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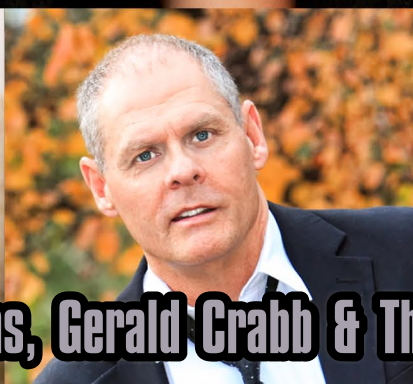
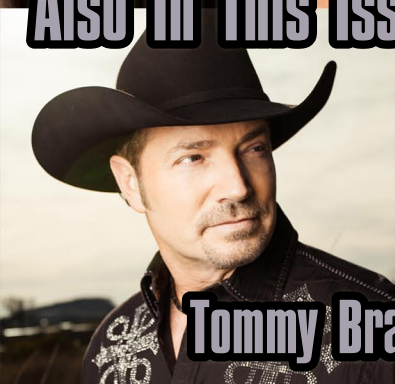
Scoops

digital



The Nelons

Also In This Issue:



Tommy Brandt, Lindsay Huggins, Gerald Crabb & The Browders

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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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Have a SCOOP to share? For news consideration, email us at news@sgnscoops.com

PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz



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Letter From The Editor

"Love Hurts!"

By Rhonda Frye



During a recent sermon, my pastor walked around the congregation asking us to randomly call out songs with the word "Love" in the title. At first, we seemed a little shy; after all, if we called out a secular song, then all would know we listened to secular music! Gasp!

"A Crazy Little Thing Called Love," someone said. "Stop! In the Name of Love," said another. "Jungle Love," giggled my friend as I started whistling in my head. "Muskrat Love," "Love Me Tender," "The Power of Love," "Can You Feel The Love Tonight" were among many of the remembered songs.

As happy people waltzed down *love- song- memory- lane*, the radio in my cynical mind was playing my favorite "love song." It's my favorite because I'm a realist and this song tells it like it is! "Love hurts...Love scars...Love wounds...Love mars....Ooh... Love hurts!"*

It's funny how in a minute's time right there in church my brain tuned into a Classic Rock station inside my head and I recalled lyrics to a song I hadn't heard in years! And- I'm not sure what that says about me as a person when everyone else was thinking, "Love Me Do," I was thinking "Love Hurts" and "Love is a Battlefield!" I'm especially not sure of what that says about me being that I've been married to the same sweet guy, my one and only husband for 24 years! Ha!

On a serious note, you better believe love hurts if we are loved according to our culture's definition of love. Makes me think, "What's LOVE Got To Do With It?" If we love each other according to the world, we

will all find ourselves singing "Love Hurts" along with Nazareth. We confuse the word love with *like* and *lust*, don't we? And it seems the minute we're stung by the phony love bug; we retaliate by withholding God's love.

I love Eugene Peterson's paraphrased description of love in I Corinthians 13. I encourage you to read the entire passage as interpreted in The Message. Just to give you an idea, Peterson says, "Love never gives up, and it doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, puts up with anything and doesn't keep the score of the sins of others!"

To experience loving relationships as God has mandated, is truly a beautiful thing. The bad news is, we are all a work in progress learning each day how to love each other the right way. I suppose that's why God included the part about not keeping records of wrongs.

So what does this have to do with Southern Gospel Music? Everything! Ministry is about loving God and loving people! The loving God part is easy, but the loving people part is the challenge. People disappoint us. Even the best of the best people with the best of the best intentions will sting us from time to time. We have to deal with the redness, swelling and tenderness from the sting if we are to ever implement effective ministries!

This Valentine's season, I encourage you to love others as God requires- constantly asking God to help you love others better! For those times we find

ourselves singing, "Love Hurts"- By all means, reach for the healing balm that heals all wounds! We can allow God to heal us and allow Him to love others through us in a supernatural way. The only way we can do this is to accept and relish in God's perfect love He has for us. When we're the guilty phony love bug stinging others, be quick to admit it and ask for forgiveness! God's love does cover a multitude of sins!

With God's grace, let's Love (according to God's definition) when Love (according to the world's definition) hurts! By this, the world will truly know that we are truly His!

Editor's Notes:

*In spite of our best efforts, from time to time we make mistakes in our stories at SGNscoops Magazine. We sincerely apologize to the Whisnants regarding last month's article. The correct song title mentioned should be, "I'll Trust The Potter's Hand," and we apologize to Aaron Hise for the incorrect spelling of his name.

*"Love Hurts" written by BOUDLEAUX BRYANT



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LIFE LOVE & LEGENDS

BY LOU WILLS HILDRETH

Publisher Rob Patz is on the cutting edge of media communication as President of Coastal Media. One of his projects, SGNScoops digital magazine, is an example of his dedication to reaching the people, and it is indeed an honor to be on the team with him and Editor-in-chief, Rhonda Frye.

I have written for several publications in the 75 years of my LIFE in gospel music and remain thankful for every opportunity to lift up the name of Jesus. My other LOVE is being involved in television, and God has kept his promise to give us the desire of our hearts when we seek Him first. Without a doubt, being included on the Gaither Homecoming videos, viewed worldwide, is an incomparable honor. My life has been blessed with the joy of hosting several television series, and preparation for the work came early in my ministry. In the 60's, "Wills Family Inspirational Time" helped pioneer gospel music programming on television. The series was owned and syndicated by Hal Smith, Inc, Nashville, and taped in Ft. Worth where the TV station had acquired the first color television cameras. As host, I learned valuable lessons in communicating with a television audience, lessons that would last a lifetime. When Howard and I moved from Texas to Nashville in 1968, hosting "Nashville Gospel"—a daily TV program—added to the excitement of working in the industry. In the 80's, "Family Lifestyles" was another TV opportunity to present the gospel in interviews with the artists. For one of the programs, Rusty Goodman brought a guitar and sang his classic songs. A very young Lauren Talley "stole the show" when the Talleys were guests. Candy Hemphill Christmas gave the TV audience her powerful testimony. When Howard and I moved back to Texas, an Austin company hired me to host "Hill Country Gospel." I was privileged to have



many of my friends and family as guests on that series—Larry Gatlin, Brian Free, Lulu Roman, Ann Downing, Joel & LaBreeska Hemphill, Larry Ford, Chuck Wagon Gang, Crabb Family, Original Wills Family, Bob Wills & the Inspirationalists, and many others.

Later in my TV ministry, co-hosting "Inside Gospel" with JP Miller, most of our guests had become LEGENDS. Hovie Lister was one of the first, and it was an unforgettable experience as we talked about our early days in gospel music. Dottie Rambo made one of her last television appearances on our program. Roger Bennett, co-founder and pianist for Legacy Five, talked about how his faith was comforting him in his battle with cancer. In 2012, at my "Celebration Of 75 Years In Gospel Music" in Pigeon Forge, JP and I taped several segments of "Southern Style Praise" for Dale Burrell. I felt a deep satisfaction as guest artists shared with the television audience how God is blessing their ministries. Friends, it takes every means available to us to reach the lost and encourage our fellow Christians. We are thankful for every opportunity to let the world know there is joy in serving Jesus! Contact: P. O. Box 271106, Houston, TX 77277 gospelvdo@aol.com www.louhildreth.com

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PHOTO: Legendary Dottie Rambo, guest of Co-hosts Lou Hildreth & JP Miller, "Inside Gospel"

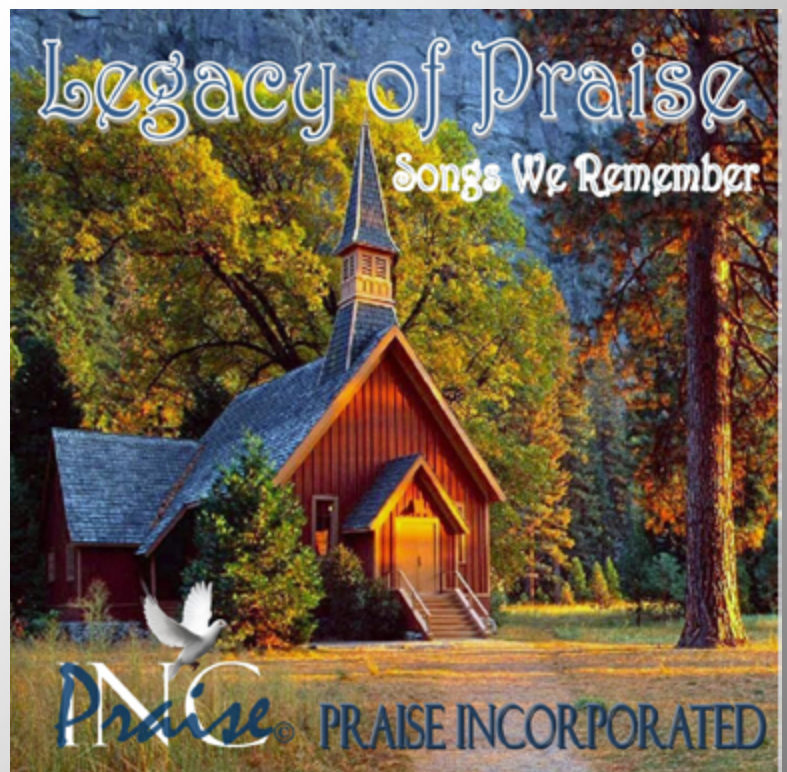
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By Rhonda Frye

We hope you have already marked your calendars for October 28, 29 and 30th! We are excited about Creekside Gospel Music Convention 2013! The Smoky Mountain Convention Center in Pigeon Forge is the location again this year. We've had a great response from artists who plan on participating in this year's event. If you or your group would like booth information, please contact Rob Patz at rob@sgnscoops.com.

We are looking forward to a showcase sponsored by Patterson Music Group to take during the Convention. Pauline Patterson has served the Southern Gospel Music Industry for many years. She has promoted Southern Gospel music into the airwaves and charts for over seven years and has recently broadened her company services by adding a new song publishing company. The services of Patterson Music Group include radio promotions, song publishing under Patterson Publishing, the Southern Gospel Times ezine, and publicity for artists on the radio promotions roster.

Patterson Music Group's artists will take the stage from 10:00 AM until 2:00 on Tuesday, October 29. Special guests will include Phil Cross, the Hoskins Family and many more! Remember, this event as well as all other events are free to the public.

The Diamond Awards Show will take place during the Creekside Gospel Music Convention too! We're working diligently to put together an outstanding program. Remember, the fans choose the winners, so make sure you start voting with Round One. Round One nominations open on Monday, February 18. Please vote and then

encourage your friends, family and fans to as well. We encourage all artists to send the link in newsletters and post it on websites and all social media outlets.

Sharing the gospel is truly at the core of the Creekside Gospel Music Convention! Now is the time to organize special church groups to attend! And please know, Creekside Gospel Music Convention will serve again as a collection location for a local ministry called, "Live-It!" Live-It is a non-profit ministry serving the less fortunate in Sevier and surrounding counties. We had a great response from last year's guests and participants and we're asking everyone to not come to Creekside empty handed. Live-It will provide a truck to receive donations of items including used clothing, jewelry, books, toys, shoes, fashion accessories and music CDs! All items collected will be used for re-sale in LIVE-IT'S thrift store, profits earned purchases needed products and supplies to those in desperate need.

Plan to stay at the onsite hotel and enjoy Creekside Guest rates! <http://www.ramadapigeonforge.com/convention.php>

We're looking forward to a great time of fun and fellowship as we share the good news of Jesus Christ and help the less fortunate in Sevier County. If you have any questions regarding the Creekside Gospel Music Convention, please email me at Rhonda@sgnscoops.com or Rob Patz at rob@sgnscoops.com.

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Missouri Theater Kicks Off Concert Series

With Marshall Hall and Wes Hampton

By Sheri Whitt



Some call it an “event.” Some say it’s a “show,” a “performance,” or an “act.” But on this night, January 11, 2013, at the Missouri Theater in St. Joseph, Missouri, it was a BLESSING; a rare occurrence that a small part of us Southern Gospel music-lovers were privileged to be part of. Together on stage once more, Marshall Hall and Wes Hampton kicked off the 2013 NWMO Gospel Concert Series with a phenomenal night of worship and camaraderie.

Seeing these two brothers in Christ join in song brought back precious memories of their Gaither Vocal Band days together. Many people were surprised when Marshall sat down at the piano and started playing beautiful renditions of songs from his Vocal Band era. Then came an unforgettable moment...Marshall, still at the piano, sang the first verse of Through It All. Then, from the second row of the venue, another beautiful voice joined in – none other than Kansas City native and surprise guest, Lynda Randle. To say the audience had “glory bumps” would be a grand understatement. Marshall performed a stirring version of Day-star, just a voice and a piano.

Wes sang a Gaither Vocal Band classic, “Little Is Much”, to remind us that everything we do on this earth, no matter how big or small, will be rewarded in Heaven. The guys shared stories about their worlds – their beautiful wives and kids. Marshall played a recording of one of his daughters

singing a song she made up that had us all in stitches. Wes had us laughing as he told how he retaliated at one of his sons for playing a practical joke on him. As each guy took the stage – solo and together, their love, admiration, and appreciation for each other, for God, for their families, and for their calling into the ministry was clearly genuine.

Two hours seemed like 30 seconds, as the night of worship ended way too soon. From the first line of “Bread Upon the Water” to the last note of “It Is Well,” this dynamic duo showed that they are ordinary people, just like you and I, who have been blessed with an extraordinary talent that they are using for God’s glory. They shared their hearts in song and message, and revealed God’s love, forgiveness, and grace in every line. Those of us in attendance went away with a rejuvenated spirit and renewed hope. They reminded us that we’re all human...imperfect in our own eyes, but beautiful in God’s sight.

But the story doesn’t end there. The best part is, the worship continues. The 2013 Concert Series is just getting started. There are five more chances to experience the kind of soul-soothing, spirit-healing message this music brings to the historic Missouri Theater. I, for one, am so grateful for the opportunity to worship in an intimate setting with some of the greatest voices in Southern Gospel music today.

On March 1, Jeff and Sheri Easter will continue the concert series with what's sure to be a night of great bluegrass gospel and laughter. May 17 brings Ryan Seaton and Union Street back for a second time – and if their first concert was phenomenal, we'll have to consult Webster's for a word that is beyond phenomenal to describe their second spirit-filled night. On June 22, the legendary Gold City Quartet makes their debut appearance in what's sure to be a night of booming-bass tones from Mr. Tim Riley himself. And the one who has been called The Voice, Mr. Ivan Parker, will be blessing us on August 23. What better way to head into the Christmas season and round out the 2013 series than to spend an evening with The Nelons and The LeFevre Quartet on November 30.

I strongly encourage you to get a group together and drive up, down, over; or fly, hop a train, ride a bike...by any way and by any means possible, get yourself to the Missouri Theater for the 2013 Concert Series. For more information about these concerts and to buy tickets, please visit www.nwmogospel.com. Seek out the page on Facebook and Twitter to receive updates. Come join the treasure that is the Missouri Theater and the 2013 Concert Series. God has provided a blessing. Spread the word, bring a friend (or a busload of friends), and don't miss out!

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The Nelons

"Living a Legacy of Love"

By Jennifer Campbell



Southern Gospel Music is rooted in family, faith, and the mindset that musical talent should be handed down from generation to generation. The Nelons are the prime example of a family who lives this tradition every single day of their lives. Kelly Nelon Clark carries on the tradition started by her father Rex Nelon, just as her children are now a part of the legacy left by their grandfather. Kelly, Jason, Amber, and Autumn understand the value of Southern Gospel Music. They also know that a close-knit family is priceless. Above all, they place Jesus Christ at the center of it all. Through their love for music, love for family, and love for Jesus Christ, The Nelons are living a legacy of love!

For Kelly Nelon Clark, Southern Gospel Music is a way of life. She spoke of her first recollection of Southern Gospel Music, "I'm sure I was at a concert where my father was singing with The LeFevres and if I remember correctly it was at the city auditorium in Atlanta, GA. I was probably three years old."

Rex Nelon left a legacy that will always be remembered, both by his family and the countless individuals he influenced throughout his life. "My father would be the greatest influence in my life," Kelly stated. "I watched how he handled adversities, the bus break downs, the constant staying on the phone to make sure the dates were on the books so

that we could make a living. He handled so many things and he handled them well. He was such a good man and a man of great integrity. I don't think he realized how many people loved him."

Of course, Jason Clark is no stranger to Gospel Music either, having been raised alongside his bass singing father Dan Clark. Jason says, "I remember hanging out at their concerts, riding the bus occasionally, going to their rehearsals, then coming home and giving my very own pretend concerts for the audience of Mammaw & Papaw Clark in their living room. They have a picture of me in diapers, holding my microphone and giving the performance of a lifetime at the early age of two."

Amber and Autumn also grew up with Gospel Music running through their blood. Amber said that music has always been a part of her life and that she has always wanted to sing Southern Gospel Music. Autumn echoed Amber's response saying, "That's all I have ever really known."

The Nelons are comprised of husband and wife duo Jason Clark and Kelly Nelon Clark, along with their daughters Autumn and Amber. Throughout their musical career, they have garnered three Grammy nominations, six Gospel Music Association Dove Awards, and many other accolades. They have traveled from sea to shining sea and they have even

journeyed “across the pond” on a Scandinavian tour.

“I love to travel because it has afforded us the privilege of seeing the world over, and experiencing so many diverse cultures,” commented Jason. “The ministry is more fulfilling than I could ever explain when I think about the marvelous love of Jesus and that I get to tell others about that through the medium of music is extremely humbling, gratifying, and sometimes overwhelming.”

Kelly added, “We have traveled here and abroad and the

over 150 concerts per year and spend time together at home too, yet even with all of this time together often spent in close quarters on the bus, their love for each other simply grows stronger.

Autumn chimed in and said, “I’m very blessed to get to be able to spend time with my family as much as I do. I get to travel and see these amazing places and sing some with them. Although we may get on each other’s nerves from time to time, I wouldn’t change a thing. My relationship with my family is great. I know a lot of people think that they

have the world’s best parents, but I really believe that I do. Our family is very competitive, so we have fun playing board games or a game of basketball. Sam and Buddy {pets} tend to get on my nerves a little bit, but I can’t help but love them!”



greatest thing are the friendships and relationships we have made and kept down through the years. We love and cherish our friends. Also to see a life that has been affected by something we have sung or said is worth all the miles we travel.” Whether they are at home or abroad, one thing is certain: Kelly, Jason, Amber, and Autumn love what they do because they are doing what they love.

Kelly said that singing has always been her dream. She commented, “From the first day of kindergarten it was just a part of me that I would sometime sing with my father. It was my dream and my desire and thankfully God granted the desires of my heart. I spent many days on the road with my father Rex Nelon, and I can honestly say it was always a joy. We were very close and we talked every day and I could tell him anything. I really miss that.”

If you have spent even five minutes with them, you know that the Nelons have a strong familial bond. “I really couldn’t imagine leaving home every week and spending more than half the year away without my wife and children,” Jason stated. “We are always reminding each other of this privilege and blessing that God has given.” They travel to

Amber talked about the opportunity she has to travel with her family. “Well not a lot of people get to go to work and have their family with them all the time. We are always together and we can take vacations whenever we want. We even stop at places on the road. So I’m thankful that God didn’t just allow me to sing, but my entire family as well. We are a very close knit family as you can tell. We’ve always been that way. We love doing things and going places and having parties at home. We are all like that and just enjoy entertaining as a whole. As for Sam and Buddy, they’re great. I bought Sam when I graduated High School and he became my little baby. That was 5 years ago. Now Autumn and I bought Buddy and he’s the baby. You can imagine how Sam is taking to that!”

During the interview, I asked Kelly and Jason what it meant to them to be a husband and wife and father and mother.

“I absolutely love being a wife and mother,” Kelly replied. “It totally consumes me. I would do anything for them. Jason and I have fun wherever we go and I make him do some crazy things but he does it to make me happy. When Amber played basketball, no matter how far or how tired I was, I made sure that I was there to support her. I do the same thing for Autumn. We do almost everything together. It makes me sad when they are away from me. And as far as my little babies (Sammy and Buddy), they go everywhere with us, and Sam has become a little star on his own with over 24,000 views on his Sam Cam videos!”

When asked what she hoped her children will teach their children one day, Kelly said, “I hope they will teach them the things and ways of the Lord! Reading and studying the Bible daily, church attendance and paying your tithes. Loving God and loving each other, as Bill Gaither would say. You can’t go wrong with God!” Jason added the following advice to his children, “Spend your days giving of yourself,

marked. “I can go to her with anything and I know she was always gives me her honest advice.” Amber said that her grandfather and her whole family have influenced her life. She said, “He was so wise and I never doubted his judgment. My family definitely has had a major influence. Without them, I would be so incomplete and they help keep me on track.”



your resources, your time, your talent, and your love for it will be the most rewarding life that one can live.”

“Being a husband to Kelly is a wonderful life of fun and adventure,” said Jason. “She teaches me to laugh more and she really sets the tone for our family. We are a fun bunch always experiencing new things mainly because of her. I want to continue to love, protect, and provide for her in such a way that not only pleases her and our children but also brings a smile to the face of Jesus. Amber and Autumn have both taught me so much about being a dad because they are both so different, and we really have a great bond. Other stepdads have reached out to me asking for advice in raising a blended family for sometimes it can be challenging. But I can honestly say that Amber and Autumn have always respected my authority, reached out to me for counsel, advice, and come to me when they need comfort. Some of my most treasured possessions in this world are the letters or cards they’ve each written me through the difficult times in their growing up, when I’ve tried to simply be a loving, caring father.”

Amber and Autumn love their parents just as much as they love them. Autumn said that her mom has been the greatest influence on her life. “She’s the best,” Autumn re-

The Nelons offer the following advice for aspiring young artists. “Never give up and keep giving it your all,” Amber advised. “God always rewards the faithful. If you are faithful to God and His word, then you can’t go wrong. He will lead you and guide you, so follow Him. With Him as your leader, you’ll never be astray.” Autumn added, “Take advice from people who have been there, done that. Also, be confident in yourself.”

While the Nelons have enjoyed a lot of success and enjoyable moments in their lives, there have also been days when they have faced difficulties. Kelly said the hardest days of her life were the days she learned that her mother and then her father had died. Jason said one of the hardest days he has experienced

was when they decided to resign their church and return to a full-time touring schedule again. He said, “Even though undoubtedly it was God’s will for our lives and ministry, leaving those wonderful people and relationships that were fused together by life’s struggles and triumphs was extremely emotional and difficult. I gave the church a full year’s notice because it was so hard to leave.”

One of the questions I often ask during an interview is this: If you could speak to Jesus face-to-face, what would you say to Him? Kelly answered, “I would thank him for all He has done for me, and how He got me through some of the most difficult times in my life. He is a lifeline!” Jason responded, “I can only begin to imagine such a moment but those words may simply be, ‘I’m sorry, thank you, and I Love You.’” Amber said, “I would ask Him so many questions about my life and why this and that happened and then ask Him questions about stories in the Bible.” Autumn replied, “I would ask him why my Grandparents had to go so soon when I really never got the chance to get to know them. I was nine months old when my Grandmama died and three years old when my Granddaddy died. But, I just have to keep reminding myself that God has a reason for everything.”

Ten years from now, it is certain that the Nelons will continue to share Jesus Christ with the world through song. Kelly says, "I pray the Lord will enlarge our territory and bless our ministry." Amber said, "In 10 years I would hope to be married (maybe with kids) and still singing and continuing to spread the Gospel." Jason said, "I pray we will always



continue to do what God allows us in reaching more people, more nations, by writing and singing songs of the Greatest News this world has ever known!"

Without doubt, the Nelons will be spreading the love of Jesus for many years to come. They are excited to be working toward several projects including a Hymns project, live DVD and an a cappella project. And of course, they also look forward to seeing you at an upcoming concert! But overall, they have their eyes focused on the most important piece in the puzzle of life: Jesus Christ. They know that a life without Jesus is nothing, but a life with Jesus is everything.

Amber said, "The best day of my life would no doubt be October 25, the day that I got saved. That day, my life was forever changed because I realized how much Christ loved me."

"God will be everything that you could possibly imagine or hope for," Kelly said. "Make it a choice to give your life to him, spend time with him, and talk with him. He wants to talk to you!"

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, call on His name today. The Nelons will tell you that your life will never be the same. Jesus loves you more than you could ever imagine. With Him, you, too, can live a legacy of love!

Noteworthy Nelon Notes

If Kelly wrote a book, it would be titled "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

If Jason wrote a song to describe his life so far, the title would be "The Song Must Go On."

Autumn warns, "Watch out on those Highways! I'll be 16 and driving really soon!"

Amber's favorite hymn is "Be Thou My Vision."

Kelly said the song that has been an encouragement to her is "God Will Make a Way."

If Autumn was stranded on a deserted island, one item she wants with her is her iPhone, since it also has a Bible on it. Jason would take his family and his Bible.

Kelly said the best days of her life were the days her children were born.

Jason said the song that has encouraged him is a song he wrote titled "We Speak Your Name." He said, "This song was written in the midst of some very difficult times for me personally and every time Amber sings it, God reminds me of all He's brought me through for His glory and praise."

The most exciting thing Autumn has ever done was going to American Idol with her sister. She says, "I got to meet Ryan Seacrest, so that was pretty cool."

One of Amber's favorite moments was receiving the Dove Award nomination for Children's Album of the Year as the youngest Dove Award nominee ever. She says, "That was pretty amazing. I was nine years old when I made that album and to think that God used it that much is so cool to me."

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Supersized Dreams

By Dixie Phillips



May I share with you about a dream I had in my childhood? Not the sleeping kind of dream, but the “I wish” kind. First, you’ll have to take a stroll down Memory Lane with me.

My parents never had a good marriage. They limped along, trying to raise three children—two boys and a girl. Because of their difficult marriage, my mother was hospitalized for severe depression. My brothers and I missed her immensely and were sent to live at our grandparent’s house. Our maternal grandmother loved gospel music. A stack of LPs would play while she worked around her house. As the songs ministered to my broken heart, I was “hooked” on southern gospel music. The Blackwood Brothers, Statesmen, Chuck Wagon Gang, Happy Goodmans, and the Speer Family sang hope into my hopeless situation. I memorized every lyric and verse of favorite songs and practiced singing them a

gazillion times.

One morning as my grandmother was braiding my hair, I announced to my grandmother, “I’m going to be a gospel singer when I grow up.”

“That’s nice.” She smiled. “I hope your dream will come true.”

Throughout my early teenage years, I prayed the Lord would bring southern gospel music to our little town in northern Iowa. I continued to sing and dream, but when I was 17, I attended a summer church camp in Oklahoma. During an evening rally, I sensed the Holy Spirit dealing with me to lay down my dream of gospel music and surrender my life to be a pastor’s wife.

“No way, Lord,” I argued. “You can’t mean me. You want my cousin to be a pastor’s wife. She’s far more

spiritual than I am. I'm way too shy to be a pastor's wife." I wrestled with the Call for months, but finally one day I surrendered my life to the Lord's service.

God calls people in many different ways. I knew I was to lay down my dream of a world-wide gospel singer and support my husband's ministry. I obeyed the Call and used my music in our local church, leading praise and worship for 31 years and singing in a local ladies' trio for 20 years.

In 1995, the Lord gave me a bigger and better dream. My husband and I started the Floyd Iowa Gospel Sing. Every September more than 30 gospel groups and 1,800 fans flock to our little town—Floyd's population of 340 swells to around 2,000 people.

The Floyd Gospel Sing is proof to me when you give your dreams to God, He gives you grander dreams. My story could end here and I would be one happy pastor's wife, but God has recently blessed us even more.



Two years ago my sister-in-law Sharon, who is also a pastor's wife, and I began writing gospel music together. Last month our song "Hidden Heroes" won the grand prize in the 2012 Singing News/Solid Gospel Songwriters Search. Two of our other songs—"Bound" and "Love Took His Breath Away" were runners up. Part of the award package is a paid staff writing position for one year.

As I reflect over my life, waves of gratitude sweep over me. My heart is filled with thanksgiving for God's faithfulness to a shy girl from a troubled home.

I don't know what you are facing today, but I do know God loves and cares about you. He keeps good records and sees every trial you face. My life is living proof



of His faithfulness. Don't be afraid to give Him your future. When He asks you to lay down your dreams at the foot of the Cross, He will give you bigger dreams—in fact, He super-sizes them.

Editor's Note

Congratulations, Dixie on winning 2012 Singing News/Solid Gospel's Songwriters Search! We are looking forward to watching how God will use your music to touch lives! We are also blessed to have you share your writing talents with our readers! Everyone, please make Dixie feel welcomed as a Staff Writer at SGN Scoops Magazine and enjoy her feature in this month's issue on Lindsay Huggins!

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Gerald Crabb-

A Very Blessed Man

By Rhonda Frye

Most Christians have a list of favorite Bible characters and saints from all the ages they long to meet some day. Although we sometimes refer to those folks as *heroes*, the Bible describes them all as regular, everyday people. From Genesis on, God has chosen to use ordinary and imperfect people to accomplish extraordinary things and still works in this manner even today.

What a thrill it was to meet in person one of those *normal, chosen and empowered folks* that God is using to impact the lives of many during this current phase of history. It was a blessing to have Gerald Crabb perform at the 2012 Diamond Awards and it has been a delight to learn more about his ministry. Gerald Crabb is the first to say, he is a very blessed man!

Gerald was born into a modest home in rural Rosine, Kentucky and it sure didn't take God very long to start the good work in his life! Gerald was singing at age 5, playing the guitar at 11, preaching at 16 and he wrote his first gospel song at age 19! Gerald's mother was instrumental in teaching him the ways of God. She made sure he went to church and she taught him how to pray.

During the formative years, Gerald was musically influenced at church. "A blind fellow named George Esterly made an impression on me. He always played a red Gibson electric guitar. He was a great player and

singer. He was the one who got me started playing," Gerald explains.

Gerald also says he was influenced in those early years by country music TV shows such as The Wilburn Brothers, The Earnest Tubb Show and The Porter Wagner Show.

Although it was impossible to understand the vastness of his calling at a young age, Gerald sensed it. "In some strange way, I have always known God had given me a special gift and calling. Even when I was a child, I didn't know what it was, but I knew it was there," he recalls.

He may have known it was there, but little did he know at the time that his calling would lead him to places such as Carnegie Hall, The Grand Ole Opry, The Ryman Auditorium, and The Brooklyn Tabernacle- and to appear on The 700 Club, TBN, CMT, and Gaither Videos- just to name a few places.

There was no way for the young Gerald Crabb to ever dream God would eventually enable him to write over 400 hundred songs and that 22 of them would claim number one.

Over the years, Gerald has garnered numerous accolades and multiple awards. The impressive list includes Dove Awards, Diamond Awards, BMI Awards, Southern Gospel Music Guild Awards, and SGN Music

Awards for "Song of the Year" and "Songwriter of the Year."



Gerald is known for songs such as "Please Forgive Me," "The Walk," "Greater Is He," "He Came Lookin' For Me," "Shepherd's Call," "The Cross," and "Please Come Down To Me" recorded by the Crabb Family. Gerald is also known for "I've Come To Take You Home," recorded by The Isaacs and "The Healer," made popular by Talley Trio. Perhaps Gerald's most effective masterpiece is "Through The Fire." Bill Gaither once advised the Crabb Family to not let a concert go by without singing it.

It just doesn't give the song justice to call it *powerful*. A song that is so anointed by God that its results bring about serious life transformations and miracles is more than just powerful. Gerald says he got chills when God gave him "Through the Fire," and he still does. "I just thank God for letting me hold the pen," "I didn't do it, He did."

"The song was debuted at a Daywind Songwriters showcase one night at the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville," Gerald recalls. "This was the first time we had made a rough attempt to do it, but something special happened that night. The Glory came down!"

The debut performance was just the beginning of the Glory coming down during the song. In fact, Gerald has released a book entitled "Through The Fire" that features amazing personal testimonies of how this song has touched hearts and lives. Gerald also shares heartwarming thoughts and also details of behind the scenes of writing the song. The book should come with a warning that reads, "Keep Tissues Close

By!" In a nutshell, the personal testimonies in the book leave the reader in awe at the power of music and how God uses people and songs to accomplish His divine purposes.

"Through the Fire" was penned several years ago, but Gerald has been blessed with recent hit songs. "Sometimes I Cry" recorded by his son, Jason Crabb won the 2011 Dove Award for "Song of the Year" - the first Southern Gospel song to win Song of the Year in 35 years! Gerald also took home the 2011 Dove for "Songwriter of the Year."

The story behind the song, Gerald shares: "I was at a BMI awards show in Nashville and performing that night were the sons of Steven Curtis Chapman. They were singing one of their father's songs called "Cinderella." They had just experienced a real tragedy in their family, yet these two young men were on stage giving it their best. Something about that made me stop the car on the way home and write down the lines, "Sometimes I Hurt, Sometimes I Cry."



Another hit song finding its way to the top is a catchy Gerald Crabb tune called, "Hold On." Gerald's son Aaron along with his group cut this one. "Hold On" was a recent top 5 single by Canton Junction, - their very first single," Gerald explains. "It's a song about patience- something that most everybody struggles

with. The ole good book still says 'Those that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength!' It's tough but sometimes we just have to WAIT!"



Adam Crabb recently cut Don Poythress' and Gerald's "Sometimes God Allows" a powerful song dealing with questions for God that sometimes goes unanswered. Gerald also loves a new song written with Tony Wood and Don Poythress that will be released on Aaron and Amanda Crabb's new album.

Gerald draws inspiration for songwriting from a variety of sources such as sermons, life experiences, catchy sayings and even other songs. He also named Aaron Wilburn, Rusty Goodman and his good friend, the late Dottie Rambo as his songwriting heroes.

In fact, Dottie and Gerald shared a friendship out of the public eye and Dottie spoke highly of Gerald while cameras rolled. In an interview from 2007, Dottie's affirming words to Gerald were: "I don't think I could ever have had a brother that I love as much as you." She went on to say, "Everybody that God ever did use in a *great* way, the devil slapped in a *great* way. It breaks your heart, hurts you, tempts you, knocks you down and you think you never will write another song....God never has been so proud of you then he is today." Gerald is grateful for the wisdom Dottie poured into his life.

Although Crabb has experienced great success at songwriting, he says it's not always easy. He explains: "There are a lot of heartbreaking experiences involved in songwriting. 'Hold Me While I Cry' was turned down by two artists before Karen Peck cut it and had a number one with it. Also, 'Sometimes I Cry' was turned down by an artist before Jason recorded it. In 2011, it became Dove Award Song of The Year. I sometimes feel that artists are afraid to record strong-message songs that the listener really wants to hear."

Due to Gerald's songwriting achievements, many people seek his advice regarding songwriting skills. Since it is impossible to help each and every one, Gerald makes himself available through various songwriting classes, and workshops. His next Songwriting Bootcamp is scheduled for April 20th at the Gatlinburg Convention Center in Tennessee.

When Gerald isn't busy writing for others, he writes his own music. His latest CD entitled, *SOMETIMES I CRY* just happens to be one of this writer's personal favorites. In a CD Review by Friday Night Revival, this CD was compared to a mix of Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings and Stevie Ray Vaughn. The Friday Night Revival Review says it best: "These songs are a collection of realistic expectations and heartaches of death, heaven, grace, broken relationships, redemption, family, and crucifixion in a simple, yet utterly deep, and profound way, piercing through the darkness of humanity, it's doubts, fears, and weaknesses, the stuff of life...just like a later Cash or Dylan would do."

The lyrics are raw, the music is uncomplicated and beautiful, the messages are clear. Again, Friday Night Revival hit the nail on the head by saying, "The brilliance is found in its simplicity."

Obviously a man with many talents, Gerald is a producer too! He recently produced an album for Heavens Highway, 2nd Generation and the Downs Family. There are many reasons Gerald makes a great producer, but he says his experience is his greatest strength in this role. "Over the years I have been involved in many award winning albums and many award winning, chart topping songs. I really am a blessed man; God has been very good to me."

In order to have Gerald produce an album, all one needs to do is to be patient with his schedule, he jokes! Gerald's schedule is jammed packed, for sure! He sings, preaches, writes and produces! In 2012, Gerald ministered at 194 dates and he doesn't plan to

slow down in 2013. His ministry is multi-faceted and his schedule is full, but his number one priority is to see souls saved. "Also," he adds, "I love to see people who have experienced failure to experience real forgiveness from Jesus Christ, I love it!"

For fun, Gerald enjoys his family! "I like doing things with my wife, Debi," Gerald admits, "We usually find a way to turn every trip into a fun trip."

Gerald also says his wife, Debi is his biggest supporter. He couldn't do all he does without her support. "She contributes so much to what I do, she is the unsung hero. I love my Lady and thank God for her."

Like a typical grandfather, Gerald's grandchildren light up his life! "My grandkids are awesome- all 13 of them. There is not enough room here to get me started. They are awesome, again, I am a very blessed man," he shares.

Other joys in Gerald's life include shopping, dining out and sports. He says believe it or not he likes to shop and find good deals! He also enjoys eating at P F Chang, he loves college Basketball & Football (UK & Ole Miss), he loves good music, and he loves the mountains.

It is very obvious; Gerald Crabb loves God and works at nurturing his relationship with Christ. He says God is currently teaching him to chill out! "I have learned to trust Him for everything, He has never once failed," Crabb testifies.

Gerald has a soft heart toward the "backslider" he says. To the folks that think they've strayed too far from God, he reminds, "You can't get too lost to be found, He's got His eyes on you. He loves you."

Gerald Crabb is certainly a very blessed man. What a blessing it has been to share his ministry and heart with our readers at SGNscoops. To learn more about Gerald, his tour schedule as well as how to order his latest book, and CD, please visit his website at <http://www.geraldcrabb.net/>. For more information regarding Gerald's upcoming Songwriting Seminar, see the ad in this issue of SGNscoops Magazine or email rhonda@sgnscoops.com.

What Others Say...

"Gerald Crabb was given a unique insight into human experience, emotions, how the power of the Gospel can affect that experience and to top it off, he can articulate it very well into prose which can be wed to a melody which can imbed itself deep in your brain. That is an ability that only comes as a gift from God!" Phil Collingsworth

"Gerald Crabb is an anointed songwriter with songs that have made an impact on the world for many years now. He's a close friend of mine and I look forward to many more years of great music from his heart as Gerald continues to be in tune with the Lord." Phil Cross

"The first time I wrote with Gerald he asked me if I'd ever read *Songwriting For Dummies*. He said he was reading it and learning a lot. It made me laugh, because who would ever dream that the amazing Gerald Crabb would need to learn anything about writing, much less from a "For Dummies" book? I was blown away by the humble way he approached writing, and somehow I believe this is what makes his songs so wonderful. There is not a moment of pride or pretentiousness in them. I long to have that measure of honesty in every song I write. It's what makes him one of my songwriting heroes!" Sue C. Smith

"We've had the pleasure of recording several Gerald Crabb songs. He has a gift of translating our deepest emotions into song. Gerald is an incredible song writer and is very well respected in our business. It's a pleasure to honor him by this quote." Ben Isaacs

"Gerald is one of the sweet, gentle spirits in the Gospel Music field. I have written with him and I am glad to call him my friend." Bill Gaither

"For most of my life I've seen my dad write song after song and then watched them turn into great hits for our family as well as many other artists. I think he is one of the best songwriters alive today! Now in this chapter in my life, I have the privilege of sitting down with him and writing together - we wrote together just the other day. This is just another way that God is blessing my life. God is so good!" Jason Crabb

Friday Night Revival Cd Review: <http://friday-nightrevival.wordpress.com/2011/09/23/gerald-crabb-sometimes-i-cry/>

Gerald Crabb/Dottie Rambo Clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZRXp_wEHqA

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If you need an Emcee for a special concert or event, check with us about having Rob Patz or Rhonda Frye to host your next program! With more than 19 years experience in media, Rob is the owner of Coastal Media- parent company of SGM Radio and SGNScoops Magazine and the host of the Southern Styles Show. Although Rhonda is fairly new to the industry, she is no stranger to the stage. She is a singer/songwriter, an associate pastor and the editor in chief for SGNScoops Magazine.

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A close-up photograph of a pair of hands cupped together, holding a small, vibrant green seedling with several leaves. The seedling is growing out of a mound of dark, rich soil. The background is softly blurred, showing more soil and some greenery.

A MATHIS MOMENT “THE LITTLE THINGS”

BY JOHN MATHIS JR.

We learn a lot of things in life through various experiences and sources. I’ve learned a lot through church and studying scripture. I’ve learned a lot through my parents and what they passed down. I’ve learned a whole lot from the mistakes I’ve made. And ironically I’ve learned something from working in the music business all these years.

What have I learned from the music business? “The little things” make a world of difference! For me this is one of those life lessons I’ve learned over time. I made friends with many folks in music years ago, in fact decades ago. At the time I made some of those friendships, many of those folks were just starting out or struggling or trying hone what they do. It’s a fact of life; most of us start at the beginning of something- a place that is far from where we really would like to be. We often look for the fast track to success, that one big thing that will allow us to go all the way around the Monopoly board and collect \$200! But the formula for success in life and our even our walk of faith is simply built on the “little things” we do each day.

Many years have passed since I’ve made some of those friendships and I’ve seen a lot of people go on to succeed at what they were doing. I’ve had time to look at their accomplishments with the advantage of knowing what was behind the scenes, what they did along the way. And there is that one central theme with people I know who have succeeded; it was “the little things” they did day after day along the way.

These guys got up every day for years and years and just did some of the most basic “little things” day after day. The kind of things people don’t see on a chart, or on a stage or in a magazine article. Well, they’re seeing the results

but often don’t realize that underlying foundation of how they got there. Most often, people are viewed as “overnight sensations” in music.

I’ve learned over time that the “little things” are key, a very important key, and it’s also one that God has tried to impart to us through His Word. Luke 19:11-27 references being faithful in the “little things” and we would be ruler over much. As I’ve thought about this over the years I notice this formula applies to just about anyone I’ve seen who has achieved a long term goal or some level or status or success in their lives. From retirees who seem to now enjoy life after 30 or 40 years of working the same job, to a successful preacher or evangelist. They have one common thread; they got up each day and just did the “little things.”

As I’ve mentioned in past articles, my background in regard to church is one of a holiness Pentecostal background. We loved big services, praying for miracles, seeing God’s Spirit manifest in a great way. We sought it, we pursued it, we craved it. I call it the “big events.” Then I heard my pastor address this a few years ago by saying “we don’t live off big events, we can’t live off big events!”

The disciples joined Jesus on top of a mountain for what scripture terms as “the transfiguration.” That’s where Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Christ. Peter was so moved by this “big event” he wanted to build three temples afterward, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. It’s ironic that this “big event” inspired Peter to want to build three temples but by a fireside a short time later he denied (three times) the very One he wanted to build a temple for, Jesus.

No, it’s not the “big events” that we should depend on

to carry us through. It's not the temples or monuments or "hoopla" we want to tag onto those big things in our lives that will sustain us or carry us through each day or lead us anywhere. It's the "little things" that happen by a fireside in life when we think no one is watching or no one will see.

My son recently landed a really good job at 19 years old. The pay is great, the company is great and it all sounds wonderful. People that have worked there for years wind up in a good stable place financially in their lives. It's a popular car manufacturing plant but it's the night shift; it's tough, boring, mundane repetitive work. Almost a week doesn't go by though where I remind him, "Son, that's a great job but what will make you successful is just getting up, showing up on time and working one night at a time and just going in and doing your job. If you can string together enough of those nights, you'll wake up one day with things you never dreamed of having and a place in life you might not have thought you'd be."

It's a simple life lesson; it actually doesn't require much thought. In fact, I find I have days where having "no thoughts" are BEST. Hey, dreams are great, goals are wonderful, big events are so thrilling when they take place. But most of our days are filled with just concentrating on the "little things." Even in relationships, I've heard the ladies say about their significant others, "it's the little things that matter most to me".

So in life, in love and relationships, in finances, in ALL things...just work on putting enough days together where you did those "little things" and you'll be amazed at where that will take you!

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Music Reviews for February

by Sandi Duncan Clark

Valentine's Day is one of the most celebrated holidays and the one holiday that allows us to share our feelings for the special people in our lives. Remember when you were in elementary school and brought Valentine cards to exchange with all the kids in your class?

The florist industry says they sell more flowers for this holiday than any time during the year, with the exception of Mother's Day. More candy and greeting cards are purchased and shared on Valentine's Day, than any holiday, even above Christmas.

We have heard "Love makes the world go 'round," all our lives, yet there are many types of love and many people whom we love in different ways. Have you ever thought just what this means? I loved my Mom and Dad. Then I met and married my husband, and I love him in a very different way. When my son was born and I looked into his tiny face, I experienced love in yet another way, and the list goes on and on.

And yet when we found Christ, the love we found in Him exceeds all the emotions, the needs, and forgiveness we could ever imagine. He loves each of us, as if we were His one and only child. I'm so very thankful for the love He brings to my heart and life.

Happy Valentine's Day to each of you, and I trust that you have the love of Christ in your life. If not, He's waiting for you to invite Him into your heart.

We have several wonderful recordings to introduce to you this month. I hope that you'll take the comments

here and search out these wonderful artists to enjoy their talent and ministry.



BUT FOR THE CROSS

The LeFevre Quartet
Activate Records

Producers: Tre' Corley, Paul Corley, Rick Sandidge

This quartet is one of the best in Southern Gospel today, and you will enjoy their latest recording. Mike LeFevre and the LeFevre Quartet have eleven new songs and present each one in fantastic quartet harmony. The front line of the quartet has changed since this recording, and while I thoroughly enjoyed every song here, I'm anxious to hear them with the new vocalists.

The title song is especially one of my favorites on the project, and I could listen to this one all day! The message is so awesome and the quartet does an awesome job on this song, written by Marty Funderburk and Caleb Collins.

A song that will definitely be a great radio song is 'I'm So Saved,' written by Dianne Wilkinson. It was awesome to hear how Dianne worked in the mention of another of her wonderful songs from Cathedral days; 'Master Builder!' 'I'm So Saved' will have you clapping your hands along with the quartet!

'Come And See' has a wonderful message pointing to three of Christ's miracles, then urges the listener to "come and see" what Jesus did! What an encouragement!

Gerald Crabb contributed two songs for the album; one a ballad, the other a strong testimony of the church. Other songs on the play list are 'The Wedding Song,' 'Saved By The Blood,' 'The Blessed Hope,' 'Someday Soon,' 'I'll Let You Lead Me' and 'Standing On The Daily Promises.' This recording is strongly recommended for any fan of outstanding, male quartet, Southern Gospel music. For your copy contact the LeFevre Quartet at www.thelefevrequartet.com



JOY IN THE STORM
The Diplomats
Song Garden Music Group
Producer: Corey Pearson

As a fan of Southern Gospel music, you will appreciate the songs The Diplomats have chosen for their new recording. Each song is arranged around this family's vocal structure, and is well-suited for the group's style as well as that of each individual. Their music is traditional Southern Gospel music at its best, and I've enjoyed this new recording several times.

I'm partial to the harmony and blend you will find in a family group. I especially appreciate a family who dedicates their music ministry to the Lord. The

Diplomats have that dedication and you will enjoy the anointing on all the songs on this album.

The album kicks off with a great camp meeting style song 'Grand Homecoming,' and just gets better! 'God Shall Wipe Away All Tears' and 'I'll Soon Be Gone' are also favorites. Darrin Vincent of Dailey and Vincent joins the Diplomats singing background vocals on 'Sheltered In The Arms Of God,' and 'If Not For The Blood Of The Cross,' is being well received by Gospel radio all across the country.

The song list also includes 'Joy In The Storm,' 'Buried My Sins In The Past,' 'Travelers Protected By Grace,' 'We're Gonna Rise' and two solid songs written by Jimmy Pearson; 'The Other Side' and 'He Still Takes Time for Me.'

Contact the Diplomats at 770-832-2930 for your copy of JOY IN THE STORM.



OLD FRIENDS
Richard Kiser

Richard Kiser Music
Producers: Richard Kiser, Tom Ohmsen

Good music soothes the listener, eases stress, rests the physical body and relaxes the mind. For me, good instrumental music performed by an exceptional artist provides these blessings. Richard Kiser's music has been exactly that since I was introduced to his music several years ago. This new recording is an excellent production, easy to enjoy and presented from the heart of a dedicated Christian musician.

I spent a wonderful afternoon in my rocking chair with a cup of coffee, a warm fire and this recording.

Richard plays what is called finger style guitar picking, patterned after the late, great Chet Atkins. He has dedicated his talent to introducing people to the Gospel message through his talent.

Richard plays three of my all-time favorite songs and does so in a seemingly effortless manner. The Gaither's 'Old Friends,' 'How About Your Heart' and 'The Way That He Loves' stirred my heart. 'There Is A Savior' and 'People Need The Lord' are songs that are recognizable by anyone who has listened to any form of Christian radio, and Richard's emotional vocals on 'I Still Can't Say Goodbye' took me back to many of my Sunday afternoons with family, after hearing Daddy bring a great sermon on Sunday morning.

"I chose the title, OLD FRIENDS because I used many of my old guitars to play different songs on this recording," Richard states in the liner notes of the recording.

I promise you will want to add OLD FRIENDS by Richard Kiser to your Southern Gospel library and you may do so by calling 540-342-6446, or visiting his website at www.rkisermusic.com



THE SONG GOES ON
The Pfeifers
Independent
Producer: Steve W. Mauldin

When it comes to great music, it just doesn't get any better than The Pfeifers and I was indeed happy to know this family has a new recording! This family has been in the ministry more years than most any group in Southern Gospel music today, with their father's evangelistic meetings, and continuing with John and Candy following in the family tradition with Mary Jane Carter.

I love the Pfeifers music, but more than that, I love their heart. Their strong desire to bring Jesus to their audience is evident and their commitment is apparent in their service. With the use of several instruments in their stage performance, their audience is in for a treat every time they perform.

The song selection for THE SONG GOES ON is interesting and exciting, with songs from some of the industry's top song writers with a couple of classics included for good measure. Music tracks are great, some most unique, but well-suited to the individual singer's vocal strength.

'God Is Good, God Is Love,' written by Gina Vera and Sue Smith, begins a wonderful, enjoyable listening experience. The rhythm on this song and 'Good News Coming Down The Road,' are different and caught my ear immediately. Both songs have a calypso beat, which draws your attention to the lyrics.

One of my favorites from the album is 'My Hallelujah Song' with a more contemporary arrangement has a wonderful message and is totally enjoyable. I love 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot' with John Pfeifer playing trumpet and Sam Levin on saxophone. John also is a blessing as he is featured on 'Be There,' one of Gerald Crabbs strong songs.

You will love having your own copy of THE SONG GOES ON by contacting the Pfeifers at www.pfeifers.com

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WWW.CREATIVEVISIONENTERTAINMENT.COM

The Ministry and Music of **Tommy Brandt**

By Sandi Duncan Clark



A few years ago, a well-known Southern Gospel industry leader described Southern Gospel music as “first cousin” to Country music. This only means that the sound and musical style of Southern gospel very closely matches that of Country music. Southern Gospel music is uplifting, with a sincere, positive message; it is easy on the ear, and much like Country music, appeals to a cross section of fans.

Tommy Brandt Livingston (who would later drop the Livingston, when God changed his life) grew up in Indiana as part of a family who enjoyed Country music. His passion for music grew as he hung out with his father at the bar the family owned. As with most bars and nightclubs, the music was country and Tommy would imitate and sing along with the artists he heard; Waylon Jennings, Merle Haggard and Hank Williams Jr. were his favorite.

“I tried to sing like my favorite country singers, and by the time Dad sold the bar and we moved to Florida, I could sing fairly well,” Tommy said. “At 16, I left home and began working on a cattle ranch in Florida.”

Tommy shared his history and we followed his early career on his web site. At the age of 25, Tommy joined a local country band, NEW SOUTH, working the sound equipment. Shortly afterward, the band’s lead singer left, and Tommy filled in until the local audience voiced their opinion and the band hired him to sing lead on a permanent basis.

“I had begun to write songs and wrote ‘Why, Why, Why’ which became quite popular for the band. The song was reported on many radio charts. Our popularity grew, and as doors began to open, I realized how different my life had become,” Tommy recalls.



It was during this time that Tommy met his future wife. This beautiful young lady, daughter of a minister, made a big change in Tommy's life with her testimony and her Christian example. "We attended church together, we had Bible study, and as we spent time together, I knew I was falling in love with Michelle," Tommy smiled. They were married in 1998 and Tommy began a solo ministry with Christ as the center.

Tommy told us, "The Lord changed the lyrics of my songs. I became more conscious of His affect in my life and on my music and I realized I couldn't sing for the devil any more. One night we were at a church where Ivan Parker was singing. We really enjoyed the service and I realized that I had never before experienced the love of God as I saw it in Ivan that night. Ivan's love for God flowed over to the people and I determined, by the grace of God, to show that love in my ministry for the Lord. I wanted the people to see what the Lord had done in my life, just as Ivan presented."

Another individual who has impacted Tommy Brandt's career and Christian life is Del Way. "Without a doubt, Del shares the love of God in his music. His attitude and help was a big influence on my desire to be the man and the performer Christ wants me to be," Tommy stated.

Through their company, *Beyond The Music Promotions*, Tommy and Michelle have elected to work with other artists, mentoring and training them in their Christian walk, their vocal and musical performance as well

as nurturing these artists as they develop their songwriting skills. He tells us, "We often take our artists with us on tour encouraging them with their stage performance and delivery."

God has definitely blessed Tommy Brandt's music ministry. "Radio has been encouraging by accepting and playing my songs. I've also been encouraged throughout my career with the awards and accolades that have come my way," Tommy shared. "We don't have this ministry for our own esteem, yet it is such an awesome encouragement when these blessings come our way."

These awards and recognitions have caught the eye of both the Christian music industry and the Country music industry. From 2004 New Artist Of The Year at the CCMA/ICMA Awards; Male Vocalist of the Year for four years; Producer of the Year; Entertainer of the Year, and many, many other acknowledgments over the past ten years, Tommy's talent and testimony has been recognized. Last year he was honored as the 2012 Music Evangelist Of The Year by the CCMA/ICMA Awards.

Tommy continues to produce charting songs in Christian Country, Inspirational country and Southern Gospel music. Currently we are hearing "My Father's Son," "Meanwhile Back At The Cross," and "If I Had It My Way" on radio stations across the country.

With a new album out; GREATEST HITS, Tommy



will no doubt be enjoying other charting songs, and encouraging more of us with his music. He has written more than 500 songs and other performers as well as Tommy, have enjoyed the success of his songs.

When asked what he felt was his most unusual song, Tommy chuckled as he said, "Probably 'The Septic Tank Man.'" He continued, "It's all in the message!!" Tommy finished our conversation with, "Seriously, when the message of God's love comes through and we see people make decisions for Christ, that's what it's all about. We were singing in a restaurant a while back and used this song to lead three guys to a decision for the Lord. And, the next morning, we had three new families in church. That's a true sign that God can use anything, if He's got a willing vessel."

Tommy performs at churches, rodeos, fairs and for outreach concerts. Michelle does Tommy's booking and can be reached at *Beyond The Music Promotions* office by phoning 321-239-0349, or visiting their web site at www.tommybrandt.org or www.BeyondTheMusicPromotions.com

Michelle will also help you in contacting any of the other artists she and Tommy work with at *Beyond The Music Promotions*. In addition, Tommy offers help and expertise with production of a recording project for your group or solo ministry. He has aided a number of other artists in creating excellent recordings, and would love to supply you with an exciting source of guidance.



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A close-up photograph of two hands, one from the left and one from the right, with fingers interlaced to form a heart shape. The hands are positioned against a plain, light-colored background. The lighting is soft, highlighting the skin tones and the texture of the fingers.

Heart Health Spiritually and Physically

By Laurette Willis

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

February is Heart Health Month. While the world may consider only the physical heart, as believers we realize that we are more than just our body. You are a full package—spirit (made in the image of God), soul (mind, will and emotions) and body (your “earth suit”!).

While the words of King Solomon from Proverbs 4:23 are referring to spiritual heart health, what we continually focus upon will have an effect upon our physical health. We want to be aware and keep watch over what we are meditating on in our heart.

Is there unforgiveness or bitterness? Envy? Worry? If so, the answer is to exercise—not physical, but spiritual. Exercise forgiveness, repentance and then cast your cares upon the Lord.

Become a Fit Witness

Being what I call a “Fit Witness for Christ” is wonderful not only for you—but the people around you will want to know your secret. You can begin expressing yourself with heartfelt words such as

“by the grace of God” and “praise the Lord.” You can then mention how you like to combine faith and fitness (such as doing PraiseMoves or prayer-walking).

As a child of God, you are a steward or caretaker of the body the Lord has given you. Did you know your body actually belongs to Him?

“For you are bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Both your spirit and your body are God’s property. Don’t let that scare you if you haven’t been taking as good care of His property as you could. Instead, realize He has a vested interest in helping you take care of your body! Ask Him to help you.

Physical-Spiritual Heart Health Connection

Stress is a major cause of heart problems. Remember Who is the Author of your peace.

“For He Himself is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14).

At the first moment you begin to sense undue

stress, worry or care, turn to the Lord. Cast the whole of your care on Him because He cares for you (it's HIS job, not yours). In fact, it can be considered prideful to hold on to worry and cares: *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:6-7).

You may say something like, "Father, I give You this situation. I cast the whole of my care on You, because You care for me. I refuse to worry because Your Word says in Romans 14:23 'whatever is not of faith is sin.' Instead I receive Your peace, because You are my peace! Amen."

Cardiovascular Training

Physically speaking, cardiovascular training involves any activity that requires the use of the large muscle groups of the body in a regular and uninterrupted manner. It elevates the heart rate between 60 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate.

Some examples of cardio training include brisk walking, running, aerobics, cycling, elliptical training and rowing.

How Much Cardio?

Most experts agree that cardiovascular training should last for 20 to 60 minutes, with the normal range being 30 to 40 minutes per session. Cardio should be performed a minimum of three days per week, with four to five days being optimal.

What Are the Benefits of Cardio Training?

1. Burns calories
2. Lose excess body fat
3. Strengthens heart and lungs
4. Elevates your mood—a real blues buster!
5. Adds variety to your workout routine

When to do Cardio Training?

Most people find exercising earlier in the day best—so you don't put it off! But anytime you do purpose to exercise is fine—just do it! Some find after work is best for them.

Avoid doing cardio exercises before bedtime. You may have a difficult time sleeping if you do so, as the energy level of the body will be elevated for a while. If you are doing weight training too, try doing some cardio exercises right after, not before.

A protein shake 30 minutes before cardio ensures you'll have energy and won't burn muscle protein during your workout. After a larger meal, wait 2 hours before exercise.

Combine Physical and Spiritual Cardio

Select a scripture for the day and meditate on it while you are working out. Consider the scripture piece-by-piece and ask the Holy Spirit (our Teacher and Guide) to reveal hidden truths to you.

Build your faith muscles by speaking the scripture out loud as you are working out so you can hear yourself saying it. Remember, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17).

Combining these two forms of cardio exercise will thus ensure you will keep your physical and spiritual heart with all diligence!

Christian Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry (<http://PraiseMoves.com> and on Facebook <http://facebook.com/Praise-MovesFan>). Get your free fitness kit at <http://Christian-FitnessKit.com> and something brand new: www.MI-RAdance.com – MIRA! is Christian Fitness with a Latin Beat! Hallelujah!!! ©2013

Photo Courtesy of ARTS



The graphic features a blue and white logo for "Sing A New Song" by Charlie Griffin, with "Praise 95" written above it. To the right is a portrait of Charlie Griffin, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark shirt and a light-colored jacket. Below the logo and portrait, the text reads: "He PAID A DEBT - THE EXCITING NEW SINGLE! Happy New Year! Now scheduling for 2013". At the bottom, contact information is provided: "For more information: www.CharlieGriffin.Net Charlie@CharlieGriffin.Net or 704-374-5910". A small logo for "Classic Artists RECORDS" is in the bottom right corner.

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Born To Sing- Lindsay Huggins

By Dixie Phillips



When most little girls were playing with dolls, Lindsay Huggins was singing the glory down at her local church. At the tender age of five, she competed and won her first talent contest. Lindsay's mother still remembers the song her daughter performed—"What Makes Popcorn Pop"—a delightful tune from one of Lauren Talley's first recordings.

Every Sunday after church, Lindsay's family headed over to her grandparent's house for lunch. After a delicious meal, Lindsay and her sister, Lauren, provided the entertainment.

"We put on our own dinner theater. I hopped up on a footstool in the living room, clutched a microphone and gave a concert, while Lauren took everyone's food orders." Lindsay joked, "I guess our business sense was a little off, seeing as we were all stuffed with Granny's good home-cooking."

Lindsay knew from an early age she wanted to pursue a career in music. She has successfully followed her dream and has a gift for finding harmony, not only in her music, but in her marriage and motherhood.

Gospel music roots run deep in Lindsay's family. Her father played guitar with awarding winning songwriter Marcia Henry and Latter Rain for several years. When Lindsay hit the teen years, her musical tastes broadened and she became a fan of Crystal Lewis, Avalon, and Point of Grace. Later, she worked in the country music industry for five years, and is an avid bluegrass fan. This talented soloist believes her love for various genres and well-crafted songs have made her a more versatile vocalist.

One night when Lindsay was a young teen, she attended a church service. God used a song to grip her

heart and speak to her. She was surprised it wasn't a revival service or an elaborate sermon God used, but He spoke to her through the words of a song. This experience revolutionized her life and ministry. "Every time I get up to sing, I pray God will use my music to touch someone's heart in that same powerful way!"

While Lindsay was traveling with a music group in college, she met her husband, Craig. She was attracted to the love, kindness, and respect Craig extended to people. "Yet to this day he will go out of his way to help anybody. If he has something someone needs and he knows it, he will give it to them."

Lindsay attributes her husband's Christ-like qualities and even-keeled disposition to the stabilizing force in their home. "Besides being a man of integrity, he calms me down when I'm frantic, challenges me when I'm complacent, encourages me when I'm down, and is severely honest, pointing out when one of my songs needs extra rehearsing! He's a wonderful partner in life and ministry. I am very thankful for him."

The couple are members of Trevecca Community Church of the Nazarene, and are heavily involved in the worship department. When they aren't traveling, Craig plays bass guitar and Lindsay sings in the choir and on the worship team.

A few years ago Craig and Lindsay were informed by their doctor they might not be able to have children, but the Lord granted them a miracle. Their son, Tanner Cameron, was born March 6, 2012. "He's pretty much perfect! Seriously, we are so blessed. He's such a happy baby and he sleeps through the night." Lindsay is quick to share what the Lord has taught her since Tanner's birth. "As a new parent, I'm realizing even more the immeasurable love God had for us when He gave us His only Son."



One of Lindsay's most memorable performances was in 2007. She entered and won the Solo Division in a talent contest at National Quartet Convention. This gave her the opportunity to sing on the main stage, which is one experience she will never forget and hopes to minister in song on the main stage again one day.

Her latest project is her "Christmas" CD, which includes several traditional favorites, as well as new songs for the season. "I love Christmas music and I have to say this is my personal favorite so far."

Lindsay's ministry and musical influence is growing. She is always adding dates to her calendar so be sure to check out the schedule on her website at www.lindsayhuggins.com and see if she will be coming to your area in the near future.

There are a couple big ministry opportunities on the horizon Lindsay is really excited about. First, she has been invited to sing in the Sunday worship services for the global Church of the Nazarene General Assembly in June. As a member of the Nazarene denomination, she feels really honored and knows this is a door the Lord has opened for her. Second, she will be ministering on the Girlville Getaway Women's Retreat Cruise to the Bahamas in January 2014. Check it out at www.girlvillegetawaycruise.com. Lindsay teases, "Well, you know somebody's gotta do it!"

Even with all her accomplishments, Lindsay continues to stretch herself and hone her music skills. She is a lifelong learner and has made some realistic New Year's goals. "I hope to begin working on a new CD and music video in the near future. I'd really like to challenge myself in the area of songwriting, too."

Everyone who meets Lindsay agrees. She was born to sing!

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CREATIVITY

Merriam - Webster's definition

*The quality of being creative.
The ability to create*

By Susan Werchonowicz

This article is intended to pay homage to all of the creative artists of whom some may be reading this right now. Whatever your creative medium of choice; writing - books, poetry, songs, plays, art – painting, drawing, and design etc. Please continue to create, we need you and your created worlds, they are our hamlet that we live and/or escape into, the marrow to our weary bones. Your creativity is the essence to our internal architecture, without it we are but a dispirited and uninspired cadaver.

Creativity specifically for the Christian artist is their compulsory lifeblood - without it their innovative spirit is depleted. Occasionally an artist suffers a famine of ideas, a creative hemorrhage if you will. Requiring a full transfusion of His Pedigree to seep back into barren unimaginative veins. Resulting in an extensive pool of resurrected creativity of which the artist can dive and resuscitate submerged ideas.

Our Lord (The Creator) rains down ideas from vapor in the atmosphere. It is up to us (His creation) to grab and catch these gems during His downpour. The fervor along with the volume of pressure required by the artist in working on the raw ideas can be coerced into either: choice jewels or premium diamonds (dependent on the application of weight and pressure directly

applied by the artist).

Over the past numerous years I have mostly been an analytical “thinker/doer” due to the nature of my career. Prior to my profession, I had always had a “passion” for being creative. The fun of begetting something from nothing was my bliss. I breathed it or did it provide me breath? Not sure. My creative language consisted mostly in; pencil sketching, cartoon art/animation, scriptwriting (short comedy sketches, plays, stories), poetry and lyric/songwriting – initially secular and later Christian. I would always have a pencil in my hand, either communicating with sketching portraits or authoring something. I had no idea I was attempting to build a new community of artistic offspring; it just seemed to come organically. Did I have a talent? Maybe. Was it encouraged? No.

I had recently asked myself, when did the “creative bug” in me receive a vaccine producing unwanted immunity to my right-thinking creativity? Well as far as I can tell, it was when I had stepped into the non-creative workforce. Not having proper insight, on top of being young, I signed my creative execution and chose a left-thinking occupation in order to sustain a required source of income. I hadn’t known at the time that I committed creative suicide. A personal regret, no

doubt.

Alas....Moving forward how does one unfetter imprisoned creativity? Unleash choked imagination? How does one breathe new life into an “assumed” extinct creative voice, or exhume a Promethean fossil preserved in ones DNA? The key is to permit, encourage and foster abandoned utterance and self-expression. The resurrected enunciators’ preferred discipline for excavation of expression could be the written word (*which is now my choice*). A chiseled manifesto, the scribes’ articulate tool to properly drill without leaving any exposed painful cavities. Allowing the author to unearth thoughts, obsolete images and/or ideas from their lair, void of any superficial veneer. I have been blessed with some talented mentors who unselfishly have tutored and coached me back to being creative. Mere words aren’t enough to convey behemoth gratitude of this kindness bestowed me.

In closing my creative appetite is craving a healthy dose of new and original work from all of you talented and creative people out there in this new year of 2013... Creativity is an apprenticed bouillabaisse of inspiration, talent, imagination, and perseverance; all catered by the greatest CREATOR – God. The artist needs to continually churn to allow the preverbal cream to rise to the top. I’ve witnessed with such pride and envy, Christian artists/writers ladle out their inspired and articulate alphabet soup of encouragement to the lost and homeless. Leaving the receiver spiritually satiated along with their fellow elbow mates seated at His table. A Regal Banquet indeed.

Photo Courtesy of Phil Feather

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The Browders: God Is Opening Doors

By Lorraine Walker



The Browders' name is everywhere in Southern Gospel news these days. "Praise You in This Valley", the family's latest single, was January's number-one new radio release by deejays as reported by the Singing News. The group has three songs in the Top 100 Songs of 2012 as picked by Absolutely Gospel. How does a family from Hiltons, Virginia, who have been singing for 23 years, achieve this not-so-sudden fame and recognition? As an independent artist not assisted by a professional record company, they have been working hard and relying on God to open doors.

"The group technically started in 1990 and we've been full-time for 10 years. Our recording called *Be A Light*, from seven years ago, really launched the group to where it is today," said Sonya Browder, as SGNscoops interviewed her and her husband Matthew. "We've stuck with our roots, but we've ventured out with our sound and we now do a variety of styles,"

says Matthew. "Some members have changed. Sonya joined the group back in 2005. She married me and all her dreams came true!" The couple laughs and Matthew continues, "Our recording approach has changed. When we began to record in Nashville, we started making more well-thought-out, quality projects. Things just began taking off from there."

The Browders have a dynamic sound with seasoned vocals and an earnest desire to bring people closer to Christ that radiates through their music, their presentation and even their website. Patriarch Tommy Browder is a preacher as well as an accomplished instrumentalist. His sons Matthew and David play the guitar and Matthew's wife Sonya is a pianist. With the addition of powerful family harmonies and well-crafted original songs, this family's years of experience are now bearing fruit as more opportunities arise.

"The fact that we're an independent artist has been

a difficulty at times,” says Matthew. “However, we rest in the confidence that God is opening doors that no man can shut, and shutting doors that no man can open. After 23 years, doors are opening and things are happening.”

“Since [the video’s] release, we have received countless messages about how the song has been an encouragement to someone or how they shared it with someone else, often who didn’t know Christ, as they were going through a difficult time,” says Sonya. “Matt and



I went to the movies about 30 minutes from our home. A police officer stopped us on the way and said that a friend had shared our video with him and he recognized us. He said he watches that video at least once every day and it brings him to tears. He’s never heard us in concert but that song has ministered to him more than a concert ever would. He’s looking forward to attending a concert when we’re in the area.”

Although this popular video often elicits a deep, heart-felt response, Sonya admits there was one performance of “Fall On My Knees” that drew a totally different reaction. “We were in concert in Kentucky,” Sonya begins. “The church was pretty full; I was playing the piano and the rest of the group was off the stage except for Matthew who was singing.”

The opening doors include an increased audience, as shown by The Browder’s You Tube concept video, “Fall On My Knees”, which has recorded over 51,000 views at time of publication. Written by Matthew, the haunting song features Sonya’s piano along with a cello and Matthew’s vocals. The powerful lyrics took the song to number three in the Singing News charts.

“We were getting near the end of the song when suddenly my piano stool broke and fell right beneath me. I fell down and landed right on my backside with a big, loud, thump! It sounded like a bomb went off,” laughs Sonya. “The only thing I could think to do, while I was crumpled up on the floor, was to keep playing. All the church could see was my hands and my chin on the keys. My husband

did nothing but look over and stare at me. The church had busted up laughing so what could we do at that point. We decided to finish the song! It was hysterical.”



Although live performances can bring unexpected results, The Browders find that their audiences appreciate the family’s musical expertise. “People love live music,” says Sonya. “We perform with tracks, we do some songs where we play our instruments with tracks and we also do an acoustic set where we just play. It gives a variety and there is something for everybody.”

The Browders themselves are versatile and are gifted outside of music. “My husband and father-in-law both preach. We do meetings and conferences and I’ve been

The family is thrilled with the expansion of their ministry, as much as they enjoy traveling and singing together. Matthew says that the best part of being on the road is just getting to hang out. “We are very family-oriented and I love being around family. It’s fun to get to travel and share ideas.” Sonya says, “The unique thing about the family dynamic is that we work well together. There isn’t the problem of group members leaving. If there are problems you have to just work it out and keep on going.” Matthew adds, “Sonya and I are together all the time. Sometimes that’s great and sometimes it’s not,” Matthew laughs. “We are just being honest. No two people are exactly alike and you are not going to agree on everything. The thing is to get through it and still appreciate each other.”



Matthew and Sonya begin to share about the things they appreciate about their family members. “My favorite quality about my husband is that he is very forgiving,” Sonya shares. “I really admire that. Also, I have learned from him to take instruction. A lot of people get very offended if people try to give them advice. Matthew is so great at not taking offence. If someone gives him advice, he takes it; that’s what makes him the songwriter that he is. That’s how he is in every aspect of life and I love that about him.”

“My father-in-law is in a wheelchair because he had polio as a child,” says Sonya regarding Tommy Browder. “Traveling is a challenge for him, but you couldn’t get him to not go on the road. He is very faithful to his calling.” Matthew agrees, “Yes, he goes whether or not he feels like it and when most people would stay home. He is one of the sweetest people



asked to start doing women’s conferences. We are very excited to see all of those areas grow to wherever God would have them to be.”

you'd ever meet."

"David, my brother-in-law, is very easy-going and you aren't going to get him in a hurry about anything. That is a good thing," says Sonya. Matthew adds, "My brother is one of the greatest singers that I've ever heard and I feel honored that I get to sing with him. He is a laid-back, cool guy and one of the nicest guys you'd ever meet."



Sonya adds that her brother, Burt, also travels with the Browders. "Burt is one of the best personalities that you'd ever meet. We were raised that if there was something to be done, you'd do it. So that's how he is! He's a hard worker. He's also got a peacemaker personality. He's fun to have on the road."

Matthew looks at his wife with love. "Sonya is beautiful and I love her blue eyes. She really encourages me; she speaks to the *king* in me. She believes in me. She's very talented. She is quick to forgive also. We can have a spat and in 20 minutes, it's over. God is so good to let me travel with my wife."

Although The Browders travel full-time, performing 150 concerts a year with some of their family, there are still those left at home to consider. Sonya says, "We typically try to keep the traveling to Friday through Sunday. Even though Matthew and I are on the road together, it is still important to have time that is just your own, doing things that are not work-related. We always look forward to attending services at our home churches as well."

David Browder is married with two children and also enjoys spending time off the road with

his family. When David talks about the ways in which God has been good to him in 2012, he says: "Seeing the excitement on my boys' faces when we took them on a surprise family vacation!" Looking ahead to the next few months, David adds, "I am very excited to see what doors God is going to open for our ministry in 2013!"

Already in 2013, The Browders have been working on a new project called *Time Machine* that has a projected street date of the end of March. Sonya says, "We recorded at several different studios in Nashville with Kevin Ward as our incredible producer. His creativity along with our craziness makes for a good team!"

Ward is definitely a Browder fan. "I'm always impressed with the Browders' drive to get to the next level," says Ward. "They've examined and reexamined every step of this process to make sure it's their best record yet. We've all given everything we have."

"I enjoy working with Kevin, he brings the best out of us!" says David Browder. "My favorite part of recording is when we get to watch the Nashville musicians play the songs we've written. I have a favorite guitar player, David Cleveland. I highly recommend him not only for his amazing guitar playing but also because he's incredible to work with and he truly has a heart for God."



Following the recording session, Tommy talks about a few of the cuts from *Time Machine*. "I have three favorite songs on this record," says Tommy. "First is 'The Reason,' written by Sonya. 'I couldn't have said it any better! 'The reason I can stand, when life gets out of hand; the reason is Jesus in me'. My second favorite is 'I'll lift Up His Name Again,' which gives glory and praise to Jesus, written by Matthew. 'Whatever You're Going Through,' by David, is my third favorite, which

says that no matter what you're going through, God will be there."

For Sonya, it's impossible to pick a favorite song off of the new project. "I truly love them all for entirely different reasons: the writing, the arrangement, the message, the style. We wrote all 10 songs and they all mean something to each of us. I wrote one so I'll tell you about it. 'The Reason' is my appeal to our audience that no one is exempt from having an abundant life in Christ. The great blessings I have received are not earned; they come from the one Who lives in me, and are a result of a life lived for Him. That life is available to anyone."

More fans and friends in the music industry are acknowledging the songwriting abilities of the Browder family. Donna King of Vertical Sky says, "The Browders are incredible people and not just because of their ability to sing. You haven't met a more passionate songwriter than Matthew. If you've met him, you've seen and heard that passion. He'll sing you a song anywhere, anytime! It's awesome how his heart exudes the love of God in a song. And his brother David is no slouch either. He and Matthew have co-written number-one hits like 'The Land Of No Goodbyes' and others."

"The best thing about the Browders is that they are true friends and their very first goal, all day, every day in ministry, is to win souls for Jesus," says King. "I love them all and I am honored to work with them!"

When asked about The Browders' goals for 2013, Tommy's words reflect King's comments when he says. "God was always with us every time we met at His house and He opened new doors for our ministry in 2012. I would like to reach more people for Jesus in 2013."

Sonya agrees with Tommy's comments and says the family's goals also include: "To reach as many people as we possibly can with the new recording and to grow in our personal lives in the Lord so we can effectively continue to grow in the ministry God has called us to. We strive to continually grow vocally, musically, and in ministry every year." She adds, "We always want to present Christ as the Answer to unbelievers. However, there are probably more Christians than not that hear our music. If we can encourage them to seek Christ above all else and to understand that truly abundant life only comes from Him, then we hope they will in turn take that message to the lost world around them."

Through preaching and singing, this family is doing their part to take the message of abundant life to their world. "We are trusting God to take us to a worldwide ministry," says Matthew. "We believe we have Good News to bring to the people, to be able to minister to hearts. We truly have an evangelistic ministry."

The Browders have worked hard for many years to achieve excellence in their music and ministry. However, they know that any recognition they now receive is due to God opening the doors for them. Matthew says that this is what he would want their audience to remember about The Browders, as he quotes from 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourself under the mighty Hand of God, and He will exalt you in due time."

"When you are willing to let go of the things you think you need and the plans you have and allow God to do whatever He wants to do, that's when He is able to open His hands and let loose on you the things that He wants to, things that are greater than anything that you could hold on to in your life," says Sonya. "When you humble yourself under His authority and lift Him up to the proper place in your life where He belongs, He will lift you to the place where He wants you to be."

The Browders have experienced the heavenly support of an Almighty God who is using this family to reach many who need to feel a touch from Him. The friends and fans of this talented family look forward to experiencing the exciting things ahead as God continues to open doors for The Browders.

For information on The Browders and their tour schedule, visit <http://thebrowders.com/index.php>

See The Browders on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Browders-Friends/246351358032?fref=ts>

Watch their You Tube video, "Fall On My Knees", here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWKEpHgJCXk>

Thanks to the following for their contribution:

Donna King, Vertical Sky <http://www.verticalskyonline.com/>

Kevin Ward, Producer <http://kevinwardmusic.com/>

2013 DIAMOND *Awards*



Diamond Awards Round One Nominations

We are excited to kick off the 2013 Diamond Awards nomination process! On Monday, February 18 fans may cast their nomination for their favorite artists and groups in many categories covering Southern Gospel and Christian Country. Remember, the Diamond Awards are fan based, so every artist is on equal ground as far as being nominated. Please vote, then encourage your friends, family and fans to vote by sharing the link on your website and all social media outlets. We will close round one on April 22. Look for the top candidates to be announced on our website as well as in the May edition of SGN Scoops Magazine. Round 2 of the voting process begins May 1, and then the final round opens the first of July. Winners will be announced at the 2013 Creekside Gospel Music Convention in Pigeon Forge, TN on October 29, 2013.

Vote by clicking [here](#) beginning on February 18th



Christian Country News

Jimmy Davis -

"Music was always there for me."

As long as he can remember, Jimmy Davis always had a guitar in his hand. "My pastor taught me my first few chords." He also got his first taste of being on stage at a very young age while singing with his family at their local church in Vero Beach, Florida. "I played the guitar, my brother played the piano and Mom and Dad sang. We never played anywhere else, just at our church." Jimmy loved to listen to quartets, bluegrass, and men at his church while they had jam sessions. "Music was always there for me."

At the age of five Jimmy received the Lord as his personal Savior. He also knew that he wanted music to be a part of his life. His pastor noticed that God was planting something special in Jimmy. "My pastor told me, 'Jimmy, God has given you a gift and that gift was given to be used for His glory.'" Jimmy promised his pastor that he would use this gift for God's glory. That is when Jimmy first started feeling a calling on his life for ministry. At the age of 12 he felt the calling to preach. Jimmy loved God, he promised God that he would go wherever God led, but Jimmy had no idea it would be such a ride.

Jimmy started writing songs in sixth grade. It was his way of expressing his relationship with his Heavenly Father. "It relaxes me; it's my time with the Lord." While attending Bible College, Jimmy would sometimes go into an

empty room at the old monastery, play his guitar and sing songs of worship. It was his time to sing God's praise and search for the next step in his life. Not only did he find more places to sing and play his guitar but he also found his beautiful and loving wife. During the summer months, evangelist Joe Boyd formed a team to go out and travel. Jimmy was able to earn college credits from this team. This group of men formed a quartet, "The Cornerstone Quartet." They traveled to different places, taught evangelism in the morning ate lunch and then visited people and sang in the evening. "I knew that God was calling me to evangelism, I just didn't know exactly what direction He was taking me." Six months before he graduated from college, God called him to move to Christiansburg, Virginia and pastor Lighthouse Baptist Church. He was there for 17 years.

In 2000, Jimmy was first introduced to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. One of his church members, Jeff Levy, provided the t-shirts for the BGEA crusade. "He was looking for someone to help sell his t-shirts for an upcoming crusade and I accepted the offer." That changed his life forever. During that time Jimmy started forming a relationship with the BGEA and in 2003 when Franklin Graham came to Salem, Virginia he was asked to be an office assistant. God was also calling him to be a full-time evangelist. It was time for Jimmy to take his guitar and his songs and share them with the world. That same year Jimmy received his first of many awards. He was voted "New Male Artist

of the Year, Eastern Division" by the Country Gospel Music Association. He then went on to win the "New Male Artist of the Year, International" also by the CGMA.

While his career as a Country Christian artist was building so was his time with BGEA. What began as contract work as an office assistant turned into Production Volunteer Coordinator within the next few years. "The Lord kept opening doors for me." In 2007 he was asked to sing at the pre-events for the crusade. He got to share the stage with Point of Grace and Paul Overstreet. Between BGEA and Jimmy Davis Evangelistic Association he is able to do what God has called him to do. "My calling is to strengthen the church and win people to Christ."

Jimmy has taken his music and words of encouragement all over the world. His main stage is in the church. He also does speaking engagements. Whenever Jimmy is given the opportunity to talk about God, he gladly takes full advantage. "God gives you these divine appointments to share His love. God sometimes gives me these opportunities on an airplane. I try to be alert for those divine appointments." A few years ago while performing at a church a man on his way to commit suicide walked into the church and through Jimmy's ministry his life was changed. "I also try to encourage the pastors of the churches where I perform. I know from being a pastor myself it is sometimes hard to hide all the emotions, and they also need to be ministered to."



Jimmy has released five CD's and is currently working on number six. He has been nicknamed "the John Denver of Christian country music," because of his ability to connect his songs with the people. He has won numerous awards from "Male Vocalist of the Year," "Songwriter of the Year" to



"Esteemed Pioneer award." Next year Jimmy hopes to take the Jimmy Davis Evangelistic Association overseas for his first crusade.

Although Jimmy enjoys spending time on the road spreading the Gospel of Christ, he is also grateful to go home to his loving wife of 25 years and seven children. His eldest son, who is a United States Marine, also has released a CD. For more information on Jimmy Davis his web site is www.jdea.info.



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Palmetto State Quartet In Concert



By Eva Wilson

In their first concert of 2013, Palmetto State Quartet started the year off right: celebrating Jesus! The host church, Harvest Time Church of God of Crosby, TX welcomed David Staton, Mike Allen, and Jeremy Easley, along with Robert Fulton filling in for Larry Strickland. And Casey Martin on keys, of course.

Their hand-clappin' toe-tappin' opener "Good Morning" was a true crowd-pleaser. Then, after a few introductions, they went straight into the PSQ classic kicker "Day by Day," showcasing Mike's bass vocals. They laughed about how this was like having an audience sit in on their first rehearsal of the year, but every song was exceptional. It's hard to just hit the highlights!

All the guys delivered the tight harmonies they're famous for, with a great mix of old fan favorites and new material. Robert, a former PSQ member, didn't miss a beat. You could tell he was having fun, and wow, he's got some pipes!

Jeremy, the new high tenor, tenderly nailed the vocals on "Never Too Far." He walked down the center aisle as he sang, gently reminding each person of how close God really is to each of us. The lyric says "Wherever you are, you're never too far away..." –

there was such a warmth, a sweet joy as he showed us the Lord's heart.

Casey's piano skills captivated the audience from the very first song, but when it was time for the offertory, it was what we used to call "special music." He didn't seem to mind one bit when his piano solo turned into a hootenanny for Jesus. Yes, the gentle hum-along soon became a sing-along as even the ushers were unashamedly singing "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, there's just something about that name!"

The group also shared several tunes from David's solo project: "Every Knee Shall Bow," "Do It By the Book," "Thank You, Dad," and "Living Like I'm Leaving." Wonderful, unforgettable songs. His love for the Lord and the Kingdom work is evident in his songwriting.

Other highlights for me: how the congregation enthusiastically joined in on "Amazing Grace." And how a hush fell over the room as Mike sang the beloved hymn "The Love of God." Then, as David announced the last song of the evening, I heard a voice behind me whisper "Don't stop singing. Please, we want more." Me, too, friends. Me, too.



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A photograph of three men standing in front of a large, rustic wooden water wheel. The man in the center is older with white hair and a mustache, wearing a patterned shirt. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a light-colored button-down shirt. The man on the right is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. They are all smiling. The background shows a stone wall and trees with autumn foliage.

Artist Spotlight: Midnight Cry

By Angela Griffin

This month's edition of our Artist Spotlight features Greg Day, Stan Shuman and David Walker of the newly formed Southern Gospel male trio... "Midnight Cry." Midnight Cry is a name that most Southern Gospel music fans will recognize. Co-founder, Greg Day co-wrote one of the greatest songs ever written, "The Midnight Cry" along with his brother Chuck Day in 1986. It was recorded by Gold City in 1988. Greg and Chuck were honored at the National Quartet Convention of Louisville, Kentucky in 2006 with an award from Provident Music group in Nashville, Tennessee for "The Midnight Cry" being one of the most recorded Christian songs in the history of Gospel music. Co-founder Stan Shuman recalls "Greg and I were returning from a weekend trip to Tennessee and I said to Greg, 'Why don't we call the group Midnight Cry? You co-wrote the song and how fitting it would be to use your song for the group name?' We chose the name because it is so fitting for the day and

hour in which we are living in," Stan says.

Greg also serves as the trio's lead vocalist and has written hundreds of songs since co-writing The Midnight Cry. "I've been singing since the age of five," Greg shares. "I have traveled with my family, The Day Family, and recently with Danny Funderburke and Mercy's Way".

At the age of 18, Greg enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and moved to Ft. Walton Beach, Fla. where he was stationed. At age 23, Greg asked the Lord to use him in whatever way he wanted. It is very evident that God is using Greg for His kingdom and has anointed him to minister to the lost and hurting. It is Greg's desire to let God lead him in every aspect of his life until "The Midnight Cry."

Stan has been traveling and singing southern gospel music since 1970 with such groups as Roger Horne Trio, Jerry & the Singing Goffs,

Naomi & the Segos, Danny Funderburke with Mercy's Way, and others. Stan has a heart for ministry and believes that if one person comes to know Christ, it's worth every mile you travel. He believes one hundred percent in what and who he sings about, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He has also been writing gospel music since 1979. His very first song, "Somebody Touched Heaven for Me" was co-written with songwriter Savannah Foust. Artists such as The Kingsmen, Gold City, Dixie Melody Boys, Danny Funderburke and many



others have recorded songs written by Stan. Stan has appeared at the Ryman, The Grand Ole Opry, The 700 Club, PTL, Atlanta Live, and also INSP Network.

Tenor, David Walker, is a five time Singing News fan award favorite tenor nominee who has won several regional fan and industry awards, and has penned 2 southern gospel songs that topped the southern gospel charts. David began his professional Southern Gospel career with the Anchormen of Goldsboro, North Carolina. Following a successful career

the Lord moved him across the state to Maiden, North Carolina, where he accepted the call from The Singing Americans. He and his family then moved to the Smoky Mountains in beautiful Sevier County, Tennessee. While performing with Dollywood's Kingdom Heirs, David was afforded the opportunity to minister to



over one million visitors to the park throughout his tenure at Dollywood, as well as fill an extensive travel schedule including multiple church and concert venues.

The group has a pre-release project that will follow with a full compilation later in the year. It was only fitting for the group to record "Midnight Cry" which is also the title of the project. "I love the song "I'm Willing Lord" sung by David Walker. David really shines on this song and I think it's his Signature song. What a voice!" shares Greg.

Stan adds "I first heard this song when David sang with the Anchorman. When Dave joined the group I told Dave, we have to record "I'm Willing Lord" because the title says it all... we are willing to do and go where God

leads us.”



I think Stan sums up the group’s mission best: “I think for any artist the most rewarding moment is when someone walks the aisle and asks Jesus Christ into their heart as Lord and Savior of their life. Over the years many have come to know Christ through our individual ministries in song. Knowing time is short and what we do, we must do quickly before the Lord comes again. We must go wherever the door is open and to proclaim the Good News in song.”

Midnight Cry is now scheduling for 2013. For scheduling contact: stanshuman@rocket-mail.com. You can also find “Midnight Cry Ministries” on Facebook. A new website is coming soon at mdnightcry.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.



Rhonda Frye is an ordained minister serving as the Associate and Worship Pastor at Rock Pointe Church in Fort Oglethorpe, GA. She is a recording artist, songwriter, preschool music teacher and sings with family trio, "Rhonda Frye & RiverSide." Rhonda is from Ringgold, GA and is supported by her husband and their 3 children. To learn more about Rhonda Frye Music Ministries, visit: <http://rhondafrye.com>



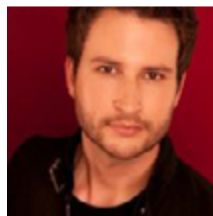
Lou Wills Hildreth appears on the Gaither Homecoming Videos, and is a founding member of Texas First Family Of Gospel Music, the "Singing Wills Family." She helped pioneer Christian television as host of "Wills Family Inspirational TV." After moving to Nashville in the sixties, she was the first woman 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>



Victoria Shirey first took the stage at 3 years old. Strong vocal abilities and harmonies are a God given talent that started in her at a very young age. Along with writing for SGN Scoops, she designs websites, is a Producer and Background Vocalist for Homeland Records out of Gallatin, TN and is a part-time cruise director for Paradise Tours & Travel. Victoria writes and arranges most of The Shirey's music as well. Most importantly, she loves the Lord with all of her heart and makes it her goal to let the love of God shine through her. Visit victoria at: <http://theshireysministries.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.



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



Christian Health & Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is an author with Harvest House Publishers, and the Director of Praise-Moves Fitness Ministry with DVDs, a training program and PraiseMoves Instructors on four continents (<http://Praise-Moves.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>

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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. Queen-noq.blogspot.com



John Mathis Jr's life and musical influences have given him years of experience in the music industry in the areas of songwriting and music publishing, radio, publicity, A&R and recording. Another influence in John's life has been ministry. His grand-father was a church-planter

and minister for 43 years, his father was a national evangelist. John has spent a number of years as an evangelist, pastor, worship director and public speaker. Currently, John works with Mansion Entertainment in the aspects of media promotions, publishing and recording while continuing to write, manage his own music catalog and occasionally speak.

www.themansionentertainment.com

www.avidgrouppublishing.com

www.thepathwayrecords.com

www.johnmathisjr.com



Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, spreading the message that there is joy around the

bend. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational

blog at <http://jenniferjoycampbell.blogspot.com> Learn more about Jennifer at

<http://jennifercampbell.net>



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@sngnscoops.com



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.



Scott Rhoades has a passion for writing, and enjoys sharing his experiences and interests through publication and speaking in public forums. After completing graduate work in 2006, he began to pursue freelance writing and continued public speak-

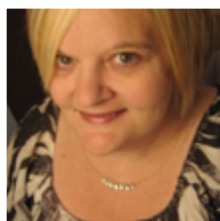
ing. In 2009, he took to the airwaves, joining the staff of WMUG in Indiana, Pennsylvania where he is the Program Host for Sunday Morning Light.

The owner of Ivory Hill Studios, he is the co-author of Legacy of Love: Memories from Ivory Hill - a collection of stories and poems highlighting the history of the Rhoades family and the small coal-mining town of Nanty-Glo, Pennsylvania. Scott is also a songwriter, publishing his first song, I'm Under His Wings, with Asheville Music Publishing/Chris White Music in 2010.

Website: www.scottrhoades.net

Contributors

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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 chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.



Richard (Rick) Kiser Jr. is the author of the children's book series, Carly and Friends. He also has written one novel, "Forever My Son." He is a full time computer technician and lives in Virginia with his wife and two daughters. To learn more about Rick visit his web site [www.](http://www.carlyandfriends.com)

[carlyandfriends.com](http://www.carlyandfriends.com)



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.



Susan Werchonowicz is a lover of our Lord Jesus Christ. Susan is Canadian-born with a deep love of Southern Gospel Music. Her passion for Gospel Music was re-ignited when Russ Taff performed at her church in Brampton Ontario Canada a few years ago.. When Russ performed "Ain't no Grave"

Susan became re-enamored and consumed with Southern Gospel music. By trade Susan is an analytical "left brain" type, with her profession as a Project Manager in the Telecom Industry. Susan has returned back to her passion for writing, including her love for Lyric Writing, including writing a Christian play which she hopes to see on stage one day. Susan is single and lives about 1 hour north of Toronto. She has recently joined the SGN Scoops Magazine team Dec. '12. "It's your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words" (Matthew 12:34) (MSG). You can email Susan directly at swerchon@sgnscoops.com