just starting out, Mom and Dad got booked at this church. I think it was my brother that said, 'Mom and Dad, I want a suit to wear on stage.' After church that night there was a woman that pulls up in a big ol' Cadillac, [and] in her trunk there were suits that fit us both perfect."

Even then, God was watching out for them and answering their prayers. He had great things in store for The Browders and knew that even in the hard times they would be obedient to the call to serve him in their lives.

Browder recalls, "I remember as a little boy I'd heard the word of God preached and was told stories of the scriptures -- how that we can pray and in faith believing -- and I just believed it with all my heart and soul. And I'd pray sincerely for lost souls."

The Browders still continue to pray over their records. They pray that people will feel the presence of God, and that people would get to know Christ through their music.

They often dreamed – and prayed – that they would one day have some hit songs

on the radio. And then one day what they merely dreamed about before was coming true. Their first top ten song was called "Stand Up for Jesus." By then, the ball began to roll, and like a domino effect, a lot of things began happening.

The Browders group are blessed to have four songwrit-



His dad and mom started the family group. His dad was a preacher, and his parents would sing as well; eventually as the boys grew, the whole family became involved in ministry. When asked if he could remember a humbling experience from their time in ministry, he responded, "I can remember when we didn't have much, and God would come through for us. When we

ers. They often co-write with one another, as well as write songs for other artists. In fact, Matthew Browder is a phenomenal songwriter, and The Gaither Vocal Band recently recorded one of his songs called "Good Things Just Take Time." Sonja co-wrote the number one song "You're Not In This Alone" and their brand new song entitled "My Home" is climbing the charts.

As far as charting songs go, The Browders have been

portant part of the Browder ministry. They meet up there when they want to really get a hold of God and also feel like that is when they're the closest to God. You know they are still going up on the mountain. Their dad, Tommy Browder, started out walking on a cane and is now in a wheelchair but still gets as close to that mountain as he can, still seeking God, still asking God to lead their family and their ministry.



blessed with several number one songs with most of them being on the album Time Machine. They were even nominated for a Dove Award for the song "Lift Up His Name." While they were at the Dove Awards, David Browder got to meet Michael Tait, lead singer for the Newsboys. After he introduced himself, Michael Tait replied, "Browders. I know who you are. My sister Linda Randle plays you guys all the time."

Although The Browders enjoy the creativity they have in writing songs that minister to other people, their greatest achievement is in seeing souls saved and lives changed for the glory of God. This in and of itself is the ultimate goal in Browder Ministries.

One thing that many people may not know is that years ago mountain prayer meetings became an im-

Their prayer is that God would open doors no man can shut, and shut doors no man can open.

As far as their faith in God is concerned, they believe the Bible -- every bit of it. They believe in delighting in the Lord. They cling to Ephesians 3:20 which says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding, abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." And they strive with their whole hearts to seek first the kingdom of God -- Matthew 6:33 -- knowing that everything else will fall in place as long as they allow the Lord to guide their decisions. They believe in the saying "not ability, but availability." As David Browder puts it, "God can take anybody or anything and open doors for them if they are willing to turn their whole life over to God."

However, there was a time in Browder ministries when

it was so tough financially that they didn't know if they would be able to stay in full time ministry. David Browder stated, "We got so discouraged, my brother and I, for a while we were just spinning our wheels. I was a teenager, times were different then. All we wanted to do was use our talent for the glory of God and not have to get a public job and our desire was full time ministry. We went to Dad. We loved what we were doing more than anything, and we had a passion, but we felt like we might have to get a public job or change to contemporary music to stay in Full time ministry." Their dad encouraged them to stick with it. He said, "God's gonna make a way. I can't tell you how God's going do it. But God's gonna make a way." Browder recalled hearing about the Crabb Family. "It was like a fire was lit under me and my brother -- anointing oil, that gold nugget [when] you know there is hope," Browder explained. "If God can use them, then God can use us. He lit that spark, and the spark became a flame once again."

The Browders' journey is truly one of running the race with their eyes fixed on Christ.

If you're on the run from God, like Jonah of the Bible, you have to be aware that running always comes with a price. In one instance, if you're someone running away

from God, then there are eternal consequences and a real place called Hell . Conversely, if you are running towards God and seeking him with your life, your service, and all the desires of your heart, then the price has already been paid by Jesus, and your destination is Heaven.

The words from their new song "My Home" perfectly encompasses their passion for their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to finish the race of life well. Here are the words from the Chorus:

The road's been long but I'm on my way home  
Made up my mind to make it home  
Gonna give it all I got til I reach the city of God, my home.

Take the time to listen to The Browders as they share their songs and the message that Jesus saves . When you become a child of the king you are never alone. You can either live your life like Jonah running away from God, or like the Browders, you can choose to live a life on the run – towards Jesus Christ.

You can find out more about The Browders by visiting their website at [www.thebrowders.com](http://www.thebrowders.com).



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# DJ Spotlight

## Randy Blakeney



by Vonda Armstrong

Randy Blakeney is the founder of Blakeney Communications. A DJ for over 50 years, you may have heard his Classics Show on SGM Radio. Randy is our DJ Spotlight this month. He and his wife, Jean reside in Laurel, Mississippi.

Tennessee, at the Grand Ole Opry. The late Great Opry announcer Charlie Douglas was a good friend of mine. Jean and I have stood in that great circle in the middle of the stage.

VONDA ARMSTRONG: How did you get involved in radio?

RANDY BLAKENEY: Growing up in Taylorsville, Mississippi, I built my first station at the age of 10 in Mama's back bedroom. And we were on the air! I played a lot of Statesmen and Speer Family records! [I] went into commercial radio at a 50,000 Watt station in Magee, Mississippi, at age 17. [I] played Southern Gospel 5 hours a day for over 10 years. James Blackwood was a frequent guest on my show. Marty Stuart visited my show at age 12 from Philadelphia, Mississippi, helping me with my Flatt and Scruggs selections. Great memories as I stroll down memory lane!!!

VA: If you could visit anywhere in the United States, where would you go? Why?

RB: You would find me in Nashville,



VA: When is your show on and can we listen online?  
RB: Randy Blakeney's Gospel Classics airs on the SGM Internet Radio Network. Go to SGMRadio.com

VA: Who is your all-time favorite group? Why?  
RB: My all-time favorite group is The Florida Boys. [I] worked a lot of concerts with Les and the boys. They even nominated me for DJ of the year at the GMA.

VA: If you could interview any person in the world, who would you pick? Tell us why.  
RB: That would be Jack Armstrong because he married the prettiest lady in Gospel Music!



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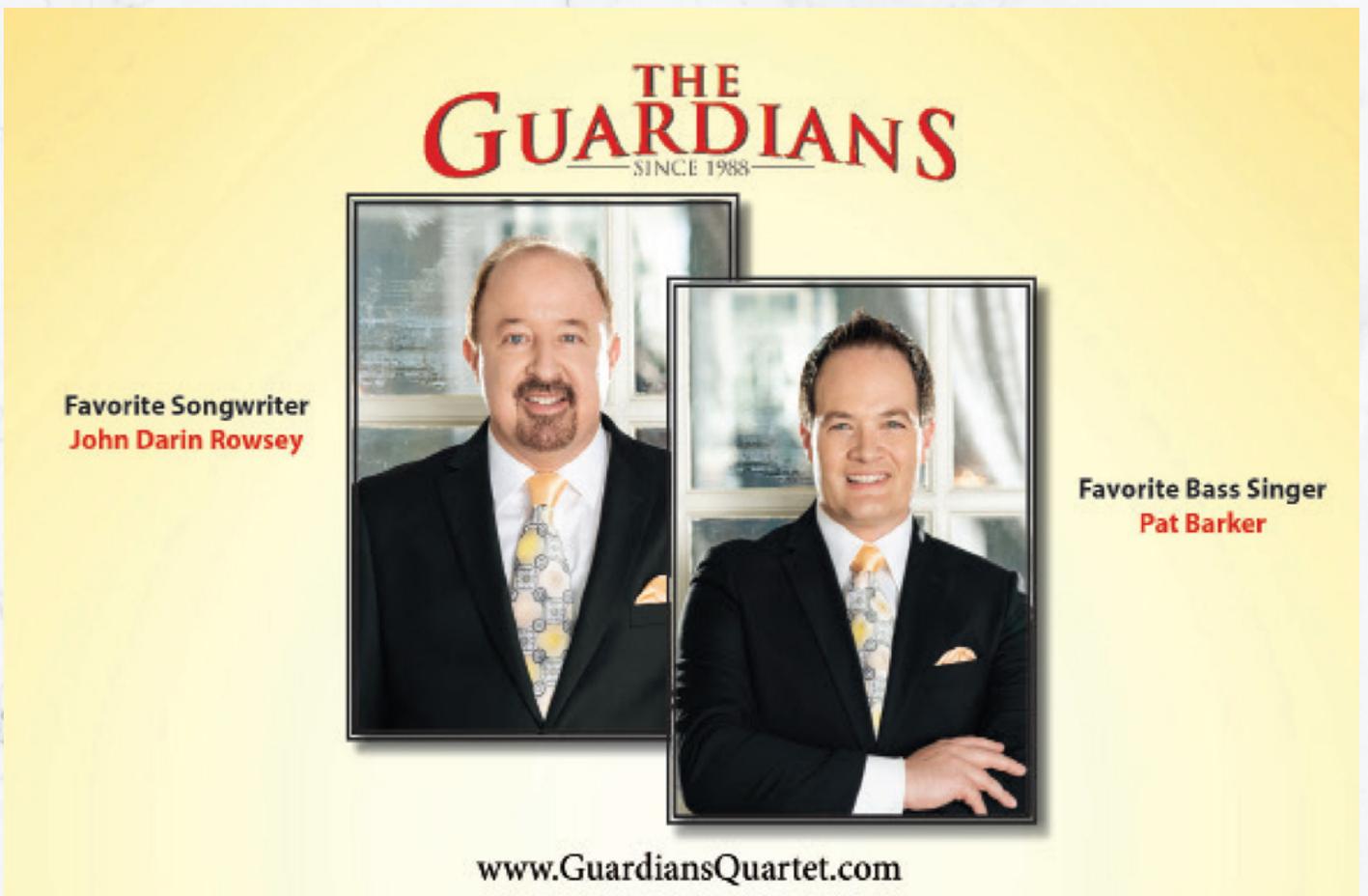


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# Jesus Is Coming Soon

by Charlie Griffin

There is a lyric line from “An Old Convention Song” by the Cathedrals. As I hum the song, I realize that line is really powerful. “Gospel songs today have a lot to say, they lift you up when you’re feeling down.” That is true of many gospel songs.

LaVerne Tripp says, “I preach many sermons when I stand up for Jesus. Each song I sing is about three minutes or so long and each has a message for the listener. Some will hear the message, others do not. It’s the same for any preacher or singer.”



Take the song “Jesus Is Coming Soon.” It was penned in 1942 during World War II. The message was thought to be for that time but has proven to be even more true down through the ages.

The song was written by R. E. Winsett, an American gospel songwriter and publisher of gospel music. It is said that he wrote over one thousand gospel songs. His 1951 songbook, *Best Of All*, sold over one million copies. In total, his gospel song books sold more than ten million copies. But the song is the story here.

When doing research for this story, I had the chance to speak with Marilyn Winsett. Her memories of how the song came to be is what makes this a one-of-a-kind story to tell.

Winsett shares, “Early in 1969 our mechanical licensing firm, SESAC, notified us that one of my Daddy’s songs, ‘Jesus is Coming Soon’ had been recorded by several major gospel music groups and was gaining in popularity. Then came the news that the song had been nominated for the Dove Award for gospel song of the year. It was the first year that the Dove Awards were held. One of the highlights of my life was being able to assume my role of long ago as my Daddy’s mascot and receive the Dove Award in his stead on October 10, 1969.

“After a long, delightful, spiritually uplifting night filled with wall to wall love among the groups and members of the Gospel Music Association it was time to announce the Song of the Year. Our dear friend Jim Myers of SESAC and President of GMA had asked to present the award, as he was sure it was going to win. He wanted to be the one to present it to me. I was not so sure.



“My heart was pounding. I don’t believe I ever wanted anything so badly in my entire life. All of the other nominees were young and living. They had other opportunities. However, I knew this was the one and only shot that my Daddy had of receiving the recognition

he so richly deserved as a pioneer of Gospel music. At last Jim opened the envelope. The song ‘Jesus is Coming Soon’ was the winner. Trembling, with weak knees, tears of joy streaming down my face, I stood and Brock Speer, who was seated at our table, escorted me to the stage. I have no idea what all I said. Mother said I did an excellent job. I was lost in the moment. I was able to watch a broadcast of it later on Gospel Jubilee as Les Beasley had taped it for his program.

“Back to the song. When asked if I had heard the song before it was recorded. I hadn’t, and apparently it was not one of my Daddy’s favorites for he only put it in one of his songbooks.

“My Mother well remembered the morning in 1942 that he said to her, ‘Come listen to the song I wrote last night, ‘Jesus is Coming Soon.’ I was only 4 years old and I cannot remember.”

It



was a song that fit the times. The fear of World War II and the uncertainty of each day, it weighed heavy on the minds of all Christian Americans.

“My father was given a lot of his songs in dreams, and when he was awakened, he would put them down on paper. So, it was nothing to awaken to the sound of our wonderful old Mason Hamlin baby grand piano with him singing a song that he had written during the night.

“The first I remember hearing it was in 1969. When I learned that it had been recorded, I called our local radio station asking if they had it. They did and they played it for me that next morning and just about every morning after on a gospel music radio program that they had in the morning.

“Later on at a gospel sing, Vestal Goodman told us that the song had been introduced to the public by a family group from South Carolina called The Sheltons. My Mother had intended to write them a letter of thanks in 1969 however, with her health beginning to deteriorate, she put it off and it was never sent.



“Recently, I found the Sheltons on Facebook and was able to contact them to finally thank them. One by one, I began getting friend requests from them. I finally got to meet three of the remaining Shelton children, who make up the current group, original members George Jr., Sandra with sister Frankie.

“I was overwhelmed with joy when the three of them drove to Knoxville, Tennessee, just to meet me and spend the afternoon with me. It was without a doubt one of the most special days of my life. It was a day that I knew in my heart was ordained of God and was a part of forever.

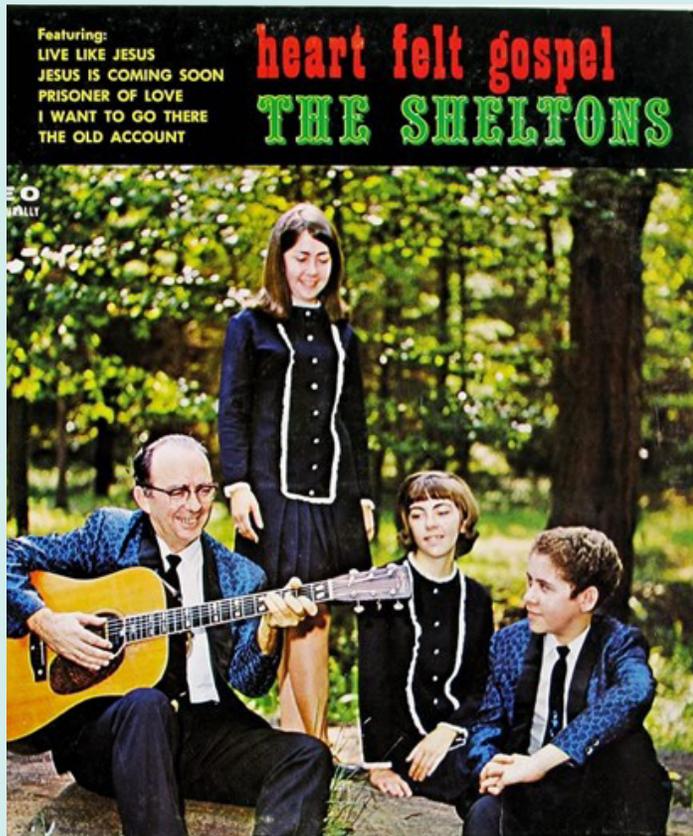
“Frankie Shelton wrote a Facebook account of our day

together. She said something about it being the beginning of a forever bond when they sang 'Jesus is Coming Soon' to me. Well, let me tell you, it took my breath away. The sweetest, purest harmony this side of heaven. I have their recording; however, it has never sounded better than when they sang it for me that Saturday. I kept feeling from the moment we got together that God had somehow let our parents know, and they were all together witnessing the whole thing and smiling down on us."

Many groups went on to record that song and many will credit the Oak Ridge Boys for putting it over the top and making it popular. Ms. Winsett continues, "However, they nor any of the other groups who recorded it, would ever have known of its existence had it not been for The Sheltons. I and the entire Winsett family will forever be grateful to The Sheltons for introducing the song, to the Oak Ridge Boys for all they put into it, and to all who contributed to the song's popularity."

The Sheltons had been singing the song for some time. So, they decided to record the song and stage it as the writer intended.

That first Sheltons' album recorded for national release was titled Heartfelt Gospel and is the first known re-



ording of the song "Jesus Is Coming Soon." The song is the first recognized #1 chart song and the first GMA Dove Award Song of the Year 1969. It went on to be recorded by every major group of the time. The song and other Shelton songs on the Halo label received a "4-Star pick" in Billboard Magazine that year.

But there is a little more to the story. The Sheltons were in the Mark Five Studios recording their first national album. That afternoon, they had recorded "Jesus Is Coming Soon." As they wound down their recording time, the Inspirations came into the studio to record that night. Martin Cook heard the Sheltons version of "Jesus Is Coming Soon" in the studio. That night, the song continued to play on Martin's mind. He brought the quartet around the piano in the studio. They learned and recorded the song in what is now known as the Inspirations style. They released the song to radio a couple of weeks later before the Sheltons completed their album.

Duane Allen of the Oak Ridge Boys states, "I first heard 'Jesus is Coming Soon' from the Sheltons and Inspirations. Since we very seldom worked with either group, we decided to record it on our next album. It

became the most popular song we had ever recorded. In fact, I would say that it was the most popular song that any group sang. I think every group in gospel music recorded it. We published a sheet music version of the song, and it was the biggest selling sheet music title in our catalog.”

He continues, “The song was so big that we could not leave the stage without singing it several times. We followed the studio recorded single with a live recorded version, and it stormed right up the charts to stay for several more weeks. It is an exciting song to sing for any artist, and the message is very current then and more so today.”

Allen exclaims, “We still get requests for that song from our long-time fans, and sometimes we do it in our show. We have re-recorded it in recent years to our country music fans’ delight.”

The Gospel Greats archives show the song remained in the recognized gospel charts of the time by numerous artists for most of 1970.

Today SGHistory.com indicates 71 historical artists have recorded the classic song. Yet given the number of church, local and regional singing groups, it stands to reason that literally hundreds of artists have recorded this timeless musical masterpiece.

Yes, “Jesus Is Coming Soon” is a classic song for the ages. And just think – the song came in a dream during the night with the world in trouble, just like today. Now you know the story.



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# Rolling with the Flow

by Mary Farmer

When we think about music and artists, what so often comes to mind are the performance, the power of the music, the lighting, the stage and everything that happens there, then the merchandise table and all it has to offer. When it is a Christian concert, we also think about what happens at the altar. These are the things that the people actually see.

The goal for these artists in particular is always for hearts to be transformed and for lives to be changed.

However, for Johnny and Gale Rowlett, this is just the tip of the iceberg of what it looks like to be in full-time ministry. They don't often share those deeply personal and life-changing moments where someone's life was changed by an act of love and kindness, but they happen more often than you might think.

Behind the scenes, once the wheels of their RV hit the highway, ministry opportunities come along every day, and are constantly evolving. Their hearts' desire is to go outside the four walls of the Church and go meet people where they are, often in the middle of

addiction or brokenness. They never would have imagined eight years ago when they sold their home in Monroe, Michigan, the doors God would open for the two of them.

Out of their constant desire to find new ways to reach people for Christ, their YouTube channel, Full Time Freedom Run, was born. Johnny shares an encouraging word every Tuesday through Thursday on social media. Through their videos, they take you along with them on the road, and you get to experience the RV lifestyle and all the blessings and challenges that go along with it. On this fun and informative channel, you never know what they may share as they explore the country, RV style. This has given them a great opportunity to reach thousands of people on a regular basis with a positive and up-beat message. At every step of their journey, Johnny and Gale's fans and ministry partners get the opportunity to interact with them and get a behind-the-scenes look within their ministry.

Both are inspirational speakers and love to share what

God has done in their lives. They are authentic and humble when they share their experiences, and it is easy for many people to relate to them and what they have gone through. Their desire is to see the chains of addiction broken in people's lives, believing that addiction stems from trying to fill a void in the heart. For some, this may be from events from their childhood; for others it may be from grief or some other trauma. Johnny and Gale's goal is to help hurting people overcome these voids and find hope themselves. When asked, Johnny will tell you that the reason they minister the way they do is because they want people to know that they are loved and that their lives matter.



Johnny's upbeat inspirational country music seeps into your soul and sets your feet to tapping. He has had four top five singles, two number-one songs, and in 2016 and 2018 was named Evangelist of the Year by the Inspirational Country Music Association. He has recently partnered with good friend and fellow artist Jayc Harold, who has the Honky Tonkin' Opry in Florida, to do non-traditional events in order to reach people who ordinarily may not attend a traditional Christian concert.

Johnny grew up in Sierra Vista, Arizona. Due to the warm climate in Arizona, it is a prime location for our friends without homes to build camps, or "tent cities" as they are often called. Many live in the

"washes" until it rains and they are filled with water. The first time he took Gale to visit the homeless population in his home city, these people completely stole her heart. Once back on the road, she could not get the images of these people out of her mind. More and more she started the people sleeping in gas stations, under bridges, and other less-than-ideal places everywhere they went. It was like God was shining a light on these people everywhere she looked.

There are many misconceptions about homelessness that too often cause people to keep on walking or to drive past the people affected without making any kind of contact, even to the point of avoiding eye contact. Often, it is presumed that a person is homeless solely because of addition or their poor choices, when in fact, there are a vast array of circumstances that can impact someone's ability to maintain a home. Mental health, unemployment, and loss of family members are just a few of the very real issues that impact the homeless population. The truth is, many do have jobs but simply don't earn enough money to support a home. Some receive disability for mental or physical issues, but it is not substantial enough to pay for rent and utilities.

An important part of connecting with people is to make eye contact and learn to call them by their name. Since the all-to-often response to homeless people is to avoid them, many in this situation become accustomed to being "unseen" in society, and therefore begin to feel less than human.





the Body of Christ coming together and being the hands and feet of Jesus!

Johnny and Gale had the opportunity to help with a food distribution event last November in Pocatello, Idaho. Gale served alongside other volunteers, loading food into cars and loving on people, while Johnny ministered in song to everyone while they waited in line in their cars. They served over 1200 cars that day.

Not only does Johnny bring hope through his music, his preaching style exemplifies grace, mercy and the love of Christ. At the close of each service, they both minister at the altar with a true desire for God to breathe new life into broken souls. Music has been their primary platform for ministry, but God has used it for so much more!

The hopelessness that Gale saw in these people touched her deeply, and she began to hear the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit urging her to take action. The desire in her heart to share home with these people and let them know that they are not alone, they are not invisible, and that there were people praying for them grew more and more. It was out of this desire that “Gale’s Home Bags Ministry” was born.

As they travel throughout the country, their ministry partners, churches, and organizations collect hygiene items and sometimes donate money to help fill bags and then Johnny and Gale distribute these bags to people in need all along their journey.

2020 brought about a world of change as Covid19 shut down the economy and thousands upon thousands of people found themselves struggling to buy food or pay their bills. It has been amazing to watch churches, non-profits, businesses, and individuals step up to the plate to help meet the needs that have arisen due to the pandemic. What a true demonstration of

2020 held many challenges for everyone in our great nation, and the music industry was hit especially hard. Some are still struggling to recover, but Johnny and Gale have found a variety of avenues to keep their ministry relevant and moving forward. Staying current with new technology and social media platforms has not been a problem for the Rowlett’s,



and these formats have given them an even larger audience which is evident with their most recent milestone of 1,000,000 views on their Full Time Freedom Run Tour YouTube Channel.

You can learn more about their ministry at [www.johnnyrowlett.com](http://www.johnnyrowlett.com), follow them on social media or follow their YouTube Channel.

No matter how hard the struggles of life can be sometimes, the Rowlett's know one thing for sure. Like his song says, "Jesus loves me this I know, I keep on Rollin' with the Flow."

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1	<b>I WISH I COULD TELL YOU</b>	<b>GUARDIANS/STOWTOWN</b>
2	SALVATION'S SONG	TAYLORS/STOWTOWN
3	PRACTICE WHAT YOU'RE PREACHING	LEFEVRE QUARTET/NEW DAY RECORDS
4	WHAT LOVE	DOWN EAST BOYS/CROSSROADS
5	GOLIATH	JOSEPH HABEDANK/DAYWIND
6	LOOK AT ALL I LOST	THE OLD PATHS/CROSSROADS
7	THE HEM OF HIS GARMENT	MARK TRAMMELL QUARTET/CRIMSON ROAD
8	HE WILL BE GOD	WHISNANTS/UIA
9	TURN TO THE CROSS	HYSSONGS/CHAPEL VALLEY
10	MY HOME	BROWDERS/DREAM BIG
11	I'VE BEEN WASHED CLEAN	GREATER VISION/DAYWIND
12	CHILD OF THE KING	GAITHER VOCAL BAND/GAITHER MUSIC
13	I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN	GOLD CITY/SONY
14	I CALL IT HOME	TRIBUTE QUARTET/DAYWIND
15	JUST DRINK THE WATER	KINDGDOM HEIRS/CROSSROADS
16	WE COME IN THE NAME OF JESUS	MYLON HAYES FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
17	I KNOW HE IS MINE	11TH HOUR/CROSSROADS
18	WHAT WE NEED	OLD TIME PREACHER'S QUARTET/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
19	KEEP PRAYING	LORE FAMILY/CROSSROADS
20	FIRST CHURCH OF MERCY	THE SOUND/NEW DAY RECORDS
21	THE WILDERNESS	ISAACS/INDEPENDENT
22	HOW GOOD DOES GRACE FEEL	BRIAN FREE & ASSURANCE/DAYWIND
23	JORDAN	NELONS/DAYWIND
24	ALL THE WAY TO THE GATES	KRAMERS/STOWTOWN
25	THIS SAME JESUS	MASTERS VOICE/CROSSROADS
26	GONNA KEEP LIVIN'	THREE BRIDGES/CROSSROADS
27	HOPE FOR THE WORLD	JORDAN FAMILY BAND/INDEPENDENT
28	STORM BEFORE THE CALM	HEART 2 HEART/INDEPENDENT
29	HE RESCUED ME	ENDLESS HIGHWAY/CROSSROADS
30	TIME TO PRAY	GORDON MOTE/GAITHER MUSIC
31	DON'T BE CAUGHT DEAD WITHOUT JESUS	JUSTIFIED/INDEPENDENT
32	WHAT LIVIN' IS	LANCE DRISKELL/INDEPENDENT
33	ALWAYS ENOUGH	BOWLING FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
34	SEND IT ON DOWN THE NILE	JEFF & SHERI EASTER/GAITHER MUSIC
35	SING JOY TO THE WORLD	SACRED HARMONY/INDEPENDENT
36	DELIVER AGAIN	FORESTERS/INDEPENDENT
37	MOVIN ON	BIBLETONES/INDEPENDENT
38	THEY'LL NEVER TAKE JESUS OUT OF MY HEART	MICHAEL COMBS/INDEPENDENT
39	YOU GOTTA HAVE A SONG	JIM & MELISSA BRADY/DAYWIND
40	NOBODY	ERWINS/STOWTOWN
41	GIVE THEM JESUS	WILLIAMSONS/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
42	HE WALKED OUT	TRIUMPHANT QUARTET/STOWTOWN
43	WALK ME THROUGH	PERRYS/STOWTOWN
44	BORN	SUNDAY DRIVE/CROSSROADS
45	WHEN YOU PRAY, PRAY FOR AMERICA	MARK209/INDEPENDENT
46	WHAT GRACE CAN DO	PHILLIPS FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
47	RESCUE STORY	FIELDS OF GRACE/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
48	PASSING IT ON	BROWNS/STOWTOWN
49	I'LL PUT ON A CROWN	FOLENIUS/INDEPENDENT
50	MADE RIGHT	KAREN PECK & NEW RIVER/DAYWIND

# SGN SCOOPS

# HOME OF THE <sup>THE</sup> DIAMOND AWARDS



POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
51	CLEAN	ADAM CRABB/DAYWIND
52	IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY	COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY/STOWTOWN
53	THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN	MICHAEL BOOTH/DAYWIND
54	COME ON BACK	PARDONED/MANSION
55	JESUS IN THE BOAT	A'MEN QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
56	THREE MEN ON A MOUNTAIN	ERNIE HAASE & SIGNATURE SOUND/STOWTOWN
57	WHEN JESUS WALKED BY	ANSWERED PRAYER/INDEPENDENT
58	HALLELUJAH HOMECOMING	WILBURN & WILBURN/DAYWIND
59	LOOKS LIKE JESUS TO ME	TALLEYS/CROSSROADS
60	ALL THAT I NEED	PAUL JAMES SOUND/INDEPENEDENT
61	WAKE UP	ERNIE HAASE & SIGNATURE SOUND/STOWTOWN
62	THROUGH IT ALL	MARK DUBBELD FAMILY/SONG GARDEN
63	THIS SHIP WAS MADE TO SAIL	GREG SULLIVAN/RESTING PLACE MUSIC
64	RUN TO HIM	JAY STONE SINGERS/CROSSROADS
65	GOD'S NOT DEAD	DIXIE ECHOES/INDEPENDENT
66	GOOD NEWS	WILBANKS/INDEPENDENT
67	HARD TIMES	ZANE & DONNA KING/STOWTOWN
68	END OF THE STORY	GLORYWAY QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
69	THANKFUL & SINCERE	ISELL FAMILY/CHAPEL VALLEY
70	I'M TRAVELING ON	CAROLINA BOYS QUARTET/CROSSROADS
71	GLORY	STEELES/STOWTOWN
72	RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTS A NATION	BLACKWOOD BROTHERS QUARTET/DAYWIND
73	SPARROWS & LILLIES	CHARLOTTE RICHIE/GAITHER MUSIC
74	NEW DAY, SAME GOD	AUSTIN & ETHAN WHISNANT/UIA
75	HERE I GO AGAIN	JOURNEYS/CHAPEL VALLEY
76	JESUS IS LORD	BUTLER, HUGHES, & HAYES/INDEPENDENT
77	EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE ALRIGHT	JANET PASCHAL/GAITHER MUSIC
78	HE STILL MOVES MOUNTAINS FOR ME	PURPOSE/CHAPEL VALLEY
79	ON MY KNEES	DOUG CORUM/INDEPENDENT
80	YOU ARE STILL FATHER	WALKERS/MANSION
81	WHEN HE WASHED MY SINS AWAY	PINE RIDGE BOYS/CLASSIC ARTISTS RECORDS
82	I LIKE SOUTHERN GOSPEL STYLE THE BEST	LES BUTLER/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
83	GOING ON HOME	BUTLER BROTHERS QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
84	GIVE IT TO JESUS	3 HEATH BROTHERS/CROSSROADS
85	GARDEN OF MY HEART	BARBER FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
86	OLD RUGGED CROSS	CHRONICLE/INDEPENDENT
87	WALKING IN THE SPIRIT	WILLIAMSON BRANCH/PINECASTLE RECORDS
88	LITTLE THINGS	MELISSA EVANS/CHAPEL VALLEY
89	WHAT A DAY	LEGACY FIVE/DAYWIND
90	ANOTHER SOUL IS SAVED	SOUNDS OF JERICHO/SONG GARDEN
91	WHATCHA GONNA DO	TONY ALAN BATES/INDEPENDENT
92	HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOR	SOUL'D OUT QUARTET/CROSSROADS
93	I'M WORKING ON A BUILDING	TROY BURNS FAMILY/CHAPEL VALLEY
94	MERCIFUL TO ME	SOUL'S HARBOR/INDEPENDENT
95	REMEMBER HIS FAITHFULNESS	RILEY HARRISON CLARK/DAYWIND
96	THE BEATITUDES SONG	RIVER'S EDGE/INDEPENDENT
97	BORN AGAIN	SUNDAY DRIVE/CROSSROADS
98	POTTER'S WHEEL	WISECARVERS/CROSSROADS
99	GET ON THE WHEEL	HOPE'S JOURNEY/INDEPENDENT
100	THERE IS LOVE	CANA'S VOICE/STOWTOWN



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# BLUEGRASS TOP 10 CHART

POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	<b>WORRY NEVER DONE NOTHING</b>	<b>EAST RIDGE BOYS/MANSION</b>
2	GRIT & GRACE	BALSAM RANGE/MOUNTAIN HOME MUSIC
3	SOMETHING GOT A HOLD OF MY SOUL	EAGLE'S WINGS/INDEPENDENT
4	THE WILDERNESS	ISAACS/INDEPENDENT
5	WALKING IN THE SPIRIT	WILLIAMSON BRANCH/PINECASTLE RECORDS
6	TELL THE TRUTH	BECKY BULLER & FAIRFIELD FOUR/INDEPENDENT
7	THAT HOME FAR AWAY	ZOE & CLOYD/ORGANIC RECORDS
8	I HAVE A FRIEND	JESSICA HORTON/M.A.C. RECORDS
9	I'M GONNA WAIT ON JESUS	CAROLINA BLUE/BILLY BLUE RECORDS
10	THERE IS A PLACE	WALKING BY FAITH/JEFF TOLBERT/INDEPENDENT



# CHRISTIAN COUNTRY TOP 40 CHART

POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	<b>GARDEN OF MY HEART</b>	<b>BARBER FAMILY/INDEPENDENT</b>
2	YOUR SON	CHRIS GOLDEN/24K RECORDS
3	THE REST OF THE STORY	RAY WOLFORD/HMG
4	JOY	BRANDED/INDEPENDENT
5	GOD DOESN'T CARE	JACKSON HEIGHTS/CENTER STAGE MUSIC
6	LITTLE THINGS	MELISSA EVANS/CHAPEL VALLEY
7	COME ON BACK	PARDONED/MANSION
8	GOD CAN	SHELLEM CLINE/TIRE SWING RECORDS
9	SEND IT ON DOWN THE NILE	JEFF & SHERI EASTER/GAITHER MUSIC
10	HOMETOWN HEROES	WOODY WRIGHT/INDEPENDENT
11	HIS NAME IS JESUS	TIM MENZIES/NEW DAY RECORDS
12	PROMISE LAND	SAM L. SMITH/INDEPENDENT
13	HERE I GO AGAIN	JOURNEYS/CHAPEL VALLEY
14	HE WILL SEE ME THROUGH	DON STILES/INDEPENDENT
15	GOD LIVES	LISA DAGGS/INDEPENDENT
16	TOUGHER THAN NAILS	BEV MCCANN/INDEPENDENT
17	THANK GOD FOR THE BLESSING	MITCHELL WHISNANT/INDEPENDENT
18	TEARS	CHOSEN ROAD/SONG GARDEN
19	MIDDLE OF A MIRACLE	TONY GRIFFITH FAMILY/SONG GARDEN
20	A DAY	CAROL BARHAM/M.A.C. RECORDS
21	AMERICAN HEROES	HUNTER MAY/INDEPENDENT
22	JESUS IN MY COUNTRY	TRISH ENGLAND/INDEPENDENT
23	ROCK BOTTOM	KEVIN AND KIM ABNEY/INDEPENDENT
24	ON YOUR KNEES	DOUG CORUM/INDEPENDENT
25	REPENTANCE STILL WORKS	APPOINTED2/INDEPENDENT
26	IS THERE A PLACE I CAN GO	DEBBIE BENNETT/INDEPENDENT
27	THE HOUR I FIRST BELIEVED	DERRICK LOUDERMILK BANK/INDEPENDENT
28	FIND JESUS NOW	LIZZY G/INDEPENDENT
29	AT THE END OF THE ROAD	SOUNDS OF VICTORY/INDEPENDENT
30	THAT'S THE WAY IT SHOULD BE	ELIZABETH MILLER CLARY/INDEPENDENT
31	I JUST WANT TO THANK YOU	LULU ROMAN/INDEPENDENT
32	RIDING THROUGH THE STORMS	ROGER BARKLEY JR/INDEPENDENT
33	WHAT LIVIN' IS	LANCE DRISKELL/INDEPENDENT
34	BORN	SUNDAY DRIVE/CROSSROADS
35	I CAN'T BLAME NO ONE BUT ME	COOKE BROTHERS/INDEPENDENT
36	I KNOW WHO I AM	ALAN FRIZZELL/INDEPENDENT
37	COUNTRY GOSPEL IS ROCKING COUNTRY	DAN DUNCAN/INDEPENDENT
38	I HAVE A FRIEND	JESSICA HORTON/M.A.C. RECORDS
39	DON'T WEEP FOR ME	AVA KASICH/INDEPENDENT
40	MOM	KEN HARRELL/MANSION



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POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
1	<b>MESSIAH OVERCAME</b>	<b>KAREN PECK &amp; NEW RIVER</b>
2	THE GOD WHO NEVER CHANGES	LAUREN TALLEY
3	COME UP CLEAN	STEVE LADD
4	THAT'LL PREACH	MERCY'S WELL
5	HE WALKED OUT	TRIUMPHANT QT.
6	YOU CAN'T SAY HE DIDN'T LOVE US	MARK BISHOP
7	GLORY	STEELES
8	APART FROM YOU	SUSAN WHISNANT
9	WHAT A DAY	LEGACY FIVE
10	NEVER CHANGING GOD	KINGDOM HEIRS
11	NO ROOM FOR HATE	MARK LOWRY
12	IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY	COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY
13	THE BEAUTITUDES SONG	RIVER'S EDGE
14	I WANT TO TAKE SOMEONE WITH ME	THE PRIMITIVE QT
15	THE TICKET SONG	JAY HUMPHREYS TRIO
16	NEW DAY, SAME GOD	AUSTIN AND ETHAN WHISNANT
17	THERE'S A MEETIN'	JOSH & ASHLEY FRANKS
18	GABRIEL	BLEDSES
19	REMEMBER HIS FAITHFULNESS	RILEY HARRISON CLARK
20	I FOUND LIFE	TONJA ROSE

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# Southern Gospel Television on your computer!

# Down East Boys



By Lori Wise

Kicking off their ministry in Eastern North Carolina, the group chose the name for which that region is called – Down East. In just a few short years, the group had their first charting song and signed a major recording contract with Sonlite Records. For 10 months, their second Sonlite release entitled “Beautiful Valley” remained in the Top 40 chart. In 1990, readers voted the Down East Boys as the Horizon Group of the Year. The demand for the group reached an all time high, and through a lot of prayer, they chose to journey into a full-time ministry.

Over the past 30 years of travel, the group has recorded more than 20 projects, with over 40 songs reaching the industry charts. Known for their incredible harmonies, high energy, and fan popularity, The Down East Boys show no signs of slowing down. Their travels have taken them coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico. They share the gospel with an amazing talent and heartfelt delivery. They are passionate about this calling on their lives.

This past year has been completely unprecedented. It would be easy to become discouraged. However, not this group. They have been using every bit of this downtime to prepare for a much needed “season of encouragement” – both literally and spiritually. Ricky said the scripture he refers to often is found in Jeremiah 29:11. “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.” There has never been more of a need for hope.

Group members include Ricky Carden, who hails from Reidsville, North Carolina, started his gospel music journey at the age of 19 when he took over the lead position and has held it since. Daryl Paschal, from Ruffin, North Carolina, does an amazing job on the baritone. Considered the hardest part to sing in a quartet, he is flawless. Doug Pittman from Macon, Georgia, joined the group on tenor in April of 2017. He has rich vocal tones that are loved by audiences everywhere. Zac Barham of Summerfield, North Car-

olina, is known and loved for his quality on those low notes and rounds out the group on bass. Together, these incredibly talented men have become gospel music industry mainstays and fan favorites.

The list of accolades, awards, nominations, and performance stages is quite numerous. They have had the opportunity of performing with many evangelists through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. They have sung at the Southern Baptist State Conventions and Evangelism conferences and performed all around this vast country, every single milestone a blessing and honor. Every single time they stand on a stage their prayer and goal is to simply glorify God.



In December of 2018, the group landed their first number one charting song with "Beat Up Bible." This song is a heartfelt rendition of the popular Little Big Town song that paints the picture of a "worn out and torn up" book used by generations to teach the value of prayer and unwavering trust in God. BMI named "Beat Up Bible" as one of the 2019 Top 25 airplay songs of the year.

By June of 2019, their release "Testimony Time" also went to number one. During December 2019, the group once again landed in the number one position with "I'd Like To Tell It Again." Every one of these songs were from their One Day In The Past project. In September of 2020, the group was humbled by their fourth number one song, "Amazing Amounts of Amazing Grace" from the Faithful Still project. This song also was named the #8 Song Of The Year.

When Ricky Carden was asked about upcoming events this was his reply: "I have been blessed to grow up in this music industry. I am honored to travel with incredibly Godly men. We have the calling and responsibility of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a group, we are so excited about the future of gospel music. Getting back on the road, creating new music, meeting new friends in Christ, and simply sharing hope, faith and encouragement is one of the most rewarding opportunities. We cannot wait to see each of our friends. As more churches return to in person services, our senior saints receive vaccines, and concerts are once again being planned, we take nothing for granted. The Down East Boys are ready to sing! Without doubt, come expecting great things. Hope has not been cancelled and God is still on the throne."

Please visit The Down East Boys on Facebook and their website: [www.downeastboys.com](http://www.downeastboys.com)

To schedule the DEB for your next event, please contact The Dominion Agency at: 828-454-5900 or 828-246-4498.



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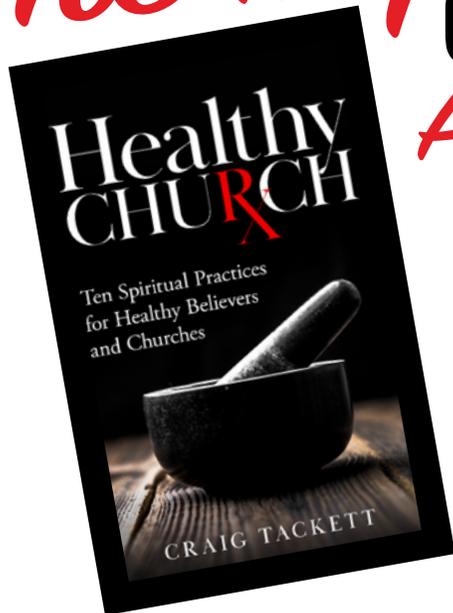
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# *The Impact* of a Healthy Church *Are you a Healthy Member?*



by Carrie Hofmeister

rules. But if I messed up, that was it. If I dressed in one way, then he would be happy with me. When I looked at women who were dressed differently, I questioned if their heart was right. You did not talk about your problems, because, well, if you were right with God, then you should not have any.

In May of 2010, I was going through a divorce. I was 22 years old. A baby with a mountain of issues that kept piling up because I didn't know the first thing about healing. I had never seen what a healthy relationship looked like. Whether it be a marriage or even a church relationship, it wasn't good. All I knew was to run and cover things up when they weren't going as planned.

This was the first time my eyes were opened to the true colors of "Christians" as I knew them. Instead of extending love, they extended hate. Instead of offering forgiveness, they offered forgetfulness. After my own family member said they "hope that I got cervical cancer," I decided that I never wanted to be part of "church" again.

In 2013, I moved to Kentucky to be closer to my mom and dad. I got a job at the Macy's Clinique counter working as a beauty consultant. My boss, Jamie,

Church. What was the first thing that popped into your head when you read that? If it were seven or eight years ago, I would have probably rolled my eyes and stopped reading this. Seriously.

I grew up in church from the day I was born, to May of 2010. So, for those of you that do not know me, that was for almost 23 years. I went Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, and any other day the church doors were open. In a way, the church raised me. My mom was a single mom trying to keep the bills paid and make sure that we never knew she did not have an endless supply of cash. I went to a school that was affiliated with our church, so she never had to worry about me. I was given a set of rules that if I followed them, I was good. I was accepted. I was in. As long as I looked the part, I could be the part.

There was one problem. I did not look the part. I came from a broken home whose stepdad, at the time, was secretly abusing me in every way you can think of. But you did not dare tell anyone because then there would be a problem that would need to be fixed. The problem was nobody seemed to know how. I was not considered the perfect Christian because I could not stay in the bubble that they gave me. I questioned things that were not Biblical and then was called rebellious when they could not show me why something was considered "wrong."

I loved Jesus, but I had a totally wrong idea of who He really is. I believed that He loved me if I followed the



quickly became my best friend, and I know without a doubt that God put her in my life for a reason. Both of us, single, longing to be with the one that God would send us, had no clue that she would start dating a pastor who lived three doors down from my mom. At this point in my life, I wasn't completely turned off by church but wasn't sold on it either. Jamie and I had gone to a local church here and there together, but I wasn't ready to commit to a lifelong relationship just yet.

I believe the first time I met Craig Tackett I called him "Shorty" and he wasn't impressed. He came to the Clinique counter so Jamie could introduce us. You know, you must make sure the best friend and the new "Boo" – as the kids call it – get along. He was kind and could keep up with my sarcasm which I liked. He wasn't like most pastors I had ever met before, but I still wasn't ready to give a warm welcome. Jamie had mentioned that Craig needed a pianist at their church but I viewed it as a tactic to get me in the door. So, I politely declined. There was then mention that I would be paid for this gig, so I thought, I can probably swing that. Hey, I was a 25-year-old trying to make it on my own, so it is what it is.

I was dreading that first Sunday a little bit – stressing about what to wear since I was always taught that you had to wear a certain attire to church or else you were showing Jesus that you didn't care. I was told to get there early so Craig could hear me play. I guess he needed to make sure that I was at least decent. I got the nod and smile of approval and knew I was good to go.

People began to walk in, and I tried to blend in. But I'm pretty sure I stood out the most because I was so dressed up. I looked like I was getting married.

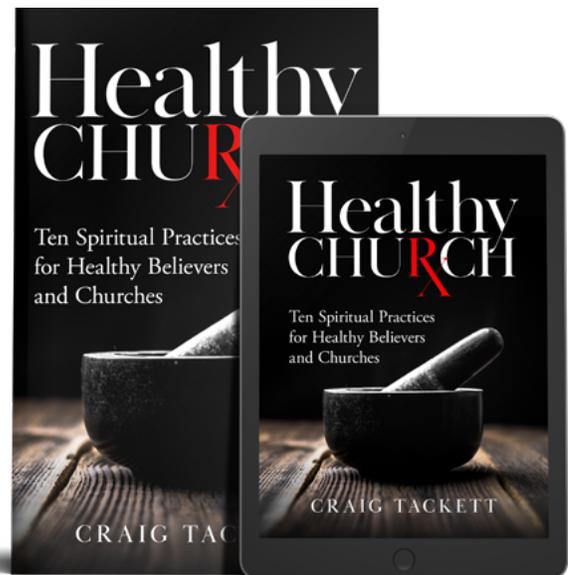
I began to play a few minutes before the service started, and I looked around as everyone seemed to just love each other and accept each other. It didn't seem to matter what you wore or how you looked. It didn't matter where you had been; they were just glad you were there. I sat in my seat after I was done playing the piano and listened to the sermon. I listened to the truth. I listened to the Bible, not opinions or things that didn't matter.

When the service was over, so many people came up to me and even hugged me, just so thankful to have me there playing. They didn't care what my status was

or the fact that I hadn't really been to church in years. They were simply happy to have me there in that moment.

I left Nicholasville Baptist Church that day, got in my car, and thought, "Ohhhhhh this is church!" Needless to say, I could no longer accept payment for playing the piano at the church that I soon became a member of.

Since then, Craig and Jamie have gotten married and are raising three beautiful children together. He is still Pastor at Nicholasville Baptist Church in Nicholasville, Kentucky, and I visit any time I am there. They both



have made a huge impact in my life that I will forever be grateful for. They were there for me through some pretty difficult times in my life. Even in times when I messed up, they didn't judge me. They loved me through it. They showed me that I can pick up the pieces with God at the forefront, and He can and will use me if I let Him.

So, to them I say, "thank you" for showing me what it really means to love like Christ – for showing me what a "healthy church" is.

That was probably the longest introduction known to man, but I say all of that to paint a picture that there are so many people out there that experience an unhealthy church like I have. Maybe you are one of them, and if so, I want to apologize that you haven't been able to experience the beauty of what a truly healthy church looks like.

Traveling around for years and speaking in different churches, Craig Tackett also saw a need for healthy

churches. I like the analogy Craig used: "When you take a 9-month-old baby that is perfectly healthy and you stick it on the back porch and leave it there, It's not going to stay healthy. It needs to be nurtured, fed, and loved on, in order to stay healthy and to grow strong. It's the same with a church."

Because of this, Craig wrote a book called Healthy Church. In it are ten spiritual practices for healthy believers and churches. It was designed to be read by either an individual or in a small group with its built in workbook at the end of each chapter.

With chapters covering church discipline, missions, celebrating freedom, and many more, you will be able to identify what a healthy church should look and feel like.

I'm going to end with a quote from Craig that stuck with me. "Church is only as healthy as its members." Are you a healthy member?

To grab your copy of Healthy Church and you are going to want to, there are three websites you can go to: [www.craigtackett.com](http://www.craigtackett.com), [www.healthychurchbook.com](http://www.healthychurchbook.com), and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and type in Healthy Church. There are also options for buying in bulk at the first two websites mentioned.

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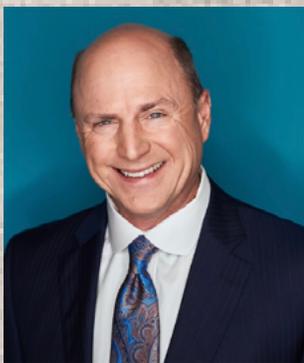
By Joy Holden

Get to know your favorite artists. Learn what inspires and encourages them in their journey. Let's explore and celebrate these wonderful artists and share fun facts. Get ready, get set, let's go behind the scenes!

This month our featured artists are:

Rodney Griffin of Greater Vision  
Amber Eppinette Saunders of 11th Hour  
Tim & Missy Kinchen of Chronicle,  
Jeff & Susan Whisnant of The Whisnants  
Sarah Davison of HighRoad,  
Richard Hyssong of The Hyssongs

Joy Holden: So, most of us know what your live concerts are like, and the after event at the product table. However, like athletes have a pre-game warm-up, can you please share your pre-stage rituals and what preparations that you do on concert day?



Rodney Griffin (Greater Vision): We have four drivers on our bus – Gerald, Chris, Jon and me. We each drive 250-mile shifts. If our shift ends late at night, we park the bus and the next driver in the rotation calculates how far it is to the venue and heads

out the next morning. We usually stop for lunch around noon. We arrive at the venue 3 ½ hours to begin preparation for the concert. Gerald and Jon

set up the product table, and Chris and I set up the sound. Many weekends, we're blessed to have Robert Dixon of Robert Dixon Audio onboard to have a sound engineer in the house. In an hour and a half or so, we all head back to the bus for afternoon coffee and laughs. We start getting ready and head into the venue to greet people at the product table before the concert starts. Jon is the product manager, so he's usually in first, followed by Chris or me.

After the concert, we go to the table and are available to speak with the people again. We love to hear testimonies of how our songs have impacted their lives. That is the most rewarding thing about what we do. When the lobby has begun to clear, we head back to the bus, change back into our everyday clothes and begin packing the product and sound system. We seem to get those back into the bus bays around the same time each night...usually in 30-45 minutes. We are always happy to have helpers from the venue to roll the equipment out. I usually stay at the sound bay by the bus and pack it back in. Everything has its place. If something isn't pushed in just right, we wind up with more equipment than we have bay space.

Depending on who is hungry (usually me and Robert Dixon), we'll pull into a Waffle House or walk up to a drive through window for a quick bite before rolling toward our next destination. Back on the bus, we catch up with our families via text and share a few laughs before we start heading back to our bunks for the night...looking forward to the next day and what it holds for us.



Amber Eppinette Saunders (11th Hour): On the day of an 11th Hour concert, these are our usual routines. We will wake up, get dressed (some of us will go ahead and do our vocal

warmups), we will check out of our hotel rooms, and get back to the bus so that we can head to the venue for the evening. We like to be at the location of our concerts at least 2 hours prior to start time. That way we are unloaded, sound checked, and ready to go before people come in. After everything is set up, we will continue to get dressed on the bus (along with some more vocal warmups). A day never goes by that we do not laugh, cut up, catch up, and carry on, so of course that is part of our day as well. We always like to have a good time and have the best attitudes possible. Before we walk on stage, we pray so that our minds and hearts are as one when we go to minister to the congregation. After the concert is over, we will stand at our table until the crowd has exited. We always enjoy the time we have to get to visit and get to know our friends that support us and come see us. The last part of the evening is the MOST fun (sarcasm), the part that no one usually sees. We break down and load up ALL of our equipment onto the bus.



Missy & Tim Kinchen (Chronicle): We try to get to each church with 2 hours to spare. Sometimes on the way to a singing, we will stop by McDonalds to grab a quick breakfast. After

getting to the church, we then set up equipment; then sound check. Then usually we talk with the pastor and pray with the pastor about the service. We then go to get ready and pray together on the bus before the service.



Susan and Jeff Whisnant (The Whisnants): A day in the life of The Whisnant Bus: Our driver, Brooks Abee, usually drives us

through the night to the next venue. Aaron Hise, our lead singer, usually sits in the buddy seat up front, talks to his wife and Facetimes her and the girls. Me, Austin, Ethan and Jeff usually sit in the front lounge... on our phones or we watch something on TV together (you have to do something to make the long miles seem not so long). Austin usually gets a Facetime call from Jordan and we all run over to his phone so we can see Carter, our new grandbaby. Ethan usually finds something funny that he wants us to watch and he'll cast it to the TV. Jeff and I usually go to bed around 12:00 a.m. Austin, Ethan and Aaron usually stay up longer.

We wake up the next day usually at a Walmart, take the dog out, drink our coffee, Bible study, talk about what we're gonna do for lunch. Go to lunch then the guys shower and get ready to load in at the venue. I wait until they are unloading to start getting ready. I usually listen to one of my favorite groups and sing with them to warm up. The guys usually load in 3 hours before start time. They come to the bus with usually about an hour to spare so they can rest a minute, then they start getting ready. Ethan usually goes to the product table about 30 minutes before start time. Jeff always prays with us on the bus, and then we head in about 15 minutes before the concert begins.



Sarah Davison (High-Road): We travel in a van and a trailer, so we don't necessarily always have the comfort of a bus! Usually, we are in a hotel room getting ready, and

you can imagine what it's like for four girls to get ready with one mirror! Ha! We have the best time though and have made a lot of great memories together. We always try to decide what we are wearing so nobody ends up wearing hot pink while the other ones have red or something on. We usually have good coffee nearby and hot tea and water. And maybe some Mountain Dew!

To begin the day, we all load our own stuff in. We don't have guys to do it for us! We all get a pretty good workout in on concert days. Most days, we have tennis shoes on so we don't roll a cart over our toes in heels, so we are really making a fashion statement in our dresses and clunky sneakers!! I do almost all the driving, and if I get tired, Kinsey does great! We always listen to music in the van that spans about every genre and have pretty deep conversations about life – we know each other extremely well, I would say, and always give advice to one another. I really like that part of spending time with the band. My favorite part about pulling up to a church or a theater is that we always play a game called “guess the carpet.” We all have dibs on the color scheme of the carpet, and as soon as we go inside, we all congratulate whoever guessed the color! Whoever gets done setting their instrument up first is usually who sets up the product table. We take turns at pretty much everything!



Richard Hyssong (The Hyssongs): Many times, the day of a concert is typical to most any other day. If it is a weekday, my wife homeschools our two kids, who are now 9 and 12 years old. I am on the

phone most of the day talking to folks in radio, pastors, or promoters for upcoming concerts, or working on some of our events that we host. If we get to the venue early, my wife and I either try to go for a walk, or I throw the football around the parking lot with the kids. After travelling long distances, they need to get out!

We usually are loading into the venue three hours

prior to the doors opening or before the first guest is going to arrive. I am typically the first one inside, finding out the best place to park for easy load in and also talk with the one that has booked us for the concert. I think I have that job because I talk the most, LOL. Our family all gets involved in the set up. Even the days that we have a sound engineer and driver, we all get out and load in, even the kids. My son loves to plug in the speakers. We each have our own jobs within the setup. After everything is set up, I take our iPad out into the auditorium and run the sound check. People always ask me what is on our iPad. Basically, everything we have now is wireless and connected by a router, so my mixing board is right on the iPad.

After our sound check is complete, we often sit and talk with whoever booked us. We love people, and especially love to encourage pastors. I often get asked about life inside the bus. We have three generations, so it gets a little hectic. The ladies are working on their hair, makeup, and clothes while I try to just find my shoes hahaha. I am also usually looking in the refrigerator for a quick snack. Our concerts are usually at 7 p.m. so most of the time we do not get to eat supper. My dad likes to be left alone so he can prepare his thoughts and rest. It is hard to rest because the kids are usually playing a game or arguing about something. LOL The fun part is watching the cars pull into the parking area. Someone inevitably will try to park their car as close to our vehicle as possible no matter where we are parked! I guess we are people watchers, and we have seen some crazy stuff. About an hour prior to the concert our family will stop and pray. This is something that we started from the very first time we ever sang. When I was in my teens, I often wanted to pray that God would bring thousands of people; however, I have learned to ask God to use us to make a difference in someone's life. My dad and I are usually the first ready to go into the venue and meet the people. Because the PEOPLE are our Purpose.

Join us next month for more with these six fabulous artists as we go back behind the scenes!

# Happy New Year! Let's Sing!

From our family to yours!



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# Deeper Things

## FOR KIDS

by BJ Jenkins

*Most of us have heard about the Fruits of the Spirit. But can you tell if any of the Fruits of the Spirit are growing in YOUR life? Yes, you can, and so can everyone around you. In fact, others may see a change in you before you even get the chance to notice it for yourself.*

*Let's look at the very first Fruit of the Spirit: love. It is mentioned first because it is the most important fruit of all. You see, Jesus himself said this about love: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength and Love your neighbor as yourself." That's a lot of love! He went on to say, "That is the greatest commandment of all time and whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me." So how can you love like that?*

*The Bible says, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not get jealous, it does not brag, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails."*

*Loving someone means you always want the best for them even if you have to give up something you really want. Jesus loved us so much He gave up His very own life. That is the greatest love of all! It's easy loving people who love you back. But what about loving those who are mean to you? Should you love them? Your enemies? Jesus said yes. "Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who are cruel to you. If anyone slaps you on one cheek, offer him the other cheek, too. If someone takes your coat, do not stop him from taking your shirt. Give to everyone who asks you, and when someone takes something that is yours, don't ask for it back. Do to others what you would want them to do to you." Luke 6:27-32*

*This is how Jesus loves! I know this sounds hard. In fact, you probably can't do it alone. That is why Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit to live inside of us and give us the strength to love like He loves. It is absolutely possible!*

*The Fruit of the Spirit is not a fruit at all but something that can grow in you even when you're small. This special fruit is something that you cannot grow or buy. You cannot make it on your own no matter how you try. So how does someone get the Fruit of the Spirit? This book teaches godly character and Christ-like attitudes. It will teach everyone how the Holy Spirit moves in our hearts and how His fruit grows in everyday life.*

*Note to Parents: Teach the deeper things of Jesus. They're not too young to start, for their childlike faith will open the windows of their heart.*





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Introducing Bob and Joyce Spamer of Spencerport, NY. They have a mission to bring Southern Gospel Music back to the Rochester, NY area and are asking that you pray God's blessings on what they are doing. It has been a real struggle they say, as there has not been anyone in the area to promote Southern Gospel for years and with God's help and your Prayers they believe this will be a success. Do you know someone in area? Tell them about SGNY and join us in prayer for Bob, Joyce and Southern Gospel NY



# THIS IS LOVE

I started singing in 1964. This year I will celebrate fifty-five years of singing Gospel Music it has been a great privilege to do so over these years. I remember writing my first song in 1973 entitled, "Tower of Strength". George Younce was a mentor and he helped me with the process while I was with The Cathedral Quartet. It was recorded by twelve other groups and was used on The Cathedral's "Town & Country" Album.

In 1974, I joined Jerry & The Singing Goffs. Jerry was one of the greatest songwriters in gospel music. He authored countless songs and was another mentor to me both in music and in business. That is when I wrote my second song entitled, "This is Love".

Jerry liked the song so much that he made it the title song of our first QCA Record Album. QCA was a label out of Cincinnati and well known at the time. It was a great honor for Jerry Goff to pick my song to title the album. It was somewhat progressive back in 1974 and the words to this song still speak to me today. It's about the greatest love that can be experienced - the wonderful, unconditional, forgiving and peace giving love of God that is what brought me to the title of "This Is Love." Go to [www.HopeWorthHaving.com](http://www.HopeWorthHaving.com) to hear these songs.



# Spotlight on the Song

by Kristin Stanton

The right words speak volumes. The right words set to music have the power to change lives. The right song evokes emotions and actions. A great song is one that will transcend time and generation.

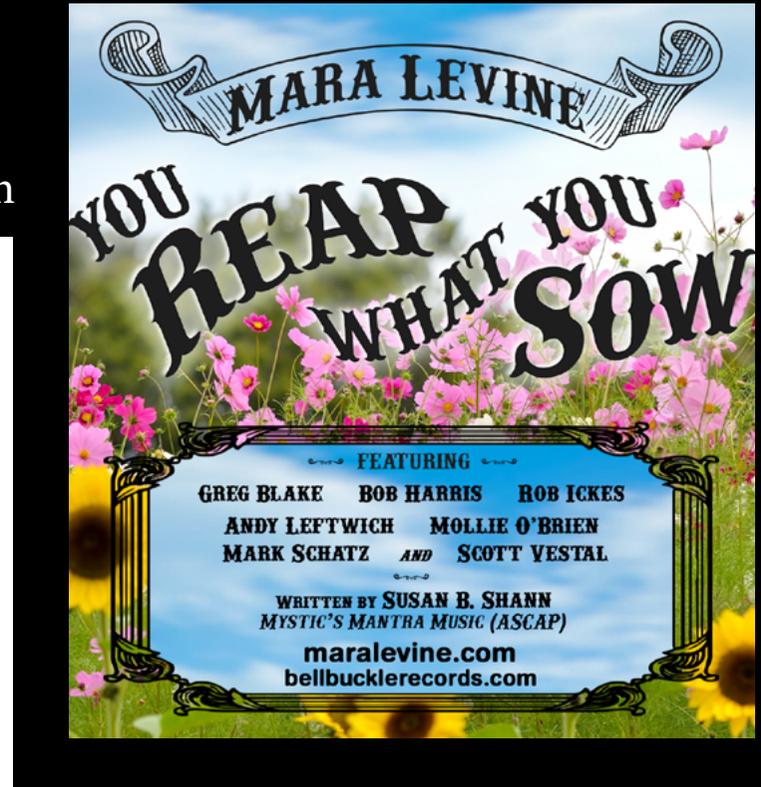
Every artist looks for those special songs that will impact the listeners beyond just the toe-tapping tune. Folk and bluegrass artist Mara Levine, who recently joined Bell Buckle Records, found such a song in her newest radio release, “You Reap What You Sow,” written by Susan Shann.

“I picked up two CDs from Susan at the SERFA (Southeastern Regional Chapter of Folk Alliance International) conference in Montreat, North Carolina,” explains Mara. The message of this song caught her attention. “The chorus struck me immediately, and I feel both lines together send a powerful message.”

You reap what you sow so you'd better plan wisely  
That the harvest may yield you a bounty of good,  
You get what you give, so give completely  
And all your deeds will return as they should.



It most certainly is a powerful message. It makes one think twice about the impact of his or her actions. Mara elaborated, “The entire song resonated with me as a positive message about doing your best at whatever you do and reaping



the rewards or fruits of your labors. I also interpret the song to mean caring for others and nurturing relationships, in particular, keeping your word and your commitments and that this will be returned to you in kind. I think the message of caring and being kind to each other is so very relevant today.”

Mara knew right away that this was one of “those songs” – the songs that have universal appeal. She described it as “uplifting” with a lovely melody. “I love to invite audience participation and the chorus was catchy, sing-able and the entire song connected with me as coming from a positive place.”

With wonderful arrangements, backed by some of the best bluegrass musicians including Bob Harris, Rob Ickes, Andy Leftwich, Mark Schatz, and Scott Vestal, and beautiful vocal harmonies by Greg Blake and Molly O’Brien, you will find yourself humming along with this catchy tune. You will find yourself thinking about the lyrics long after the last chord has ended. This song is important to Mara in her own life as she practices the concept of reaping what you sow. In the competitive world of music, she has done a significant amount of volunteer work, supporting other musicians, mentoring them, encouraging them, and edu-



this time, listeners will be encouraged to care for others and support each other, regardless of their differences.

During the pandemic, Mara and Valerie Smith, owner of Bell Buckle Records, opted to use that time to create a music video for the song, which was filmed on a pick-your-own sunflower farm, with each artist contributing self-shot videos, and re-released it through Bell Buckle Records. Les Butler, of Butler Music Group and Family Music Group, is promoting “You Reap What You Sow” to Southern Gospel and Bluegrass Gospel audiences in conjunction with the re-release.

Les had this to say, “This song and this voice was a breath of fresh air from the moment I heard ‘You Reap What You Sow.’ I am honored to represent Mara and this song as a single to Gospel radio worldwide!” “You Reap What You Sow” has already experienced success on the FAI Folk Chart and Bluegrass Today Grassicana Chart and is sure to draw in both Southern Gospel and Bluegrass Gospel fans as well.

Be sure to check out Mara Levine on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/marascreations](http://www.facebook.com/marascreations) or view her video on her website at [www.maralevine.com](http://www.maralevine.com)

cating them. “I have seen that these actions and my non-competitive and nurturing behavior has helped to create a network of friends who, in turn, have been supportive in kind,” she expressed.

Mara hopes that through this song, especially during

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# Contributors

Rob Patz is the President and CEO of Coastal Media Group.



Rob has an 18 year history in radio hosting the nationally syndicated radio show the southern styles show since its beginning in 1993. Rob is also the owner of the internet's #1 Southern Gospel station, SGMRadio.com. In 2009, Rob Patz acquired SGNscoops.com, including the all digital Scoops Magazine and the Diamond

Awards. Rob has taken part in several Christian television programs as well. Rob does voice work for various outlets including fortune 500 companies as well as emceeing concerts and special events. Email Rob at [rob@sgnscoops.com](mailto:rob@sgnscoops.com)

Stephanie Kelly is a public speaker and owner of



Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebie, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. [Queenoq.blogspot.com](http://Queenoq.blogspot.com)

Vonda Armstrong is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Vonda draws on a vast knowledge of Southern Gospel Music-



for her expertise in the field. In addition to her many personal friendships she also hosts a weekly radio show which keeps her in touch with many of Southern Gos-

pel's leading executives and artists. It also allows her a fresh view of new music and latest happenings inside the industry. Vonda is also a group owner and manager as well! A self-starter Vonda has started and managed several "new" events in Southern as well as "Country Gospel" Music. These events are fast becoming trend setters within the industry. She is a graduate of The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Kristen Stanton is a dynamic singer, speaker, and



writer. From discussions on Facebook, to live concerts on any stage, Kristen's main focus is to share her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. She says: "I was saved when I was four years old. I've been in church my whole life. I went to a Christian

college. I don't have the experiences of walking away from God and how He brought me back. But I do have the experience of how God continuously reveals Himself to me... of how He answers prayer. I want people to understand who God is so that they can be more of a reflection of Him. My goal is to help others see God in a way that meets every need in their life."

Following a trio of No. 1 songs from her debut project, "Destiny by Design," Kristen recently released her second solo project, "Love As Jesus Loves" and is currently writing songs for her new album. Kristen is also an Attorney-at-Law, serving clients in Northwest Ohio.

Justin Gilmore is a resident of San Diego, California,



graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University with a B.A. in History in June of 2014. Passionate about Southern Gospel music and its history, he decided to venture into the blog world in January starting Southern Gospel Spotlight in order

to share his love of this great style of music.

Charlie Griffin is an avid gospel music fan, soloist,



teacher and speaker. He is a staff writer for SGN-Scoops featuring highlighting Southern Gospel Music history. You can follow Charlie Griffin on Facebook, Twitter or visit him at [www.charliegriffin.net](http://www.charliegriffin.net).

# Contributors

Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middleschool English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion of teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, sharing her testimony. To learn more about Jennifer visit <http://jennifercampbell.net>.



bell.net.

Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer. He is behind the scenes making sure content is uploaded to the servers properly and that the monthly digital magazine can be properly downloaded each month. He and his family have a farm in East Tennessee. [www.cloverleafhorses.com](http://www.cloverleafhorses.com)



Staci Schwager enjoys design work of all kinds.

Whether its graphic design layouts or interior design she loves and has an eye for color and layout. In her spare time she can be found usually with a paint brush in hand doing some type of project. She and her husband Pete enjoy their farm life in the East Tennessee



mountains.

Jimmy Reno began singing at the age of four with his family group. He has sung for The MysteryMen quartet, Florida Boys, and Mark209. Off the road, he enjoys spending time with his wife Christa, his three kids and one granddaughter.



Robert York's love for Southern Gospel music began at a young age when his parents took him to Atlanta City Auditorium for concerts hosed by Warren Roberts. After retiring from USPS after 35 years, he decided to start promoting concerts. The goal was nit only to promote our concerts but to promote any Gospel concerts in our area. When his wife graduated to heaven in 2013, he was at a crossroad. After much prayer God led him to continue promoting concerts. He still very mush enjoys attending concerts and writing about the groups as well.



Jeff Lowe, from Massillon, Ohio, has been involved in Southern Gospel Music for 46+ years. In 1974, at the age of 14, Jeff started singing bass with The Soulseekers, a mixed group from his hometown. There have been several groups since that time, and in 2009, Jeff started Mercy River Quartet. Eleven years later, the group is still serving the Lord and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Having written for other publicationsaJeff is excited to be a part of the SGNScoops family!



Dixie Phillips is a Dove Award winning songwriter. Her songs have been recorded by many popular gospel artists. Shis is also a Christian Editing Services Editor and Writer. She is an award winning children's author and ghostwriter. She has been published by Abingdon Press, Standard Publishing, Eldridge Publishing, Gospel Music Publishing House, and Guardian Angel Publishing.



# Contributors

Les Butler has been actively involved in Southern Gospel Music for 40 years as a musician, producer, manager, former publisher of The Singing News, and as a nationally syndicated radio host. Butler started Butler Music Group in 1978, and purchased Family Music Group in 2003. He is a



past March of Dimes AIR award, as well as winner of the Paul Heil Broadcasting Award in 2011. Butler's syndicated radio show, Les Butler and Friends, is heard across America and abroad.

Carrie Hofmeister is a staff writer for SGNScoops magazine, covering a wide range of stories that push her to step outside of her comfort zone. She has always had a passion for writing, whether stories, songs, feelings, or just what happened that day. When she isn't writing articles, she and her husband, Mitchell, write and sing their own music, traveling to wherever God opens a door.



Lindsey Sipe heard God tell her that she would work in country music when she was just 4 years old. Currently making her living as a publicist, artist/media consultant, and freelance journalist through her company LIT Nashville, telling stories is Lindsey's specialty, whether it's through writing, photography, social media, or on camera interviews.



April Potter Holleman is a 24-year veteran in music business serving in consulting, marketing, radio, publicity and most known for her booking and management agency April Potter Agency where she has had the privilege of working with numerous, multi award-winning artists and speakers. She joins SGNScoops as a speciality guest writer. You can follow her [www.apotteragency.com](http://www.apotteragency.com), FB [www.Facebook.Com/aprilpotteragency](https://www.facebook.com/aprilpotteragency) or IG [april\\_potter\\_agency](https://www.instagram.com/april_potter_agency)

