

sgn

A gospel-music world view

January 2011

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# The Isaacs

## Making Music

Let the gospel fans  
be heard! Time to  
vote for the 2011  
Diamond Awards.



*The Diamond Issue*

Debut of our  
**GUEST TOP 15**

Featuring our favorite stories from 2010 as we look ahead to an exciting 2011 ~ with Brian Free, Wills Family, Oak Ridge Boys, The Perrys, & more!

**A TRIBUTE TO SUSAN UNTHANK**



# THE PUBLISHER'S PERSPECTIVE: A VIDEO MESSAGE TO READERS FROM ROB PATZ

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are a  
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best  
friend...



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# January 2011

The Diamond Issue



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SGN Scoops exists to showcase what is distinguished, intriguing, and real about southern & country gospel music. We seek with our stories to shed light on people fulfilling a call to minister - to make or support the making of music that excites an audience and glorifies God. And we seek to do it interactively.

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# What brings you the most joy?

**Joyous New Year, Readers! Thank you for continuing to add life to SGN Scoops. As we embark on a new calendar year and a new Diamond Awards voting season, I want to talk to you about a subject dear to my heart and perhaps somewhat contradictory to the idea of awards voting: *non-competition*.**

About a year ago, I tweeted something that has become my mantra: "There is no competition in ministry except for souls, and they either belong to God or to His enemy." Nearly immediately, that message was "retweeted" by Susan Unthank, then the editor of AbsolutelyGospel.com, the groundbreaking southern gospel news website she began with her husband Deon.

When I became Editor of *SGN Scoops*, I was already friendly with the Unthank family. Our families and ministry ventures had joined forces in several areas. On the outside looking in, it would seem that my working on another southern gospel news site and magazine would be viewed as competitive, but to Susan and her family, it never was. As I look back today through messages she sent to me, I see phrases like, "I am interested in your success" and "Who's giving your problems? Let me know and I'll beat them up LOL!" And there is also the last treasured message I have for her, simply to let me know she was praying for our daughter after a car accident.

In fact, we often shared insights, advice, and yes, sometimes, even leads, because we hold to the same belief. We're not in "this" to be considered the best at publishing stories; we are in this to glorify God's kingdom through writing and entertainment and conversation. Our beliefs say that surely, there are enough fans of varying ages and interests to enjoy stories told in just a little bit different ways, and furthermore, many gospel music fans are fervent enough to read whatever they can about their favorite artists and music.

*Why compete? Why not do our best at what we do while encouraging and sup-*

*porting one another as the Bible instructs?*

That was Susan's belief throughout her time on this earth, and when she passed away earlier this month, I mourned my friend, I cried for her family, but I smile at the thought of the crown jewels she will get for promoting relationships over rivalry.

As we head into Diamond Award voting season, it is important for me to share my heart and thought process about our awards. What I dislike about awards is that feelings will always be hurt, that some will make them more or less important than they truly are, and that anyone would equate an award with their level of talent, likability, or even service to the kingdom.

What I like about awards – and in particular, the Diamond Awards – is that anyone can win. All you have to do to make your voice heard is cast a vote. And all you've had to do to earn votes is do your best to bring joy to your audience. Awards don't go out

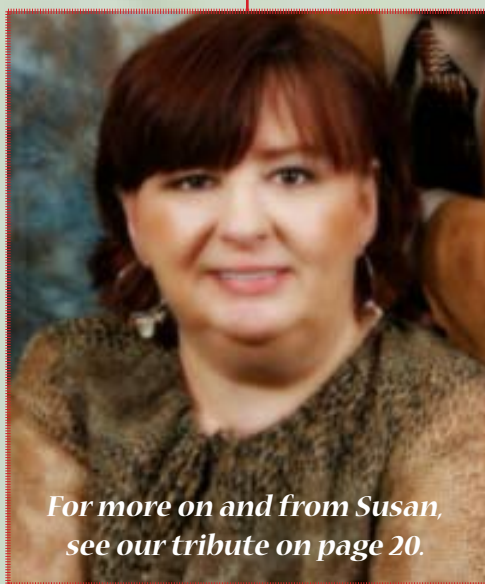
to "the best," because who are any of us to judge that anyway? Awards go out to "favorites," those who brought a lot of joy to people (and incidentally, people who happen to be able and willing to take the time to vote).

In whatever we do, let us labor to bring joy to others. And when we celebrate, let it not be a celebration of approval or popularity or accolades, but let it rather be the people and things that bring joy to our lives. On the day this article is published, Susan Unthank's family and friends will gather to celebrate

her...not the things in her life that brought her illness, pain, or sorrow, but the victories, the beauty, and the joy. I dedicate this issue to her... a true gem of a person, one who brought me joy.



KELLY CAPRIOTTI BURTON,  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



*For more on and from Susan, see our tribute on page 20.*



Above: Original Wills Family—Three of the siblings—Lou, Bob, & Betty; Below: Lou & Bob, namesake of Bob Wills, presenting Randy Wills, President, Texas Gospel Music Hall Of Fame, an original autographed photo of the famous fiddler. Next page: Bob Wills Family—Bob, Angel, Ron, Don, & Bobby Lee. Hildreth Family.

Love, Life, & Legends with Ms. Lou:

## An influential new season

At the beginning of this New Year, I am reminded of how God has blessed my life in gospel music at every season. My first gospel song onstage was sung with the Wills Family in 1938. In more than seventy years of my passion for this music, I have witnessed MANY times the power of God when His children sing the sweet salvation message. At this new season, we hold to that truth as we continue our desire to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. The faithful staff of this magazine has captured our hearts with a broad vision and precious commitment. Rob Patz & Kelly Burton, I pray God's blessings on your efforts in the coming year 2011.

As one of the Homecoming Friends appearing on many of Bill & Gloria Gaither's videos, I am

constantly amazed at the scope of the Gaither influence. Recently, Gloria compiled a beautiful cookbook of recipes and photos from the Homecoming artists. I am honored that my recipes and "Singing Wills Family" stories are included, but the thrill is reading recollections and unknown bits of information about other Homecoming friends. Not to mention, the recipes and photos of the food are absolutely stunning. HOMECOMING COOKBOOK WITH GLORIA GAITHER is sold exclusively at Cracker Barrel Old Country Store and Restaurant, with locations in many states. What a great way for the secular world to learn more about gospel music.

In the coming year, I pray God will bless the ministries of my siblings— the Bob Wills Family, Betty Wills Stephens, and Jo Wills Hamm. A few weeks ago, my brother Bob, and his family, hosted the Annual Wills Family Reunion Concert at First Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, where Don Wills, one of Bob's sons is the pastor. My sister Betty came from Nashville, and it was exhilarating to be onstage with her, the Inspirations, Southern Charm, and the Bob Wills Family. The remaining member of the Original Wills Family, Norma Jo, promises to be with us for the Reunion Concert in 2011. I am blessed to have Dr. Billy Hamm (Norma Jo's husband who pastors in Denver, Colorado) de-





sign my web site [www.louhildreth.com](http://www.louhildreth.com) Click on NEWS to keep up with our travels. While you are on there, click under the Gaither photo to see the video of Bill presiding over my induction into the 2005 GMA Hall Of Fame.



On January 24th, I will be Nashville for the 2011 GMA Hall Of Fame Induction Ceremony at the TBN Studios in Hendersonville. Larry Gatlin and Chonda Pierce will co-host. Admission is free, and the show will be taped for future viewing on world wide television. What a grand opportunity to expand the interest in gospel music. In 2011, please join me in a renewed commitment to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ! 🇳🇮

Contact us at P. O. Box 271106 Houston, TX 77277 [gosplvideo@aol.com](mailto:gosplvideo@aol.com) [www.louhildreth.com](http://www.louhildreth.com)

**It is the Lord's desire- and ours here at SGN Scoops Digital- that you become one of His followers. God has promised eternity in Heaven with Him for all those who accept Him as their Personal Savior.**

**A**dmit that you are a sinner.

*Romans 3:23- For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

**B**elieve that, because of your sin, you deserve to spend eternity in Hell. However, Jesus shed His blood and died on the cross of Calvary to pay the debt for our sin. He then rose from the dead three days later, proving His victory over death, Hell, and sin. He offers this as a free gift to all who will accept it in faith.

*Romans 5:8- But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us....Romans*

*6:23- For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**C**all upon Jesus and ask Him to come into your heart, forgive your sins, and make you one of His children.

*Romans 10:9- That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved... Romans 10:13- For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

If you would like to accept God's free gift of salvation, then all you have to do is pray and ask Him. Then, you must believe this in your heart as well.

If you have any questions about salvation, or if you just prayed to receive Christ, please e-mail us at [sgn-scoops@gmail.com](mailto:sgn-scoops@gmail.com). We'd love to rejoice with you! God bless you!

# Tom's Picks for THE Movie & TV Show of "HIS" 2010

Kelly asked us to do a "Best of" list from 2010—in my case, for TV and film. Unfortunately, I often don't get a chance to see many shows and movies until after the calendar year is over, so I can't provide a comprehensive list. However, I can certainly think of the most interesting things I have seen this past year.

**Best Film: Inception.** How refreshing to have a big-budget blockbuster that's not just a rehash or sequel, but rather an incredibly innovative story. And the fact that it was such a huge hit shows that there is an audience for such films, despite what Hollywood would believe.

In the world of this movie, people can invade one another's dreams to get access to information guarded by one's subconscious: bank codes, company secrets, etc. Leonardo DiCaprio plays a man whose job is to prevent such interference from happening. I won't say more than that, because watching the plot unspool is the chief joy of the film.

Most movies seem to come from filmmakers who assume that the audience is stupid, and so dumb down the content as much as possible. *Inception* is the opposite. Christopher Nolan (the writer and director) throws the audience in the deep end of the pool, and then dares us to keep up. There's enough creativity and invention in this film for three movies. Finally, just when the last piece seems to have fallen into place, Nolan gives us a final shot that will be the subject of debate regarding its meaning for years to come.

Ordinarily, I don't talk about the visuals in a movie because I think effects are irrelevant in comparison to a good story. The difference between *Avatar* and *Up* is that *Up* would still be a great movie on a tiny black-and-white TV. However, *Inception* doesn't just have great effects. It presents an incredible and unique world inside the dreams, with mind-blowing visuals much like *The*

*Matrix* with its backwards-bending heroes. This film has changed the way I think about what's possible with visuals in a movie.

Is there a profoundly Christian story here? Not that I can think of, but there's nothing un-Christian that I can think of either. There is a subplot dealing with DiCaprio's emotional struggle regarding his departed wife that can be seen as a cautionary tale about trying to manipulate the ones we love. One other character has a subplot involving his father, and when that storyline reaches its emotional climax, one is inclined to see it as ringing completely false, since we know how that character has also been manipulated in order to have that epiphany. But perhaps the false-ness of it is the point; maybe Nolan is saying that we shouldn't accept everything labeled a "happy ending" just because Hollywood says it's so.

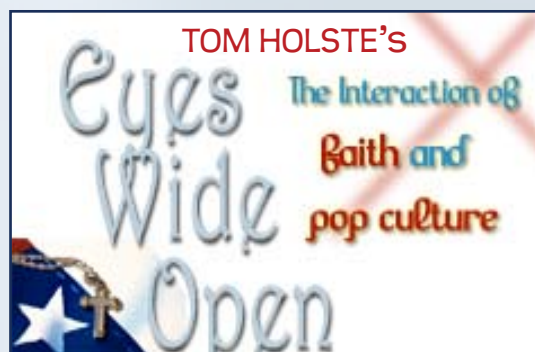
*Inception* is a great gift to audiences starving for an intelligent yet entertaining movie. It's the best film I've seen in a decade.

**Best TV Show:** The best TV show I finished this year is actually a show that completed its run over a year ago. It took me a while to finish the re-imagined **Battlestar Galactica**, but I'm glad that I finally did. (More on the "why" in a minute.)



As with the original series from 1978 by producer Glen Larson (*Knight Rider*, *Magnum P.I.*), the story starts with a group of humans fleeing from their home planet, Caprica, after killer robots called the Cylons attack and destroy their world. But there the similarities end. While the original *Galactica* was a cheesy *Star Wars* knockoff, the new *Galactica* by Ron Moore (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *The X-Files*) is a deep and profound series about the vagaries of war and the often terrible decisions that even heroic characters must make during war-time.

While the original Cylons looked





like low-rent Stormtroopers, the new Cylons look just like humans, and so can blend in to a crowd and attack at any time. Some don't even know they're Cylons; they're sleeper agents who can be activated and made to do things beyond their will. Soon, friends and lovers turn on each other over false suspicions; others begin to doubt their own identities; still

### Miracles can happen.

*Someone is watching over us and has sent his servants to help us, even if we can't totally comprehend him and what he wants... Isn't that a remarkable theme for a show to have?*

others are shocked to find out the truth about their own origins.

Intriguingly, the crux of the conflict between the races is religious in nature, even though one of the races is mechanical. The humans have a polytheistic belief in the gods of our world's Greek and Roman mythology (like the characters of the original). In contrast, Cylons believe in One True God that rejected the humans and blessed the machines. There are elements of Judeo-Christianity in both sets of beliefs, which left me as a viewer in the interesting position of not taking a side.

In fact, even though the Cylons clearly remind viewers of modern-day terrorists, the makers of the show often seem to sympathize with them and to point out as many chinks in the armor of the "heroes" as possible. However, ultimately the writers seem to take the stance that both sides have made grievous mistakes, and both sides need forgiveness and redemption.

The first season was difficult to get through, as Gaius Baltar (basically the Judas Iscariot of the human race) and a sexy female Cylon do all kinds of steamy things to each other in each episode. Their scenes together came off as nothing more than cheap titillation, as though the show producers felt they were trying to compete with late-night Skinemax. After Season 1, though, the sexual content of the show cools down a bit.

Also worth noting is that the show has a lot of



profanity, though most of it is made-up intergalactic swearing. The characters use these by-words frequently; don't say you weren't warned.

The show is often unrelentingly dark and cynical, with horrible things happening to characters that the audience cares deeply about. Between the sexuality, the language, and the very dark storylines, I wanted to give up on the show altogether more than once. But having seen the finale, I now know that the major themes of the show are these:

There is a meaning and an order to life, even if we don't always see it. Trust what the prophecies say. Even when they seem to let us down, it's just because we don't fully understand everything the prophecies were trying to tell us. Miracles—unequivocal miracles—can happen. Someone is watching over us and has sent his servants to help us, even if we can't totally comprehend him and what he wants. This Someone loves everyone on all sides equally, yet he is always in control.

Isn't that a remarkable theme for a show to have? (Frankly, isn't it a deeper theme than anything in the *Lost* finale?) While far from a perfect show, *Battlestar Galactica* has left more for me to talk and think about than any other show I can think of this year.

So, while these recommendations don't constitute a "Best of" list because I didn't see a lot of films from this year, and *Galactica* actually finished its run a year ago, I think it's worth mentioning both as some of the best entertainment viewed by me during 2010. 🇸🇮

It's finally here: the year 2011. What will this year bring? Many people worry about the future. We often wonder if we will have money to pay the bills, health to enjoy life, or love among our family and friends. But, did you ever consider the present? What are you doing right now? If someone looks at you, what do they see? I invite you to take a look at yourself. Have you ever truly thought about what people see when they look at you? Do they see someone who is sorrowfully sad or joyfully happy?

Do they see someone who is unfriendly or friendly? Do you portray someone who is discouraged or contented? Do they see someone who is a living testimony of God's love?

In life, we encounter many obstacles. There are times when no peace can seemingly be found. It is in these moments of complete hopelessness, though, that we need to cling on to the hand of God even tighter than before. He always provides the peace that may seem so elusive. He is the Prince of Peace.

As Christians, we still encounter trials. These trials come in many forms. Even in these times when we are tested, we must stand firm. The Bible consistently uses the phrase "stand firm."

We need to stand strong when Satan comes through with his deceptive storms and powerful winds. We are not to waiver, but to stand strong in the Lord.

In the New Year, we need to remember that we are living testimonies of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior of the world. When you are at work, do coworkers see your testimony? Or do you become frustrated easily because someone has not met their deadline, delaying the completion of your own daily tasks? When you sit in the pew at church, do the other members of the church see your testimony? Or do you remain focused on the fact that the preacher has preached ten minutes past twelve, which will cause you to lose ten minutes of your afternoon naptime?

It may be true that we should not worry what "they" think. However, we do need to worry about what God thinks. How many times have you disap-

pointed our Heavenly Father? Did you ever skip church, cheat, use inappropriate language, or lie about something or someone? When was the last time you took five minutes out of your busy schedule to thank Him for waking you in the morning? Some New Year's resolutions are bound to be broken, but here is one you can keep. Make a resolution to pray. Pray when you go to bed, pray when you get up, but above all, pray! Pray that you can be a testimony to

those around you, much like the gentleman I have described below. Take a look at this living testimony:

One Sunday morning in a small church in Western North Carolina, I had the privilege of hearing a precious man of God deliver his testimony in song. This gentleman did not seem to care what "they" saw when they looked at him, but at the same time, his living testimony of God's faithfulness shined for all to see.

Slowly, he ambled up to the platform with some much-needed assistance, as his physical body was visibly not what it once had been. He stood there, open and vulnerable, and humbly started to sing. His stance was one that seemed as if he was holding his hands out in front of him, as if reaching up to

the Lord as a child would reach up to their father to receive a loving embrace. The song he chose to sing was "Because He Loved Me." He wasn't concerned with stage presence. He didn't worry about anything. He just sang.

Chills ran up and down my spine. Goosebumps covered my arms. There were no musical accompaniments. There were no special lighting effects. He was not wearing a designer suit. He did not introduce the song. He did not even make eye contact with the audience. Yet, it was one of the most anointed performances I had ever witnessed.

I had never met this man. I had never spoken with him. Nevertheless, through this one song, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was one of the saints of God. I was completely reassured, that while I have no guarantee that I will see him again on this





old earth, I know that I will see him one sweet day in Heaven, worshipping at the throne of God.

This older man does not know of the profound impact he had on my life. His living testimony reached across the sanctuary and extended beyond the doors of the church. We should all follow his example and strive to be living testimonies of God's love. It doesn't take fancy clothes. It doesn't take renowned fanfare. It doesn't take any additional trappings. All it takes is an individual who is willing to be used by God.



**Ann Downing** shared with Jennifer how she plans to make a splash in 2011:

**"I do love the idea of 'newness,' so the phrase, 'Happy New Year' makes my heart cheerful. A new beginning, but what I'm hearing in my heart this year is how important it is to look forward to a good 'new year,' but not forget that we really can't know where we're going if we don't remember where we've been. 'I've learned a lot this past year of 2010...learned some things I need to work on to make them better, learned to let go of some opinions, ideas, and plans that obviously weren't His, also. And you know what is sooo exciting as I look into 2011? GOD IS ALREADY THERE!!! So, how can I lose?"**

Are you willing to be a living testimony in the New Year? Can you reach out to others, using the abilities God has given you? Do you want others to see

Jesus in you? Step out on faith today. Sing a song. Share a smile. Encourage someone. Spread the joy of the Lord. Make a difference in

the lives of those around you. Choose to live a life for Christ in 2011. Let others see a living testimony in your life. Take a look around to see how you can impact someone's life today. Even the smallest act can make a big difference. Make a splash in 2011! 🇺🇸

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SGNSCOOPS.COM

# Diamond

## awards 2011

*the gospel fans have spoken.*

1. **J.D. SUMNER LIVING LEGEND AWARD** - A once-in-a-lifetime honor to recognize the living performer for whom the fans feel has made the greatest contribution to Southern Gospel music over a career spanning 25 years or more. PREVIOUS WINNERS: (No longer eligible for this award) Bill Gaither, Naomi Sego, Beb Speer, Dottie Rambo, Connie Hopper, Eva Mae LaFevre, & LuLu Roman.
2. **MIXED GROUP OF THE YEAR** - a group of any number with male & female members
3. **QUARTET OF THE YEAR** - a traditional group with 4-part harmony
4. **TRIO OF THE YEAR** - a traditional group with 3-part harmony
5. **DUET OF THE YEAR** - a group consisting of two singers
6. **FEMALE SOLOIST OF THE YEAR** - for artist recording as a soloist
7. **MALE SOLOIST OF THE YEAR** - for artist recording as a soloist
8. **SUNRISE AWARD** - for a new or developing artist who has seen growth in their career this past year. Nominees in this category have not released their debut single two years prior to the eligibility date (January 1, 2011) This award is also a once-in-a-lifetime honor.
9. **SONG OF THE YEAR**
10. **ALBUM OF THE YEAR**
11. **CHRISTIAN COUNTRY GROUP OF THE YEAR**
12. **CHRISTIAN COUNTRY FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR**
13. **CHRISTIAN COUNTRY MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR**
14. **CHRISTIAN COUNTRY ALBUM OF THE YEAR**
15. **ANTHONY BURGER INSTRUMENTALIST OF THE YEAR**
16. **DOTTIE RAMBO SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR**
17. **BLUEGRASS GOSPEL ARTIST OF THE YEAR**
18. **VIDEO/DVD OF THE YEAR** - a short form video or a DVD release
19. **FAVORITE ARTIST WEBSITE** - independent, artist-owned website only (no Facebook, MySpace, SoGoCity, ShoutLife or fan sites will be counted)
20. **FAVORITE INDUSTRY WEBSITE** - news, magazine, supporting business, or event
21. **PAUL HEIL AWARD (Broadcasting)** - honors a disc jockey/radio or television host

The SGN Scoops Diamond Awards are returning for an 12th year! This fan-voted awards ceremony will take place THURSDAY, JUNE 30 at the Branson Gospel Music Revival ([www.bransongmr.com](http://www.bransongmr.com)). The categories are listed here & for the first round of voting, you may choose UP TO 10 of your picks in each one. First round voting begins Monday, January 10 and will continue until February 28.

**TO VOTE:**  
**Go to**  
**[SGNSCOOPS.COM](http://SGNSCOOPS.COM)**  
**to VOTE.**

#### **OFFICIAL RULES:**

One vote per email address. Email address will be required to place a vote. Printable ballots are available for mail-in votes, but photocopies of completed ballots will not be accepted. *SGN Scoops Digital* and Coastal Media Group reserves the right to discard any vote believed to be fraudulent (ie, using a fake email address for mass voting) and reserves the right to determine eligibility in all categories. Votes should be based on an artist's work within the calendar year of 2010. Ballots must be filled out for at least 18 of the 21 categories to be counted. All fans are eligible to nominate.



If you missed the 2010 Diamond Awards...



...you missed big winners, big worship, big laughter, and an all-star celebration of gospel music.



Don't miss 2011! For tickets:  
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# The Isaacs Make Music



For more than thirty years The Isaacs have been “making music” and loving every minute of it. Over the years, their music has encouraged, enriched and entertained many listeners. With their music, the Isaacs take the message of the Gospel to many venues where traditional Gospel cannot play.

Ben, Rebecca, and Sonya Isaacs grew up in a family where making music was a way of life. Their dad, Joe Isaacs, played bluegrass, and the children gravitated to acoustic instruments. Those acoustic instruments complimented the



In an interview with our Sandi Duncan-Clark, musical matriarch

**Lily Isaacs**

reflects on the music her family has made for over 30 years.



Photos by Aaron Crisler |  
Judy Nelson Group



folk music their mom, Lily Isaacs, sang, so naturally their music matured around those influences.

Through the years the Isaacs developed their own style and sound. Their music morphed into a smooth combination of country, jazz, bluegrass, folk, southern and contemporary Gospel music. Their rich vocals and close family harmony appeals to fans of any musical style.

Lily Isaacs, the mother of these fantastically talented young people, is one of the smoothest vocalists you will hear in any form of music. Lily was born in Germany to Jewish parents who survived the Holocaust. They immigrated to America when Lily was two years old and she grew up in New York City.

In the family band, Ben plays stand-up bass, Becky [Isaacs Bowman] plays guitar, and Sonya [Isaacs Yeary] is famous for the mandolin. Joining their Mom vocally, each one brings their own individual sound to the family harmony, and together they form one of the nation's most sought after artists.

This family has performed on stage with some of the music industry's most illustrious, influential artists, including Dolly Parton, the late Dottie Rambo, Vince Gill, Ricky Skaggs, Mark Lowry and many other well-known vocalists and bands. They have toured more than a century with Bill and Gloria Gaither and the Homecoming concerts, singing all across the United States and in several foreign countries. One of Lily Isaacs' biggest thrills was performing at Carnegie Hall in New York with the Homecoming friends, and having her Mother in attendance. The Isaacs also appear regularly on the Grand Ole' Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, and The Trinity Broadcast Network.

Making music is not only a ministry and career, but entertainment to us as well as our fans. ~ Lily

Many of the songs the Isaacs sing are written by Sonya and Becky. "The girls have written some of our most popular songs and songs made popular by other artists. I'm so proud and thankful for their talent," Lily said. "Sometimes when we're traveling, they will be in the back of the bus with a guitar and pen and paper, putting together a new song."

Asked where Sonya and Becky get ideas for their songs, Lily said, "They draw from life experiences, from

sermons they hear or from a thought that God gives them.

They sometimes awake at night with a thought, and will get up to write it down. Sonya is good with lyrics and Becky is good with the melody. Sometimes we might need a song for a recording, or another group might need a song and will ask them for help," Lily continued.

When it comes to putting all the music together, Lily tells us each member of the group contributes. "When we get a song we look at who is best suited to sing it," she explained. "We always try to feature everyone on a song when we record, and in our concert performances."

"Everyone picks a song they like when we're about to do an album. We listen to all the songs, then everyone gives their opinion," Lily explained. "For instance, when we were do-



Around the piano with Homecoming pianist Gordon Mote.



The Isaacs were awarded with the 2010 GMA Dove Award for Best Bluegrass Album for *...Naturally*.

ing the new Christmas project, we were trying to decide what songs to use. Ben produces our albums, along with Bill Gaither, and Bill had the idea to let our fans have input on the recording. The fans could go to our website or to the Gaither website and suggest what Christmas song they wanted to have us record." The Isaacs included five of the songs suggested by their fans. While they can't do this with all their recordings, they are very open to the leadership of God in choosing material.

"We really try to choose songs with a strong message. You know, sometimes things we face in life - life experiences and trials can either draw us to God and make us stronger or will distance us from Him," Lily said. "Our goal is that every song we sing will have a positive

effect- on everyone who hears it"

Lily further shared, "In the past we've been fortunate to have some big profile producers work with us on our albums and we've learned from each of them. Ben has definitely benefited from their knowledge and abilities. He's learned all the aspects of production and he's a genius in the studio. The fun is putting it all together. Ben is a tough task master, but he knows how to get the best out of each of us!" Lily continues, "Making music is not only a ministry and career, but entertainment to us as well as our fans. We all love what we do and feel that if we enjoy it, our listeners and fans will enjoy it and get something from the songs."

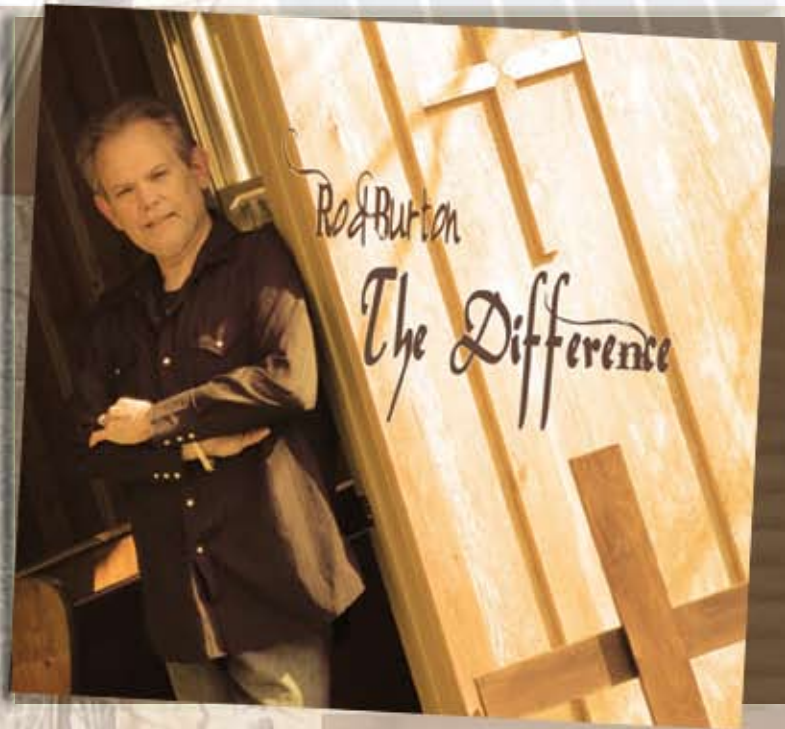
Two additional band members join the Isaacs on stage. Thom Wywort plays banjo and guitar, and Nathan

Fausette plays percussion. "These are two of the most talented young men in music," Lily stated. "Occasionally these young men have a different take on the music which we haven't noticed or heard, and will make suggestions to Ben. We are very fortunate to have them traveling with us."

When you attend a Gaither Homecoming event or any concert where the Isaacs perform, you will be struck not only by their music, but their personalities and sincerity and how they care for their fans. Sitting back watching as fans approach the group's product table is always amazing. Smiles and hugs abound which automatically draws fans back to another concert, then another and another. Once you've experienced the Isaacs in person, you too will love the music they make!







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Released on Airplay Radio

Promotion, November 2010

# BEST OF 2010: BRIAN FREE

## GIMMICKS vs GOSPEL

BY LORRAINE  
WALKER

*In a world that celebrates mediocrity in talent and moral fiber, Brian Free has worked to uphold both musical and ethical standards in Southern Gospel for almost 30 years.*

Assurance may push the envelope on style but they don't blur the lines on integrity. Brian Free and Assurance is all about class, credibility and clearly communicating the message of the Cross.

Last March, Brian spoke with us about his views of gospel music, right around the time he commemorated 29 years in full time ministry. "I'm nearly three decades in the industry," says Free. "The decisions regarding our music often come from watching trends, seeing what works on stage and what doesn't, and it is not an exact science by any means."

Free continues, "Musically, I trust the Lord to deal with my heart and deal with the guys' hearts and tell us the songs to pick. As far as interpretation of the songs, we pretty much stay with the writer and work together with them. I won't pick a song that I don't think the writer and I can work together to allow us to deliver the song the way we need to deliver it. It can be a great song, but not every song is for every group. So if we can't deliver the song from our heart and do the song justice, then we won't do it.

"We are here to serve the audience," says Free. "So if I see we are serving up a dish they like, I will serve some more of it!" Assur-

ance is very frank onstage regarding their desire to deliver straightforward lyrics and to minister to their audience, without a lot of extraneous flare that Free compares to a 'circus'.

"When it gets to the point where a gimmick has to be what my ministry's success is based upon, personally, I would stay home. We don't need to have a gimmick; we are presenting the message of Jesus Christ. Everyone is not going to like our ministry. I'm not concerned about that." Free shares, "We do the very best we can to do what God has called us to do. We present our ministry and the people that like our ministry support us. Thank God there are a lot that do."

"The people that don't like us, I understand, I don't hold it against them and I don't get upset with them," Free continues. "But in turn, I'm not going to change what we do simply because a gimmick comes along. I've seen many gimmicks come and go. What remains and what stands the test of time is the heart of the ministry. That's where we are and that's our focus. We do music we enjoy doing, which touches us, that we are excited about doing and that stylistically we enjoy. There is an audience for it."

The pressures of the industry and performance can be incredible for artists, even those with years of experience and a firm grasp of their place in ministry. Some artists find it difficult to remain grounded in the midst of life events and career stress. Free admits that this can be a challenge in the Christian music industry. Assurance members have strong church ties to assist them in remaining firm in their faith.

"We all have home churches and pastors we talk to," says Free. "I'm with my Pastor quite often. We talk at least once or twice a week and email as well if I have questions. If I want to share what's on my heart or have an opinion on something, he's there. He and my wife are my accountability partners. You need that."

Free says his wife is his biggest accountability partner. "You get out of line and my wife, she'll tell you really quick. She doesn't hesitate. She is a five-foot-four fireball."

One of the dangers of not remaining focused on the purpose of ministry is that artists become too affected by the attention and hype surrounding the industry. In some cases, it can cause people to become disillusioned and leave their calling. Free says he has always felt blessed to be able to sing Southern Gospel and knows he is being allowed the privilege to minister in this way because God decided to use him for this purpose.

"It's not anything within me, so there's no ego to burst," says Free. "If I have a bad night, so be it, I do the best I can. I am far from perfect, I'm human and I'm going to make mistakes. I'm going to mess up and when I do, I'm the first one to say, 'Ouch, that hurt!'"

"There isn't any ego to deal with in any of our guys." Free contin-



ues, "We are down-to-earth guys. If you aren't going to be real, you can't connect with real people. After nearly three decades in the industry, I'm jaded when it comes to people that are not real. I can't handle it and I don't suffer fools very well. That's just one of my faults. I have problems with anyone who thinks they are anything because as humans we are only dirt when it comes right down to it."

"My righteousness at its best is just filthy rags in the eyes of God. And the filthy rags that the scripture is referring to here are the rags off a leper's body, if you research the original Greek and Hebrew. So that's the nastiest rags you can imagine and that is my righteousness at its best. I have no reason to be haughty and no reason to have an ego, so that's never been an issue with me. And if I ever made a comment that was the least little bit in that direction, my wife would quickly stop me. So I've always been focused."

Brian Free is an ordained minister and takes his calling to rightly divide the Word of truth very seriously. "When you are given the privilege to stand on a stage and preach and sing the Word of God, you are also given a great responsibility. That comes at a high price. We have to be careful because we are responsible for what we say to God's people, what we do and how we present ourselves."

"The Bible is very plain," says Free. "If you do anything to mislead, you'd be better off having a millstone tied around your neck and cast into the sea. The millstone the Bible is referring to here would weigh about 800 pounds. So if they tie that around your neck and throw you in the ocean, you aren't coming back up!"

"I don't want to be responsible for misguiding or misleading anybody." Free continues, "This includes how you present yourself, the places you go, how you walk, the way you talk, your facial expressions, your attitude, everything. You only have one chance to make a good first impression on somebody you haven't seen before. That's it. You only have one time. For those that take that lightly, that's because it's all about them. If it's just all about you, you don't care what anyone else thinks, so it doesn't matter. You are your own little universe."

Just as an artist has to have goals for their music, they also need to develop personal spiritual goals to remain focused. "My goal every day is to be closer to the Lord," says Free. "I need to be a better Christian. I need to think more on Godly things, to act more on faith, to do everything we need to do on a daily basis to grow. I've got a long way to go before I become the kind of Christian I want to be."

"If God allows us greater popularity, that's great, because the more popular you are, the more people you reach," says Free. "That's what keeps you on the road. If no one wants to hear you, you aren't going to be doing it very long. I want us to become more popular within the Christian community and within the Church, so that we can share our hearts and carry the message that God has given to us." 🇳🇮



# best of 2010: susan unthank southern gospel wife and pioneer

In our February 2010 issue, we highlighted “southern gospel wives.” Susan Unthank was obviously much more than that in the world of southern gospel - after all, she founded AbsolutelyGospel.com (formerly SoGospelNews.com), which completely revolutionized news in the southern gospel genre, uniting fans and artists in a brand new way.

But to know Susan was to also know that more than any role she could play in the world, her role as wife to Deon and mom/stepmom to her children (Scott, Amy, Chris, and Leslie and Aaron) was the most important. Her loyalty, generosity, and integrity were something to admire. Though SGNscoops.com also publishes daily news and monthly features, Susan never acted as though we were competitors; rather, she worked alongside us all the way by sharing her wisdom, experience, and support. To say that is a special quality is an understatement, and to say it is rare is an admonishment.

Susan passed away on January 5, after a long and difficult physical battle that left her dependent on a wheelchair and oxygen tank. Yet, her focus and determination never wavered.

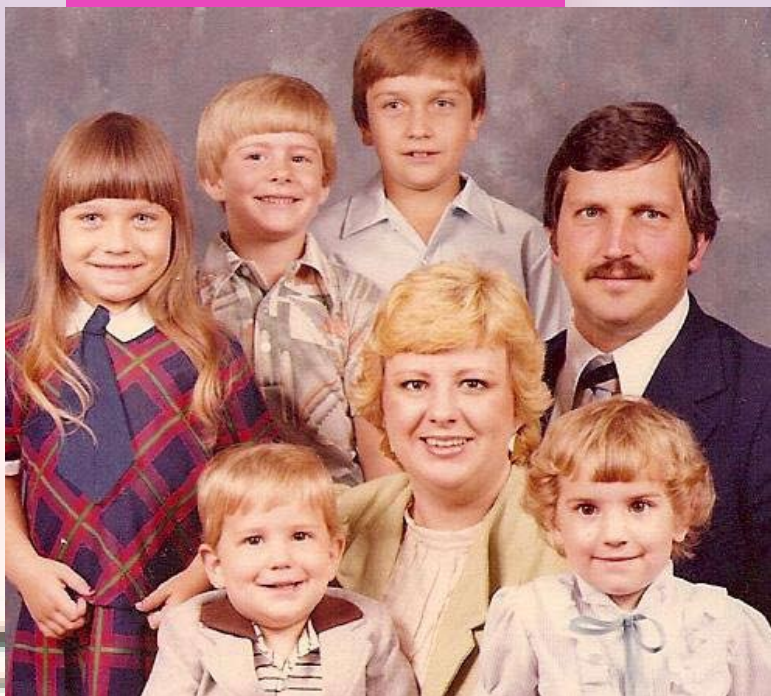
Donna Beauvais of DayWind Records and Vertical Sky recalled, “Susan Unthank was an internet pioneer in Gospel music and was a major part of expanding the outreach of this genre. My life enriched today because of Susan Unthank...I never heard her complain once, and I always saw her put everyone in front of herself. I’ll never forget when she had [daughter] Amy Unthank interview my little and completely unknown group over

10 years ago...We were SO excited! Susan Unthank was all about giving the underdog a chance. God was and will continue to be honored by the motivation of her life and ministry”

And Susan’s devoted and beloved husband Deon had this to say, “She was the back-bone of our family and the [AbsolutelyGospel.com] site. Susan put more time and energy over the course of the last 15 years in SGN than most people put in in their life. She lived and breathed Southern Gospel for the past 15 years. While our family grieves the loss of this very important member of our family, surely the industry must mourn the loss of one of its most prized possessions.”

Indeed, we have, Deon, and we do. May God be with the Unthank family...and may they be comforted in the promise that Susan is completely restored and with our Savior!

~Kelly Capriotti Burton





By Susan Unthank

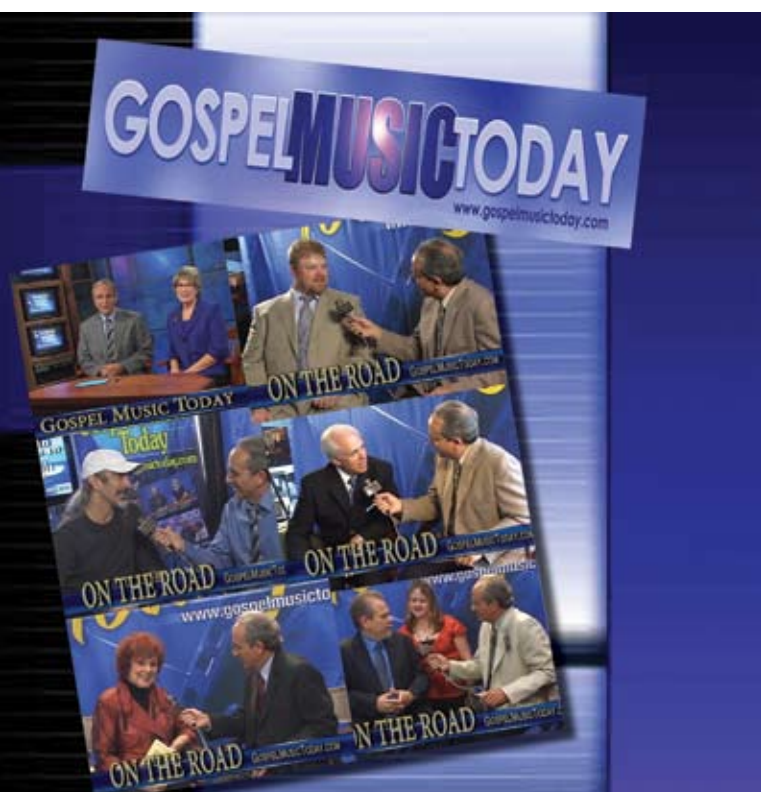
I have been a wife of a Christian music singer for over 32 years. I was lucky in that I already loved gospel music before I married Deon [Unthank of Sunday Edition and AbsolutelyGospel.com], so at least I didn't have to learn to accept his music like some wives do. That being said, our children didn't always share our love for southern gospel as we did. Our daughter, Amy, was the only want who loved it from day one, but our other children all preferred the more modern sounds of contemporary Christian and gospel music during their teens and early twenties. Interestingly enough, they have come to love it and are now or have been involved in the business in some way or another.

*I haven't ever felt like I had to juggle anything. My family has always been intricately involved in our business in some form.*

And, I never see my roles as wife, mother, worker as being separate from each other. They are all necessary parts of what makes me who I am. I can't imagine being a wife who wasn't involved in her husband's passion. I can't imagine being a mother who didn't involve her children in that same passion. Being a worker in this industry came naturally and is simply another facet of my life.

I can't imagine being either a wife, mother or worker without the other two, or being two of the three without the third. I don't juggle them but I do cement them. I cement them with the only glue worth using, my faith. My faith is simple. I believe that what God puts together, He holds together.

The Unthank family requests that you leave a tribute message on Susan's Facebook page, and that in lieu of flowers, donations be made toward Susan's medical expenses and burial. Click [HERE](#) for more.



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In an interview that so closely captured our vision for SGN Scoops magazine, Oak Ridge Boy Joe Bonsall shared his thoughts on what it means to be a gospel singer. Originally published in May 2010, Joe's words continue to ring true.

Joe Bonsall, one of the "ORB" or "Oaks," says most things with a lightness in his voice. This is a man with serious accolades and a seriously prestigious career who rarely takes himself too seriously. Whether you get to know him from the countless ORB songs woven into America's musical culture, one of his memoirs, over a plate of lasagna at Hendersonville's Nana Rosa, or as one of his near-3000 followers on Twitter, you'll know that Joe has a lot to say about a lot of things, and all of it with an enthusiasm for life that is contagious, kind of like an Oak Ridge Boys song. *By Kelly Capriotti Burton*



Above: Joe giving his all in a concert. ORB Site. Below: Our own Ms. Lou with the legendary group. Howard Hildreth.

## Best of 2010: Oak Ridge Boys Gospel Music, Rock & Roll Attitude

The Oak Ridge Boys have a 50-year history that spans across and often defies genres. While many of their charting songs and general successes have occurred in the country music industry, gospel music is at their roots and their core, and that is a subject Joe does not take lightly. Joe and members Duane Allen, William Golden, and Richard Sterban have made up the current and iconic iteration of the Oak Ridge Boys for the past 36 years. Together they have musically transcended the gospel, country, pop, and rock and roll genres. In the 1970s, followed by a change in direction at shift to the Columbia record label, their music began to be more heavily promoted to country radio than to gospel. In that timeframe, the group who at one time was often seen in SG-matching-suits was widely accused of leaving gospel music or going country. Joe explained throughout our talk and from the stage at the Harmony Honors that this wasn't quite the case. More so, the ORB have been blessed with variety of success and opportunity.

"[One week in early spring], we were singing [at the 50 Years of Kenny Rogers concert taping] with Kenny, Wynonna Judd, Lionel Richie, and Smokey Robinson. [Two weeks later at the SGM Guild Guild Harmony Honors] we shared the stage with Triumphant Quartet...there's never a reason to limit ourselves," Joe says.

Incidentally, Triumphant Quartet recently scored a hit with ORB's "Everyday," the song they would perform together on the stage at the Gaylord Opryland Convention Center. It was there that Judy Nelon, president of the SGMG, told the crowd that the Oak Ridge Boys, "Have touched people all over the world with gospel music."

Indeed, it seems that the industries showcasing ORB music agree. With numerous country accolades (among them, the Academy of Country Music's lifetime achievement/Pioneer honor), ORB was also inducted into the Gospel





Music Hall of Fame in 2000, have won numerous Dove Awards, Christian Country Music Awards 2004 Mainstream Artist of the Year, and was honored by the SGMG with the President's Honor in April 2010.

"I fondly recall having the opportunity of presenting a Gospel Music Award to the Oak Ridge Boys in Los Angeles, California in 1973," recalls Nelon. "It just happened to have been Joe Bonsall's first week with the group. Now, thirty-seven years later, it is such a privilege to present the prestigious SGMG President's Honor to this same amazing group."

The night of the SGMG Harmony Honors and the presentation of the Presidential Honor showcased the gospel stylings of Oak Ridge Boys as well as the relevance they hold in the current southern gospel

It's no secret or even a touchy subject to say that ORB's place in southern gospel comes with a touch of controversy. So when the question is posed: How does the group balance songs about carousing with songs about Jesus? Joe responds with an answer that he's clearly given before.

"I've never had a problem singing any of them," he says. "Trying to Love Two Women" – if you listen to the words – is saying it's a bad idea! "Y'all Come back Saloon" is just about people who are down and out. There are blurry lines, but all the guys in the group are Christians who believe in the gospel... We pay tribute to it every night in our concerts, and we pay tribute to it with the lives we live."

A typical ORB show – and there are about 150 a year – has a set list that weaves in and out of the nearly four decades of music they have made together. Those sets change nightly and consist of country songs, love songs, songs about family, patriotic anthems, and always, several gospel songs.

**"To me, it's old news that 'The Oak Ridge Boys went country,'" Joe says. "We don't make our living in the gospel music industry, but we never quit singing gospel music."**

Joe says the group talks to younger artists in gospel music who would also like to "step out of the box" musically but are afraid of "getting hammered upon."

"We're just surfing a different feed," he adds. "If some lady in the fourth row doesn't like my hair, who cares? That puts everything in the wrong perspective."

Bill Dykes of Mansion Entertainment, himself of a gospel music mainstay, shared his thoughts on the group: "The Oaks have always been true to themselves, be it in gospel music or country, and most importantly they have always been true to their God. That is the reason why I believe the transition of them moving back

towards Gospel Music again has been so easy. People always loved them and never forgot them from their original gospel music days; songs like "Jesus is Coming Soon" and "I Know" will live forever as sung by the Oak Ridge Boys. "

The ORB's latest release, *The Boys Are Back*, an eclectic collection that put ORB on the playlists of a new generation of listeners, also includes selections that embody the gospel and family friendly thread that runs through the group. The single "Mama's Table," (written by Nashville-based Jamey Johnson) tracing a family's story through a kitchen mainstay, hit the *Billboard* Country Singles chart and is a sentimental fan favorite, while show-opener "The Boys Are Back" and the raucous "Seven Nation Army" (previously recorded by White Stripes) consistently bring ORB audiences to their feet. Meanwhile, "You Ain't Gonna Blow My House Down" and "Live with Jesus" continue to showcase the group's gospel music roots. The project as whole has been a creative turning point for the group, one that shows no signs of them slowing down or settling for the same old sound.


"We are four guys who are just like-minded," Joe says. "Nobody is ready to retire, and we're always thinking forward: How can we do it better?"

The new effort still resonates with long-time fans, such as editor of AbsolutelyGospel.com, Deon Unthank, who says, "I've been an Oak Ridge Boys fan since I was about 16 years old, and that was a long time ago. I was checking my old LPs not long ago and to my surprise I have more Oak Ridge Boys records than any other group. I watched all the changes as the Oaks morphed into who they are today. Several personnel changes, and a lot of years later, I will still go see the Oak Ridge Boys every chance I get."

While Joe describes the group as quintessential American music group, a middle American group, the one you see on the campaign trail with George Bush and at the state fair, he is perhaps happiest to say that an Oak Ridge Boys concert is one for the family: "There is nothing off color: you can bring your grandma or your little kids."

And when it comes to the gospel section of that American music scene, Joe states enthusiastically, "All of us are honored beyond words to be honored by gospel music."

He concludes, "We love gospel music; it is where our heritage lies. A lot of people's lives have been touched by Oak Ridge Boys music – including mine before I was ever a part of it. We're a southern gospel quartet singing country music with a rock and roll attitude."

It's a flavor all its own, and may many more lives be touched by it in the years to come. 





Best of 2010:

## THE PERRYS give thanks

For our November issue, Dee Ann Bailey put out a call for artists words of gratefulness. At the center of the story was Tracy and Libbi Perry Stuffle, who were plowing through an eventful year of successes, accolages, and transitions, and one that also brought serious threats to Tracy's health. Libbi shared the story of God's faithfulness and their own gratefulness.

On August 11, 2010 a time came that neither Tracy nor Libbi then were really prepared for. Tracy was experiencing pain and once the doctors saw him, things

began to move really fast. In addition to having multiple blockages Tracy learned he was a diabetic and also there was a small heart aneurysm. After determining that would this not be a problem, Tracy's surgery was set for August 13th.

What the hospital wasn't prepared for and what Tracy and Libbi didn't fully understand, was how much they were loved! The hospital switchboard was overwhelmed and the waiting rooms were overflowing. The love this couple had inspired was now surrounding them as gentle prayers were being whispered for them not only across the country but around the world.

This outpouring of love caused the hospital to ask them to begin a Caringbridge website to keep everyone updates as their lines could not handle the influx of calls. As he made it through the surgery and Libbi and Jared were allowed to see him, a collective sigh of relief was heard in many homes that had been praying for them.

"We didn't know that Tracy was diabetic and we thought the pain he was experiencing was from a hi-enal hernia, we had no clue he had anything wrong with his heart. But the doctors said that many folks in his shape, by the time they have a clue is already too late," Libbi shared. "The good news is he was there and able to get better. The bad news, he had to get in better shape because the doctors were not giving us options if he didn't."

As members of The Perrys and their friends pitched in to keep concert dates going, Libbi stayed right by Tracy's side. "Our vows said 'for better or worse, in sickness and in health' but I thought that would



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be later in life, when we were old and grey, I didn't expect it to be now. But she has not left my side, she encourages me and has been with me every step of the way" says Tracy.

"When they were wheeling him away from me were so many 'what ifs' that came to mind but there was no time, they said we have to do this now. All I could do was put him in God's hands" Libbi adds.

"God's been good to us," she continues.

"We have felt the prayers and words can't express how much that means to us. Tracy is doing good

and losing weight, his insulin keeps being reduced and we believe before long we can begin to control his sugar with just diet. His blood pressure is still giving us a few problems but the doctors are pleased with his progress."

Just as with anything in our lives, change happens,

and as they finish out this year and look forward to 2011, there are changes with The Perrys. With the recent departure of Troy Peach, The Perrys have added

a young man who is no stranger to SGM or many other Americans for that matter. Bryan Walker, formerly with the Dixie Melody Boys and *American Idol* contestant, is their new baritone. The song and the singers will still carry on. They know what they are singing about and that message resonates with those listening: It's not about being perfect, it's about allowing Him to perfect us.



*Update: According to Libbi, Tracy has dutifully changed his lifestyle and lost over 50 pounds since suffering his heart attack. However, he was hospitalized in early January after a knot formed on his leg. With Libbi by his side, he is healing. Please keep them in your continued prayers.*

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Presented this month by  
He's Alive Radio

### Top 15 Songs of 2010

Weeks at Number 1 is within (-).

Title of the CD is in ALL CAPS

1. Mckamey's : Shepherd's Point of View  
(11 wks) in May and June of this year.  
\*The MESSAGE
2. Perry's : Did I Mention?  
(7 wks) in March and April \*ALMOST MORNING
3. Browders: Message of the Cross  
(5 wks) May and June \*THE MESSAGE
4. Collingsworth Family : Fear Not Tomorrow  
(4 wks) June and July \*THE ANSWER
5. Akins : I Want My Stage to Be An Altar  
(3 wks) Peaked in January \*THE AKINS
6. Ernie Haase & Signature Sound: I Thirst  
(3 wks) Nov & Dec \*TRIBUTE TO THE CATHEDRALS QT
7. Karen Peck & New River: Why Should I Worry?  
(3 wks) July \*NO WORRIES
8. Jonathan Martin: Fill My Cup  
(2 wks) October \*
9. Mark Lowry: Keep Walking  
(2 wks) Feb \*LIFE GETS LOUD
10. Kingsmen – Missing People  
(2 wks)Dec \*MISSING PEOPLE
11. Booth Brothers: Faithful One  
(not number one) Nov \*ROOM FOR MORE
12. Lulu Roman: 7 Times In the Jordan  
(o) May and June \*SEVEN TIMES
13. Jim Brady: Don't Ever Miss the  
Chance  
(o) August \*JIM BRADY
14. Jeff & Sheri Easter: Born to Climb  
(o) March \*EXPECT GOOD THINGS
15. Michael Combs: Almost Home  
(o) August \*RAIN ON ME



He's Alive Radio is a Christian Network of 8 frequencies located in PA, WV, and MD. This non-profit ministry also operates a live webstream online at [www.hesalive.net](http://www.hesalive.net). Founded in 1984, it is now entering a second generation of family ministry with Sharon Johnson, president, at the helm. Her daughter, Melissa Flores (pictured above with karen Peck & New River), is general manager and host of the AM Cafe. [www.hesalive.net](http://www.hesalive.net)



# Carol Sanguinette-How

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**BGSSA**  
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*It is good to praise the  
Lord and make music.  
- Psalm 92:1*

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# Where does *Christian Fitness* Begin?

By Laurette Willis

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

Does fitness begin by doing a lot of acrobatics (physical or mental)? It does feel that way sometimes, doesn't it? Where do we begin?

Most of us would say that to make physical changes, we must begin with our body.

**But what part do the spirit and soul play?**

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Paul prays "may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless..." You are a spirit who has a soul and you live in a body. Your soul consists of your mind, will and emotions.

What's on your mind? It's estimated that we think about 60,000 thoughts per day at a speed of 600-800 words per minute. Do you find your thoughts consistently running along positive paths or negative ones? When something bad happens do you think or say, "It figures. Nothing good ever happens to me."

Or do you say, "You know what? I'm not moved by this because God said in Psalm 34 that 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all,' so we're coming out of this one, too."

## In More Jams Than Smuckers?

While quoting scripture out of your mouth may be new to you, it's certainly better than quoting many of the slogans the world hands us. "If it feels good, do it" has landed people in more jams than Smuckers. How about the woeful outlook of "Murphy's law" which says if anything can go wrong it probably will.

Why are people who quote God's Word called ex-

tremists and fanatics while those who quote Murphy's Law are considered realists who are just "telling it like it is?"

## Does God "Tell it like it is"?

Did you know God never told us to "tell it like it is?"

In fact, if that were the way God operated, creation would not have happened.

Imagine if God had stepped out into the black void of space and said, "Hey it sure is dark out here." It would still be dark! What God says is truth. He cannot lie.

God chose not to "tell it like it is." Instead He "calls those things which do not exist as though they did" (Romans 4:17).

He used His Word and said, "Let there be light." And there was light. (In Hebrew, the words are translated, "Light be!" in Genesis 1:3.)

Since we're made in the image of God and Ephesians 5:1 tells us to be "imitators of God as dear children," doesn't it make sense to say what God says instead of what the enemy and the world say?

## Become a Nonconformist!

Run a WWJD check on your mind and mouth today. Are you thinking and speaking in line with what God's Word says about the situation -- or what the world, circumstances or the enemy have to say?

If you want to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" for your life, become a nonconformist! You can decide you won't allow yourself to be "conformed to this world," its thoughts and ways of doing things -- but you can "be transformed by the renewing of your mind" on the



*You will begin to see yourself in a new light, a new mirror: the Word of God.*



## Fitness cont'd

Word of God.

Read and speak scriptures aloud -- especially God's promises to you about who you are in Christ and the victorious life the Lord has for you in Him. You'll start to be transformed.

The book of Ephesians is a great place to start - especially all of the "in Christ" and "in Him" scriptures.

### Start Looking in a New Mirror

Thinking and speaking God's words and thoughts will change you. Your faith will grow as you hear the Word of God. You will begin to see yourself in a new light, a new mirror: the Word of God. It will become easier for you to encourage and bring hope to others, for you'll begin to know that the Lord can help them.

Situations that used to baffle you will become easier

to understand. Health and fitness issues will also become easier to solve, for godly fitness is tied more to the development of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) than any diet or exercise routine.

Look at yourself in the mirror of God's Word today.

**You will love the way you look - in Him.**

(Adapted from BASIC Steps to Godly Fitness by Laurette Willis, Harvest House Publishers)

Note: One of the things people have told us they enjoy about PraiseMoves is being able to recite and meditate on Scripture during their workout. A number of you have told us you are not only remembering so much more of the Word than you ever have before, but that knowing more of the Bible has changed you and enhanced your relationship with the Lord. Glory to God! 🇺🇸

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Our SGN Scoops Staff is comprised of professional writers, singers, speakers, publicists, and ministers. Please visit their websites for more from them. **| CONTRIBUTORS**



**KELLY CAPRIOTTI BURTON** is a former teacher and IT project manager, and a current gospel wife, mom of 2, stepmom of 2, homeschooler, event promoter, and writer/editor, recently featured on [www.incourage.me](http://www.incourage.me). She currently lives outside of Chicago sometimes and on a bus the rest, and survives to tell about it at [mylifeastheglue.com](http://mylifeastheglue.com)



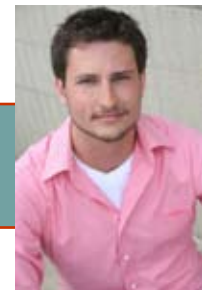
Born and raised in southern Ontario, Canada, **LORRAINE WALKER** has been interested and involved in Southern Gospel Music since the mid-80s. Since 2005, she has also authored the popular 'Reality Check' column and other features for [sgmradio.com](http://sgmradio.com).



**MS. LOU WILLS HILDRETH** is always smiling, is married to Howard, is a member of the legendary Wills family, a member of the Gospel Music Association Board, and a television host, songwriter, publisher, journalist, an industry leader. Get to know her at [louhildreth.com](http://louhildreth.com)



**SANDI DUNCAN-CLARK!** grew up in Greenville, South Carolina as the daughter of a Baptist minister. For more than 30 years, it has been her joy to contribute to the ministry of those who serve the Lord singing Southern Gospel. With her husband, Cliff, Sandi makes her home in Easley, S. C., where she attends Westwood Church, does volunteer work, and spend time with her son and new daughter-in-law. [Sandi's Facebook](#)



Through a series of events, **JEFF HAWES** has moved from the classroom where he taught high school English in Jackson County, Alabama to the tour bus of gospel great Karen Peck & New River. Jeff chronicles the fulfillment of his gospel music dreams and his road life exclusively for SGN Scoops. Learn more about him at [karenpeckandnewriver.com](http://karenpeckandnewriver.com)



**ROB PATZ** is the owner & publisher of SGN Scoops along with the owner & voice of SGMRadio.com & The Southern Styles Show. He resides in Seattle and loves Jesus, music, food, people, and talking as a job and hobby. [sgmradio.com](http://sgmradio.com)



**TOM HOLSTE** is a writer living in Chicago and a graduate of Act One, a screenwriting program specifically geared toward Christians. He has written and directed numerous short scenes for church events. [tomholste.com](http://tomholste.com).



SG enthusiast **D. ANN BAILEY** has written for a number of industry publications. Currently she works as a senior manager and is part of a four generation household. She also serves on the advisory board of Harvest Hope Food Bank., allowing her to reach out to the community showing God's love not only in spiritual ways but helping to meet the physical needs as well. [twitter.com/DeeAnnBailey](https://twitter.com/DeeAnnBailey)



**JENNIFER CAMPBELL** returns to Scoops this month and we're happy to have her. She resides in Florida where she is a master English teacher and enjoys singing and writing gospel music. We invite you to read her rich testimony at her website. [jennifercampbell.net](http://jennifercampbell.net)



Christian Fitness Expert and author **LAURETTE WILLIS** is the Director of PraiseMoves, offering fitness programs, DVDs, books and training for those interested in a Christian alternative to yoga, and fitness for spirit, soul and body at [www.praisemoves.com](http://www.praisemoves.com)  
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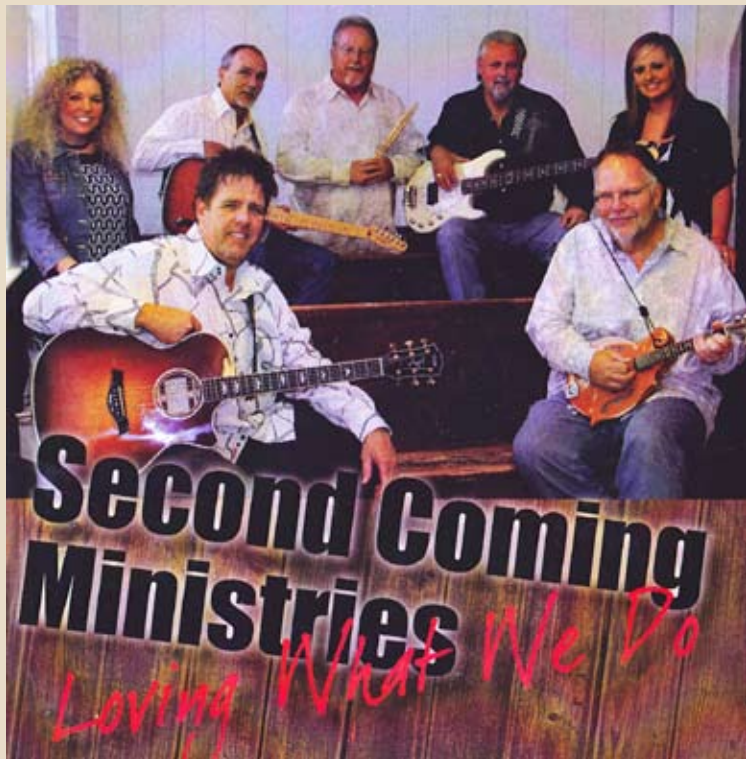
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## LOVING WHAT WE DO

Produced By Second Coming & Steve "Rabbit" Easter  
Gaither Music Group

Giffin, Georgia is home to Gospel singing group, Second Coming. Donna Hanna-Boswell and her husband, Vernon, manage the group, booking almost every weekend out of the year, singing Gospel music and sharing the message of salvation. This mixed group recently released an exciting new recording, commemorating their love for God and for the music they sing.

*Loving What We Do* is the title of their latest recording, produced by the group with Steve "Rabbit" Easter. "'Rabbit' has worked with us on other recordings, and we always enjoy working together," Donna Hanna-Boswell said. Donna is lead vocalist and keyboard player with Second Coming.

This new recording features eleven songs; several well-known classics and four original songs written by Donna and another group member, Taylor Caswell. "Our goal with this recording is to let our listeners know how much we love sharing the message of Christ through our music," Donna said.

My favorite song on the recording is the first cut, "The Burden," one of Donna's compositions. Another favorite is the old standard, "(I've got) So Much (to thank Him for.)" Second Coming does an outstanding job on both songs.

## Behind the Music CD Reviews "Plus" by Sandi Duncan-Clark

Their musical style has a country flavor and Second Coming travels with a full band. Donna's husband, Vernon joins her on vocals and plays acoustic guitar. Ronnie Boyt plays drums and Marcus Caswell plays bass, while Greg Smith plays lead guitar. Jeff Stanley sings vocals and rounds out the band playing fiddle, mandolin and twelve-string guitar. Joining Donna, Vernon and Jeff on vocals are Taylor Caswell and Myra Wells, who are featured on various songs during the groups program.

"We have been blessed with a group of people who devote their time and talent to the Lord," Donna stated. "We enjoy the music and we enjoy being together. We had been needing more room on the bus for family members who like to travel with us, and had prayed for several months for the Lord to provide. A lead on a bus in California didn't work out, but we learned of one for sale just a few miles from home," she continued.

"When Vernon and the guys went to look at the bus, it was exactly what we needed. We asked the Lord to make a way for us to sell the old bus, and buy the new one," Donna related. "Within four days, we bought the new bus and sold the old one." When we spoke with Donna, Second Coming had just returned from vacation to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. "Each year, we rent a cabin and everyone takes the week off," Donna said. "No, we don't book singing dates, we just go for the fellowship and the fun." She ended with a laugh, "And yes, we do eat a LOT!"

With the new recording, Second Coming is fulfilling the mission of their ministry. "Our mission is to sing wherever God opens a door," Donna stated. "We can minister in churches where other groups aren't able. We realize that some people will go to a concert when they won't go to a regular worship service. When we sing, we try to present the message of salvation in a way that will touch hearts and entertain as well."

"LOVING WHAT WE DO" is available at Second Coming's concerts and by contacting them at 770-227-4111. You may also have them at your next Gospel music event by calling this number or by visiting their website at [www.secondcomingsgm.com](http://www.secondcomingsgm.com)



*Other than the year I came to know Christ, 2010 has definitely been the best year of my life.*

Other than the year I came to know Christ, 2010 has definitely been the best year of my life. As I look back at all that has happened this year, I am simply amazed at what God has blessed me with and what He has allowed me to witness. Just one year ago, I was thinking of what I would be teaching for spring semester at school, what gigantic piles of essays I would be grading, and which students I would have.

When Karen Peck Gooch called me one year ago, I did not know my plans for 2010 would be quite different than what I had previously thought. Thinking back, I remember the first night I sang with KPNR. It was in LaGrange, Georgia at a Bible Conference. Wow! Was I nervous, or what? Until that moment, I had never had to rely on God to take complete control of my life and body. I had no idea of what He was preparing me for, but as it turned out, New River would be my new home for 2010, and I would put teaching aside in order



for my dreams to become reality.

This year has truly been a whirlwind, especially since I have never traveled before, a fact that Karen and Susan often kid me about. They really did expose me to a whole new world. I always wanted to travel to other parts of the country and even the world, but until 2010, I really had no reason or way to go; I owe them so much for everything they have shared with me. When I think about how I did not have a clue what I was doing, it often scares me stiff. For example, who can forget my first trip to Canada? I will never forget the pit in my stomach when the customs officer put that bright red X on my entrance form. I wanted to crawl in a hole. However, I did learn a valuable lesson: always know where you are performing and have at least \$5 in your wallet.

How will I ever forget the first time I stepped onto the Gaither Tour stage or when I sang at my first Gaither Homecoming DVD taping. I can still feel my hands shaking and my knees knocking. Sheri Easter said "Poor Jeff! We all remember the first time when we shook and sang for Bill Gaither. I have been so thankful this year for artists like Jeff and Sheri Easter and the Isaacs who have supported and prayed for me this year.

Prayer has also been a key ingredient to surviving 2010. Growing up, I was always taught to carry my struggles and trials to the Lord in prayer, but this was taken to a new level in 2010. Truthfully, I prayed more as I drove back and forth to meet the bus than I did anywhere else, which could be scary if you passed me on the interstate sometime this year.

As I look ahead to 2011, the sky is the limit to what I want God to do in my life and in New River. May He reveal spiritual truths through scripture and others and may He protect our group as we are on the road each and every day. I have compiled a list of just SOME of the exciting moments I have had during this year, although they are not in any particular rank or order. Perhaps, though, my favorite moments have been when I am in the midst of someone coming to accept Christ as Savior of

The Chronicles of a  
Singing English  
Teacher:

*Thinking Back and  
Looking Ahead...*

*Expecting Great Things in 2011*

A Counting Series by

*Jeff Hawes*

of Karen Peck & New River





his or her life. There is nothing to compare to the thrill of a person who kneels, broken and humbled before the Lord, not exactly knowing all of the answers, but knowing the one who does. May we all expect GREAT things in 2011. 🇺🇸

### Jeff's 10 Exciting Events in 2010

- People accepting Christ/ Meeting wonderful new KPNR friends
- Recording a new project with KPNR/ Writing for Scoops
- Singing on the Gaither Homecoming Tour and DVD
- Singing at the Dove Awards Pre-Show and attending the main show
- Receiving the call from Susan that the group had received a Grammy nomination
- Singing on the National Quartet Convention Stage/ Singing News Fan Awards
- Singing for Dr. Charles Stanley and In Touch Ministries/ Singing for TBN

- Being able to bring KPNR to my home church/ Manna On the Mountain Bible Conference
- Cruising to Hawaii and the Bahamas
- Visiting New York City and Bar Harbor, Maine

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