

JANUARY 2015

SGN SCOOPS

.....MAGAZINE

JIM BRADY TRIO

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Booth Brothers, Jay Parrack and Vocal Event
The Bowlings and Guardians



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OUR MISSION

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern Gospel and Christian Country music. With integrity, we aspire to strengthen Christians, 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



I am always excited to start a new year, because it is like starting fresh. You can set goals or make resolutions, whichever you like to do. Personally, I'm a goal setter, not a resolution person. I know I should stop eating foods that are bad for me, but I'm not going to say I want to make a resolution about that. Instead, I will work on new goals for the coming year. Now, I do have a goal to stop eating the foods that are bad for me, but not a resolution! I'm excited about 2015 and where God is leading SGN Scoops magazine and our website. I'm also thrilled about several of the events that I am a part of this year. I'm looking forward to our inaugural Southern Gospel Weekend in Oxford, Alabama on March 27th, 28th and 29th. As you know, I love new things and I am excited about this event.

If you like your music with a more country flair, I want to invite you to the inaugural Country In The Smokies on April 27th, 28th and 29th. This weekend will feature three great days of Christian Country music and we are excited about this. The event will be held in Pigeon Forge, at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center.

Be watching later this month on the website, as we begin the nomination process for the 2015 Diamond Awards. Yes, it is that time of year again, folks! We are truly blessed that YOU, as fans, take time to nominate your favorite artists for these Awards.

Another event that I need to talk about is the Ozark Gospel Music Convention, which is May 4th, 5th and 6th in the beautiful city of Branson, Missouri. We always have a wonderful time. I want you to make plans to come and be a part of this great event.

I want to take this moment to thank each and every one of you for helping make 2014 the best year ever for SGN Scoops magazine. I am humbled each day as I look at the number of people who download the magazine and visit our website. It is truly a blessing to know that there are people out there just like you, who spend part of their day or their week checking out our website and reading our magazine. If you know me, you know that I am not the kind of person that sits still and says, "well, we've done this and we have reached our goal." I believe we need bigger goals for 2015!

I would love to see us double the numbers that we currently have but I need your help! I need you to share the stories that are on our website; to share the magazine each month with friends that may not be Southern Gospel fans and introduce them to the greatest music in the world.

I am thankful that God has allowed me the opportunity to be the publisher of this magazine and I don't take lightly the task that He has given to me. I ask that you pray for our staff and for everyone who is connected with the magazine. Thank you for making 2014 awesome and I look forward to seeing you in 2015!



the FREEMANS

We thank our Lord Jesus for a great 2014!
2015 the best is yet to come!

Thank you for the 2014 Diamond Awards.

For our Group Award & for the video "Lead Me Home", thank you
to everyone one from SGN Scoops, you are a gift to our Industry!



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A Letter From the Editor

By Lorraine Walker

NEW...the word itself invokes a certain feeling, a shine, a fresh scent; an un-marred surface, like a frozen pond or a blanket of snow. Sometimes the word brings excitement and endless possibilities. At other times, it brings fear or a feeling of uncertainty.

All of these emotions and ideas can be heard through the words of our writers this month and we are thrilled that you would join us for the beginning of SGN Scoops 2015.

I was privileged to talk with Jim Brady for the cover story this month. I do mean *privileged* because he took some time before one of the Jubilee Christmas performances to sit and share his heart and his goals for the future. We chatted for much longer than I had suggested and I was grateful for his

generosity. The conversation was easy and comfortable and I hope you enjoy the story that resulted from our talk. A follow-up feature will be posted on the SGN Scoops website to tell you the rest of the story. Be sure to look for *Getting Personal With Jim Brady*.

Jim is looking at his new adventure with excitement. I'm sure some might feel a little more trepidation than he expresses, and for those whose anxiety level peaks at the word *NEW* you will find some good suggestions by our columnists. Read about the new direction being taken by a number of artists and take comfort in the knowledge that Jesus is with you, regardless of what road your life is taking.

Happy New Year from all of us at SGN Scoops and Coastal Media Group.

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LIFE LOVE & LEGENDS

BY LOU WILLS HILDRETH



A new year is here, and with it comes another opportunity to carry out the mission to shine the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, according to Matthew 5:16. We are resolved to persevere in getting out the good news! Howard and I are thankful for SGN Scoops magazine-publisher Rob Patz, editor Lorraine Walker, the staff and the writers. Their dedication to spreading the message of hope and expanding the boundaries of gospel music remains strong.



God has blessed our LIFE in gospel music, and I count it a privilege to share my LOVE for it with you. Howard and I are in our mid-eighties, and we thank God for His blessings in the good times and His comfort in the tough times. In 1968 we moved from Arlington, Texas, to Nashville, Tennessee, center of the gospel music industry at the time. Our son David was hired by JD Sumner to play bass guitar for the Stamps Quartet. Our daughter Kathryn took a position with the Benson Company.

After a few months, we established Nashville Gospel Talent Agency. I was the first woman to head a gospel booking and management company, and it was

really a challenge. Howard's salary as a salesman for a record label helped provide food on the table and a comfortable home. We knew we had made the right decision in relocating to Music City.

After being elected to the GMA Board, I had the privilege of serving with industry leaders for many years. A group of us, passionate about Southern Gospel music, worked together to organize the SGMG [Southern Gospel Music Guild], and the Guild has continued to be highly effective.

The move to Nashville also afforded the opportunity of hosting a daily TV show, featuring interviews and gospel music. Coming from a background in television as the host of *Wills Family Inspirational Time*, a pioneer TV series from the sixties, I enjoyed being in front of the camera.

God allowed me to use the gift of encouragement to artists, industry, and friends of gospel music in the 20 years we lived in Nashville. Howard and I moved back to Texas in 1988 to be near our children and grandchildren. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28 KJV)



During our time in Nashville, we began a precious friendship with Bill and Gloria Gaither. When Bill called to invite me to be on those first Gaither videos, we could never have known the impact they would have over the years. Being a member of the Gaither Homecoming Friends, and appearing on the videos, has blessed me with new opportunities to “shine the light” for gospel music.

As we begin this New Year, I pray you will join me in the determination to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, our soon-coming redeemer.

Lou Wills Hildreth gospvideo@aol.com P. O. Box 271106, Houston, TX 77277



Photo A. Gaither Concert, Gaither Homecoming Friends: Becky Isaacs Bowman, Guy Penrod, Lou Hildreth and Jason Crabb.

Photo B. Jim Black, Jim Hill, Lou Hildreth, and Clarke Beasley.

Photo C. Dove Awards: (Front Row) Vestal Goodman and Lou Hildreth. (Back Row) Rosa Nelle, Mary Tom, and Ben Speer.

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A New Beginning

The Jim Brady Trio

**Takes A Leap...
Of Faith**

By Lorraine Walker

Twelve years. Jim Brady spent more than 12 years of his life singing, sharing, laughing and living with the Booth Brothers. His mellow baritone and incredible range made him fit in the group like another brother. However, beginning January 1, 2015, he followed God's call to begin his own journey with his wife Melissa, and Tim Parton. So the obvious question is... why?

"Well it's been a dream of (mine)," Brady begins. "My wife and I actually sang together as The Shulers. Her father was an evangelist, and we did revivals, crusades and churches; a little bit of concert work and a lot of church work."

After 10 years, Melissa's father came off the road. Jim and Melissa continued as The Shulers with a

man who would play a role in Jim's future: Paul Lancaster. Then came the call that would alter Jim's life significantly. The Booth Brothers asked him to fill in until they found another singer.

"After about three weeks of filling in, my wife came to me and said, 'you know what, if you think that's where God wants you, then I'm behind you.' The Bradys had just built a home close to her parents and Melissa's father was ill. Jim wasn't sure it was the right thing to do. In fact, he didn't even consider it.

"Melissa said, 'you know my home is wherever you are and if you feel like this is God opening a door for you, I don't want to hold you back.' We felt like God had opened up a great door and I didn't realize He was doing that, because I was truly just going to help

the guys because I loved them and respected them. So, after a few weeks of filling in I said to the guys, 'If you guys are interested, you know, I'd be interested.'" Then Michael and Ronnie Booth admitted that they hadn't actually auditioned anyone else. Jim Brady was officially a Booth.

"The first night I ever sang with the guys was with the Gaithers in Nashville. I met Bill on stage, in front of all those people." Jake Hess was there, and told Brady that he really "fit" with the Booths. "That was a great compliment. You know, I'm nervous, I'm around all these heroes of mine and Mosie Lister, the great legendary songwriter, said to me: 'you could be a (Booth) Brother, you sound like a Brother.'" Terrific compliments, from a couple of gentlemen who embodied Gospel music.

Jim Brady had an amazing start with the trio that would take his voice and his music to the top of the charts and to the heart of every listener. Many thought the three men would continue on until they rode off into the sunset together.

One of those, however, was not Michael Booth. "It's one of these things that we always knew was a possibility because he had his own group before he came with us. So we are just grateful for the amount of years we got," says Michael. "You can't fault a guy for wanting to be working with his wife! She has spent an enormous amount of time alone. With our [Ronnie and Michael's] wives, we have children. Ronnie's are grown and out of the house, but my wife home schools our kids and although it is hard for her to do that job by herself, she is not alone. She has the burden of being the guy and the gal, raising our kids by herself. But for Melissa it got pretty lonely."

Michael immediately adds, "We want to make sure everybody understands that it was not a situation where Melissa talked her husband into quitting the Booth Brothers. That was *NOT* the case. I think it was Jim realizing that if he was ever going to do it, he needed to do it now. We are just grateful we got almost 13 years to sing with him."

Brady knew it was the right time. "I felt like God was really putting it on Melissa's and my heart to do this ministry. God has opened up doors for her and I, the last couple of years. It was hard to tour with the Booth Brothers and then do what we wanted to. We have a Ladies' Ministry and confer-

ences that she does. We do a lot of traveling together, banquets and marriage conferences."

The Booth Brothers were doing 150 concerts a year, which kept the Bradys apart for 200 days a year. "The reason 'now' is the right time is because first of all, I'm not getting any younger, and we cherish the moments we have together. We can now minister and do what God has called us to do - together - for those 200 days. You can't get those back."

How does it feel to begin again? "It's a leap of faith, it's exciting, it's crazy and it's hectic right now, but I feel like it's the right thing. Once we made that decision, we just had peace that God was leading every step of the way."

"It's hard to leave. This is a great job! When you think about the familiar and the safe and it's all laid out for me; all I do is walk on the bus." With the Booth Brothers, everything was provided that the Jim Brady Trio may not have at the first, from the sound engineer to the driver to the product person. "I just walk on stage and they hand me my mike and I sing, and it's very easy. It's awesome, it's been rewarding to do this but I'm in some ways starting over and now it's all up to me to do all that."

Sometimes when God asks you to leap, it doesn't make sense. "You walk through those doors and He provides, and He opens. It's been amazing the doors He's already opened, the concerts that are being



booked. It's like the floodgates of heaven have opened up and He's given us the opportunity that we had hoped for."

"So you take that leap of faith, and I don't know why we're surprised, we know God says He'll take care of us and walk with us and it's funny how we're surprised when He does." The Jim Brady Trio has signed on with the Harper Agency, the same booking agency that works with the Booth Brothers. The dates are coming in fast.



"Our first date is at Opryland Hotel with Legacy Five. It's kind of neat; December 31st is Paul Lancaster's first day with the [Booth Brothers] and I'll do a little bit (with them) that night. The very next day is our first date as the Jim Brady Trio. It's kind of a goodbye and then the start of a new chapter of my life." On January 4th, the Trio is scheduled to be Dr Charles Stanley's church. "What a way to start out! God has opened the doors and we hope to walk through them and just be faithful."

The Jim Brady Trio is working hard to get their new music to their audience. They have completed a project that was recorded in four days, over the Thanksgiving break, and Daywind will release it, with the first single to be determined. At press time it was tentatively self-titled, but Brady says that may change.

"We wrote a lot for this project, and a couple of songs were written directly to where we're at right now in our life (lives). One of the songs is just called, 'Stepping Out in Faith.' There's another one called,

'The God of What's to Come.' We wrote it specifically for what our life is right now. We pulled a few songs that I've written through the years that I felt would fit, and what we need for our live performances right now. I did some familiar songs that I've written that [people] would know and then we pulled some classics, then the rest are fresh and new."

Brady wanted to make sure all the songs were exactly right for the new Trio. As a prolific songwriting couple, it was hard to decide between all of their 'babies.' "You know you kind of love your 'kids' the best. We didn't want to play favorites, so we bounced it off a lot of friends. So Scott Godsey and Ed Leonard, and the people at Daywind have been really helpful to give opinions and ideas of what would be the best. I think we've got the right collection. We're excited!"

At first it was surprising for Booth Brothers' fans to see who the new voice would be in the Jim Brady Trio, a man who has been known more for his piano work than his vocals. Jim first met Tim Parton when Parton was with the Missouri family group, The Lesters.



"I've known him all these years, but we toured together for several years with the Christmas Jubilee tour and then the regular Jubilee tours, because he was part of Legacy Five. When we recorded all those Jubilee projects, he was arranging and producing and we became great friends. Through the years we've just worked together; even on some Booth Brother dates, Tim would be opening, playing the piano, and then he'd sing a little."

Jim and Melissa invited Parton to join them in their Nashville conferences entitled *Something Beautiful*. "We've worked with him on stage, in the studio, we've had him in our home, so we just felt a good connection with Tim. Not only is he an unbelievable talent, he's also a great singer, and he's just a great guy. He's just a great human being; he has a sweet, gentle



spirit. We loved him and we knew that the personalities would click. When we started singing, the blend just worked. There's something magical that happens when three voices blend well together and that's one of the things that the Booth Brothers have been known for and people love, is that chemistry that those voices have. We actually talked to him about coming before we ever sang together. When we did, it felt right. You know as a singer if you think you can blend with somebody, and then more than that, you got to think about living together on the road in a 45-foot bus or 40-foot motor home."

"Whatever you're in, you're in tight quarters, so you have to be able to get along, work together, and be like-minded in ministry as well as music. We knew that with Tim we would also connect spiritually and in ministry." The Bradys knew that there would be harmony with Parton on and off the stage.

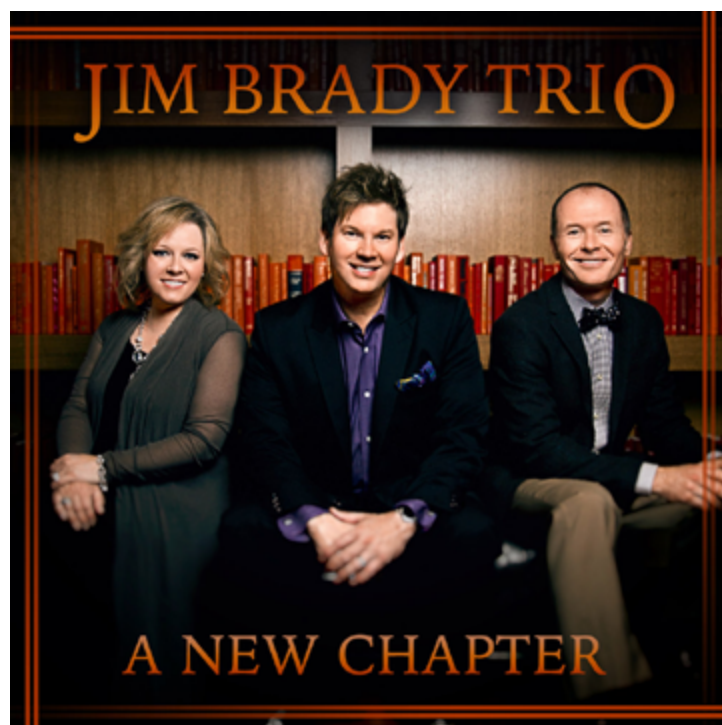
As exciting as this new leap of faith is for the Bradys, Jim says that there are things he will miss, from the Booths, to their driver, to all the men who work with them. "I'll miss those moments of fun with these guys. The music has been wonderful. It's those moments on stage that are so priceless to me: when you feel God working, and you feel the song with the audience. I'll miss that. I'll miss the laughs on the bus I'm sure, because we absolutely had a wonderful time."

"My wife and I love to be together and there's nothing like it, it's just wonderful, but I think sometimes you get out with the guys and you laugh a little more and it's different. We'll have that too, it'll just be a different dynamic."

The Jim Brady Trio's goals are much the same as the Booth Brothers' and as Jim's personal goals: to bring hope. "It seems like everywhere you turn, people are hopeless; tragedies are happening, and they feel

like they have no hope. But we want to remind people that there is hope, there's always hope in Christ. It's more than success, if you can help an audience, help a Christian in their walk with the Lord, to know that it's not just about the here and now. You can remind them of the things we have to look forward to. It's significant when you help people for eternity; whether it is salvation for those that do not know the Lord, or just encouragement for those who do know the Lord, who are going through a hard time. That's really what I would love, that would be huge to us if we felt that we could do that successfully. That would be fulfilling for us."

Find out more about the Jim Brady Trio at www.bradyhousemusic.com. Visit the SGN Scoops website to read a follow-up story called *Getting Personal with Jim Brady*.



A portrait of a young man with short brown hair, wearing a dark shirt, looking directly at the camera. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage.

DREW ZERINGUE

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“Can You Handle The Truth?”

What Will You Do In 2015?

By David Staton

I don't know about you, but if I don't make a “to do” list in the evening and plan my day, I will not get much done the next day. Everyday life has too many distractions that will keep me from getting done what I need to get done. I've never met anyone who was successful who didn't create a plan on how to achieve their goals. Most people will never retire unless they map out a plan in writing with advisors and a team of people that know how to make it happen.

If I had a business that didn't do very well this past year, didn't grow, didn't make a profit and I sat down with a successful business person, they would ask questions like: “How much money did the company profit last year? What is your product? What is the process for getting the product to the consumer?” Then

they would ask a very important question: “Can I see your business plan that makes you think next year will be more successful?” If I don't know the answer to any of these questions, I am almost guaranteed to fail.

We carefully plan our lives and take practical steps to make the things that we care about happen. Many people say that their number-one priority is following Christ, but something is wrong. When Jesus asked the disciples to follow Him, He told them, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.” In other words, “I will show you how to share the Gospel with people.” Then just before He ascended, He told all of us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, baptizing them and making disciples. In other words, He is telling us that when we follow Him, He will teach us

how to share the Gospel. It was important enough that the disciples took the time to write down important events and the words Jesus said so they and we would know how to share the Gospel.

I know many churches that have had about the same attendance every week for the last year, two years, five years, 30 years. I have asked the pastors what they have planned for evangelism in the coming year and what their plan was to share the Gospel with the tens of thousands of people that live in their community. Some have a well thought out plan, but too many churches plan on doing nothing different than they did the previous year. I can tell you that most of those churches will not see significant growth. Why? They dream of their church growing, but dreaming is not enough. The difference between a dream and a goal is a timeline, a plan of action.

How can we say that ministry and serving Christ is our top priority and yet we never sit down and write down a "to do" list for sharing the Gospel. Learning how to share the Gospel effectively with the people and culture that we live in is essential if we are going to make an impact on the world around us. If you are a

gospel singer and claim to be a *ministry* and you can't open your Bible and lead someone to Christ, do us all a favor and don't claim that ministry is a priority in your life! That last sentence may have been a little opinionated, but it's just some free advice.

Maybe you are a singer or in a gospel group and if you're like most, 2014 was a tough year. Good dates are getting harder to come by and church budgets are getting too tight to have any kind of outside singers or evangelists come in. Crowds seem to be getting smaller, but you think 2015 will somehow be better. Let me ask you what your plan of action will be to make it better?

If you have ever said that ministry is a priority in your life, and sharing the Gospel is the most important thing in your ministry, then let me encourage you to sit down with someone that can help you achieve more in 2015. If you're a pastor or church leader, let's work together to do more to share the Gospel in 2015 than we ever have. When we ask God to direct our paths and sit down and create a plan based on His will and His leading, we will be amazed at what He will do in and through us! A New Year that wins more people to the Lord is guaranteed to be a Happy New Year!



The background of the entire graphic is a dramatic, fiery orange and yellow sunset or sunrise sky with dark, swirling clouds. On the left side, there is a circular logo with the letters 'JR' in a stylized font, with a cross integrated into the letter 'J'. Below this, the name 'Randolph' is written in a large, white, serif font. Below the name is a small rectangular photo of John Randolph, a man with a mustache wearing a blue plaid shirt and jeans, sitting and playing an acoustic guitar. The photo has a circular 'JR' logo in the top left corner and the text 'John Randolph' and 'Soakin' Up The Son' at the bottom. To the right of the photo, there is a large, rounded rectangular box with a dark, semi-transparent background. Inside this box, the text 'Country Gospel Artist / Evangelist' is written in a white, cursive font. Below this, the name 'John Randolph' is written in a white, serif font, followed by 'Soakin' Up The Son' in a white, serif font, and 'Available Now' in a white, serif font. Below this, the text 'Churches and Promoters' is written in a white, serif font, followed by 'Now Booking Dates for 2014' in a white, serif font. Below this, the email 'Email: bookings@jrministries.com' is written in a white, serif font, followed by 'Call Precision Artist Management at:' in a white, serif font, and '501-815-4546' in a white, serif font. Below this, the text 'Follow John at' is written in a white, serif font, followed by 'Facebook.com/johnrandolphministries' in a white, serif font, and 'www.jrministries.com' in a white, serif font. At the bottom left of the graphic, there are two logos: the Apple logo with the text 'Available on iTunes' and the Cdbaby logo with the text 'cd baby' and 'DISCOVER MUSIC'.

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Best Days

Are Ahead For

Paul Lancaster

By Craig Harris

A rejuvenated Paul Lancaster steps back on to the stage now with the award-winning Booth Brothers.

Paul Lancaster has already enjoyed a lengthy career in Southern Gospel Music. Now, he's restarting and he's recharged. Lancaster has assumed the role as the baritone singer of the Booth Brothers.

"I'm more than recharged," Lancaster says. "I'm renewed. I'm better in my heart, mind and body than I have been in 25 years. A lot of it was not easy, but God is so good and so faithful."

Lancaster was a member of the Palmetto State Quartet from 2009 through 2012. "When I came off the road in 2012, I'd been doing this for 26 or 27 years," Lancaster explains. "I was just burned out. I'd been on the road for so long, and I had some depression."

Absence didn't necessarily make the heart grow fonder, but a heavy heart experienced a great healing during his time out of the spotlight.

"The two years I've been off have been the best

healing," Lancaster emphasizes. "Life improved so much. My family, my spiritual life ... it was everything. I had a renewal; in my mind, my body and my spirit. I found that contentment that Paul had talked about."

"If this opportunity with the Booths had come along at any other time in my life, I think I could have messed it up."

In fact, Lancaster – who worked in sales and also as a worship pastor over the last two years – wasn't even in search of another opportunity in the Southern Gospel industry.

"I would talk to my wife (Michelle) and say, 'the only way I'll get back out there is if it's this, this and this ... good men, accountability ... I made this list,'" Lancaster remembers. "I said, 'my family is too important.'"

"When the Booths called, my wife and I both

knew it was good.”



The stability within the award-winning quartet peaked Lancaster’s interest. “I’ve been in it too long,” Lancaster notes. “I don’t have the energy to build anything anymore. That was one of the things I had on the list. When God answered that prayer, God answered it good. You can’t be more established and loved than these guys are.”



“To be standing next to these guys, it’s not just the talent and vocals, but it’s the level of men they are. You want to be with good men who have accountability for each other. Accountability is a big thing in the local church. Out here, we only have those guys in the bus for accountability. I’m so honored to be ministering beside these men.”

Lancaster started his career as a member of the Mullins, followed by a two-year stint with the Nelons. Then, when Jonathan Martin left the road for a period of time, he toured with the Martins for approximately two years and also sang with the Greenes.

“Doug Anderson (the baritone singer with Ernie Haase and Signature Sound) told me a few years ago ... he labeled me a stunt singer,” Lancaster relates with a laugh. “In every group, the responsibilities have been different. It’s been so educational.”

“The duties were all different, and I’ve been with mostly family groups. I’d sit there and watch and do my homework. I enjoyed my time with the Nelons. The Mullins, we are still close. I was with them 12 years. They are like my brothers. I can see us (the Booth Brothers) really being there for each other (like that). This is not just people I’m just working for or working with.”



Lancaster steps into the role previously filled by Jim Brady, who is launching the Jim Brady Trio along with his wife Melissa and Tim Parton. Brady was a part of the Booth Brothers for more than 12 years.

“Jim Brady has left some big shoes to fill,” Lancaster points out. “He’s set the bar high. We’ve been friends for 25 years. I have no better friend.”

Lancaster first met the Booth Brothers in the late 1990s and then filled in with the group in 2006. “They already knew they could stand me,” Lancaster says with a smile.

Lancaster’s vocal versatility will be evidenced with the Booth Brothers as he will sing baritone, after singing tenor for much of his professional career. He served as the lead singer with Palmetto State.

However, the group indicates that the sound will not change.

“No, well, let me qualify that,” Michael Booth begins. “No (it won’t change) in the sense of the harmony and the blend. There’s a fraction – depending on how good someone’s ear is – of what they are going



to hear that will be different. There is a different *body* to Jim's voice. It's a little heavier on the low end than Paul, but Paul can still hit the same notes. It just might not be quite the same. Paul is a tenor and has a tremendous range. So, we will start him off, trying to make sure we keep what we have, and then we will introduce his strengths later.

"My challenge for Paul will be allowing him to use his high-end range and allowing me to sing over him, because I am not Jay Parrack or David Phelps. So, we will have to figure out how to let him use what he is capable of doing, without me hurting myself. He's extremely versatile, very smooth and a fantastic pitch singer. He's right in the middle of the pitch. We've always had our eye on Paul. That's why we didn't have auditions. We talked to a total of three people, and that was it."

Lancaster adds, "The fans are very used to this sound. In the blend with the Booths, Jim fills a lot of space. He has a broad tone. We're different in a lot of ways, and we're the same in a lot of ways. I'm watching him and learning from him. I hope to just go in there and do my best. I don't think it will really (change the sound). The overall blend when you hear the group all together, it will be the same. It will be a different flavor as far as the solos, but I'm working with them to

maintain the sound."

The Booth Brothers recently released a new album – entitled "Still" – which will have more of a country flair than the group's recent projects.

"We just wanted to do something a little different," Michael Booth explains. "It's been a few years since we got out of the box. We used to be known for that (country sound), but it's kind of gone away because we did the Lari Goss albums, the Gaither album and the last album we did, which was pretty traditional. But, years ago, we used to push the limits. So this is a *schizo* album. It has anywhere from big band to Lari Goss ballads to country to ... I don't know."



Lancaster's first official performance with the group came on Dec. 31.

"People ask me (what this is like), and the only word that comes to mind is blessed," Lancaster shares. "God is blessing. There're times where I thought my best days were behind me. I had no idea that my best days were ahead of me.

"I want to tear up and cry. My wife has been amazing. I have the total support of everybody around me. I've had amazing response from everybody I know."





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YOUNGER PERSPECTIVE

Michaela Brown

BY ERIN STEVENS

Welcome back to a brand new year of Younger Perspective! We're starting 2015 on a bright, beautiful note with the multi-talented, Miss Michaela Brown! Get to know this gem of a young lady in the next few moments as we take a little trip to the Browns' farm in Iowa. Maybe we'll even stop at Blue Bunny Ice Cream on the way! Michaela, it's all yours...

Erin: When did you feel the call into music ministry?

Michaela: Music was always a part of our family! The day before my 13th birthday, they showed the Jesus film at our church and I rededicated my life to Christ. That night, I told Him I would be a willing life, ready to embark on an adventure with God. This music ministry has been just that! Over the past 15 years, I can see that guiding hand I prayed for so many years ago!

Erin: What does a typical day in the life of Michaela Brown look like at home on the farm?

Michaela: Mornings must include French Press coffee and quiet time. My sister-in-law and I work out together and my office is in town. Le Mars is the home of Wells Blue Bunny Ice Cream and the CEO and his wife are dear friends. They started a ministry center and coffee shop across the street from the Ice Cream Parlor! Our offices are in that building and about a 10-second walk from the best ice cream in the world. That's why I work out, so I can eat ice cream! The rest of my morning is spent working behind the scenes for The Browns, Stage to the Stove (my cooking and music company), and some design work I do. Violin practice is also a part of my days. During harvest season on the farm, you would just scratch all the above and find me in the field, out and about on the farm from sun-up until after

sun-down!

Erin: At what age did you discover your love for the violin? Share the story behind the musician.

Michaela: My sister and I took piano lessons. There were some kids in our church who played violin and we wanted to play just like they did. So we started violin lessons too. My grandma gave us the idea to work up one song with a violin part in the middle; I stood there with my feet planted and played my little song. Adam joined me and eventually Andrew as well. We love the energy they bring to our concerts. We don't just stand there with our feet planted the whole song anymore!





Erin: What was the inspiration behind compiling your cookbook?

Michaela: Mom and the fans thought I should write a cookbook! Ever since I was little, I was always doing something with cooking. Gloria Gaither asked me to do two cooking shows at her Fall Festival a couple years back; that was the perfect event to debut a cookbook. The second one is in the works!

Erin: It's apparent from social media that you take your role of being an aunt very seriously! What is your favorite part about being Auntie to adorable little Tessa and now Baby Charlie?

Michaela: It's one of the greatest gifts in the world! My favorite thing is watching them grow into little persons! I just spent some time with them; we made cookies, played, laughed, hugged and kissed. Everyone needs five days with a two year old and two month old!

Erin: As a chef, I'm sure this answer will be no easy task: what is your go to, can't live without, all-time favorite dish to whip up?

Michaela: I love making desserts and pastries. I still can't make a pie like my Grandma did, but I keep practicing!

Erin: Craziest thing a fan has ever said to you? Go!

Michaela: Well, I just got a marriage proposal through Facebook, does that count?!

Erin: What was your favorite part of filming the group's latest music video? Give the readers a behind the scenes glimpse.

Michaela: COLD! It was in the 30's with 20-mph winds. We threw our coats off, recorded a take, then bundled up and did it all over again. We shot it in front of a neighbor's barn, and had to chase the cows out of the shot! Day two, we went to another neighbor's farm that has all kinds of animals, so we had fun interacting with them while

catching it all on camera. "A Place in the Choir," music video will be released in January, so stay tuned!

Erin: As a young woman in ministry, how do you personally keep Christ the focus of your hectic lifestyle?

Michaela: Well, I'm not perfect and will be the first to admit some days I spend more time with Him than others... But I have come to truly cherish my quiet time with Him. I have some wonderful women in my life who inspire me to keep Him first in all things. It's a daily journey and I love waking up to see what each new day with the King will bring my way!

Even on those days when it seems we can't find the opportunity to have our quiet time, I pray that we won't be so quick to let it go by the wayside. We'll never be perfect and our Heavenly Father doesn't expect us to be, but that's why we need that daily one-on-one time with the Lord. As we embark on this New Year, let's try to keep Christ at the center of those hectic 'every days.' Thanks to Michaela for joining us today, and sharing straight from her heart. Until next month, Scoops fans...

And that's my take on it.



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DJ SPOTLIGHT

Doug Ford



By Vonda Easley

Doug Ford is the Station Manager at Rejoice 89.1, WKNG in Tallapoosa, Georgia. Their station tagline is “Southern Gospel by day, Worship by night,” and we think that is a great motto for a radio station!

We asked Doug some questions. Here are his answers.....

Vonda: At what age did you know you wanted to be a radio DJ?

Doug: Actually, I didn't know it until age 52.

Vonda: What is a “super wow moment” that happened to you while working radio?

Doug: I got to go to the National Quartet Convention. I had always wanted to go and I had a great time. It was exciting seeing all the artists in person. Also, I got lots of free music!

Vonda: Of all the places in the world, where would you like to visit?

Doug: That's easy, Yellow Stone Park!

Vonda: What is your favorite restaurant?

Doug: I love Longhorn Steakhouse and go there every chance I get.

Vonda: Everyone has someone that has impacted his or her life. Who has impacted yours and why?

Doug: My pastor, Brother Darryl Jones. He worked with me on being patient. Trusting God with the little things has been hard for me. He helped me a lot and for that I am grateful!

Thanks Doug for answering our questions as we put you in the DJ Spotlight! Fans can listen to Rejoice 89.1 if they are in the area, or online at www.rejoice891.com.



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New Year's Eve 1976

By Dean Adkins

“Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.”

~Alfred Tennyson *In Memoriam* (1849)

For many people, New Year's Eve means a time to party or to go out with friends and celebrate. My New Year's Eves were usually spent in a different way. When I was young, I would attend a service at a nearby church where local groups would sing out the old and sing in the new. As I grew older, and was able to drive, I started to attend New Year's Eve concerts featuring professional groups. One of the biggest sings was promoted by Cecil “Sonny” Simmons and held at the Charleston (WV) Municipal Auditorium. Over the years I was able to see many of the top groups.

One of those concerts that stands out, was held December 31, 1976. This particular concert was one that I recorded on my portable tape recorder so I can relive it via the recording. There were a number of reasons that this concert was memorable to me. The lineup was very diverse and along with the national groups, some regional groups were also featured. So let me give

a recap of this concert.

The concert opened with “Sonny” Simmons introducing the Telestials. The Telestials at this time were featuring their lead singer Jim Wood on “One Way Flight” and “Here They Come”. Both of these were well received by the capacity crowd.

The next group was a Charleston-based group, the Calvarymen Quartet. The Calvarymen had recently undergone a couple of changes. Squire Parsons had left to join the Kingsmen Quartet and Conrad Cook had left to form his family group, the Calvary Echoes. The Calvarymen still used songs written by Parsons and Cook, including “When My Feet Touch the Streets of Gold”, “There Is Joy In Serving Jesus” and “I Get A Little Heaven.”

Naomi and the Segos were the next group to hit the stage. They sang “Thank God I Am Free” and “Learning to Lean.” The highlight, at least for me, was when they sang “The Dearest Friend” and James Sego gave a moving testimony. He told how he had been delivered from alcoholism and also described his recent stroke. He admitted his voice wasn't what it used to be, but he was blessed to be able sing at all.



The group to follow the Segos was Conrad Cook and the Calvary Echoes. A lot of fans were happy to see Conrad since he had previously been a favorite with the Calvarymen. Conrad's daughter, Robin, was featured on "I Came On Business For The King" and Conrad's unique style was manifested on "Sweet Holy Spirit." The crowd definitely loved this group.

Willie Wynn and the Tennesseans were the next group. Willie was featured on "My Soul Has Been Set Free" and "I Am A Seeker." Ron Hutchins, formerly of the Inspirations and LeFevres, did a masterful job on "He Is So Precious To Me." The other selections were fast, hard-driving songs that had the crowd clapping along.

Roger Horne began his professional career as tenor for the Gospel Harmony Boys and later joined the

Cathedral Quartet. He also spent some time with the Scenicland Quartet. However, on this night, he was joined by his wife Becky and Eddie Burns as the Roger Horne Trio. They sang: "He Kept On Loving Me," and "I Can Feel The Spirit," both written by Roger Horne.

The group that most fans were waiting to see was the Kingsmen. Many would be seeing Squire Parsons for the first time with this group. The Kingsmen began with "Beyond the Clouds," and followed that with "I'd Rather Be An Old Time Christian." Squire was featured on "The Land of Beulah." They also did "When I Wake Up To Sleep No More," and "Gloryroad." Their set concluded the first part of the concert.

Each group came back after intermission and sang a couple of songs. A couple of songs from the sec-





ond part really stood out. One was Willie Wynn being featured on “You’ll Never Walk Alone” and the other was the Kingsmen singing and encoring “I’ve Made A Covenant.”



There were other songs besides those I mentioned, but I hope this will give you a taste of what this concert was like.

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Music Reviews for January

by Sandi Duncan Clark

Winter is here and the cold temperatures followed by heavy winds almost take your breath away! According to our weatherman, and the Old Farmer's Almanac, the southeast is set for a very cold winter. Okay, bring it on! The Clarks love winter!

The holidays are fantastic for most of us, but for many, post-holidays are dreary. Not so for the Christian. We look forward to a new year of opportunity to worship and serve our Lord. We should be united in these goals for the coming year.

We received a new Christmas project after our December deadline, and we have included an introduction of this one for January. Rest assured you will enjoy it if you obtain your own copy of the recording. We have other new music that will bless you, interest you and cheer you. Please contact these artists to support their music!

HAVE A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR, AND
SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS!



THE THOUGHT OF CHRISTMAS

Celebrating Christmas With You

Tribute

Daywind Records

Producer: Roger Talley

While this great presentation came after our December deadline, I can't think of anything better than to begin the New Year with more music celebrating Jesus Christ! This quartet has recorded 11 wonderful songs. Some of them are rousing with brass and orchestra: others slow things down to share the birth of our Lord. The recording begins with "It's The Most Wonderful Time of The Year" and just gets better as it goes on!

One favorite is "Sing Christmas," a collection of some of our favorite Christmas carols combined in a unique arrangement for our worship and enjoyment. Gary Casto sings "Who Came When Jesus Came," to perfection! What an inspiring song!

Another special song, "Cherish That Name,"

brings back so many memories from Christmases past. How many times have we heard and sung this precious song in worship! It is, without a doubt, one of Lanny Wolfe's best songs and what a blessing it is!

While the quartet sings a number of the songs in unison, when they break into perfect harmony, one feels the spirit in their music. The song list is complete with "Jesus What A Wonderful Child," "A Cradle In Bethlehem," "Come On Ring Those Bells," "Silent Night," "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" and "Who Would Imagine A King." It closes with the awesome song written by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene, "Mary Did You Know."

You will definitely want to add this album to your Christmas collection—to enjoy all year when you want a reminder of how God loved us and gave such a wonderful gift for our salvation. Contact Tribute at 615-357-0181 for a copy!



ADOPTED

Butler, Hughes and Hayes

Independent

Producer: Wesley Pritchard

I was happy to receive this recording from a quartet out of Salemburg, North Carolina and I'm excited to share it with you. Darren Hughes, the husband of a sweet lady whom I met while working Gospel radio promotions, Margie Hughes, sings baritone and writes material for the group.

After learning this, I related well to the title song, "Adopted," which Darren penned. Darren and Margie adopted a precious baby girl from China three years ago. The song is the story of that miracle; howev-

er, Darren associates that adoption to that of the Christian into the family of God.

With a total of 12 songs, the song list has more than half originals written by Darren and Michael Hayes. They also include some well-known songs we will remember. There are fast, toe-tapping tunes; slow, moving ballads, and medium tempos for a good variety of music. I do like "Carry The Glorious Gospel," "Marriage Supper," "I Love You," "Adopted," and "Jesus Is Lord."

Other songs are "The Beatitudes," "He Came As A Child," "The Dearest Friend I Ever Had," "Jesus Is Better," "He Washed My Eyes With Tears," and "Around The Cross."

Butler, Hughes and Hayes began as a trio before adding a strong bass singer to the line-up. The vocals can be soft and smooth, as well as strong and moving, depending on the song and the arrangement. You will enjoy their heart for the ministry and the music. Contact them at 919-820-2459 for a copy.



SINGING THE HITS

Jim Brady

Daywind Records

For more than a decade, Jim Brady has been a "Booth Brother," and we have enjoyed this talented young man, both vocally and his song writing. Just recently he and his wife, Melissa have combined their talents to give us another side to their ministry: The Jim Brady Trio. Tim Parton will join them when they hit the road this month.

Daywind Records has put together 16 of Jim's

hits over the past two decades for our enjoyment. One thing I appreciated as I heard each song again, was remembering when and where I first heard it. Jim is a tremendous vocalist and has the great talent to deliver the message in a song with anointing and passion. While these are his original versions of the hits, there are some updates in the music tracks on some of the songs.

Beginning with “Hold On To Jesus,” and ending with “The King Of Who I Am,” there is bountiful music here for any Gospel music fan. If you’ve been a fan for a few years, you will remember each one. I have several favorites: “He Didn’t Throw The Clay Away,” “Until Then,” “Master Of The Sea,” “The King Of Who I Am,” and a wonderful duet with Melissa Brady on “I Still Glory In The Cross.”

As each of us is familiar with Jim and Melissa and their extended careers in Gospel music, we are acquainted with these hits. To obtain a copy contact Jim at www.jimandmelissabradys.com.



TODAY

Mercy's Well

Independent

Producer: Donna King

Mercy's Well has thrilled Gospel music fans with their music for more than a decade and has given us almost as many chart-topping songs as they have years in the industry. Their ability to perform a variety of musical styles successfully and to satisfy fans wherever they travel speaks well of their vocal talent and ability to communicate the songs.

“Today,” written by producer Donna King, is a upbeat toe-tapping song with fiddles and guitars on a Country arrangement, while “Come As We Are,” also

written by Donna, has a more Contemporary arrangement and simple, easy music tracks. Mercy's Well does a good job on both.

I really enjoyed “I’ll Trade This Valley For A Mountain.” There is not one of us who hasn’t traveled the valley and this song is a true promise for each of us. Their first single to Gospel radio, “I Wanna Hear The Gospel,” written by Lee Black and Gina Boe, debuted at #62 on the National Gospel music charts, and promises to go higher.

Other exciting songs are “I Already Know,” “Who You Say You Are” and “The Gospel Of The Second Chance.” I highly recommend *TODAY* should be added to your music library. Contact the group at www.mercyswell.com for your copy.

I Talked To Lou Brock

By Dr. Jeff Steele



I surrendered to the ministry when I was 10 years of age. The legitimacy of my calling was put to the test early on. As a kid I used to stay up late and listen to far off radio stations. One of my favorites was KMOX in St. Louis, Missouri. They were Talk-Radio before Talk-Radio was cool.

One night they had base-stealing legend, Lou Brock, on the air and they were interviewing him. Then they opened the phone lines and invited calls from the audience. I *tried* to resist the temptation, I really did! I failed.

Here I am, a 10-year-old kid, standing in the kitchen dialing over and over (on our brand new push button phone by the way), a radio station in St. Louis, Missouri! Then, miracle of miracles, I *got through*! I was in line to actually talk to Lou Brock!

Nobody told me I might be holding for 45 minutes. Quite frankly I probably wouldn't have cared if they had told me. They finally brought me on and I talked for a couple of minutes with Lou Brock and then it was over. I excitedly went back to bed and was unable to sleep. How do you go from a conversation to a far off place like St. Louis and a conversation with a big star like Lou Brock, to *sleep*?

Here's what I hadn't planned on. At the end of the month the *phone bill* came in at our house! I understand people talk all over the world like it's down the street now, but not back then! A long distance call was a big deal. It had my parent's attention! They

began an investigation that led to... ME! They asked if I had made the call and like any good future Baptist preacher I responded, "Absolutely *not*! No way, not *me*!"

Then my mother sat down on the bed and she said: "Now Jeff, (she didn't call me Dr. Steele or anything) you know you've surrendered your life to the ministry. As a minister you *must* know that telling the truth is a very important thing. I want to ask you one more time: did you make this call?" Under *that* kind of pressure, I '*fessed up* and said, "Yes...yes I did."

What's the point of all this? As a kid I messed up. I did something that was wrong, and then I lied about it. I'm not much and I know that, but I think I turned out okay. My call to the ministry was real and I have been in full-time Christian service for 35 years. I'm saying: be encouraging to and about your kids. Yeah they are going to miss the mark you set sometimes but look at the big picture. See the long haul. God is watching over them and He loves your children more than you do. Lighten up some. That C will become a B or even an A and if it doesn't you will live and so will they. Look around as this New Year begins and enjoy the blessing of your children. They grow up SO fast.



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This chart was compiled from a list of reporting stations. Each month we will be adding more stations.

1	Kingsmen	Oh Yes I Am	34	Social Security Boys	I'm Not What I
2	Legacy Five	Christ Is Still The King			Was
3	Karen Peck and New River	Everybody's Go-	35	Mark Bishop	Pray On The Little Days
		ing Through Something	36	Guardians	He'll Welcome Me
4	Perrys	I Can Trust Him	37	Wards	Coming Out Of Bondage
5	Dunaways	Church In The Kitchen	38	Mylon Hayes Family	There's Still A
6	Shellem Cline	Dinner With Jesus			Refuge
7	Talleys	Hidden Heroes	39	Steeles	Eternally
8	McKameys	There Is Jesus	40	Clyde Felton Jr.	Lord Forgive Me
9	Williamsons	It Was The Word	41	Taylors	Measure Of Grace
10	Brian Free and Assurance	Unashamed	42	Keith Barkley and Family Tradition	It Will Pass
11	Greater Vision	The Blood Hasn't Ever			By
		Changed	43	Mercy's Reflection	Oh What A Dif-
12	Zane and Donna King	No One Like God			ference
13	Ernie Haase and Signature Sound	Water	44	The Gospelaire	Miracle
		Walking God	45	Browders	He Took The Nails
14	Tim Livingston	I Just Miss You	46	Ivan Parker	'Til The Shackles Fall Off
15	Dennis Cook	Crying In The Chapel	47	Wisecarvers	One Prayer At A Time
16	Tony Burchette	We'll Soon Be	48	Scotts	I Won't Let Go Of My Faith
		Gone	49	Carter-Robertson Band	God
17	Old Paths	Love Them To Jesus			Against The Law
18	Lore Family	It Shall Be Well	50	Greater Vision	What A Beautiful Day
19	Bev McCann	Through The Thunder	51	Collingsworth Family	How Great His
20	Caleb's Crossing	What I'm Made			Love/Love Found a Pardon
		To Be	52	Triumphant Quartet	This Blood
21	Gordon Mote	Ain't It Just Like The Lord	53	Bev McCann	Smile
22	Tribute Quartet	Everything I Need	54	Mark Bishop	Love's Gonna Get You
23	Isaacs	I Wanna Be There	55	Hyssongs	Still Blessed
24	Browns	Place In The Choir	56	Whisnants	Glorybound
25	Kingdom Heirs	Joys Of Heaven	57	Bowling Family	That's What I Miss
26	Mercy's Well	I Wanna Hear The Gospel			The Most
27	Bowling Family	I Know Enough	58	Gold City	Part The Waters
28	Kevin and Jennifer	He's Still Doing	59	Blackwood Brothers	You Can Find
		Miracles Today			What I Found
29	Master's Voice	He Saved Me Anyway	60	Partons	Peace Be Still
30	Mark Trammell Quartet	Don't Stop	61	Troy Burns Family	By The Blood Of
		Running			The Lamb
31	Shellem Cline	That Saving Song	62	Terry Collins	Some Things Never
32	Lori Jonathan Trio	What A Precious			Change
		Friend	63	Page Trio	I Wanna Go There
33	Debra Perry and Jaidyn's Call	Bottom Of The	64	Joseph Habedank	Never No Never
		Barrel	65	Exodus	Tell Me Oh Tell Me Again

66	Barry Rowland and Deliverance	Somebody	84	Campbell and Rowly	It's Not About Me
		Go Get God	85	Jim Sheldon	Even After
67	Talleys	The Broken Ones	86	Down East Boys	Beyond The Blue
68	Hyssongs	I Was Blind But Now I	87	Brothers Redeemed	If It Had Not Been
		See	88	Beyond The Ashes	Over For Good
69	Booth Brothers	If God Didn't Care	89	Caleb's Crossing	Isn't The Love Of
70	Nelons	Do Unto Others			Jesus Something Wonderful
71	Paul's Journey	One Foot In Egypt	90	Dunaways	Didn't I Walk On The
72	Josh and Ashley Franks	He Prom-			Water
		ised Me	91	Heaven's Mountain Band	A Cross
73	Declaration Trio	Lighten Up			And Three Nails
74	Gold City	Power Of The Cross	92	Erwins	When Justice Called, Mercy An-
75	Dennis Cook	One Pair Of Hands			swered
75	Watts, Rowsey and Bean	Don't Give	93	Hagees	I've Never Been This Homesick
		A Rock A Chance			Before
77	Crimson Ridge	Hand On The	94	Crystal River	The Pastor
		Plow	95	Eternal Vision	None But Jesus
78	LeFevre Quartet	Children Go	96	Porter Family	It Won't Be Today
		Where I Send Thee	97	Greater Vision	Preacher Tell Me Like It Is
79	Inspirations	God's Word Will Still	98	Poet Voices	He Saw Me
		Stand	99	Rita Broyles	Looking Through The
80	Gaither Vocal Band	Sometimes It			Bars
		Takes A Mountain	100	Little's	God Is Doing A Work
81	Browders	Lift Up His Name			
82	Linda Foster	That Day Is Almost Here			
82	Rick Webb Family	Send Me			

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A portrait of a woman with long, wavy brown hair and bangs, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a red top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green. The text 'Reflections with' is in a blue sans-serif font, and 'Sherry Anne' is in a large, white, elegant script font. Below her name, the title 'Five Loaves of Bread, Two Fish.... and Some Lemons' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Reflections with

Sherry Anne

Five Loaves of Bread, Two Fish.... and Some Lemons

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade”... we’ve heard it, seen it and lived it—*Amen*? I’ve always liked lemonade stands growing up and had many of them. From there I went to making and selling my own handmade greeting cards for a nickel or dime (depending on how fancy it was) to eventually owning three businesses. Entrepreneurialism started early with me, and my family.

It sure is nice to make your own hours, rules, prices, vacations, etc. But, what many people do not realize when you are self-employed, especially with a small business, is that there is no one to pick up the slack when you are sick, injured or otherwise unable to perform work responsibilities. That the future of the company rests squarely up on your own two shoulders and if you don’t show up, for the most part, you don’t get paid.

I remember, vividly, that 7:00 am phone call I got within an hour of opening my chiropractic office for the day: “Dr. Sherry?” “Yes,” I answered. “This is Barb’s husband... Barb (my only employee and front end office

manager) will not make it in this morning; she passed away last night of a hemorrhagic stroke.” She was 54.

Wow. Just like that. She was gone.

Alone (well, we’re never really alone are we?) I went to work. I ran both the front end and the back end and was exhausted by the day’s end. Some patients understood my shocking and grievous situation; yet, others were a bit belligerent that I had fallen behind on my otherwise punctual schedule. Barely making it through the day, I wondered how I would ever make it through the week, but I did.

Later that week, I was scheduled to be the featured speaker for a women’s event and the topic of discussion was servanthood. Feeling I had nothing to give, and raw with emotion, I took all day to pray and prepare. Truth be told, I believe that sermon may have been one of the most powerful (and anointed) messages I ever gave....

People ask me: “How do you do it?” Honestly, there are some days it is so hard for me just to get up out of bed in the morning. While I have never been diagnosed with depression, I do think I have had my fair share of being under its spell a season or two...or three. So how *do* you do it? How do you *get up* again when you’ve been sucker-punched? Having experienced this physically—yes, I was bullied at one point—I can assure you, it is no easy feat! But, the answer is simple: just put one foot in front of the other... and move forward.

There are really only three directions a person can go in: backward, into your past; sideways, which is really stagnation; or forward, into the future. It was rough that week, but it ended with me saying to God: “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (Job 13:15). Even though dark clouds hover over, there is a rainbow on the other side of the storm. We must keep our eyes on Jesus. I know that every time I take mine off, even for a minute, I sink... thankfully, He still grabs my hand when I reach for His (Matt 14: 22-32).

There are some things that there just are no answers for, and we have to trust God, not man. Shortly after my secretary’s death, a couple of patients began discussing psychics and talking to the dead. I believe the Lord was showing me what people turn to when they take their eyes off of Him, looking for answers, demanding that anyone break the silence. While mediums may give you information you want to hear, they will turn up empty every time. They can’t explain God’s sovereignty, His right and power to govern without outside interference, as one definition puts it (1 Chron 29:11-12, Ps 103:19).

Will all be married? No. Will all have children? No. Will all have their dream job, house, car, vacation, life? NO! As hard or as crazy as this may sound, life is not all about what we want. Much more than that: it’s about serving a higher “Being” than ourselves, living for a higher Purpose than we imagine, and helping others, despite how our enemies persecute us. Is this not what Jesus taught in the Gospels?

Retrospectively, we have all seen how plans that didn’t turn out then, were for our best now. Everything is to sharpen us and make us stronger, make us better (not bitter), victors (not victims). In this way, we can reach back and help somebody else out after we’ve come through ourselves.

How can you best serve God? Ask God what gifts He has given you to best make a difference in this world; He will multiply what you have, such as when He fed the 5,000 with only five loaves of bread and two fish






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(Matt 14:13-18). If you feel you are called to be a mother but are unable to have kids, adopt or start an orphanage. Desire to be married but are single? Maximize your time to develop and explore your personal interests, talents and goals. Don’t have a job but have a skill? Start your own company. Take the talents and the resources you’ve been given, and use them to the best of your ability to glorify God. I trust you will ultimately find this is most satisfying not only to God, but also to you.

I don’t know why I went through some of the hair-raising, near death experiences I have in life, but the Lord knows when it is our time; and for those of us still here, there is a purpose. Life is so short and fragile; there is still a lot of living to do and serving to do. “Help me, Lord, to remember this, especially during the times when I want it all to end...”

In case you are wondering, I never did hire another secretary... I just picked up the pieces and moved forward... lemonade anyone?



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JAY PARRACK AND VOCAL EVENT: BLENDING THE OLD AND THE NEW

by Paige Givens

If you haven't been fortunate enough to hear Jay Parrack, Anthony "Bubba" Hallman, and Darren Morton, the men who encompass the group known as Jay Parrack and Vocal Event, then you are definitely in for a wonderful experience. The group has a special harmonious blend that is not always easy for listeners to find these days. Their lyrics, melodies, and harmonies have a special blend of the old Southern Gospel sound with a Contemporary lilt that will take you straight into the presence of the Almighty One that they are singing to.

All three singers grew up with musical backgrounds and have come together to form a wonderful trio of personalities and talents. Jay, tenor, was born in Smackover, Arkansas and was raised in Corinth, Mississippi. He says, "I grew up hearing my dad (Johnny Parrack) sing and began attending concerts at a very early age when he was with the Kingsmen Quartet. I was probably nine when I sang my first solo in church." Jay went on to spend a decade singing tenor with the Gold City Quartet. He was the noted featured singer of songs such as "God's Building a Church" and "Are You Ready?"

Lead singer Bubba Hallman grew up in Alabama. "I grew up and still reside in Cordova. It's a small town of about 3,000 people," says Bubba. "Both sides of my family are musical so I've grown up around music and singing my entire life. I was part of a quartet when I was about eight years old. It was my sister, my two cousins and myself, and the only song we sang was "He's Still Working on Me," by the Hemphills. It's so awesome that my children are now singing that

same song at church. My mom, dad and aunt traveled and sang a large part of my childhood so I fell in love with Southern Gospel music. My mom listened to The Southern Gospel Caravan EVERY night out of Birmingham, Alabama, which definitely added to my love of Southern Gospel music."

Baritone Darren Morton also grew up in Alabama. "I grew up in Corner, Alabama and started singing in the children's choir at church when I was three." Darren recalls, "The first performance I remember was in the musical *Down By The Creek Bank* when I was three years old at church. I have always had a love for music, whether it is performing, writing and recording it. The creative process is so fulfilling to me. Taking an idea for a song then growing that song from infancy to maturity into completed production is a blast!"

The group began its journey with a night of shared singing, when Darren and Bubba asked Jay to sing a few songs with them. Jay agreed to sing with them for one night, and the sound that resulted was very special. After hearing what a great blend the three had, they all became eager to approach a group singing ministry on a more constant and committed level.

Each member of Jay Parrack and Vocal Event has special skills that they bring to the group in order to make things flow smoothly. Bubba handles sales, while Jay handles the MC duties and produces the CD projects. Darren handles the live audio and video details. In the studio, he records, edits, mixes and masters the CD projects in his recording studio, Gat3 Midsouth (www.gat3midsouth.com).

The group has a sound that is uniquely its own. Dara Murphy, their manager and booking agent, describes it as, "Southern Gospel with a strong harmonic blend. Jay Parrack mostly arranges the songs, with many old hymns and Southern Gospel favorites turned into today's Gospel style. We have incorporated some more Contemporary Southern Gospel sounds into some songs, but always return to the true old-time southern gospel heritage."

The strong harmonic blend is definitely noticed by listeners. "We are blessed to have a natural trio blend between us, but we also put in the hours of practice it takes to improve and perfect a great blend. We enjoy being together in the studio and on stage and look forward to these sessions. We have a great camaraderie between us and we have a clear understanding of how fortunate we are to have this," says Jay.

With 2015 now here, the guys are looking forward to new experiences and reminiscing about the old ones. One particularly interesting experience from 2014 stands out. Darren recalls, "While traveling through Michigan in 2014, we thought we'd take a chance at 'getting into' the University of Michigan's 'The Big House' football stadium. When we drove up, it was completely empty. We saw a single man on a cart riding around and Jay flagged him down. Somehow, before we knew it, Jay was on the cart waving for us to jump on. We hitched a ride into the empty stadium and managed to sing an a cappella version of 'Who Am I,' smack in the middle of that empty stadium. We had a blast as we imagined singing to a packed crowd. The acoustics were out of this world. Somehow we managed to run a few bleachers and make it down to the center of the field. Jay can talk his way through most anything. We're glad he's 'along for the ride'!"



with their new expectations. When looking forward to 2015, the group had one main goal: to sing as much as possible. They are always looking for more and more



opportunities. Their prayer is to grow their ministry and to keep their priorities in order while doing so.

Jay Parrack and Vocal Event have a current CD project, *Sometimes He Whispers*. Dara Murphy says, "This project definitely has its share of true Southern Gospel arrangements but also has a few surprises such as the title track 'Sometimes He Whispers.' This song is simply contemporary gospel with incredible lyrics that speak loudly to the hearts of the people. We, as a group, went through many trials throughout the recording of this tune and found that the lyrics in this song are true to their simple meaning. We ended up producing a concept video for this song and had a great time in doing so. One song on this project, 'Where Eternity Begins,' was written by Darren and Bubba and was recorded with a background choir. 'Since You Gave Me A Song,' and 'I Have Decided,' are great, jived-up Southern Gospel tunes that we love to sing and perform live on stage, and are always crowd pleasers!"

Whether they are in the studio or live on stage, Jay Parrack and Vocal Event are truly ministering with their music. They look for this New Year to be packed full of more music, more opportunities, and most of all, more of Jesus. "We simply want to worship our Lord and bring His gospel to the people. We want to have fun while doing it...but our ultimate goal is to truly share His gospel and see lives changed."

To learn more about Jay Parrack and Vocal Event, or for booking or ordering products, visit them on Facebook or call Dara Murphy at 256-591-2446.

Just like the unique blend of old and new sounds, the group is also blending their old experiences

Photos courtesy of Kim Lancaster-Brantley and Dara Murphy.



WISDOM FROM WELLS

by Dusty Wells

Happy, happy New Year! I just love being able to say that, just like I love saying, “Merry Christmas” to all those that I come in contact with during that special time of the year! There is something so refreshing and invigorating about the NEW in our lives. Yes, I also understand NEW can also bring about fear and other feelings at times as well. It is always scary to take those first steps of venturing into the NEW. But I so love the scripture that says, “*He won’t leave us nor forsake us*”, and for me I know that means the NEW that is so important for my own growth in Him and where He is taking me on this journey.

Ever since I can remember (which is many years at this age), I have strived to make New Year lists of resolutions and *things* that I wanted to accomplish or do differently in the New Year. I would sit down with my pad of paper, my journals, my Bible, sit there and pray and sit there some more, maybe eat a few Christmas

cookies, write a list of things to try to accomplish, tear the list up, eat some more Christmas cookies and try to make my list so spiritual. Of course there was always some element about eating more healthy and dieting... of course I would then eat a few more Christmas cookies. Finally I would get my list finished. I then would share it with a few others and the New Year discipline would start off so good those first few days, and then what do you know? I would fall back into all of the old, and the list would miraculously disappear to never be seen again. And I would say, okay, next year I will do better. I know many of you have done the same, so just admit it.

So here it is, the beginning of a NEW YEAR, and I’ve decided that I will not make a list of resolutions. I won’t write one out, nor will I make unkept promises and vows to myself, but what I will do and challenge others to do, is to pray a simple but

heartfelt prayer to our great Daddy God. And here it is...

"Father, thank You, thank You, thank You for this past year. Thank You for the good times and the bad times, the difficult climbs up the steep mountains, and also those dark desolate lonely valleys that I have found myself wandering about so aimlessly. Thank You for the trying, difficult times and the times of experiencing Your great joy and peace. Thank You for all of the junk, garbage and debris that I have walked in and dealt with. Thank You for bringing me to that place of NEW that is right before me, and grasping, knowing and accepting that the NEW begins with me, wanting to make right choices and striving to become

more like You in all that I am so graciously entrusted with. I thank You, that You love me endlessly and unconditionally. You are everything to me, and NEW begins with me learning to trust You more. I am yours Lord, and today I will start NEW once again. You are faithful always and I love you so very much"

Of course dear ones, you can pray your own prayer...tell Him exactly how you feel and why you feel that way. He already knows, but He loves to hear you share your heart with Him. Your NEW is right before you, just like mine is as well.

So happy, happy New Year my friends; it's your time to shine NEW!



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THE BOWLING FAMILY

NEW BEGINNINGS AND NEW FACES FOR 2015

By Candi Combs



The Bowling Family goes into 2015 with new faces and that gives this family a new beginning, as these faces are young and full of talent! Hope Bowling is now the youngest artist to be part of a Singing News number-one charted song with her contribution to, "I Know Enough."

The most exciting part of the 2015 line up of the Bowling Family includes a full live band. Hope is now standing next to her mother Kelly and father Mike Bowling, making this a real family treat since the departure of Troy Peach in late 2014. Mike's nephew, Blake Bowling, is picking on acoustic, bass and electric guitar. Blake, a guitar instructor from Kentucky, is fully capable of bringing the sounds that Bowling Family friends love to hear.

John Jeffrey has been a vital member of the stage sound as a gifted keyboard artist for many years. Under John's direction along with Blake, is Logan Rodgers from Arkansas who has joined the group with a full range of percussion. "I grew up with a live band, it feels good to be surrounded with these young men,"

said Kelly Bowling who gained early notoriety with the Crabb Family.

"A live band allows so much more flexibility to our presentation of the Gospel than when we are singing to tracks. We can make adjustments quickly as the Spirit is leading," explained Mike Bowling. In a recent Virginia concert, Mike was able to change up the program easily when the congregation was responding. While finishing up his lead part on, "I'll Be Alright as Soon as I Touch Calvary," Mike was able to join folks praying at the altar while the band made a seamless transition to music that Hope could sing as the lead part. Mike says, "That is the kind of response that makes the difference between being singers and being ministers, and we take the stage only to bring ministry to people."

It appears that Mike and Kelly are the leaders of this family's musical presence. That is what most people think when they see the new Bowling Family. But the rising stars are the Bowling Sisters. Ranging in ages from 14 down to eight, Hope is now joined on stage with



sisters Katelanne and Gracie for their own set. Mike and Kelly are the parents of these three sisters who are gifted with the natural ability to hear parts.



“They can find their own notes, hear what the other is singing and take off,” states proud mom, Kelly. “Every night the girls are gaining confidence.” When not on the road, the girls are working with a vocal coach who is no stranger to sister harmony. Music lovers will be hearing more from these girls throughout their concerts.

Another new feature of the expanding Bowling Family is a set of music that features Hope singing with her sister, Katelanne and joined by Blake. Hope says, “I am pumped about traveling with my cousin, Blake, and can’t wait for everyone to hear his talent. There is something so cool about traveling with family!” This Bowling trio enjoys jamming on the bus between concerts. They have worked up some Isaacs songs that gained popular-

ity with Gospel music fans before these three were even born. They take over the stage while Mike and Kelly sit back and envision what God has in store for so much raw talent.

As their repertoire grows along with their confidence, it won’t be long before the message of Jesus is delivered by the youngest Bowlings. This fact alone means the future of music is bright. Even more encouraging is the willingness of these youngsters to deliver the message to reach their own generation. Just like the lyrics of a classic Bowling Family song, “Everything is going to be okay,” this new beginning for the Bowling Family is just the beginning of great

things!



Find out more about the Bowling Family at www.bowlingsonline.com.



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Celebrate a New Day

By Kelly Nelon Clark



It's a new day! It's a new year! It's time to lay all those things that have held us back, down at the feet of Jesus!

Do you have things in your life that you need forgiveness for? Give it to Jesus and ask for His forgiveness. We are so blessed that we have a Savior who loves, cares and forgives! And guess what else? His mercies are new *every single day*.

Lamentations 3:22-23 (KJV): *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

That is such a great word from the Lord!

We always make New Year's resolutions and sometimes we fall short of making them, or keeping them, but with God, mercies are new *every single day* of our life. So no matter the day of the year, know that God has a new start for you.

As I'm writing this I'm thinking that someone may be reading this who thinks that they have done so much and been so bad that God will never look their way or ever forgive what they have done. *You can never go so far that God won't forgive or love you.*

Give Him a try I beg you! Many times our family or our friends or people we look up to will let us down. People are human and prone to failure. But with God there are no disappointments. You can always depend on Him!

I am encouraging you, as well as myself, to put our trust in the God who holds the universe in His hands, but also holds our lives and our hearts too.

He loves you! He cares for you! You can trust Him!

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The Guardians

By Tina Wakefield

The Guardians. The name itself implies a sacred calling: to guard, to watch over something or someone. What could three men from a small town in Ohio have to do with a name like *The Guardians*? I envision a watchman who keeps a path safe for those who come, and that is just what this ministry has accomplished for over 26 years: watching over the ministry of their music to the souls who will be touched as they present the Gospel of Jesus Christ through words and music. As the group states, “We are here for the purpose of ministry, not to make ourselves great, to reach more souls and expand the ministry. What matters is what we do for others, not who we are.” Dean Hickman states the group’s purpose is not just to entertain, but also to minister.

Just as a minister searches for just the right words from God to convey a thought to a congregation, a singer or group searches for songs that will touch the very heart of someone to receive salvation, encouragement or healing; that is the focus of this group of men called The Guardians.

The Guardians have been a weekend-ministering group for over 26 years as some members have been involved with other occupations, ensuring that our Nation’s most critical assets are secure. We applaud these men for their dedication to our Nation and are thrilled that over the last two years they have been able to turn over those responsibilities and focus on a full time ministry in music. Just as they stood guard over the Nation’s security and freedom, they realize that their calling is to reach as many captive souls as possible and

introduce to them *spiritual freedom*. They constantly remind themselves and their audiences that life is only a vapor that will pass away, and the one thing that will survive the life to come is what is done for Christ.

The group is fully aware that many people will never enter the doors of a church service for a sermon, but will come to listen to great music sung with passion. Sermons reach great audiences, but where a sermon cannot go, a song can, and that is the driving force behind the Guardian’s dedication to continue on in ministry reaching a variety of audiences. When I asked Dean Hickman what would the Guardians be doing if not singing Gospel music he replied, “The only way we would not be singing Southern Gospel music is if we weren’t able because of health or similar-type issues.” This type of dedication is what makes an anointed and successful ministry. Hickman states that, “When the focus is on Jesus Christ and not self-gratification, the Word will not return void and God will bless your ministry with calmness and love within the group which will create and set an atmosphere for ministry.” He says that this is great advice for new groups starting out: keep Jesus Christ as the sincere focus of each member of the group and you will be amazed at the impact of your ministry on others. I would have to say that this is great advice from a group who has, over the course of 26 years, had only one personnel change when a member retired.

I asked Dean Hickman what are some of the changes he has observed in Southern Gospel music over

his years of ministry. Dean says that in his opinion there is no change; groups have come and gone, but those who have great ministering songs and sincere hearts have been blessed by God and have great success in Southern Gospel music. The purpose of Southern Gospel has remained constant in Dean's opinion: Ministering directly to the hearts of individuals. The audience has aged to a degree, but the up-and-coming generation of older adults still love great Southern Gospel music.



Dean says that with the influx of younger talent into Southern Gospel music, the future is bright if they just stay dedicated to Christ and the music. Many factors are involved in ministering for these young groups. Bus breakdowns, illnesses, handling financial difficulties, and traveling, are just a few of the obstacles groups face. Those who stay focused on Christ will stand the course of time.

The Guardians are comprised of three dedicated men who bring their extraordinary talents together to form a powerful trio in Southern Gospel music. For over 26 years this group has touched the hearts and lives of audiences all over the United States.

Neil Uhrig joined his dad Dale in 1988 to officially form the group and brought with him a great ability to harmonize. Neil is the official emcee of the group and is described as having a true servant's heart.

Dean Hickman has also been a member of the Guardians since their beginning in 1988 and has been

blessed to sing first tenor for the group. Once you experience the voice of Dean Hickman you will forever be a fan.

John Darrin Rowsey replaced Elba Heilman when he retired and brought unlimited talent to the group, enabling them to expand their ministry. John has recorded and written such songs as: "I Am Redeemed," and "Singing With the Saints." John has also been the recipient of a Dove Award.

As with everyone who has spent time on the road together, there are numerous mishaps, tragedies, and humorous events that take place. I asked the Guardians about some of the lighter moments of their travels and these are the experiences that came to mind:

"We were introduced as The Cathedral Quartet at one venue and we sang the entire concert and never corrected the mistake."

"We once left a member of the group in a restaurant and he had to call his daughter to contact us at our next venue before we realized that he was missing!"

"One member missed a plane because he slept through the entire boarding process and had to catch a flight three hours later."

"We had a member injured while unloading the sound equipment and we had to have our sound engineer sing his part as the injured member spent the evening in the ER."

Traveling for over 26 years has brought many experiences that could be shared, but when asked about the one moment that stands out as memorable in the group's history, one story came to mind. The Guardians were singing during an afternoon service when a gentleman that the church had been praying for, for over 40 years, came forward and gave his heart to God! The church literally erupted in shouts and cheers at his salvation. The group has also witnessed young people getting out of their seats during John Darin Rowsey's song "Let the Healing Begin," and receive healing of broken hearts and damaged lives.



The Guardians have had many top 40 songs and in 2014 reached #20 on The Singing News Charts. When I asked if there were any awards the group would like to share or mention, this is the reply I was given: "Glorifying God while reaching the hearts of the people we are privileged to minister to, and seeing their lives changed, is our number one reward." This is truly a group with a humble spirit and heart of ministry.

The Guardian's latest release "Let My Heart Sing," was professionally arranged and orchestrated by

the one and only Lari Goss, *the name* in Nashville. The vocals and mixing were performed at Harvest Studios in Huntington, West Virginia, under the direction of John Darin Rowsey and Engineer, Mark Hale.

You may contact The Guardians through the website or by calling Neil Uhrig at 614-716-8089 or Dean Hickman at 614-668-5212. You may also purchase music directly from their website www.theguardiansmusic.com, CD baby or iTunes.



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SMART-ER

Goals for the New Year



By Laurette Willis, CHC

"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:2-3).

Where are you going? Without goals, how will you know whether or not you are on the right track? How will you know if you are on the road to your destination if you don't recognize the signposts along the way (smaller goals on the way to your larger goals)?

SMART-ER Goals to INSPIRE You.

We've heard of SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound). Here are SMART-ER goals, which honor God and help keep you on track!

Your SMART-ER Goals involve these seven steps:

- S-Seek God
- M-Make a Commitment
- A-Ask
- R-(w)Rite the Vision
- T-Thank God in Advance;
- E-Expect and R-Receive

S - Seek God. Get in a quiet place and seek the presence of the Lord. Meditate on scriptures about the Lord and what He has said and promised; such as "I am the Lord that healeth thee;" "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life;" "I will never leave you nor forsake you;" and others. (Matthew 6:33) *"Seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness and ALL these things will be added unto you."*

M - Make a Commitment. Commit yourself to God. Let Him know you not only want the Lord's guidance, but that you will follow it, too. (Proverbs 16:3) *"Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established"* and (Psalm 37:5) *"Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."*

A - Ask - We want to ask in line with God's will. Ask Him. (James 4:2) *"You have not because you ask not. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."* and (John 14:3) *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*

R - (w)Rite the Vision! Write your goals down in each area. (Habakkuk 2:2) *"Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry."*

T - Thank God in Advance. Thank the Lord for His guidance, direction, favor and the fulfillment of these goals. (Philippians 4:6) *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

E - Expect (1 John 5:14-15) *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”* Expect MORE from God!

R - Receive (Mark 11:24) *“Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive (the word in Greek is “TAKE”) them, and you will have them.”*

Now Praise the Lord! Really! Thank Him in a BIG way. Start praising Him and thanking Him for answered prayer. “I thank You, Lord, that You have heard me and that we will reach these goals together. I praise You, I worship You, and I give you ALL the glory for what You are doing in my life!”

Make this your year for SMART-ER Goals that honor God and keep you on track – guiding and guarding your ADVENTURE in Faith!

Christian Fitness Expert and Certified Health Coach Laurette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry with DVDs, Training, and Classes by Certified PraiseMoves Instructors on six continents (<http://Praisemoves.com>). ©2015

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The *Pastors* Corner With Stephen J. Bedard

The Importance of Music in the Life of a Christian

When Music Breaks Through

There are different ways that people connect with God. Some people connect through acts of service as they volunteer at the food bank or some other charity. Some others have an emotional experience during every worship service, feeling God's presence in an almost a tangible way.

I connect with God through the life of the mind.

A colleague has accused me of being an "egg-head." I am the sort of pastor who will read a biblical commentary for fun rather than just searching for the information needed for the sermon. I was my happiest as I was translating a passage from the Greek so that I could get a deeper understanding of what the author originally said.

This is the way that I always have been. Before going into the ministry, my friends saw the sermon as something to be endured to get to more music, while I saw the music as something to be endured to get to the sermon.

It is not that I was anti-music. It was more that music was not my way of connecting with God. However, something changed that.

One of the last churches that I pastored was a small, traditional church with an older congregation. Our average age was in the early 70's, with a number of people in their late 80's and early 90's. Having attended younger churches with contemporary music and worship bands, I did not see music as being a powerful part of what God would do in that church.

What I did not expect was that God was going to use this little church to burst my intellectual bubble and show me new ways to connect with God.

I still remember the Sunday. Like all other Sundays, worship time was not a time for me to connect with God. My job was to facilitate the worship of the congregation. The service had been planned. A call to worship had been chosen, hymns were selected and everything I needed for my sermon was put in place.

I had always spent the services looking for the next task that I needed to complete. I would go over the bulletin to make sure the order of service was being followed and that no announcements were being forgotten. I would double-check that my Bible was bookmarked at the correct passage and would give my sermon a quick overview.

In case you are wondering if I was really that scattered, our services were recorded for shut-ins and only my microphone was recorded. Not only did they get my terrible singing, they got my start and stop singing as I was going through my routine. It was the only major complaint I received from my congregation.



I bring all this up to say that God interrupted me during what I was trying to do. As I was looking at the bulletin or the Bible or the sermon, I became distracted. I heard the congregation singing. Something was happening. They were singing a song of faith. I do not mean that they were singing a classic hymn, although they were. They were singing from a place of their own faith.

What I heard that day was not just the mouth-ing of decades-old lyrics. What was behind those words were generations of experiences with God. Those stories that I had heard over tea and cookies were coming out in worship. Testimonies of God's provision. Tales of God's presence in times of grief and loss. All of those stories were there.

The experience was so powerful for me that I actually looked up to see if there were angels floating in the sanctuary. The truth is that there were angels singing in that room that day. Those angels had false teeth, walked with walkers and needed naps.

What I realized is that what happened that Sunday was not for them. The presence of God was a comfortable sweater for them. That experience was for me.

I was so busy doing the requirements for my employment as a pastor that I had forgotten about God. I needed to be reminded of Whom I really worked for.

I was no different than Martha in the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. Truth be told, I have always been sympathetic toward Martha; Mary could have gotten up and helped with the tasks that were required.

What Martha (and I) learned was that in worship, the only place to be is at Jesus' feet. Yes, we need to make sure that everything is planned for a service, but music calls us beyond our own preferences and habits.

I am still the person that loves to study and to engage my mind in the things of God. But God broke through that to reveal the power of music in worship. The singing of some elderly saints was used to remind me that I really belonged at the feet of Jesus.

Stephen Bedard is a former Baptist pastor. He is currently an Adjunct Instructor at Emmanuel Bible College and the Chaplain at Lorne Scots Regiment. His website is www.stephenjbedard.com.



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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.



Lou Wills Hildreth appears on the Gaither Homecoming Videos, and is a founding member of Texas First Family Of Gospel Music, the "Singing Wills Family." She helped pioneer Christian television as host of "Wills Family Inspirational TV." After moving to Nashville in the sixties, she was the first woman to own an artist management agency. Lou is an inductee of the Texas Gospel Music Hall Of Fame, GMA Gospel Music Hall Of Fame, SGMA Hall Of Fame at Dollywood, and the Christian Music Hall Of Fame. She is a recipient of an Honorary Doctorate Of Sacred Music from Louisiana Baptist University. Recently, Gaither Homecoming Magazine named Lou in the "Hall Of Honor" series, and the Southern Gospel Music Guild gave her a "Lifetime Achievement Award." Lou is celebrating a 65th wedding anniversary in 2011 with Howard, and they live in Houston near son Dr. David Hildreth and daughter Kathryn Mumaw, and 4 grandchildren. Visit Lou at: <http://louhildreth.com>



Sandi Duncan Clark and Cliff Clark make their home in Easley, S.C. where they enjoy traveling, gardening, and the beautiful South Carolina weather. Sandi has worked in journalism for more than

thirty years, and she is thankful that her love for God and Gospel music provides a great opportunity to positively impact the careers of so many in Gospel music. Email Sandi at sandi@sgnscoops.com.



Christian Health & Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is an author with Harvest House Publishers, and the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry with DVDs, a training program and PraiseMoves Instructors on four continents (<http://PraiseMoves.com>), on Facebook <http://on.fb.me/PraiseMoves>. Laurette invites readers to get started on the road to better health and fitness for spirit, soul and body. For a free, easy- to- follow 21 day program visit: <http://ChristianFitnessKit.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

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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 [HYPERLINK "http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm"](http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm) and a food and travel blog at <http://jennifersjourneys.net> Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net>.



Angela Griffin is an International Field Representative for Love A Child, Inc., a 501 c 3 humanitarian organization to the island of Haiti. A rich Christian family heritage guided her path to minister in song to the broken, to feed the hungry, and lead others to Christ.

On December 31, 2002 she married Tim Griffin, an accomplished Southern Gospel pianist. Tim and Angela then combined their musical talents and formed the group "The Griffin's." They have traveled throughout the Southeast spreading the love of Christ.

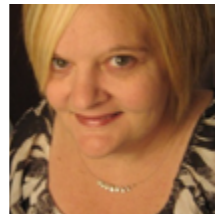


Dusty Wells is a man of many talents and multiple skills, from his speaking engagements across the country, to traveling and encouraging various artists in the Christian music genres. Dusty has a passion that is evident from the moment you meet him.

Dusty is a man who remains passionate and secure in the calling and destiny upon his life. He has come to realize the importance of finding purpose and clear direction for not only his life, but also the lives of those he comes in contact with, no matter what stage of life they may be in. Growing up in a very dysfunctional home, surrounded by all types of abuse, Dusty had every excuse to be a failure in life. He grew up on welfare, having to steal his daily necessities of life at times, being surrounded by drugs,

alcohol and pornography. He was raised by a mother who was married multiple times, living in a housing project on the wrong side of town. But in the midst of what seemed to be complete devastation, God had different plans of success for Dusty. At the age of 14, a precious couple took time out of their own lives to invest in Dusty...thus leading Him to the Lord. His life is a testimony of God's relentless love and deliverance, and is one of the most triumphant stories told in modern Christianity. Dusty is confident in the fact that if God can do it for him, He can do it for anyone, no matter the situation.

Dusty and his wife of 33 years have four children, and two grandbabies with one more on the way. They make their home in Nashville, Tn.



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!



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

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Dixie has been married to Pastor Paul Phillips for 35 years. The couple has been honored to serve the congregation of the Gospel Lighthouse Church in Floyd, Iowa, for 31 years. They have four grown children and four "perfect" grandchildren.

Dixie is a ghostwriter, award winning children's author, and songwriter. She and her sister-in-law Sharon won the 2012 Singing News/Solid Gospel Songwriters Search with their song "Hidden Heroes." Her favorite pastime is counting her blessings. If you'd like to know more about Dixie, visit her website at www.floydslighthouse.com or www.phillipsandphillipsmusic.com. You can e-mail Dixie at Phillips4Him@myomnitel.com.



My name is Tina Wakefield and I am currently Music Minister for Amazing Grace Worship Center in Alabaster, Al. I have led worship for over 18 years as well as teach adults how to live everyday life in Victory as a Christian. I enjoy playing and singing Gospel Music whenever

and wherever I am invited. I currently have three Cd's available on my website at www.tinawakefield.com and just released my first music video with Godsey & Associates called, "The Choice" available on YouTube. I write a lot of the music we sing at church and also record my original songs. My family is very ministry oriented with Pastors, Teachers, Musicians, and Singers. My heart's desire is to spread the gospel of Christ through any and all open doors that I receive.



Dr. Jeff R. Steele is a pastor, conference speaker, singer, songwriter, husband, father, grandfather and friend. He is currently the Senior Pastor at Faith Baptist Church in Cullman, Alabama. Their services are webcast worldwide; they have a weekly television program and host

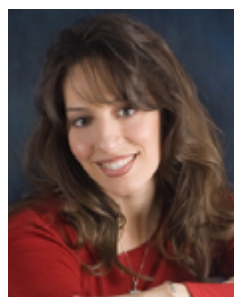
an annual Jubilee each August that attracts hundreds from around the southeast. Dr. Steele is beginning his eighth year there. As a songwriter Jeff has been credited with 17 Number One songs in Christian music as well as four BMI Gold Medals for Great National Popularity as measured by Broadcast Performances. He has also been recognized by BMI as Christian Songwriter of the Year on several occasions.

The group, The Steeles was featured across the nation and was seen on numerous magazine covers, feature articles, television and radio programs during their ministry on the road. Jeff is still writes songs and articles, sings on occasion and speaks in conferences and revivals. Jeff is married to Sherry, his wife of 31 years and they have three grown children. Visit Jeff on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and at www.jeffrsteele.com.



Erin Stevens is a uniquely talented 18 year old shutterbug, singer, guitar player, writer, blogger, social networker and shooting coach. She is the owner/operator of Photos For Keeps By Erin. She also travels in full-time Gospel music ministry with The Stevens Family. Photography is her passion, and singing for Christ

is her calling. Check out her photography website www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com and her ministry website www.stevensfamilymusic.com.



Sherry Anne Lints, a Doctor of Chiropractic, singer, speaker, actress, writer and fitness trainer, was born with a bilateral hearing and speech impairment. She appeared in the films, Clancy and The Perfect Gift and was a special guest on 100 Huntley Street, in Ontario, Canada. She is a contributing author for the book, Modern-Day Miracles and released

her second CD, Keep on Prayin', July 2012 and has opened for many of the Gaither Homecoming Artists. Additionally, Sherry Anne helps lead worship and drama at her church. For more information, visit: www.SherryAnne.com.



Vonda Easley is the owner of Hope's Journey Christian Ministries and the voice of "The Strictly Southern Show" at WPIL 91.7 in Heflin, Alabama on Fridays

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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.

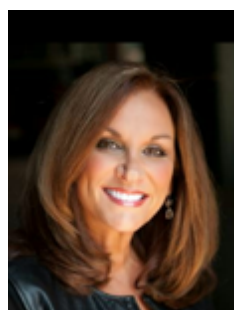


David's distinctive sound and his ability to blend perfectly with a variety of vocalists has made him a valuable commodity on live events as well as in the studio. His compassionate and gentle spirit makes him more than an artist, it makes him a great friend!

David began singing at age 6 with family. In 1990, he filled in for the Speer Family and later that year he became the lead vocalist for The Trailblazers. In 2002, Staton filled the lead position with Priority. While with Priority, the group was the resident gospel group at the Silver Dollar City theme park in Branson, MO and they performed for over one million people in one year. After the group disbanded in 1995, David continued to write for artists in many different genres of music while occasionally performing solo. It was during this time that his song, "Every Knee Shall Bow", recorded by Dottie Peoples, was nominated for a Grammy Award. His song, "Together We Can" was adopted as the national theme song to bring awareness to violence in schools. The music video (Together We Can) that featured many Atlanta based artists was shown at the 1999 Grammy Awards show, which helped launch the careers of artists like R&B's Jagged Edge, India Arie, and 4.0. In 2004, David partnered with Mike LeFevre to form The LeFevre Quartet. During the seven years that he was the lead vocalist, the group had many hit songs and won many awards. After leaving the LeFevre

Quartet in 2011, Staton began working on a solo project and also began singing with Palmetto State Quartet. The group appeared on television and toured with country music superstar, Wynonna Judd while Staton was there.

Through the years, artists like Gold City, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Kingsmen, Singing Americans, Dixie Melody Boys, Imperials, Dottie Peoples, Ball Brothers, LeFevre Quartet, Palmetto State Quartet, Priority, Trailblazers, The Greens, Ivan Parker, Brian Free and many more have recorded David's music. From 2005 to 2013, Staton was the Executive Vice President for Song Garden Music Group in Nashville, TN. In recent years, the National Quartet Convention has asked David to be a part of an industry advisory panel to help artists who need assistance and training. Not only has David made a mark as an artist, he is passing on his talent and knowledge to new artists, influencing and shaping the future of Gospel music.



Kelly Nelon Clark is the daughter of Gospel Music icon, the late Rex Nelon. As part of her father's group, The Nelons, she blazed a musical trail bringing a fresh new sound to the traditional Gospel quartet style. That sound and style influenced a generation of Gospel music performers and can be heard today in the styling of

groups like the Martins, Point of Grace, The Crabb Family and more.

As The Nelons broke new ground, the Gospel Music industry repeatedly recognized their excellence. The group won four GMA Dove awards as well as multiple awards from readers of Singing News Magazine. Kelly was named female vocalist of the year on four occasions and received favorite alto vocalist award 3 times. At one time, Kelly was the most awarded artists in the history of the Singing News Fan Awards. The music industry at large also recognized The Nelons with 3 Grammy nominations.

Today, Kelly currently performs throughout the United States, Canada and Europe with her husband and two daughters as The Nelons. The group is featured in hundreds of churches and concerts each year. The Nelons have been part of Gaither Homecoming concerts sharing their music with thousands of Gospel Music fans in sold-out arenas across the country. For more information, visit <http://www.kellynelon.com/>.

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Hannah Webb is the soprano of the Rick Webb Family and director of radio promotion and relations for Song Garden Music Group. Hannah and her family have shared the platform with noted personalities such as Governor Mike Huckabee, Dr. David Jeremiah, George Beverly Shea, William Graham, Kathy Ireland just to name a few

and has made multiple network appearances with the TCT Network. Talent winner at Miss North Carolina 2013, Hannah also appeared on Jeff Foxworthy's "The American Bible Challenge" season 3. An advocate and spokesperson for Compassion International, she is completing her Business and Communications Major through Liberty University Online.



Marcie Gray was born and raised in sunny California, yet always dreamed of moving to Tennessee. She had planned to move to the south as a young adult and sing with a gospel group, after being inspired to do so by her Great Uncle, Alphas LeFevre. Though it took longer than she had expected, in 2011, her dream of moving east finally came true when her husband, Don, retired

from the CHP. They packed up their two youngest daughters, three dogs and two horses and headed east. What a blessing to finally be where the tea is sweet, the Southern Gospel music is plentiful and there's a Cracker Barrel on every corner!

Spend ten minutes with Marcie and you'll learn that she is rarely lacking for something to say. Her passion for Southern Gospel music, combined with her instinct to be behind the camera, makes journalism a very enjoyable outlet for that "Type A" personality she has been affectionately labeled with by her family and friends.

Marcie is a worship leader, vocalist and songwriter. She has directed choirs of all ages and given voice lessons for many years. Her solo CD, "Carry Me Home" was released in September of 2014.

Having family in ministry has given Marcie a desire to support those who are on the road sharing the gospel through song. Visit her website at www.graydoveministries.com to learn more!



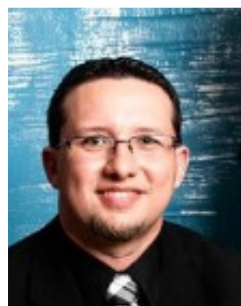
Lynn Mills is a talented writer who has a passion for music, specifically Gospel music. Lynn authors the site Lynn's Chronicles where she shares her experiences attending various concert events and what people can expect should they want to attend. Also featured are CD & DVD Reviews, Devotionals, Photos, Video and News

tidbits. Keep up with Lynn online at <http://lynnschronicles.com> or on facebook @ <http://facebook.com/lynns.chronicles>



Melissa Joy Wright is a vocalist/musician/evangelist with the Southern Gospel music group The WRIGHTS. She is a wife, mother of three, and servant to the Risen Savior. Melissa is a blogger, focusing her attention on Spiritual and Physical Fitness and her passion: all things Southern Gospel! She enjoys watching her kid's activities, running, scrapbooking and crafting, and traveling

with her family. Most importantly, Melissa's calling is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ and further Southern Gospel Music to a hurting world.



Chris Clay is an evangelist and the baritone singer for the Southern Gospel group Hope's Journey. He resides in east central Alabama with his wife Salina and daughter Cadence.

Contributors

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Hi, my name is Dean Adkins and I am honored to be a part of the SGN Scoops family. Perhaps some background information would be beneficial. I am sometimes called "Professor" because I was a Biology professor at Marshall University for 31 years and I retired in 2004. I grew up listening to gospel music (or as it is now termed Southern Gospel Music) and many of

my relatives (Adkins, Toney, Booth families) are gospel singers/musicians. I collect records, primarily LPs, and SGM related items. Over the years I have studied the history of this genre. I would like to use these articles to describe events and the mind-set of the 1950s and 60s – sometimes called the Golden Age of Gospel Music.



Alpha Source Media Group is lead by Candi Combs and was born out of a strong desire to support the ministers who share the gospel on the highways and byways of life. Combs says, "These artists and their families spend their days selflessly bringing the life-changing message of Jesus to crowds large and small. We want to do all we can to support them!" In 2015, Candi will have

a law degree from Liberty University and will provide a full range of legal counsel. This component will bring the highest level of support to those who also desire legal representation.



Paige Givens is a Christ follower, wife, mother of two boys and kindergarten teacher to 18 five-year-olds. She is a writer, reader, singer, studier, and teacher of words. Paige lives in Hayden, Alabama with her husband of 10 years, Chris Givens, and their sons Parker and Peyton. Paige loves to blog about faith, writing, music, and teaching. Her goal

is to serve the Lord by inspiring others to be who He has called them to be. You can listen to her music and read her devotionals at www.paigegivens.com.