

NOVEMBER 2020

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MAGAZINE



Dan Reid

AND THE MUSIC OF THE STATLER BROTHERS

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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.

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PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz



Welcome to the November edition of the Publisher's Point. As we kick off the holiday season, I want to wish you and your family a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

If you follow me on social media, which I hope you do, you already know what I'm going to talk about this month. During the month of October, we announced a brand new event called Creekside Revival which will be taking place in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, March 24-27, 2021.

I believe that the times that we are currently living in necessitate a revival in our country. More than ever before, we need to turn our eyes and our hearts back to Christ.

Creekside Revival makes me think of my father who was an evangelist and was part of many revival meetings. It also makes me think about Billy Sunday. Imagine 70,000 people coming to Christ in Boston! I want that kind of spirit to be the spirit that carries through Creekside Revival.

I want us to pray for Pigeon Forge, for Eastern Tennessee, for the United States. I want us to pray that Creekside Revival will be a touchstone for a fire of revival that will burn throughout our country over the next year.

Act 21:8 describes Philip being the first evangelist. According to bible.com: "Philip went from one city to another preaching about Jesus Christ. So, judging from the ministry of Philip, an evangelist is someone who carries the gospel of Jesus Christ to cities and places where the gospel is previously unknown."

I'm praying that the speakers at Creekside Revival will ignite a fire inside many and that those

who are there will go back home and be an evangelist in their own community.

Again, I want to wish you a very Happy Thanksgiving, and I am excited to see you in March in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

That is this month's Publisher's Point.



A Facebook Live banner for Les Butler's interview series. On the left, a cartoon character of Les Butler is shown wearing headphones and speaking into a microphone. To his right are two headshots of men: a man with glasses and a man with a beard. The text "f LIVE WITH Les BUTLER" is in the top left. Below the headshots, it says "-NEW- STATLER BROTHER DON REID INTERVIEW SERIES!". At the bottom, it says "WATCH LIVE WITH LES BUTLER ON" followed by Facebook and YouTube icons.

MELISSA SMITH



A promotional graphic for Melissa Smith. It features a photo of her smiling, with her hand resting on her chin. The background is a soft-focus image of pink flowers. Overlaid on the photo is a white text box with the following content: "THANK YOU DJS FOR PLAYING AND CHARTING", "OH I WANT TO SEE HIM" (in red script), "FOR BOOKINGS CALL: 580-271-2171", "MSMITHMINISTRIES@GMAIL.COM", and "WWW.GODEXALTEDMINISTRY.COM".



A banner for social media and a magazine. On the left, there are four circular icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. To their right is the logo for "SGN SCOOPS MAGAZINE", where "SGN" is vertical and "SCOOPS" is large and colorful, with "MAGAZINE" in smaller text below. At the bottom, the hashtag "#getconnected" is written in a large, bold, white font with a black outline. The background is a colorful, abstract design with radiating lines and a dandelion seed head on the right.

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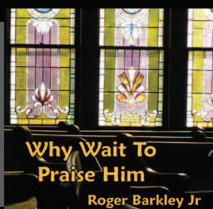
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"I'm Goin' Back"



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"When Jesus Comes Again"



"Here I Go Again"

The Lowe Down

NEW MUSIC REVIEWS

By Jeff Lowe



Lynda Randle

"White Christmas"

Label: Gaither Gospel Series

Producer: Lynda Randle & Jason Clark

Release Date: October 16, 2020/Available Now

Songs on this project

The Christmas Song / Robert Wells & Mel Tormé

White Christmas / Irving Berlin

Do You Hear What I Hear? / Noel Regney & Gloria Shayne

O Little Drummer Boy / Henry Onorati, Katherine K. Davis & Harry Simeone

Sweet Little Jesus Boy / Robert MacGimsey

Little Town of Bethlehem / Robert MacGimsey

Go Tell It on the Mountain [feat. Michael Tait] / Arr by Lynda Randle

The Loneliest Christmas / Jason Clark & Kelly Nelon Clark

Winter Wonderland [feat. Michael Tait] / Felix Bernard & Richard B. Smith

Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas / Hugh Martin & Ralph Blane

Thank You Baby Jesus / Lynda Randle & Brandon Divine

White Christmas is Dove-award winning vocalist Lynda Randle's first full-length holiday project in over a decade. In addition to ministering through music, Lynda has written a book of testimonies entitled *God on the Mountain*. She is creator and host of the popular conference "A Woman after God's Own Heart." Lynda is a regular at Gaither Homecoming events and videos. Her well known song "God on the Mountain" is the most popular video on the GaitherTV YouTube Channel, having over 43 million views. Two songs on this project feature Michael Tait, Lynda's Grammy winning brother. Tait is a founding member of DC Talk and front man for the Newsboys.

The project opens with a sentimental version of "The Christmas Song." You can almost taste the hot chocolate and feel the warmth of a crackling fire.

The title track "White Christmas" is a sweet and smooth classic jazz rendition made even sweeter with Randle's lush vocals prominently mixed in.

"Do You Hear What I Hear?" has touches of Middle Eastern mixed in with an almost mysterious feel. Typically, background vocals are filler, used to cover empty spots and make a song bigger. Not the case with this track. The backing vocals season this arrangement with loads of spice. Definitely one of my favorites from the project.

"Little Drummer Boy" has an almost regal arrangement with plenty of strings. The drums are there, let's face it, they need to be. You can't have a song about a drummer without the drums -- but they're not in your

face. They enhance, rather than rule, the song. The thing that's missing on Randle's version: no bass in the background prum-prum-prumming. All I can say is thank you, Lynda Randle and the production team, for leaving those out.

"Sweet Little Jesus Boy" is a tender but yet powerful song which connects our sufferings to Christ's.

With a noble intro of horns, "O Little Town of Bethlehem" reminds us of the wondrous gift that would be His life, teachings, and sacrifice.

Michael Tait joins Lynda on a jazzed up, toe tappin' rendition of "Go Tell It on The Mountain."

We are reminded of just how lonely and empty Christmas would be without our Savior on "The Loneliest Christmas."

Michael jumps in again and helps Lynda on vocals on the classy jazz styled, old favorite "Winter Wonderland."

Lynda's smokey vocals will warm your heart on "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

The project wraps up on the beautiful "Thank You Baby Jesus," written by Lynda and Brandon Divine. It's a song of praise and worship. There's no better way to wrap up this project. It sets the tone for the Christmas season and every day as we go about our busy lives. We all need to take the time to stop and say thank you to the one that set aside His throne. To be born in the humblest of ways for one purpose, to die on a cross for our sins.

Wrap up

Before you look at the track list and roll eyes with that been-there-done-that idea in your head, let me assure you. This isn't your typical, ho-hum, heard-it-all-before Christmas album. I know, I know. Most of the songs are all familiar. I get it. Every year when the Christmas music begins streaming from the radio, I cringe. They're stale and I'm tired of hearing them. They've been recorded by every singer in the free world and done to death, so to speak. After listening to this project, with music and backing vocals tracked by Gaither Studio talent, blended and laid down under Lynda Randle's luxurious vocals, it's like listening to brand new songs. These are the songs that will be playing in my car and in my home for Christmas.

Writer favorites

The Christmas Song

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Go Tell It on The Mountain

The Loneliest Christmas

Thank You Baby Jesus

Rating: This is a 5-star project in my book.



Larry Strickland

"Legacy"

Label: Peaceful Valley Records

Producer: Larry Strickland/Mike Lattanzi

Release Date: September 4, 2020/Available Now

Songs on this project:

1. Long Black Train/Josh Turner
2. Just A Closer Walk/Public Domain
3. Take My Hand, Precious Lord/Thomas A. Dorsey
4. Lord I Hope This Day is Good/Dave Hanner
5. In the Garden/Public Domain
6. Love Lifted Me/Public Domain

Elvis Presley would introduce him as his "alter ego."

According to Larry Strickland, "It doesn't sound like much but it was thrilling for me. Being a part of his show and getting to experience the energy, sound, and excitement night after night was an amazing, unbelievable time in my life."

Larry had the privilege of traveling with and being a part of more than 200 of Elvis Presley's shows over a four-year

period. Through Legacy Larry has found a way to carry on the songs that Elvis loved. The project consists of four songs that Elvis loved and recorded as well as two country songs that Larry loves.

Larry kicks off the project with “Long Black Train,” Josh Turner’s big hit that makes use of a train to symbolize the temptation of sin. We either make the choice to fall into that sin or resist Satan’s temptations. Larry delivers this number in his own distinct style. One of my favorites from this project.

The old standard, “Just a Closer Walk with Thee,” is an old school, jazzy country style, loaded with fiddle and swing guitar. Larry’s rich voice and smooth style is a perfect fit on this great old song that you’ll be singing right along on. It’s a simple song with lyrics all Christians should be longing for—a closer walk with Him.

The arrangement and style of “Take My Hand Precious Lord” is a throwback to an Elvis Presley gospel song. These songs have been around for a long time. They have been recorded so many times that we fail to listen to the words and get the message out of them. This song is one of encouragement that He’s always there, holding our hand and guiding our steps through all the day to day trials and struggles that we face.

If I had to pick the weakest song on this project it would be

“Lord I Hope This Day is Good.” Not that it is bad, but to me it feels like it was an after-thought. As with all the other songs on the album, Larry handled it superbly. However, when compared to the other cuts, this one seems out of place to me.

Larry’s rich, smooth-as-cream voice delivers on a great old hymn of the church. “In the Garden” urges us to spend time in prayer and open our hearts for Him to speak to us.

This six-song EP closes out with another popular hymn that we all grew up singing, “Love Lifted Me.” This song is all about the love of Christ and how it delivers us. I’ve heard this song performed and recorded in every possible way. Larry takes it back to the roots in an upbeat, and folksy, mountain gospel arrangement. There’s no better way to close out this long-awaited project than a song about His love for us.

Wrap Up

If you were a fan of the gospel songs recorded by Elvis, you will enjoy “Legacy” as much as I did. If you’re not familiar with them, what are you waiting for? Give this EP a listen and see for yourself!

You can learn more about Larry Strickland on his website <https://www.larrystricklandmusic.com>

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DON REID

AND THE MUSIC OF THE STATLER BROTHERS

By Les Butler

Harold and Don Reid, Phil Balsley, and Lew Dewitt, aka the Statler Brothers, taught me how to sing harmony. Their albums were filled with duet lines and verses. I would run to the “open hole” to fill in the 3- or 4-part chord. I owe them a lot.

Recently I was blessed to spend the morning with Don Reid, lead vocalist for the multi-award winning Statler Brothers. We talked about everything: their childhood, the early years (touring with Johnny Cash), the award-winning years, the TV years, their retirement, and finally, the Hall of Fame years. They took Southern Gospel quartet music with them all the way – from day one to retirement.

Don just released *The Music of the Statler Brothers, An Anthology*. This book gives great detail about every song the Statler Brothers ever recorded, including songs we’ve never heard before. And, of course many of those songs were Southern Gospel songs. They weren’t your everyday type of songs either. If you don’t believe me, take a listen to their double album, *Holy Bible, Old and New Testament* and the songs like “In the Beginning,”

“Samson,” “Beat the Devil,” and “The Brave Apostles 12,” “There’s a Man in Here.”

Except for “Beautiful Star of Bethlehem,” the best Christmas song I’ve ever heard is “Who Do You Think,” written by Harold and Don Reid. And, you may not know that Harold and Don have written for the Cathedrals, McKameys, Ernie Haase, Kingdom Heirs and more. Speaking of the Cathedrals, this book is full of memories of their special friends, the Cathedral QT.

The Statler Brothers have won nearly 100 major music awards including Grammy Awards, CMA, ACM, AMA, People’s Choice, Music City Awards and countless others. They have been inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame as well as the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. They also received the prestigious James D Vaughan Award from the SGMA for their deep contributions to Southern Gospel Music. They recorded Southern Gospel quartet music on nearly every album, recorded multiple Gospel albums and of course, featured Southern Gospel quartet music on their #1 ranked TV show on TNN every Saturday night for 7 years.



Oh, and don't think we didn't talk about Lester "Roadhog" Moran and his Cadillac Cowboys, the Statler's alter-ego. If you can't recite the majority of the WEAK "radio shows," you can't get your "Southern Gospel Membership Card." Ain't that right, Jeff Easter? Roadhog rides on every Southern Gospel bus.

In 1982 Lew DeWitt had to retire from the road due to illness. Enter, Jimmy Fortune. I've been blessed to tour with Jimmy as a member of his band early in his solo career after the retirement of the Statlers. We played his homecoming in Staunton, Virginia, several years ago. I get very nervous when I preach, but I never get nervous singing and picking. Except on this day. Harold, Don and Phil filed in and sat right in front of me and my keyboard for the entire concert. After the concert there was a special gathering for Jimmy, the band and the Statlers. Harold walked up to me and said, "Les, if you were our piano player we may have never retired." Now, I assume he was just being very kind. But, that's just a reflection of how the Statler Brothers conducted themselves on and off the stage. Class acts!

And now, my friend, Don Reid.

Les Butler: I understand that Harold got to read the manuscript prior to his passing.

Don Reid: My greatest dream was that brother Harold

had written this Anthology book with me, but he was not strong enough to have done that in the past couple of years; it was just not meant to be. So, as I wrote each chapter, I took it to him and he read it and gave me his approval. He said, "I remember everything just as you remember. There's nothing I would add or change." That was the stamp I was looking for and needed.

LB: What were your ages in 1959 and were your personal conversations about singing for a living or did you each have other aspirations?

DR: In 1959 I would have been 14 years old and Harold would have been 20. Singing was always our one and only dream. We dreamed of having a Southern Gospel quartet and becoming something near our heroes such as James Blackwood and J.D. Sumner. As it was, these men and all our childhood heroes became our friends and our dreams more than came true. God's blessing.

LB: It sounded like your love for harmony was birthed from hearing the music of the Blackwood Brothers and the Statesmen. Is that a correct assessment? What about their music caught your attention the most?

DR: That is exactly where it came from. We would go to all-night sings and watch Hovie Lister and the Statesmen and James and The Blackwoods and buy all their records and then go home and learn every song, note



for note and word for word. We loved the camaraderie of four men on stage with one mission, and we loved the showmanship and the harmony that just lifted us out of our seats.

LB: Some folks may not know that the Statler Brothers were a part of the monumental recording of “Daddy Sang Bass” with Johnny Cash. How did that come to be?

DR: Carl Perkins and the Statler Brothers were a part of the Johnny Cash touring company and TV in the 60s and 70s. Carl was a great friend, and we were in the room with him backstage one night when he got the idea for this song and wrote it on the spot. We sang along as he put it on paper. We told him we wanted to record it, and he said, “it’s all yours.” But things took a turn. When John heard it, he immediately grabbed it up not knowing of our interest in it and called us to come do the session with him. So, we were a part of the hit and later we did record a version of our own. No hard



feelings at all over all the mix-up. What a great country/gospel song for the ages.

LB: We gotta talk about The Saturday Morning Radio Show and Alive At The Johnny Mack Brown High School. Where and when was this zaniness born?

DR: This story is covered in my new book, *The Music of the Statler Brothers: An Anthology*. I explain there that Lester “Roadhog” Moran and his Cadillac Cowboys were born on a flight from New York to Holland one long night in February of 1972. We wrote a nine-minute comedy sketch for our upcoming album, *Country Music; Then and Now*. It became so popular the label, Mercury, asked for a complete comedy album featuring Lester and the boys. So, the four of us wrote it and performed it, and it was a hit and we were constantly plagued with and begged for appearances of these guys. We did them in costume on a few TV shows and realized we had created monsters we couldn’t keep up with. Doing the Lester voice just destroyed Harold’s throat so we couldn’t do long skits even when we agreed to a performance. But we loved those guys. They were fun!

LB: I want to talk about what I believe is the second greatest Christmas song, “Who Do You Think.” How did you and Harold come to write that?

DR: First, thank you very much. We were writing music for our Holy Bible albums and when it came time to write about the birth of the Lord, we wrote this song --not as a Christmas song, but as a history. We followed the scriptures and then after telling such a miraculous story, capped the chorus with the title. Who do you think could believe such a thing, could believe that this story is true? Who do you think could believe such a thing? Well here’s hoping to heaven you do.

LB: I love the simple way you chose your songs for recording. Tell the readers about that.

DR: We voted. It was that simple. We listened to a stack of songs, then applied either 1,2,3,or 4 stars to it and then added up the totals. The most a song could get would be 16. Then 15 and on and on. The top rated songs got on the album. So, every man got equal say in what they wanted to record. Could never be a hard feeling with that kind of democracy.

LB: Talk about the transition from Lew DeWitt to Jimmy Fortune. Also mention that last song you recorded



with Lew.

DR: Lew retired for health issues in 1982 and Jimmy came on board. He won us over the first day; the first song we sang together around the piano in Harold's living room. We liked him immediately and loved his singing. He fell right in singing all the hits we had had with Lew singing tenor and never once tried to emulate Lew. He had his own style from day one. Lew had a lilting, crooning thing in his style. Jimmy was a flat out power singing tenor. And he never wavered from that. He walked on the stage that first night in Savannah, Georgia, January 28, 1982, and the fans fell in love with him. And so did Harold and Phil and I. The "transition" was complete with respect for Lew and acceptance for Jimmy. And the Lord smiled on the Statlers again.

Yes, the last song we recorded with Lew was "Life's Railway to Heaven." I promise you we didn't plan it that way. It just happened or I should say the Lord planned it that way because we didn't know at the time. Listen to those lyrics written in 1890 by Baptist minister M.E. Abbey. It's as if he had written them especially for us and our present situation. It was a perfect song to be our last

together.

LB: The Cathedrals recorded "I Believe I'll Live For Him" written by yourself and Harold. Have you had other Southern Gospel artists record your songs? If so, whom?

DR: Off the top of my head, Signature Sound. The McKameys. Booth Brothers. I hate when I start listing folks and can't think of everybody.

LB: You recorded at least one song in your career that got significant airplay in both Country as well as Gospel music. Tell us about Jimmy's songs, "More Than a Name on the Wall."

DR: From the time he wrote it, we sang it every night on stage. It was a big hit for us. So well written and so well received at each concert. It was about a time in my life, personally, that was very emotional for me. I went for my physical during Vietnam and failed and was sent home. But I carried the bodies of a number of friends of mine who weren't sent home. It was a sad time and that Wall is a wonderful memorial. Each night when we



Cathedrals.

DR: We had known of George Younce and Glen Payne since we were kids and followed their careers from one group to the other. From time to time, we were in their company on TV shows or certain events. We just became easy friends and we would go to their concerts whenever we could. And George would show up at ours just anytime. We recognized they were probably the best quartet of all time and fell in love with everything they did. I tell a George story or two in the book. What a man. I smile just thinking about those two guys.

LB: You mentioned that you had so many memories that tie into the song, "This Ole House." Share some of those memories.

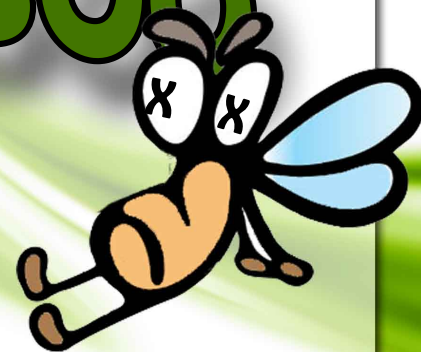
DR: Rosemary Clooney had a monster hit on it when I was a kid. Stuart Hamblin wrote it and we knew him later in life. We sang it on our gospel shows before we went country. Then we recorded it I don't know how many times. It was a favorite of Johnny Cash's dad and he always had us sing it whenever he came to a show. We were still singing it on our final concert in 2002.

sang it, the audience would stand at the end. They were standing for those soldiers whose names were on that Wall. God bless them, everyone.

LB: The Cathedral Quartet was mentioned several times in your book. Tell us about your relationship with the

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Harold and I even wrote a comedy routine around it that we would pull out of the old hat from time to time. It can be country. It can be gospel. It can be pop. Just whatever you want it to be.

LB: Tell us about your TV series that debuted on TNN on Oct 12, 1991.

DR: The Nashville Network offered us a deal we couldn't



refuse. They gave us an hour on Saturday nights and told us we could do anything we wanted. Total freedom. And we did for seven years. Harold and I wrote every show every week starting with a blank piece of paper each week. We did comedy; we did past hits; we had people from every field as guests; we closed every show with a gospel song. It was probably the hardest work I ever did, but it was the most fulfilling work I ever did. It even took a certain toll on me physically but I cherished every moment. And still miss all those wonderful people we worked with.

LB: Your last studio album was recorded in 2002, titled Amen. Why go out with a Gospel only recording?

DR: It's obvious to anyone who knows us that it's just who we are. Our core is Southern Gospel. And a more fitting title was never used. AMEN. It says it all in just one word.

LB: The single song that you devoted the most ink to in your book was, "Hide Thou Me." You had much to say about this song. Please share.

DR: I had a lot to say about this one and I really say it all in the book. But to put it in a nutshell it has been a favorite of mine since I was a preteen. After we retired,

whenever we got together for a Christmas dinner or whatever occasion at one of our houses with our wives, we would invariably end the evening around the piano singing this song. The power and majesty of its melody will just lift you off the ground and then add in the love we had for it and for each other and it closed the evening with tears and good memories every time. It's definitely a closer and I want to use it as a closer for me when that time comes.

LB: Tell us about the first song you sang as a QT, which happened to also be the last song you sang as a quartet.

DR: That first day Jimmy came to Staunton to audition, we sang around the piano. The first song was "Amazing Grace." On our final tour, and you can see it and hear it on our final album, Farewell Concert. We knew we wanted the last one to be that same song. It was and I never felt a lyric and melody so deeply as I did that night; standing those last moments beside my brothers, knowing we would never come this way again. It was special. Those guys were special. Our career was special and I cherish the memory of every moment we spent together.

What a labor of love this was for me. I own every album they ever released and can sing every lyric of every song. What an impact, what gentlemen! If you would like to see a video of my time with Don Reid, please check it out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/les.butler.50>.



An all male gospel group from Dalton, GA is seeking a tenor singer to join the group. Master Peace Quartet usually has about 70 appointments per year. The position will require some overnight travel. MPQ is praying and seeking the man God has for us. Applicants must be able to testify of their salvation and have a heart for ministry.

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DJ SPOTLIGHT

Donnie Cox



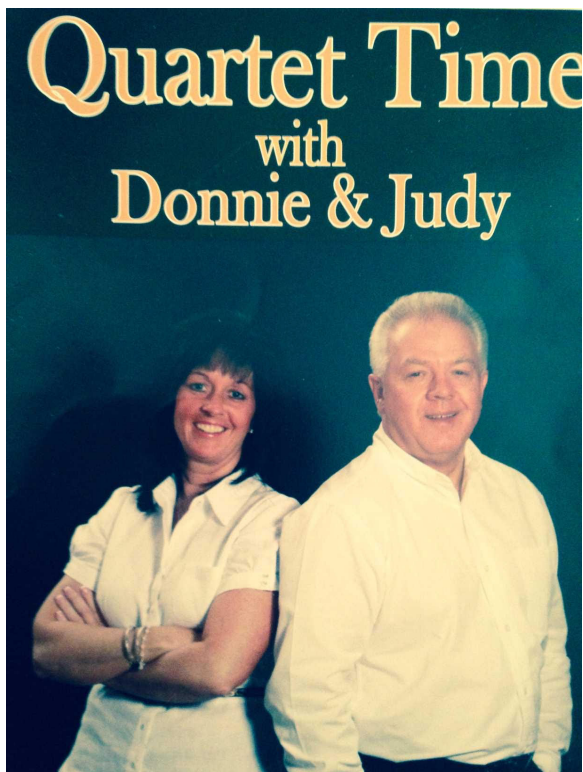
By Vonda Armstrong

WSNL is one of Michigan's oldest stations. With its low dial position and new transmitter facility, AM 600/106.5 FM covers much more than Flint with quality Christian programming. Their multi-market signal drives coverage into the Saginaw Market as well as a large portion of metro Detroit and even into Canada.

WSNL is the flagship station for Quartet Time with Don and Judy Cox, a favorite of many listeners in Michigan for over 30 years.

This month, the DJ Spotlight is shining on Donnie Cox.

Here are the questions and answers from our recent interview.



Vonda Armstrong: Tell us about your job at WSNL. When did you start? And tell us about a favorite interview.

Donnie Cox: I started playing Southern Gospel music in 1976 and have been music director for Southern Gospel Music at the Christian Broadcasting System. I have hosted Quartet Time for 44.5 years.

To name one particular interview as my favorite would be tough. I have a lot of favorites, including former President Jimmy Carter, Bill Gaither, Governor Jimmy Davis and Cliff Barrows, to name a few.

VA: Share your testimony.

DC: I accepted Christ as my personal Savior when I was eleven years old – at our church revival – on the second verse of “I Surrender All.” (I had just been released from prison for stealing the neighbor’s bicycle...jk).

VA: In addition to being a radio DJ, tell us about your position at the hospital.

DC: Director of Spiritual Care at a 400 bed facility. After working over 100 days during the pandemic, a memorable story I have would be...During the pandemic, there was an elderly gentleman in the hospital, and during that time there were no visitors or no family allowed in the COVID unit. When the gentleman passed away, only in the presence of myself and a nurse, I had to walk across the street to the parking lot where his wife of nearly 70 years and the family were waiting. I had to share with them that he had passed away. This is one of the saddest experiences I’ve ever had.



VA: Tell us about your family.

DC: I am married to Judy who has co-hosted Quartet Time with me for 20 years. We have four children and five grandchildren.

VA: Share some bucket list things you would love to do in the future and why.



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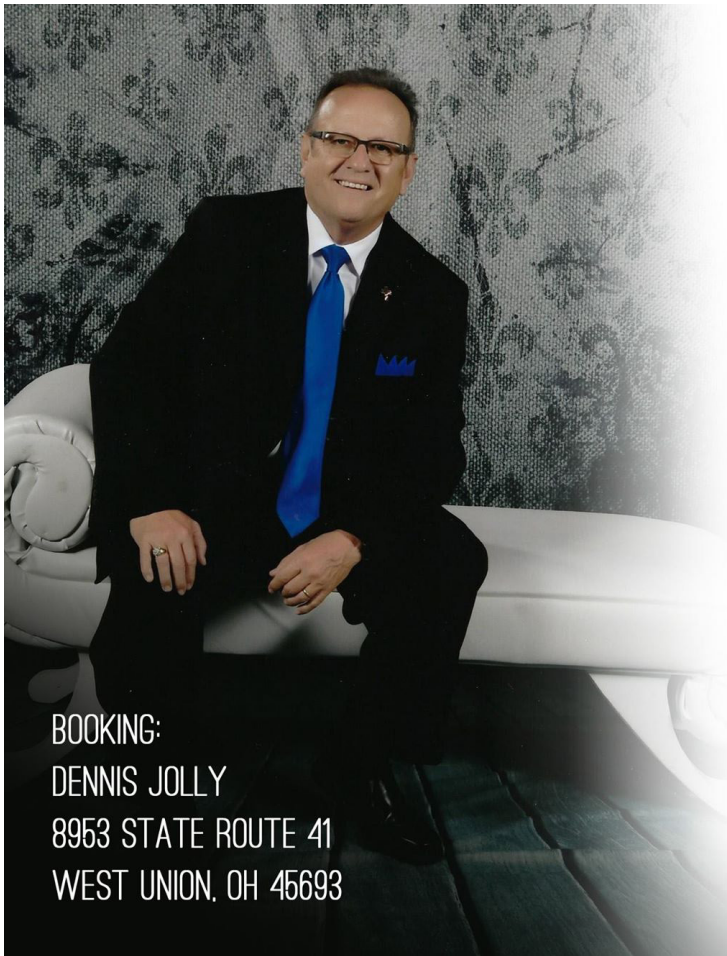
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#3 New Release
TURN TO THE CROSS

Have A Blessed Thanksgiving

A portrait of Charles Johnson, a Black man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is seated in a dark red leather armchair, smiling slightly. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

All He Wanted to Do Was Sing!

Charles Johnson

By Charlie Griffin

The Great Depression ran from 1929 to 1933. All of America was in need, and together, people held fast to their faith and to music during this trying time in history.

In the East Texas town of Paris, Charles Johnson was born in 1931 in the middle of it all. In his time Charles Johnson would affect Black Gospel music and later impact Southern Gospel music with his unique delivery and energy. All Charles Johnson wanted to do was sing.

In those depression years, radio was taking root in the homes of all Americans. That trend continued through WWII and into the 1950's. Homes were filled with music, preaching, radio sitcoms and live programming as the broadcast norm. Yet in local communities, the church was a priority to American families of all ethnicities and regions.

If the doors were open, people were in church. Church singings were common place. Choirs sang hymns with an occasional radio quartet or church group in the mix. Like many artists from this era, Johnson's musical background was singing in church with his family. As the story goes, "all he wanted to do was sing."

In the late '40s as a teenager, he was working on several ranches in Texas and singing on the weekends with friends. In the 50's he moved to California to work and sing. Charles Johnson was a guitarist and songwriter, but all he ever wanted to do was sing. He stayed in California singing regionally until joining the Sensational Nightingales.

The Sensational Nightingales were a superb gospel ensemble that had been active since the Second World War. Upon joining the Sensational Nightingales in 1961, Johnson became



their lead singer. The group embarked on a series of domestic and international tours while regularly recording music singles for labels such as Malaco. He established himself as one of the leading singers and songwriters of the time in Black Gospel.

During his twenty-three-year history with the Nightingales, Johnson's ever popular song, "It's Gonna Rain" remained on the Billboard charts for 100 weeks, while the same titled album sold over one million copies. According to Billboard Magazine, during the 1970s, the Nightingales placed three albums in Billboard's Top 10 albums chart at the same time. In late 1983, Charles Johnson left the Nightingales to spread his music in different areas and with a different flare. Shortly thereafter, in 1984, Johnson joined with brothers Darrell and Ricky Luster, forming Charles Johnson and the Revivers. Without a bus, a sound system, or scheduled concerts, Charles Johnson and the Revivers completed a final project on his Malaco Records contract entitled *No Man Can Stand Alone*.

With their unique harmonies and by staging a successful merger of Black, Country and Southern Gospel music, Charles Johnson and the Revivers became one of the top performing artists of the late 80s and through the 90s. Known for their guitars, their live projects provided added

intensity with drums, keyboards and other fill instruments. On stage, they shared a driving energy as well as happy songs that enticed audience participation.

One Night Revival featured mega songs "I Can't Even Walk" and "Sealed to the Day of Redemption" with crowd favorite "Going On With My Jesus."

Their next major LIVE project *Let's Have Church* recorded in Albemarle, North Carolina, became a classic in southern gospel music. From the title cut to "Jesus is With Me, Until Then" and "Going to the Meeting," each song captivated gospel music fans. The exuberant audience participation was captured on the DVD and audio recordings.

The Singing Americans were recording a live project that night as well. Then SA bass singer Larry Stewart (currently with Pine Ridge Boys) says, "They really sang the house down. People loved them and their songs. Charles and the group were great people. I do remember another time, when their bus broke down. We stopped and carried them onto their destination. Even when things were messed up with their bus, he was fun to be around. We really enjoyed being around them. He was always a gentleman and treated people well."

The first set of Revivers were gone by 1994, replaced by Gary Miles, Melvin Wilson and Greg Logins. In 1995, the Revivers experienced more changes as Michael Watts, Tracy Pierce took the stage with Johnson. In later times other Reviver members included Joe Yancey, Steve Boyd and Maurice Morgan.

Charles Johnson and the Revivers worked tirelessly and cultivated a radio audience that flocked to churches, concert halls and other venues for their concerts. Quickly they became a regular at many venues. Pastors and promoters booked them knowing the audience would be broadened. They regularly worked the Hallelujah Supper Club with standing room only concerts. The dinner club consistently booked the group four times annually due to audience demand.

Their multiple radio hits included "Signed 'Til the Day of Redemption", "I Believe He Died for Me", "We Cannot Stand Alone", and their signature song, "I Can't Even Walk Without You Holding My Hand."

The group was in regular rotation at radio stations that programmed southern gospel music. Local and regional gospel music television programs clamored for their videos and in-person appearances as people wanted more of this dynamic group.

With Johnson's devout faith and steadfastness, he honed his music to reach people of all walks of life. To this day, their music is in demand for download purchases and on YouTube channels.

In 2005, Johnson published his autobiography titled *Another River to Cross*. The book is a firsthand account of how a young black boy struggling in the cotton fields of Texas pursues his passionate love of music. How can he make his God-given dream come true in the face of racial hatred and discrimination?





This book is a slice of history straight from the hearts of those who lived it. It is a story of hope and love that proves that no matter how humble the beginnings and how terrible the oppression, God can cause the best to grow out of it all.

The answer is, as his Granny always said to a young Charles, "Now listen to me, child. Stead of complaining that roses get thorns, be glad that thorns got roses."

Charles Johnson passed away on October 6, 2014, following a period of declining health. His death, though a celebration of a

life well lived, created a void in gospel music. There has not been one group to come along with that driving energy that could deliver a song in the same manner as Charles Johnson and the Revivers.

But you could just tell "All he wanted to do was sing!"

and that he did.

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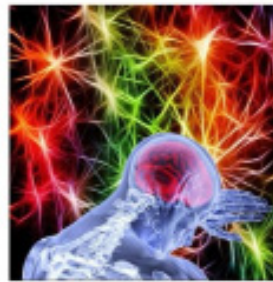
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POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	FEAR NOT	TRIBUTE QUARTET/DAYWIND
2	THREE MEN ON A MOUNTAIN	ERNIE HAASE & SIGNATURE SOUND/STOWTOWN
3	EYE OF THE STORM	TRIUMPHANT/STOWTOWN
4	NEVER A TIME	PERRYS/STOWTOWN
5	MAKE THE LAST DAYS COUNT	TIM LIVINGSTON/DIAMOND MILL MUSIC
6	LEAVIN	LITTLES/INDEPENDENT
7	DEAR JOHN	KINGSMEN/CROSSROADS
8	MADE RIGHT	KAREN PECK & NEW RIVER/DAYWIND
9	HEALER IN THE GRAVE	TALLEYS/CROSSROADS
10	GREAT GOD ALMIGHTY	THE SOUND/NEW DAY RECORDS
11	MY HOME	BROWERS/DREAM BIG
12	WHAT WE NEED	OLD TIME PREACHER'S QT/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
13	DIDN'T HE PROMISE	LORE FAMILY/CROSSROADS
14	I'VE BEEN WASHED CLEAN	GREATER VISION/DAYWIND
15	I'M TRAVELIN ON	CAROLINA BOYS/CROSSROADS
16	INTO THE FOLD	HOPE'S JOURNEY/INDEPENDENT
17	WHAT IF JESUS	STEELES/STOWTOWN
18	LOOK AT ALL I LOST	OLD PATHS/CROSSROADS
19	COME TO JESUS MEETIN'	GERALD CRABB/INDEPENDENT
20	HALLELUJAH HOMECOMING	WILBURN & WILBURN/DAYWIND
21	HOW BIG IS GOD MEDLEY	GUARDIANS/STOWTOWN
22	JORDAN	NELONS/DAYWIND
23	I'LL HAVE TO RUN	RIVERS EDGE/INDEPENDENT
24	WITHOUT JESUS	BRIAN FREE & ASSURANCE/DAYWIND
25	HEAVENLY MUSIC	MARK DUBBELD FAMILY/SONG GARDEN
26	YOUR HELP IS ON THE WAY	JASON CRABB/DAYWIND
27	THE HEM OF HIS GARMENT	MARK TRAMMELL QUARTET/CRIMSON ROAD
28	THE LAMB	COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY/STOWTOWN
29	JUST DRINK THE WATER	KINGDOM HEIRS/CROSSROADS
30	A WRETCH LIKE ME	LAUREN TALLEY/CROSSROADS
31	I'M JUST CHANGING MOUNTAINS	MARK BISHOP/CROSSROADS
32	BETWEEN THE PRAYER AND THE ANSWER	LEFEVRE QUARTET/DAYWIND
33	SEND REVIVAL	JOSH AND ASHLEY FRANKS/INDEPENDENT
34	VICTORY ROAD	BIBLETONES/INDEPENDENT
35	I KNOW HIM BETTER NOW	JIM & MELISSA BRADY/DAYWIND
36	GOD IS GOOD	MCKAMEYS/CROSSROADS
37	ALL THE WAY TO THE GATES	KRAMERS/STOWTOWN
38	FAITHFUL IN THESE TIMES	WILBANKS/CHAPEL VALLEY
39	WHAT LOVE	DOWN EAST BOYS/CROSSROADS
40	GIVE IT TO JESUS	3 HEATH BROTHERS/CROSSROADS
41	BEGINNING AGAIN	GREG SULLIVAN/RESTING PLACE MUSIC
42	THIS GRACE	JOSEPH HABEDANK/DAYWIND
43	WHEN I LEAVE IT IN YOUR HANDS	BILLY HUDDLESTON/INDEPENDENT
44	I'LL SAY THANKS	JOHN WHISNANT/INDEPENDENT
45	CITY OF GOLD	CHRONICLE/INDEPENDENT
46	TIL THE END	FREEMANS/INDEPENDENT
47	GOD OF SECOND CHANCES	HIGH ROAD/NEW DAY RECORDS
48	HE WILL BE GOD	WHISNANTS/UIA
49	TURN TO THE CROSS	HYSSONGS/CHAPEL VALLEY
50	HE'S STILL THERE	LANCE DRISKELL/INDEPENDENT

SGN SCOOPS

HOME OF THE

DIAMOND



AWARDS

POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
51	HEADED HOME, ALMOST THERE	HAZEL PARKER STANLEY/PATTERSON MUSIC GROUP
52	GONNA KEEP LIVIN	THREE BRIDGES/CROSSROADS
53	NO LONGER SLAVES	BATTLECRY/CHAPEL VALLEY
54	BETTER OFF THERE	BROWNS/STOWTOWN
55	HAND ON THE PLOW	TROY BURNS FAMILY/CHAPEL VALLEY
56	I'LL PRAISE YOU	AUSTIN & ETHAN WHISNANT/UIA
57	ANGELS SING MY VICTORY SONG	SUNDAY DRIVE/CROSSROADS
58	MOUNTAINTOP FOR ME	CRABB FAMILY/DAYWIND
59	BEHOLD THE LAMB	BOWLING FAMILY/DAYWIND
60	STORM BEFORE THE CALM	HEART 2 HEART/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
61	LIKE IT'S ALREADY DONE	BARRY ROWLAND & DELIVERANCE/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
62	LEARNING TO DANCE IN THE RAIN	JEFF & SHERI EASTER/GAITHER MUSIC
63	DON'T BE CAUGHT DEAD WITHOUT JESUS	JUSTIFIED QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
64	ANOTHER SOUL IS SAVED	SOUNDS OF JERICHO/SONG GARDEN
65	MOUNTAN MOVIN GOD	PURPOSE/CHAPEL VALLEY
66	THAT'S MY PREACHER	LES BUTLER/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
67	LAND OF FOREVER	DYSART FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
68	BOLD IN THE BOAT	FIELDS OF GRACE/INDEPENDENT
69	SALVATION SONG	TAYLORS/STOWTOWN
70	WE NEED A SAVIOR	CAMI SHROCK/INDEPENDENT
71	OLD CHURCH CHOIR	BALL BROTHERS/OLD CHURCH CHOIR
72	THANKFUL AND SINCERE	ISELL FAMILY/CHAPEL VALLEY
73	THIS SAME JESUS	MASTER'S VOICE/CROSSROADS
74	TIME TO PRAY	GORDON MOTE/GAITHER MUSIC
75	JAILBREAK	MARK209/INDEPENDENT
76	I'M SO SAVED	BUTLER BROTHERS QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
77	YOU'RE CRIES HAVE AWOKEN THE MASTER	GEORGIA/INDEPENDENT
78	OUTTA THE TREE	A'MEN QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
79	JUST A LITTLE BIT WISER	CHELSEA ESTES/BUTLER MUSIC GROUP
80	BLESSED ASSURANCE	WALKERS/MANSION
81	THEY'LL NEVER TAKE JESUS OUT OF MY HEART	MICHAEL COMBS/INDEPENDENT
82	GARDEN OF MY HEART	BARBER FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
83	I BELIEVE	RICKY ATKINSON/RESTING PLACE MUSIC
84	WHEN YOUR BACK IS TO THE WALL	BIG MO/INDEPENDENT
85	WE COME IN JESUS NAME	MYLON HAYES FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
86	YOU CAN LIVE AGAIN	SUSAN WHISNANT/UIA
87	STARBOARD SIDE	JUDITH MONTGOMERY FAMILY/CHAPEL VALLEY
88	HERE'S A REMINDER	HOSKINS FAMILY/PATTERSON MUSIC GROUP
89	SOMEWHERE PRAYING	BATES FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
90	HERE I AM LORD	4 CALVARY QUARTET/INDEPENDENT
91	HOPE FOR THE WORLD	JORDAN FAMILY BAND/CROSSROADS
92	MY FATHER'S BUSINESS	ISAIAH 61/INDEPENDENT
93	BORN	SUNDAY DRIVE/CROSSROADS
94	LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS	TONJA ROSE/MANSION
95	ANCHOR OF MY SOUL	CHANDLERS/CHAPEL VALLEY
96	HE PRAYED HER HOME	SOUTHERN PLAINSMEN/INDEPENDENT
97	GOD DOESN'T CARE	JACKSON HEIGHTS/INDEPENDENT
98	THE LOST SHEEP	EAGLE'S WINGS/INDEPENDENT
99	PROOF IS IN THE SCARS	VERNON GREESON/INDEPENDENT
100	NOBODY	GLORYWAY QUARTET/INDEPENDENT

NOVEMBER 2020

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 to hear these songs.



BLUEGRASS TOP 10 CHART

POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	THE LOST SHEEP	EAGLE'S WINGS/INDEPENDENT
2	LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS	TONJA ROSE/MANSION
3	I KNOW THE TOMB IS EMPTY	HEAVEN'S MOUNTAIN BAND/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
4	MUCH MORE THAN I ASKED FOR	KING JAMES BOYS/MORNING GLORY MUSIC
5	COME ON HOME	TIM DAVIS/INDEPENDENT
6	IT'S NOT GOODBYE	BAMA BLU GRACE/BUTLER MUSIC GROUP
7	TELL THE WORLD THAT JESUS SAVES	CHIGGER HILL BOYS & TERRI/GREAT ESCAPE RECORDS
8	THERE'S NO DEPRESSION IN HEAVEN	CHUCK WAGON GANG/MOUNTAIN HOME RECORDS
9	READY TO SERVE	ROCHESTERS/INDEPENDENT
10	THE BEGGAR AND THE KING	BRITTON FAMILY/INDEPENDENT



CHRISTIAN COUNTRY TOP 40 CHART

POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	I TALK TO GOD	MARY BURKE/INDEPENDENT
2	LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS	TONJA ROSE/MANSION
3	COME TO JESUS MEETIN'	GERALD CRABB/INDEPENDENT
4	AMERICAN HEROES	HUNTER MAY/INDEPENDENT
5	HE HEARS MY EVERY PRAYER	JESSICA HORTON/M.A.C. RECORDS
6	HIS NAME IS JESUS	TIM MENZIES/NEWDAY RECORDS
7	YOU'RE EVERYWHERE	SHELLEM CLINE/TIRE SWING RECORDS
8	MERCY CAME RUNNING	CHOSEN ROAD/SONG GARDEN
9	JAILBREAK	MARK209/INDEPENDENT
10	THEY TRIED	DOUG CORUM/INDEPENDENT
11	THE REST OF THE STORY	RAY WOLFORD/HEARTSONG NASHVILLE MUSIC GROUP
12	PREACHER'S DAUGHTER	PARDONED/MANSION
13	PATIENTLY WAITING	STEVE BRIDGMON/INDEPENDENT
14	CAPABLE HANDS	MICHAEL ROBERTS/INDEPENDENT
15	PROMISE LAND	SAM L. SMITH/INDEPENDENT
16	A DAY	CAROL BARHAM/M.A.C. RECORDS
17	LAUGH OFTEN	KALI ROSE/INDEPENDENT
18	GET YOUR PRAISE ON	ANDREW MARSHALL/INDEPENDENT
19	JONAH, JOB & MOSES	CAROLINA/INDEPENDENT
20	MY RETIREMENT HOME	ED MEADOWS/INDEPENDENT
21	GOD IN THE GUITAR STRINGS	MITCHELL WHISNANT/INDEPENDENT
22	BEGINNING AGAIN	GREG SULLIVAN/RESTING PLACE MUSIC
23	ROCK BOTTOM	KEVIN AMD KIM ABNEY/INDEPENEDENT
24	HE WILL SEE ME THROUGH	DON STILES/INDEPENDENT
25	I'VE NEVER WALKED ALONE	LIVIN FORGIVEN/INDEPENDENT
26	BETWEEN THOSE TWO DOORS	STEVE ROBERSON/INDEPENDENT
27	COME TO JESUS MOMENT	DONNA ULISSE/BILLY BLUE RECORDS
28	OH THE LORD HAS BEEN SO GOOD TO ME	DENNIS JOLLY/CHAPEL VALLEY
29	TIL I HAVE NO STRENGTH TO GIVE	APPOINTED2/INDEPENDENT
30	LET'S PUT GOD BACK IN AMERICA	STEVE WARREN/INDEPENDENT
31	LITTLE THINGS	MELISSA EVANS/CHAPEL VALLEY
32	HE DIDN'T THROW THE CLAY AWAY	WYATT NATIONS/INDEPENDENT
33	GOD LIVES	LISA DAGGS/INDEPENDENT
34	HERE I GO AGAIN	JOURNEYS/CHAPEL VALLEY
35	LOVE AIN'T LOVE TIL YOU GIVE IT AWAY	JAN HARBUCK/INDEPENDENT
36	SUPERMAN	GREG MCDUGAL/INDEPENDENT
37	EARTH TO GOD	JOHN RICH/INDEPENDENT
38	YOUR SON	CHRIS GOLDEN/24K RECORDS
39	STILL A SPECIAL PLACE	TONY ALAN BATES/INDEPENDENT
40	WE ALL CARRY SOMETHING	JOE NICHOLS/INDEPENDENT

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POSITION	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/LABEL
1	HE WILL BE GOD	WHISNANTS/UIA
2	TURN TO THE CROSS	HYSSONGS/CHAPEL VALLEY
3	WHAT LOVE	DOWN EAST BOYS/CROSSROADS
4	NOBODY	ERWINS/STOWTOWN
5	GOLIATH	JOSEPH HABEDANK/DAYWIND
6	SEND IT ON DOWN THE NILE	JEFF & SHERI EASTER/GAITHER MUSIC
7	ALWAYS ENOUGH	BOWLING FAMILY/DAYWIND
8	9 MAKES US ONE	LEGACY FIVE & WARDLOW BROTHERS/DAYWIND
9	GOD'S NOT DEAD	DIXIE ECHOES/INDEPENDENT
10	I KNOW IT'S MINE	11TH HOUR/CROSSROADS
11	THAT'S MY PREACHER	LES BUTLER/FAMILY MUSIC GROUP
12	YOUR SON	CHRIS GOLDEN/24K RECORDS
13	GOD MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN	SWEETWATER REVIVAL/INDEPENDENT
14	HEAVEN HELP US ALL	ETERNAL VISION/CHAPEL VALLEY
15	RESCUE STORY	FIELDS OF GRACE/INDEPENDENT
16	CHILD OF THE KING	GAITHER VOCAL BAND/GAITHER MUSIC
17	NEWS I DIDN'T GET	LINDSAY HUGGINS/INDEPENDENT
18	THE COMEBACK	SILER FAMILY/INDEPENDENT
19	KEEP PRAYING	LORE FAMILY/CROSSROADS
20	HE RESCUED ME	ENDLESS HIGHWAY

NOVEMBER 2020

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STILL SLAYING DRAGONS



By Dixie Phillips

Fans will remember Kevin Sorbo as Hercules in the popular television series *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*. This hit show gained a cult following around the globe and ran for six seasons from 1995 to 1999. It became one of the highest rated syndicated TV programs airing in 176 countries.

In 1997, a beautiful young woman named Sam Jenkins guest starred in the series opposite Kevin as his love interest. There was an immediate connection, and it didn't take long for the couple to realize this was a match made in heaven. After a whirlwind courtship, the two were engaged.

While they were making plans for their upcoming wedding, an unexpected aneurysm and three strokes left Kevin incapacitated and in critical condition. This easily could have been the end of his story, but God wasn't finished with him. With Sam's support, a lot of prayer, and medical intervention, he survived. Kevin remembers, "It wasn't easy. It took three years, but I eventually recovered."

A New Kind of Battle

In *Hercules*, Kevin was busy fighting evil warlords, defeating enemies, and slaying dragons. He may have retired his leather pants, chamois vest, and demigod role, but he is now engaged in a new battle—a fight for America to return to its Judeo-Christian roots. These days he's slaying dragons of a different kind, and you will find his wife fighting on the frontlines right beside him. Together they courageously share their faith and conservative views on and off screen.

It is no secret a biblical worldview can be hazardous to an actor's career in Hollywood, but the couple refuses to be intimidated, bullied, or silenced by the entertainment industry's extreme leftist agenda. Kevin experienced firsthand how the big studios blacklist Christians. He shares, "Around 2010, Hollywood stopped knocking on my door, but God opened another door. Sam and I were invited to a barbecue at Amanda and Dallas Jenkins' home. Dallas is a film director and the son of Jerry Jenkins, the author of the *Left Behind* book series. Dal-



las shared about a film project he was working on called What If and asked if I would read the script and give him my thoughts about it. I loved the script and told him I wanted to play the part of Pastor Ben. He laughed and said he couldn't afford me. I shot back, "Try me."

Bringing Hope and Healing through Family Oriented Films

A few months later, Kevin starred in his first faith-based film. It was like an epiphany for him. He realized his role had power to bring hope and healing to a broken world.

Even though What If garnered Kevin a Movieguide award for "Most Inspired Performance," Hollywood still snubbed him. Kevin continues, "Let's face it. Hollywood is running the culture right now. They continue to put out movies full of sex, hate, and violence. My wife and I want to change that and offer more family-friendly films with good values." Hollywood's loss is the American family's gain. In the past twelve years Kevin has shot more than fifty films—and more than half of those are family oriented.

The couple is so committed to wholesome movies, they built and opened their own studio. Kevin explains, "My wife and I built Sorbo Family Film Studio. We are cre-

ating films that deliver inspiration and promote morals. Hollywood is great at making big budget movies, but we work with a lower budget and need people to show up and support them. People tell me they want more movies like this. We don't have a big budget to promote them, so we need people to help us get the word out. We also need people to invest in making these kind of movies."

Kevin's words on September 25 at THE RETURN: National and Global Day of Prayer and Repentance show the depth of his conviction. "We need more principled filmmakers and storytellers who can weave moral fabric back into our culture. We need to compete in the marketplace of influence in a positive way and shout Truth from the mountaintops."

The couple stood shoulder-to-shoulder and led the massive crowd at the event in a prayer of repentance. Sam prayed, "Heavenly Father, grant us the strength to resist temptation and vanquish pornography in all parts of the culture. Lord, we pray with fervent hearts for Your forgiveness of our sins against the family, for our breaking the covenant of marriage, and our unfaithfulness to each other and to You."

Acting Is a Family Affair

The Sorbos have been blessed with three children: Braedon, 19; Shane, 16; and Octavia, 14. In 2017, act-



ing became a family affair when their two sons, Braedon and Shane, joined them in *Let There Be Light*, a film Sam co-wrote, produced and co-starred in. Kevin was the director and Sean Hannity was the executive producer. *Let There Be Light* became the fourth highest grossing faith-based film of 2017.

A Look at What Is Coming

These days, Kevin is busy promoting the release of a feature-length documentary about the life, work, and mission of the renowned University of Oxford professor, mathematician, and philosopher Dr. John Lennox. *Against the Tide: Finding God in an Age of Science* will be showing in more than 600 theaters nationwide for one night only through Fathom Events on November 19.



Dr. Lennox and Kevin traveled together experiencing firsthand many of the sites that are key to fully understanding the false choice between science and faith. Kevin says, “We spent three weeks in Oxford and two weeks in Israel, which was unbelievable. I am proud of this documentary and I hope people go check it out.”

The film shares Dr. Lennox’s life-long passion to present compelling evidence that science and history not only align with Scripture but also support the biblical narrative. Dr. Lennox breaks down the arguments and issues most often cited in apologetics debates, reflecting on the several very public, sold-out encounters he has had with well-known atheists Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Peter Singer, and Michael Shermer, among others. Steven Huff, the executive producer of the documentary, says, “Now, more than ever, there are powerful voices portraying science and Christian-

ity as fundamentally incompatible. Dr. Lennox is one of today’s leading academic voices dispelling this false choice and standing strong against the tide of misinformation and confusion.”


Kevin is also excited about a second film, *Faith Under Fire*, set to release in multiple formats. The film will debut in theaters on November 27, 2020, then release on DVD and through streaming formats beginning December 1. The faith-based film features Kevin, Dean Cain (*Lois and Clark*), and Nick Vlassopoulos (*Detroit*).

“Joel Reisig directed the movie, and we are really proud of it,” Kevin says. “The movie deals with a fireman named Tom Hatcher. He loses his wife to cancer and then his daughter gets sick. I play a doctor in the movie, and it’s just another really great story about finding your own faith.”

The Sorbos are convinced that we need more stories of inspiration and hope on the big screen now more than ever. In these unprecedented times, people need to be reminded that God is in control and has not forgotten them. The underlying theme throughout *Faith Under Fire* is this: faith has and always will shine brightest in the fire.

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According to Kevin, “COVID-19 shut down movie theaters and delayed the release of three new movies: One Nation Under God, Miracle in East Texas, and The Mustard Seed.”

One Nation Under God explores the fight to put that phrase back in the Pledge of Allegiance in schools, first amendment rights, and personal convictions. The Mustard Seed is a film about a little girl “who can perform miracles,” and Miracle in East Texas, is a comedy based on the true story of two conmen and the world’s biggest oil strike.

Miracle in East Texas is near and dear to Kevin’s heart. He shares, “It has a lot of redemption. It’s in the vein of The Blind Side and The Green Book. Anybody can watch. I want to do movies that have good value to

them and that everybody can see.”

Kevin also has the number one Christian movie out right now on Amazon. “Before the Wrath is a documentary about the book of Revelation. It’s based on true discoveries from the time of Christ. Check it out at <http://www.beforethewrath.com>.”

God Is Raising an Army

There is no doubt that God has raised up Kevin and Sam Sorbo, as He did Queen Esther in the Bible, for such a time as this. The fight is real. The dragons aren’t make-believe. There are real powerful enemies of the family, but God is raising an army—and the exciting part is that we can join the Sorbos in the fight. We can pray for them and financially support their films. Click on the links below and see how you can help America find her moral compass again.

If you would like to support more films like this go to: sorbofamilyfilmstudios.com.

Learn more about Against the Tide: againstthetide.movie.

Learn more about Faith Under Fire: faithunderfirefilm.com.

For more information on the Sorbos and their projects, visit their websites at: kevinsorbo.net and SamSorbo.com.

You can order Kevin’s autobiography, True Strength: My Journey from Hercules to Mere Mortal—and How

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Taking A Closer Look

By Robert York

Many of us have heard our parents and grandparents talk about the Great Depression. Our grandchildren will be hearing about the 2020 pandemic known as Covid-19. One thing we know for sure about both is that there was Southern Gospel music then and there is Southern Gospel music now. Many groups have been affected by the virus but most seem to be coming out of it and are getting back on the road. Some have had changes during this time and Avenue is one of those groups.

They started with a desire to help other ministries. Owner/Manager Kasey Kemp states, "Our goal was to partner with local ministries in different cities to minister from the stage, but also raise money for that local ministry. Obviously we do other concerts but that is what this ministry started for, and we are working towards that goal." During this crisis, Kemp has seen a change in the group with two new members: Daniel Rivera singing tenor and Kyle Smith now singing lead. Kasey Kemp, singing with his mom and dad while growing up, learned the value of gospel music and the church. He states, "I was blessed to be born in a Christian home. My dad led me to Christ when I was seven years old. I was also raised in a musical home and my parents afforded me music lessons, for which I'm grateful. I started singing in a quartet when I was 14 and have never stopped singing gospel music. God has blessed me to do this full time since I was 23 and blessed me with a family that supports this call."

Over the course of his career, Kemp has seen how God has directed his path. He had his own group at home called Eastern Sky and then joined Naomi and the Segos for seven years before a brief stint with the Toney Brothers. Upon leaving the Toney Brothers, he helped form Declaration who later changed their name to Allegiance. During this time they toured with the Booth Brothers. You can also find the Kemps singing for church services as a family with their two chil-

dren, daughter Avaline Jewel and son Autry Clark. Two men in particular have been a big influence on Kemp. "Danny Funderburk took an interest in me as a 14 young man," Kemp recalls, "and always encouraged me spiritually and musically. He's still a dear friend to me this day. I'm grateful for his friendship. Steve Hurst is my Pastor and our groups vocal coach. He also serves as a spiritual mentor." The group's tenor, Daniel Rivera, also has a legacy in music.





Rivera grew up singing with his family in church. Both of his parents can sing, and his dad was minister of music when he and his mother married. Daniel said, "I got started singing as a teenager in a local Christian bookstore in our area, and we had several groups come sing at the bookstore where I would open for them. One of the groups asked me to join in with them on a song, and I would later go on to eventually



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join that group." That led him down a path singing with The Hallmark Quartet, Blackwood Legacy, Promise, Woodsmen Quartet and Third Row Boys.

When asked about who had influenced him most, Rivera stated, "Believe it or not, on a personal basis, Pat Barker. I was singing with Promise and we did a concert with the Mark Trammell Quartet and I was looking at their CD's and told Pat I'd love to have their performance tracks. He ended up really encouraging me as a young artist and giving me those tracks free. I'll never forget that. He has been a huge encouragement to me over the years. Vocally, David Phelps and West Hampton."

Closing Daniel said, "I was raised in a Christian home but I ended up getting involved in drugs and alcohol at a young teenage age. I was so involved that it started to ruin my life. God got a hold of me one night as I almost took my life, God saved me and changed my life and I'll never be the same. I'm so thankful to sing for Him and serve Him. He is so good to me." Born in Hammond, Indiana, Rivera now resides in Shelby, North Carolina, with his wife Ashlee and two daughters Braelynn and Briella.

Kyle Smith is the youngest member in the group. He started singing at the age of 15 when he was in high school at Columbia Academy in Columbia. He said, "They had a great music department and I was very fortunate to have great teachers. After high school, I received scholarships to sing at

Jones County Junior College. I departed from there after one year to go sing at Peral River Community College.” Growing up, Kyle was not a big music fan most of his time was consumed with sports and friends. He put music last after baseball and basketball.

Smith stated, “What’s funny is no one in my family sings or plays. Julie and Cedric Smith are my parents and I have four siblings: Ashley, Cassady, Caden and Taylor.” His family, including his grandparents Betty and Wayne Smith, Tony and Beneaka Fraham and also Uncle Casey, are among his biggest supporters. In 2012 his grandmother talked him into singing “The Cross Makes The Difference” in church for his first time during revival, and he never looked back.

“He doesn’t know this but Bill Shivers is my favorite artist, I try my best to mimic his tone and stage presence. Steve Hurst is one of my dearest friends. I attended his school last year. Through that, Steve and Kasey contacted me, and I’m grateful for them both,” Smith said. He then became a part of Avenue.

He remarked, “Growing up, everyone has their own challenges. Coming from a split home did not make life difficult for me, just different. I love my family very much. I’m thankful for them and the people around me who helped me get through my struggles as a teenager and early adulthood. The most influential in my life is my papa, Tony Graham. He always taught me to do my best and work hard. Jesus Christ has not only changed my life, but He has become my

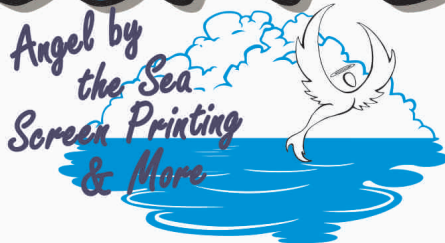
best friend. I’m so thankful He died on the cross so that we all can have eternal life. He is more real to me than you are. He didn’t come to condemn, He came to save. He loves you. I’m going to do my best to let the world know that through Avenue.”

Avenue has a two fold meaning. They are passionate about music and The Gospel. They think music is a great avenue in which to share, and if you’re born again, we are on the Avenue to heaven together.

You can find Avenue on Facebook as “avenue trio” and through their website www.avenuemusic.net.



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LIVING LIFE AFTER DEATH



By Carrie Hofmeister

Keith and Misti Sammons are not your average newlywed couple.

Although their love story would make a great movie on the Hallmark Channel, it's more than that. Both having to endure loss from previous spouses, God had a plan for both of them that even they couldn't have seen coming.

Their admiration and love for the Lord is contagious, and little did I know that their story would be helping me through the unexpected loss of my father just days ago. They both have been able to take two tragic life events and turn them into not one, but three, beautiful ministries to help and encourage people like you and me in times of trial and grief.

Having both grown up in loving Christian homes, Keith and Misti met and married their spouses pretty early in life.

Misti was married to Scott, an adventurous man of many skills and talents always willing to take on new things. He was a football coach, a bus driver, and a music pastor. He went from being a manager of a company,

to owning his own bus company, and then becoming a pilot.

Misti was married 10 years before losing her husband in a plane crash. At the young age of 31, she became a widow and was unsure how she would be able to move on. She would go from feeling complete strength from the Lord, to turning to alcohol to drown the pain.

After one night of drinking to the point of alcohol poisoning, she told the Lord she had enough. She begged for healing and He instructed her to go on a 3 day fast. Once those 3 days were up, God told her, "The plan of the enemy has been thwarted." Misti, a little confused as this is not normally something she would say, said it out loud. "The plan of the enemy has been thwarted!" From the moment those words left her mouth, she felt the healing of the Lord.

When asking Him what had happened to her and why, He made it clear to her. The Sunday after Scott passed, the Lord told Misti to dance and shout before him at church. This not being in Misti's character made her a little hesitant, but she obeyed the Lord and did what He said. This was the moment He healed her. It just took



her some time to realize that. From that moment of realization, Misti has not grieved or cried over Scott once. Since then, her focus has been to help others through grief. God then instructed Misti to go to Seminary and she now teaches Bible at a seminary level.

Sandi, Keith's wife, was a wonderful Christian woman who became a mother to their son Parker and supported her husband wherever he went. She was also a lover of shoes, which if you are a woman reading this, I know that you can relate.

Keith and Sandi were married for 26 wonderful years with a son named Parker before they got the news that would change their lives forever.

While both were at their annual physical appointments, it was made known that Sandi had spots on her lungs and liver. She was later diagnosed with stage 4 Adenoma Carcinoma colon cancer that had spread to her lungs and liver. Genetically, this was the rarest form of cancer one could have.

Two months into treatment, Sandi had her shoes propped up and she was taking a picture of them. When asked by Keith what she was doing, she said she was going to make a post on Facebook. She called them her "happy shoes of the day." She wrote about the color, texture, and the inspiration behind them. People loved it so much they started sending her shoes, and she would write about a different pair every time she went into treatment.

After Sandi did this several times, Keith thought, "I wonder if there is a way that we could put these posts into little booklets to give to other cancer patients to encourage them and give them hope." The doctor said "Absolutely," and this was the start of their ministry, "Happy Shoes."

Twenty months and two days later, Sandi went to be with the Lord. Her lungs filled with cancer and there was nothing more they could do. Keith and Sandi were married a total of 28 years. Parker was a junior in college, and he and Keith were left with life to move on. After she passed, Keith was left with a choice. Was he going to wallow in his grief or was he going to make the choice to get up every morning and live life? There were some days where he would cry and scream in his house, but his journey to healing began from day one.

Strength became a gradual process that came from trusting in the Lord and knowing that He is always good, even in those toughest moments.

In December of 2018, Keith was sitting in church one Sunday when he noticed a woman sitting two seats down from him. Someone in church that day had told Keith that he needed to check her out because she wasn't wearing a ring. If you haven't figured it out already, it was Misti.

Keith did a little digging and found out who her brother was who also happened to be the HR manager of the church. He called him and asked about her and was told it probably wasn't the best idea being that she had just gotten out of an on and off again six-year relationship. For the next 3 months, Misti played a game of "Dodge Keith."

Finally, after 3 months, Keith and Misti had their first conversation at church that lasted 15 minutes. Keith walked her out to her car, and as he was walking, he heard the voice of the Lord say, "She is going to be your wife." They went out to dinner on a date that Saturday night.

The next Monday they were having a guest speaker at church and when Keith walked in, a woman stopped him. She had no idea that he and Misti had been on a date. She first asked him how he was and then said, "I need to tell you something. You see that girl up there? God told me that she is going to be your wife!" Keith said, "He told me that too!"



From that moment, they began the process of dating. Keith ended up taking Misti to a Happy Shoes packing. At this point, it had become so much bigger than just the booklets. They had a sponsor for totes by Thirty-One Gifts. Food City came on board financially and donated a beautiful throw for the patients. Keith has a music CD out that he puts in the totes himself. Vendors donate snacks for the totes along with gum, mints, and puzzle books.

And a voucher for shoes – which was the start of the entire ministry.

A sponsor has enabled them to put a voucher in the totes for a pair of shoes. The patients are able to go then online and enter their code number which tells them what hospital they are coming from and put in their name, address, and shoe size. Volunteers from the area are then able to deliver the shoes personally and see if there are any other needs.

When Misti left that night after packing for Happy Shoes she realized she loved Keith. After much prayer, she knew he was the one that God had for her. They dated for 2 months, got engaged, and 2 months later they were married.



They have just received their

third grant for Happy Shoes, and the Lord has provided to where they are able to do this ministry full time. Last year, they were able to give away 600 totes, and this year, they have the potential of giving away 6,000 totes! Their ministry focus is “to inspire cancer patients to keep walking.”

Shortly after getting married, God led them both to start a ministry where they could take their tragic stories and turn it into a beautiful journey. And so it was that Beautiful Ashes was founded.



Their focus is “to equip people who are grieving with the keys to living life after death.” Speaking in churches, small groups, funeral homes, zoom calls, the couple go wherever the Lord leads them to be able to shine a light to those in a time of darkness.

What a beautiful reminder through Keith and Misti’s story, that God can take the most broken people and use them in such a mighty way. I hope you all are touched as much as I have been and take away that God is always good, and He will do the caring for you if you let Him.

You can learn more about Keith and Misti’s ministry or make a donation to Happy Shoes at happyshoes.org. To learn more about Beautiful Ashes or to request a meeting you can go to beautifulashes.cc or you can find them on Facebook at Beautiful Ashes or @beautifulashes61.

You can also catch Misti’s daily devotional called Daily 5 with Misti, on their Beautiful Ashes Facebook page, Monday through Friday at 7 am.

To purchase a copy of Keith’s new project called So Good go to Keithsammons.com.



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Les Butler and Friends: Barry Long

By Les Butler

I first met Barry Long at Dollywood. I was hosting the Gospel stage during Bluegrass and BBQ at Dollywood. This has been many years ago now. We talked between every show that first day. It was obvious he loved Bluegrass, specifically, Bluegrass Gospel. He was excited to be there and excited to play and sing for the people. He was always wanting to improve. He would ask how they did and how they could be better. I like that. I like that a lot! Our relationship grew and in recent years I've been blessed to do some work for Barry and the group. They're a top notch organization, men of integrity and wonderful musicians! I'm proud to present Barry Long of New River Bluegrass.

LES BUTLER: Introduce yourself to the readers. Who are you and where are you from?

BARRY LONG: I'm Barry Long with New River Bluegrass. I'm From Greer in the foothills of South Carolina!

LB: What is your earliest musical memory?

BL: I was in the 5th grade when my sister's boyfriend

began showing me chords on the guitar.

LB: What instruments do you play?

BL: I play the guitar, mandolin, banjo and dobro.

LB: If you could only have one instrument on a desert island, which one would it be?

BL: The banjo.

LB: Which do you enjoy the most-- playing live or in the studio?

BL: I love playing live! This gives me a chance to share the Gospel in person.

LB: You are a singer and a musician. Which do you enjoy the most?

BL: I really enjoy singing harmony. Baritone is a challenging part to sing, but I love working out harmonies.



LB: What is your favorite song to sing and why?

BL: “Working Man Blues!” I think it’s because I can relate to the chorus, I Work all night and I work all Day, life just ain’t worth living this way. Music really takes me away from the daily grind of life.

LB: Do you write? If so, what’s the favorite song you’ve written?

BL: Writing songs is a passion of mine. I tend to write story songs the best. My favorite song I’ve written went to # 1 on the SN Bluegrass chart promoted by Butler Music Group called, “The God of Isaac and Abraham.”

LB: When you’re not picking and singing, what do you like to do?

BL: I have too many hobbies! I love spending time with my family and 3 Grandchildren, Riding my horse, Sedona, trout fishing, hiking, camping, anything to do in the mountains just seems to relax me.

LB: What is your favorite song to play and why?

BL: A banjo tune called “Cluck Old Hen” because it’s wide open!

LB: Tell us about your group, New River Bluegrass.

BL: We are a 6-member band performing, writing, and recording music for over 15 yrs. We have had 2 number 1 songs on the Singing News Bluegrass Chart. We have been performing and sharing the Gospel in many



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Churches and events including Dollywood. We have also been voted #1 Band for 8 years running in our local newspaper The Greer Citizen where we have just had our first Musicfest on October 2nd, 2020 at the Greer Amphitheatre.

BL: I was raised in a Christian home where we went to church every time the door was open. I was saved at a revival meeting at our church at the age of 11. God called me to use my musical gifts to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the 8th grade. I really had a lot to learn about what that meant but he is still guiding me today! Praise His Name!!

LB: Give us a brief testimony.

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Brotherly Love



By Jimmy Reno

The team of Fortune/Walker/Rogers/Isaacs has collaborated to produce the new album entitled Brotherly Love for Gaither Music Group.

Jimmy Fortune, formerly of the Statler Brothers and Ben Isaacs of the Issacs are no strangers to gospel and country music fans. Mike Rogers and Bradley Walker may not be as instantly recognizable, but their talent on the album is.

Bradley Walker's first solo project with Gaither Music in 2016 was titled Call Me Old-Fashioned. The project came about after Gaither heard Walker sing at the memorial service of Joey Feek. He contacted Walker afterward and Walker was brought into the Gaither music recording family.

"It's been such an honor being a part of the Gaither music family. They have really created a home for their artists," Walker stated.

Ben Issacs and Mike Rogers had worked together on projects in the past, and Jimmy Fortune had also been recording for Gaither Music. Issacs approached Walker with the idea for the Brotherly Love recording, and the quartet was created from those talks.

The guys all gathered at Issacs house and started talking about songs they loved. They came up with a working list of what they wanted on the album. Walker and Fortune both have strong country influences and that has resonated throughout the album.

The album kicks off with the project's title cut "Brotherly Love." Mike Rogers takes the lead, and this Keith Whitley tune is brought back with a fresh arrangement.

"It's important to me to do songs about real life and struggles we all face," Walker said. "I want to reach as



many people as possible regardless of any genre but christian lyrics have always been a part of country music.”

With Fortune’s involvement in the group, a Statler Brothers hit song was in order so the group added the fan favorite “Class of ‘57” to the album.

The group reaches back to their Southern Gospel influences on the Ronnie Hinson penned “The Lighthouse.”

Songs on the album like “The Lighthouse” reflect Walker’s desire to be remembered as a follower of Christ. “I want to be remembered as someone who loved the Lord. Was honest. Loved people and someone you could depend on,” Walker stated.

Another highlight of the album is the 1955 Statesmen quartet classic “Where No One Stands Alone” penned by Mosie Lister.

Jimmy Fortune stands out on the Vince Gill tune “Go Rest High On That Mountain.”

Other notable songs on the project include the Don Williams tune “Lord, I Hope This Day Is Good.” Ben Issacs adds his smooth vocals to the lead on this one. Fortune adds another soaring tenor lead on the Roy Orbison hit song “Crying” while the rest of the quartet adds tight harmonies.

The Eagles tune “Love Will Keep Us Alive” is also covered on the album.

Fans of country, bluegrass and christian music have taken to

the project as the album debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard Top Christian/Gospel Albums chart and No. 16 on the Billboard Top Album Sales chart.

When reflecting back over the album, Walker stated, “When Ben called me and asked what would I think about doing a project like this—and he mentioned all four of us together—who wouldn’t want to do that? I’ve known all these guys through their music careers and been a fan of what they’ve done for many years, so immediately I knew I wanted to be a part of it.”

“I hope to touch as many lives as possible. I think about something Doyle Lawson said to me; he said the music we make will last long after we are gone. Hopefully it will continue to touch lives,” Walker said.

With a solid effort like Brotherly Love, the group is well on its way to achieving that goal.

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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





KAREN KINGSBURY ON HER OCTOBER RELEASE TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY

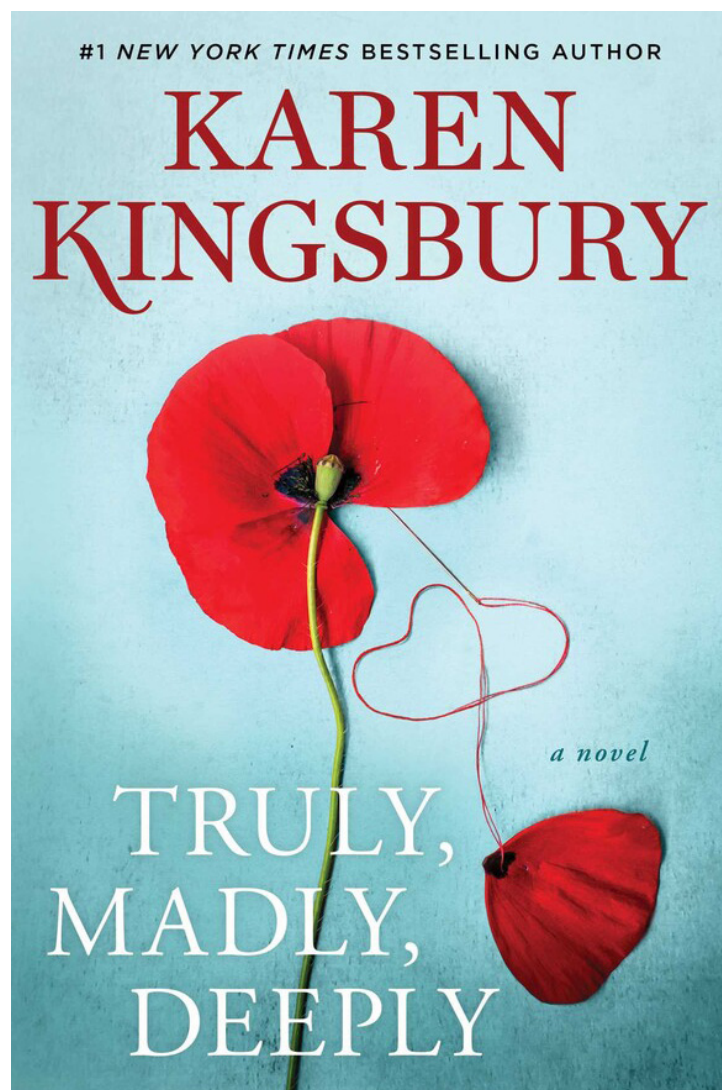
by KayleighAnne E. Stanton

"I hadn't even thought that could happen. It wasn't even in my mind that they would pull books. And I began to do more research and realized a lot of the books-- they were waiting, just like movies. And it's like, parts of your life where you just never saw that coming." The line crackled as Karen Kingsbury spoke about *Someone Like You*, her first novel of 2020, published amidst the world-wide pandemic. "And it reminded me again that God is in control, and what we have today is not a guarantee in any way. Not your book deals, not your future. So what better time than now to lean hard into Jesus and to let him carry you from here to what's next?"

For her, the next thing Jesus carried her to is the release of *Truly, Madly, Deeply*. After a full day of interviews, Karen was kind enough to hop on the phone and speak to SGN Scoops about her upcoming release, a stand-alone novel in the Baxter Series focusing on Tommy Baxter, now a senior in high-school.

The novel centers around loss, love, fear, and hope regarding illnesses and the ever-present shadow of 9/11. Reflecting on that disaster from current adversity, she mused that people drew together during the dark days in '01, even when things felt hopeless. Revisiting that theme in her current novel, it now has taken on a whole new meaning. "I wrote it [*Truly, Madly, Deeply*] when fear wasn't a part of our daily life. And I think only the Lord could give me a story that was so clearly an answer to fear," Karen said. "So I feel like that's [her novel] going to be a message of hope to people who need to be

reminded that God walks through these things with us and he wants to take us from a place of fear to a place of





**IN THE SHADOW OF GREAT LOSS
THE ONLY WAY TO LIVE WITH PASSION IS
TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY**

Annalee waited until they were at their bench, the one at White River Park with the best view of Indianapolis. She used to say time stood still here.

Tommy sat close to her and took her hands. "We don't have to talk."

Annalee nodded. She needed a minute. The truth was still a terrible nightmare, nothing real or possible. How could she put into words something she was only beginning to grasp? She pressed in closer to Tommy, her knees against his.

In an hour the sun would disappear behind the buildings and night would come. Which would lead to tomorrow. And tomorrow would lead to Wednesday. She could do nothing to stop the ticking of the clock.

And with that certainty Annalee drew a steady breath and looked straight at Tommy. As much as she wanted to pretend it was yesterday, here was the truth . . .



faith."

When asked about Tommy's choice to join the police force and the current state of affairs in the USA regarding the boys in blue, a smile beamed through the phone. "I honestly feel so honored that the Lord would so kindly let me be the one who would have a story that takes us right into the world of police-work and the reality of the sacrifices that they make every single day."

Having come from a family who is either active in the police-force or has considered it, Karen understands the troubles policemen face. "It's kind of amazing that I would have written this story at a time where there was no controversy surrounding our officers and now there is and this book takes us right into their world and lets us see just what kind of things they face every day."

Aside from penning her novels, Karen has spent the pandemic running You Were Seen, a new nonprofit launched in June dedicated to reaching one person at a time. The nonprofit sells You Were Seen cards on their website and the buyers can hand them out to anyone they wish to, a barista, police-officer, etc. The card then

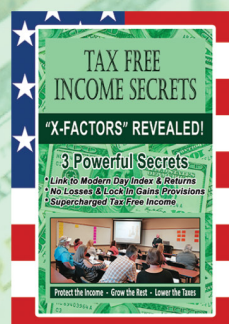
points the receiver to the You Were Seen website where it tells them about the One who has seen them all along: Jesus. "It's a message of hope to people one by one," she commented, hope brimming her tone. "If the virus can come into this land from one person, so could the love of Christ."

Hope seems to have encompassed Karen's life in 2020, and that is the word she would use to describe her year, despite the stresses and fears of the pandemic. "I believe that through it all, there are good things that have come from 2020. I don't want to just write it off and throw it away. I want to walk away with lessons learned and believe that there is still yet much more ahead."

For Ms. Kingsbury, there is much more ahead in the foreseeable future. Her Baxter series was acquired for television and has a total of three seasons filmed, has just wrapped up writing a novel centered on drug and sex trafficking titled A Distant Shore, and is just at the edge of broaching a new horizon: film.

Readers can connect with Karen Kingsbury, watch her book trailer, and stay connected with all-things-bookish on her website, karenkingsbury.com.

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Deeper Things for Kids



By BJ Jenkins

Do you know that there is a book in Heaven about you? Before you were even born, God wrote a book about every day of your life! It's true! The Bible says, "You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed." Psalm 139:16.

This book is your DESTINY! Would you like to know what it says? Would you like to know who your friends will be, where you will live, or what you should be when you grow up? If you want to know these answers, then you will have to ask the ONE who wrote your book. His name is God! How do you go about asking Him something? Good question! I can answer that! But first, there is something very important I think you need to know.

Just like God has a plan for your life, do you know that the devil has a plan for your life too? He certainly does! His plan is simply this...to kill, steal, and destroy you. Jesus said this in the Bible, "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life." John 10:10.

Now, the devil's plan never looks dangerous at first. As a matter of fact, he is pretty tricky, and he has a way to make his plan look REALLY good on the outside.

That is why you must be very careful about the friends you keep and the decisions you make. You will have to decide EVERY DAY whose plan you want to follow.

So how can you talk to God and find out what your destiny will be? Simple, it's called PRAYER! Prayer is just talking to God. The Bible says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." James 4:8 That is a promise God made to us, and God cannot lie!

Begin your prayers by thanking Him for the wonderful things He has made for you to enjoy. Make sure to tell Him how great and mighty He is and how much you love Him. That is called praise! He really likes it when you praise Him. Praise "opens up" the door to an audience with the King, God Himself! Now you can start by talking to Him just like you do your best friend. Talk about your day, your friends, school, sports, and even your family. Learning to talk with God is a great start!

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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Contributors

SGN SCOOPS



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 projects working in front of the camera and also has helped create several syndicated 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.



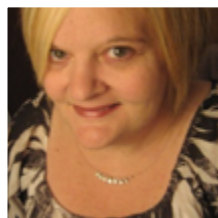
Stephanie Kelley is a public speaker and owner of Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebies, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. Queenoq.blogspot.com



Canadian-born Lorraine Walker has a love for Jesus Christ, music and writing. The combination of these passions has produced artist features and monthly columns for Southern Gospel publications including SGM Radio website and SGN Scoops Digital magazine. Lorraine desires that the power of the written word will glorify her Lord and bring readers closer to the love, peace and majesty of the Almighty. Email Lorraine at lorraine@sgnscoops.com



Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, sharing her testimony of how she was born lifeless and how Jesus raised her up to live for Him. Jennifer is a member of the Florida Worship Choir and Orchestra and has performed with them at Brooklyn Tabernacle, Carnegie Hall, Central Park, and Times Square. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm> and a food and travel blog at <http://jennifersjourneys.net> Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net> and www.christwillreturn.org.



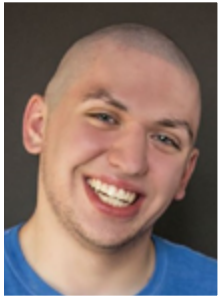
Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she enjoys proofreading the articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



Justin Gilmore, 22, 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.

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Justin McLeod is the founder of the Justin's World of Softball website, a site that he has built into one of the premier news outlets in the sport. Justin is a longtime Gospel music fan and enjoys researching the history of the genre, attending concerts, and reviewing recordings whenever possible. The son of a Southern Baptist pastor, he also works for a law firm as a legal secretary and is active in his local church. Justin is a native of Memphis and now resides in Northeast Louisiana.



Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer with a passion for Christ. He was born in Santa Rosa, California and moved to Oregon where he spent most of his life. He now lives in the quiet town of Ringgold, Georgia and enjoys living in the country with his family. You can find him online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate one on one with clients and organizing ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.



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 within the industry she also hosts a weekly radio show which keeps her in touch with many of Southern Gospel's leading execu

tives and artists. It also allows her a fresh view of new music and the 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.



After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University with a Mass Communication degree, Craig Harris has been in the journalism field for more than 15 years, working daily as both a photographer and writer at one of the largest non-daily publications in the state of Tennessee. He has experience in feature writing, news writing, action photography, portrait photography, web-site maintenance and layout. Craig has been a part of numerous awards, both collective and individual honors in the journalism field. He has had articles published in numerous newspapers and magazines on a variety of subjects, most notably in the world of sports.

Craig's Southern Gospel interest dates back for approximately the same time span, having closely followed the industry since the later portion of the 1990s. He also performed for seven years with a local trio prior to joining the SGN Scoops staff.



Charlie Griffin is an avid gospel music fan, soloist, teacher and speaker. He is a staff writer for SGNscoops featuring highlighting Southern Gospel Music history. You can follow Charlie Griffin on Facebook, Twitter or visit him at www.CharlieGriffin.net.

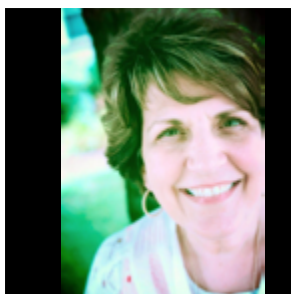
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Robert York- During my childhood days my parents took me to the Atlanta City Auditorium for concerts hosted by Warren Roberts. That was the beginning of my love for Southern Gospel music. After 35 years I retired from USPS, during which time I got married. My wife and

I often went to The Joyful Noise for dinner and concerts. Every known name in Gospel Music sang there at one time or another. After I retired, we decided to start promoting concerts. Our goal was not only to promote our concerts, but also to promote any Gospel concerts in our area and attend as many as we possibly could. I came to a crossroads in December 2013 when my wife graduated to heaven, not knowing what to do. After much prayer God led me to continue promoting concerts. Have promoted around 100 concerts and can't tell you how many I attended. I still enjoy going to concerts and writing a little about the groups.



Dixie Phillips is a Dove Award winning songwriter. Her songs have been recorded by The Talleys, Gordon Mote, The Williamsons, Doug Anderson, Susan Whisnant, The Erwins, Jay Stone Singers, Master Promise, Three Bridges, Endless Highway, 3 Heath Brothers, Fortress, and many other gospel artists.

Dixie is also an 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.



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. Butler's playing and production credits include Palmetto State Quartet, Joe Mullins and the Radio Ramblers,

Fairfield Four, Steeles, Dunaways, Crabb Family, Easter Brothers, Marksmen Quartet, Earl Scruggs, Bowling Family, Jimmy Fortune, Marty Raybon, Larry Gatlin and many more. Butler's publishing companies are Hurry-Up Publishing/BMI and Hush Jean/ASCAP.



Derek Simonis began singing gospel music at an early age, around the piano with his sister,s at home and in church. His mother, an accomplished pianist and music teacher, was his inspiration to sing. Derek was saved at an early age due to the influence of godly, praying parents and a faithful Sunday School teacher.

Derek formerly served as a Youth Pastor and previously sang with Southern Harmony Quartet. For seven years, Derek also served as a Communications Repair Section Leader for the U.S. Army; he was member of the 1/160th SOAR (A) Night Stalkers and served several deployments overseas.

Derek is married to his sweetheart, Jana, and they have two boys, Daniel and Avery. The Simonis family resides in Boise, Idaho. Derek and Jana travel and sing gospel music, having recently released their debut album, "Blessed."

His life's verse is Romans 12:1 which says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Derek's ultimate desire is to give his all in the service of the Lord.



Jimmy Reno began singing at the age of four with his family group. He has sung for The Mystery Men quartet, Florida Boys and Mark209. Off the road, he spends time with my wife, Christa, with whom he celebrates 25 years of marriage with this year. Jimmy

also enjoys spending time with his three kids and one granddaughter.

Contributors

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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.



During his 40 plus year career, Bill has developed expertise in commercial banking, retail banking, sales and marketing, media, and financial consulting. After years of being bi-vocational, he was able to merge his professional expertise and his passion for ministry. Since 2010, Bill has been helping

churches and ministries with areas of operation. This includes financing (construction, permanent financing, re-financing). In addition, many organizations need help understanding how to market their ministries and how important it is to promote their ministries properly through media and social networking.

Over the past 40 years, Bill has become an accomplished gospel singer, having performed on 32 albums and produced over 200 albums for other performers. His extensive professional credits include singing with renowned gospel music groups including The Cathedrals, The Goffs, The Senators, and The Rhythm Masters, which performed four songs that reached No. 1 in the gospel music charts. In addition, Bill has received nominations for three Dove Awards and a Gospel Music News Award. He is also known for writing and performing the Gold Record winning song, "No Greater Love." Bill also performed in events led by Jerry Falwell, Pat

Robinson, Rex Humbard, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Dr. Paul Conn, and most recently, he performed with Governor Mike Huckabee.

Bill studied finance at the University of Cincinnati and vocal performance at the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. He also attended seminary at Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and he holds a Doctor of Divinity Degree at Heritage Baptist University in Indianapolis. Currently Bill serves on the Board of Trustees for Davis College in Binghamton, N. Y.



John Herndon is a Kentucky native who was raised listening to gospel music. As a child, the Sunday morning routine always included the Gospel Singing Jubilee and his summers were filled with all-day-singings-and-dinner-on-the-ground listening to local groups just about every Sunday. He remembers seeing The Prophets at his county fair when he was seven years

old and eventually, he became a huge fan of The Oak Ridge Boys, The Imperials and J.D. Sumner and the Stamps. John spent 20 years in the located ministry and during this time, he began writing local sports for The Anderson News in Lawrenceburg, Ky. For the last 16 years, he has been the full-time sports editor of that paper. John has won over 100 awards from the Kentucky Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and Landmark Community Newspapers.

He loves listening to gospel music or playing one of his guitars.

John lives in Lawrenceburg with his wife, Stephanie, and 17-year-old daughter. He has three grown children and four grandchildren.



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 Souleseekers, 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 publications. Jeff is excited to be a part of the SGNscoops family!

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Jantina Baksteen
I live all the way overseas in the Netherlands. I'm married and I have three adult children. I grew up in a Christian home and knew in my early years that I wanted to belong to Him. I surrendered my life to Christ was baptized one day before I turned 11 years old.

Somehow, the seed of loving gospel music was planted by the style of music my parents played at home. Around 2006/2007, I was listening to Gaither homecoming music that I found on the internet. The song, "Oh, What A Savior," by Ernie Haase hit me with the so-called Southern gospel bug.

From there, I've been reading /studying all I can find. I found the digital SGNscoops Magazine.

As I was spending so much time reading and listening about this industry, I started praying for God to please give me a job in the Southern gospel industry. Sometimes, I commented to Lorraine Walker on her posts. How could she know the longing of my heart?

But last year she asked me if I wanted to do something for SGNscoops: the Wacky Wednesday posts online. Now I do the "Beyond the Song" article that really has my heart as I am reaching out to artists, asking about a current song and having a sneak peak behind the scenes.



My name is Lyndsey Chandler. I sing with my family, the Chandlers. I have wanted to get something started to promote the youth in Southern gospel for a long time. I want to say a huge thank you to SGNscoops magazine for allowing me the opportunity

to do this. I will be sharing exclusive interviews in an effort to showcase the abilities, talents and dedication of young artists in Southern Gospel music. I will be offering these monthly interviews to better acquaint you with young voices that are growing louder in our industry.

The Chandlers travel in a ministry of singing and preaching

conducting concerts, revivals, camp meetings and conferences. Their travels have taken them all over the United States, Canada, Serbia, Poland, Slovakia, and The Philippines. The group consists of Tim, Lana, and their two daughters, Tiffany, and Lyndsey. Their ministry website is www.thehandlersmusic.com.



Cheryl Smith describes herself as a "passionate disciple and follower of Jesus Christ." She says: "I am married to the sweetest, most patient man for over 30 years...Mama to one miracle son God sent to us after 12.5 years of infertility...Home-

school Teacher who learns way more than I ever teach. I love to spend time with my husband and son in the mountains, sing and play Bluegrass music, and write. I am so thankful for your visit and hope you will visit my blogs: homes-pundevotions.com/ and biblicalminimalism.com/ It is my goal to encourage you in your walk with Jesus and to inspire you to let go of this world for the sake of a higher call. It is His call that I hope you hear. So compelling, so intense, so far above anything this world has to offer. It is the call His disciples heard as they went about a normal, ordinary day, fishing. It is a call they could not refuse. A call that caused them to drop everything they had and walk away from life as they knew it, without a backward glance. Can you hear it? Are you listening?"



Andrew Ishee grew up playing gospel music in church and with local Christian groups. At age eight he asked his dad to show him some chords on the piano. That night Andrew prayed that God would bless him with the ability to play. Since that evening, he has played piano by ear.

Andrew began playing professionally at age 16 with the Dixie Echoes, a Southern gospel group from Pensacola, Florida. He then moved to Asheville, North Carolina to join the Kingsmen Quartet. Since then Andrew has worked with many of the top Gospel recording companies and artists producing and playing piano on countless recordings. And today the Andrew Ishee solo music tour has spanned the length and width of the United States. Andrew says: "There are two great things about what I get to do: Music and People. And I love them both."