

The 2011 Diamond Award
Finalists are announced,
including

'Living Legend'

Ed O'Neal: The Call's Still
the same

Marty Funderburk ~ Christians & music piracy
Tribute to a regional artist

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



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

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W gospel triumphs

With seemingly endless winters, tornadoes and floods, gas running over four dollars a gallon, and the news media managing to turn even the death of a worldwide terrorist into a lesson in political correctness, it's easy to get cynical these days.

But this past month, stories have emerged to bring those necessary rays of sunshine into gloomy gray skies.

ENLIGHTENED A few weeks ago, in conjunction with a channel lineup change, Sirius XM radio announced that it would be removing Enlighten, the southern gospel station, from its regular channel. Once the change took effect, Enlighten would only be available through the internet subscription and/or SmartPhone applications, all of which are an upgrade (and pay increase) from the standard service.

For many of us in geographic regions where SG is not played on FM or AM, Enlighten was the only southern gospel radio we could get. For many traveling artists, Sirius XM has been installed on their bus or truck for listening during hours of travel. And very importantly, Enlighten is a station who plays emerging and progressive artists who do not receive airplay on traditional SG stations. The loss of the station would be in many ways devastating to the genre.

However, Southern Gospel fans immediately took action. Word was spread via social networking and many artists and fans contacted Sirius XM to voice their discontent. Within a week, the company announced it would in fact be retaining Enlighten on its lineup, relegating it to a temporary station until it finds its new home.

Isn't it sweet to see a victory sometimes?

Elsewhere in gospel music, there is still much to celebrate. As the summer festivals, events, and awards ceremonies commence, living legends such as Ed O'Neal will stand out in the crowd, showing many of us newcomers what it takes to stick around through the long haul. It's easy to get discouraged, but with God on our side, failure is never necessary! 🇺🇸



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May blessings...

Love, Life, & Legends with Ms. Lou:



My heart overflows with thankfulness for the privilege to greet you in the name of Jesus.

After spending many years in gospel music, both as a performer and an industry executive, I still love the music, the fans, the industry, the promoters, the media, and the artists.

More than that, Howard and I love the message of the gospel.

Recently, our friends Aaron and Peggy Dykes, invited us to go with them to a Triumphant Quartet concert at First Baptist Church in Lake Jackson, Texas. David Hancock, promoter of concerts in that area, and his wife Dana, welcomed us graciously. The presence of the Lord was truly evident from the opening prayer to the closing invitation. Triumphant Quartet has earned a place in the hearts of gospel music fans nationally. The quartet is currently receiving extraordinary recognition by the industry, yet these fine men remain unchanged in their attitude. Their focus is to reach people for the Lord, and they are doing it in a powerful manner.

I vividly remember seeing a fabulous performance by Triumphant Quartet at the Louise Mandrell Theatre in their home town of Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, a few years ago. Their recording of "God's Been Very, Very Good To Me" written by my nephew, Bobby Lee

Wills, is still at the top of my list.

Howard and I loved the surprise appearance of Dale Shipley who was a guest of Triumphant. Hearing Dale sing brought back memories of those early years in Fort Worth when he sang with Bob Wills & the Inspirationals, and later when he and Jeff Stice were members of Perfect Heart. Hearts Of Grace, Floyd & Christine Scott, and Connie Maynor, friends from Brazoria, Texas, added a sweetness to the program.

Many times during the concert, I thanked God for allowing me to spend a lifetime in gospel music and blessing me with a great family and a multitude of friends. Howard took these photos of Triumphant Quartet, as we sat on the front row, being blessed, at a truly memorable concert. Contact us at P. O. Box 271106 HoustonTX 77277 gosplvideo@aol.com

www.louhildreth.com





Opposite page: Dale Shipley, Triumphant's guest, reminiscing with Lou. Clockwise from above: Triumphant Quartet at Lake Jackson, Texas—David Sutton, Clayton Inman, Scotty Inman, Eric Bennett, and Jeff Stice; Scotty Inman, song writer and gifted vocalist, taking a solo.; Jeff Stice, recipient of multiple awards, adding an awesome solo segment;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It's (NOT) a Pirate's Life for me?

One of the major issues in the entertainment industry right now is that of Digital Rights Management. To explain simply, it's now easier than ever for the average consumer to illegally download or view entertainment that wasn't purchased or doesn't have commercials in it. As such, the music and film industries are scrambling to find ways to ensure that they're still being paid for the product that they release. Despite their attempts, piracy still runs rampant.

It fascinates me that I have never heard one sermon or read one Bible study that dealt with the issue of piracy. Surely, to interact with our culture in a loving and wise way, the church should have a response to such an issue? Surely, God was not taken by surprise by the advent of digital media, and the answers for even this modern problem can be found in the Bible?

When I look at scripture, I only find two things that are very clear: God specifically and repeatedly instructs us not to steal (Ex. 20:15; Lev. 19:11; Duet. 5:19). And questioning what God said and meant is a devilish lie (Gen. 3:1). As a consumer, stealing is clearly wrong.

As for the studios themselves, though, the manner in which they're behaving, by and large, is silly and greedy, and that behavior frustrates people and often drives them to trying piracy as an alternative. To be honest, I have no idea how the Christian music industry specifically deals with these things. The Christians may be above the board in all of the following areas. I only speak now of my overall experience as a consumer in the digital age.

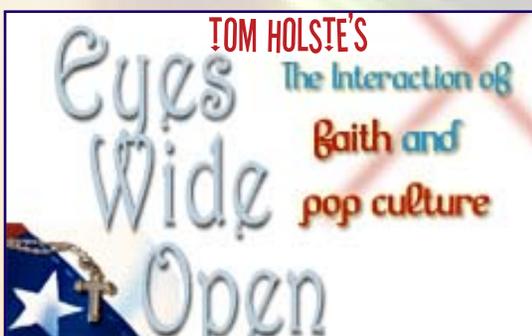
First, let's look at music. Napster first debuted in 1999 when a smart college kid realized that he could set up a program to give and get music online after ripping the music from its CD onto the hard drive of the computer. The service was called "file sharing." The name isn't really accurate, though. When, for instance, I let a friend borrow a book, I eventually need it back. But with file "sharing," we both have identical copies and we can keep them forever. With mix tapes, at least there was some sound quality loss, so the tapes never sounded as good as the original tape or record. But with a CD, every song plays back in perfect quality, no matter how many times it's copied. No wonder the recording industry freaked out. Napster was shut down and had to re-open as a paying service.

Unfortunately, as so often happens, the baby was thrown out with the bathwater. Napster didn't simply provide music that was already legally available; the users also provided rare and out-of-print music. For example, a friend of mine collects vintage Sesame Street

recordings; when Napster was shut down, he lost access to these types of albums because they weren't commercially available. Essentially, Napster became identical to the music store down the street. It had all the same boring selections that were already available by everyone else. Even as its popularity continues, its whole point for existing has been rendered irrelevant.

Making matters worse, the recording studios put a bunch of coding on their downloaded songs to prevent people from being able to share them with others. However, the people who were pirating weren't getting the songs from legal downloads in the first place. People who did download legally found out that a song that was downloaded from one piece of software would not play on another company's software or MP3 player. (Songs bought from iTunes would not play in Windows Media Explorer, for instance, or vice versa.)

In essence, the only people who were being punished were the ones who were trying to follow the rules. Meanwhile, the pirates continued their downloading on new sites that popped up in the wake of Napster's shutdown, completely unaffected by the studios' attempt at control. (It's worth noting that many services are now making improvements to make their songs playable in more than one format, and Amazon offers its song downloads free of Digital Rights Management encoding.)



Surely, God was not taken by surprise by the advent of digital media, and the answers for even this modern problem can be found in the Bible?

The goal of the corporations seemed to be to try to get people to go back into brick-and-mortar stores and to only buy plastic CDs (which, by the way, are dreadful for the environment, while online purchasing is not). The theory seems to be that studios can't support people buying just one song from an artist; consumers need to buy all the songs on an album in order for the studios to be financially profitable. To which I argue, singles have been available since the days of 45s, and they haven't put the record industry out of business. I think there are a lot more people, in fact, who would be willing to buy just that one particular song they like from an artist but would never have purchased an entire CD. My theory is that overall music revenue will actually go up from online sales (if

it hasn't already), if studio executives can stop freaking out and wringing their hands for a few moments. Historically, companies have always hated and feared any change in format. When public libraries—yes, public libraries—were introduced, publishers had a heart attack. Why would anyone ever buy a book again, the publishers reasoned, if people can just go to a library and check out a book? When movies were introduced, publishers were again afraid, this time worrying that movies would replace books. Then TV came along, and film studios were concerned that people would never go to the movies again. Then home video came along, and it was certainly going to "destroy" the film and TV business. And so on and so on. In each case, the fears were completely unfounded. People still liked to own books instead of just borrowing them from the library, and the companies made lots of money off of TV and video, just as they did with film. In other words, they embraced the new format.

Music studios wanting consumers to go back to plastic CDs is like demanding that everyone who wants to listen to music on the go should carry a turntable around with them.

What I'm not saying in all of this is that Christians therefore have no moral responsibility in this matter, and that we can use conditional ethics to justify doing what we want regarding piracy. What I'm saying is that the record companies' unfair and illogical attempts to control the issue have backfired drastically. The studios need to work with the honest consumer to find an alternative that allows ease of use and still provides financial gain for them.

In the fall of 2007, Radiohead released its album *In Rainbows* online before the official CD came out a couple of months later. The download was available for pay or for free, whatever amount consumers felt they could contribute. The album went on to sell three million copies. Consumers do respond when they're treated like intelligent adults, rather than being metaphorically forced to put their heads on their classroom desks with everyone else. 🇺🇸

To be continued next month with a look at film.

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Having been a part of this industry for more than 30 years, I've had the opportunity to meet and work with some of the best known and least known artists. We often categorize the work or standing of a particular ministry by whether they are regionally or nationally known. The label "regional artist" has taken a decidedly negative connotation through the years, now looked on as someone who hasn't quite made it yet to the prestige of "full time." Sadly, this often leads to an inaccurate and unfortunate assessment of the impact and potential these artists have.

One such ministry has some very early roots in the "gospel business", but has made impacts felt around the world. This gentleman, though known only regionally during his ministry, has been able to touch hearts with a simple but direct message for many years. He certainly has become a well known name among those who follow the genre, but there are still many who regard him as a lesser known artist because of his lack of association with mainstream organizations.

My friend was never one accepted by the "leadership" of the business. His refusal to play the game or be a part of the machine created to feed egos put him outside the "A" list crowd. While he had several well known events and dates, and while his date book was often jammed, he was still seen as a part time regional performer that had to support himself with odd jobs and duties. Fortunately he had been gifted with a craft that could be used to put food on the table but because he didn't work only on ministry, he was at times looked at as not worthy of the call he knew he had. His single releases never hit the established top 40 and the recognized leading publications refused his press releases. His efforts were seen as competitive to the

standards that were set by the industry, so he was kept from the main stage arenas and events that the industry

sponsored and supported. He didn't have a fancy coach to travel in; in fact he often traveled by borrowed vehicles to get where he needed to go. He didn't have a lot, but his dad would always provide the needs he had and for those around him. He had a small but dedicated group of supporters and followers that helped to keep him on the road during his time of ministry.

His impact, though, is hard to question. Through his years in ministry he saw many lives changed, healings and restorations. His straight, no nonsense approach to ministry was to just tell folks that sin is sin, but God loves them anyhow. He helped to grow many ministries that have gone on to flourish and have impact across the world for the cause of Christianity, and groups all around the globe still sing many of his songs today. **While he didn't get the recognition that he deserved from most people until after his death, his legacy is without question one that has grown to a worldwide impact.**

Sadly many of the industry leaders today both on and behind the stage could be reminded from his work what ministry is really about. He would work with anyone, and refused to judge others or participate in gossip. He shared the stage and didn't care what order he performed in, who was first or who was last. His only focus was to share a message of salvation to a lost and dying world. He knew that his time here was short and that the work he did was crucial. Even when he was nearing the end and felt like he just wanted to give up, he surrendered all to the will of God. He was fully aware that his reward would come after he left this earth, yet he still worked every day toward the purpose of his call.

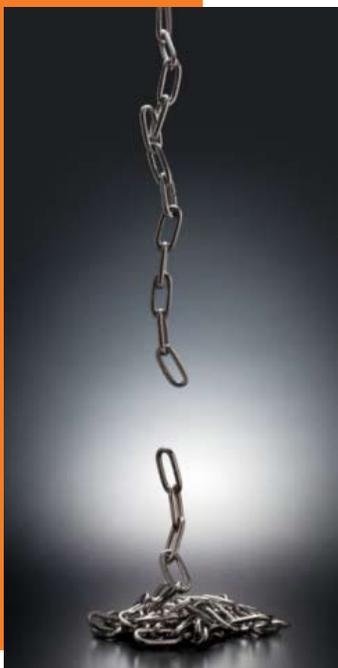
I'm sure all of you reading this have heard his work and used his material. He's been called by many names and terms; a rose, a lamb and even a king. But we know Him best as King of Kings, Lord of Lords and the Captain of the Heavenly Hosts. Jesus didn't have a large web presence, but His presence in our world and our work is unmatched. It's time we as artists and organizations drop the facade of self importance we've wrapped ourselves in and focus on the harvest fields that are ripened. Our time is short, and the work is great.

Let's have a revival... 🇺🇸

A 'regional' artist spotlight

By Rod Burton

Through his years in ministry he saw many lives changed, healings and restorations. His straight, no nonsense approach to ministry was to just tell folks that sin is sin, but God loves them anyhow.



Secret Place:

A Tribute to My Special Mom
By Jennifer Campbell



When I was just a little girl, my mom and I would always go into our "Secret Place." Our "Secret Place" consisted of a lower piece of ground in my Papa Joe and Grandma Ethel's woods. I would always pull my little red wagon out there, full of Cabbage Patch dolls and stuffed animals. We would spread a blanket out on the ground and have a picnic together. Other times we played dress-up or Barbie dolls, and baked cookies together. Even as I grew older, we still did things together like making jewelry, scrapbooking, and of course, we still baked sweet treats together. During the last week of July, my mom and I were making jewelry. She made matching mother-daughter bracelets, purple for her and green for me. I will always cherish the bracelets, but most of all, I will cherish the memories that I have of my Mama, Pamela Suzanne Campbell.

On August 2, 2008, my life changed. My Mama went home to be with the Lord as the result of a heart attack that occurred while we were vacationing in the mountains. Although that day was the saddest day of my entire life, I know in my heart that it was one of the happiest days of my mom's life. She was a Christian who loved the Lord with all of her heart. 2 Corinthians 5:8 says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. While the absence of my mom is nearly more than I can bear, I know that the moment she entered the presence of the Lord, she began worshipping and praising our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

My mom was one of the most devoted Christian women I have ever known. She prayed for our family diligently. Every morning after my dad and I left for work, she would read her Bible and pray on her knees for well over an hour. She supported my dad and me in everything we did, just as we supported her in everything she did.

She had a passion for ministering to other people, especially children. All of my life, she ministered to children through Children's Church and

puppet ministries. I will always remember years ago when a young person came up to her in a store one day and said that he had gotten saved because of what he heard as a child in Critter Country, one of my mom's Children's Church ministries.

My mom always showed compassion for others. On two occasions, she organized a family missions project where the three of us took over 500 pounds of clothes, toys, shoes, and medical and school supplies to an orphanage in Roatan, Honduras. She had the amazing ability to remember birthdays, anniversaries, and other holidays, too. And of course, she often gave gifts when no holiday existed. Shortly after my mom passed away, I found where she had a little gift bag with a necklace and bracelet set that she was planning to give me to show me how proud she was of me beginning my third year as a teacher. With God's strength, I hope I can continue to make her proud.

God gave my parents and me a





unique bond that was so close; it was almost as if we were one person. We went everywhere together. We literally climbed mountains, crossed countries, and sailed oceans together. Although we enjoyed many exotic vacations, we especially enjoyed spending time at "our" waterfall in North Carolina. She said that her favorite place in the world was sitting by that waterfall in the mountains. Of course, we even enjoyed doing nothing at all, as long as we were together.

My mom and I were best friends. Without her, my life is incomplete. My heart is broken. I say all of this to say that while our earthly life seems shattered, I know that my mom would not want to look down from Heaven and see us cry. While my heart seems broken beyond repair, my heart also rejoices. Mama has not gone to a "Secret Place." I know where she is, and I am pleased to say that her new home is not a secret location, nor is the method of getting there a secret.

For Christians, this world is simply a temporary home, similar to a waiting room at a doctor's office. We are waiting for God to call us to our true home in Heaven. Still, as humans, this wait often seems like it is neverending. When something life changing happens, like losing a parent, spouse, or child, it is at this moment that you find out who you really are as a Christian, when your faith in Christ is truly put to the test. Whether we are celebrating a victory or healing from defeat, our faith should be an ever-present part of our daily lives. The Bible says, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). We need to walk as if our eyes were closed, allowing God to guide our steps according to His perfect will.

Many times, things happen in our lives that cause us to question, "Why me, Lord?" or "Why now, Lord?" Although it is natural for our human minds to question God's direction in our lives, we need to realize that His plan is perfect in every way. Psalm 18:30 says, "As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him." Satan may try to convince us otherwise, but God is a sovereign God.

God will never take us into a cloudy day without providing a rainbow. God's word says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). The journey of life is full of uncertainties and often seems like a frightening place to be. Even so, we will never find ourselves trapped in a tunnel of darkness. In every situation, Jesus is the light at the end of the tunnel.

Jesus extends an open invitation to all who believe. And I know in my heart that my mom would not want me to write without extending the same invitation to you. Accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior today before it is too late. I can assure you, the valley I have been walking through would be far too much to bear if it was not for my relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus offers everyone hope and everlasting life. All we have to do is have faith and believe. The Bible says plainly, "whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

My mom, dad, and I accepted the invitation. Because of this, my dad and I will see my mom again soon, when God calls His children home. While my dad and I miss my mom greatly here on earth, she is in Heaven. Although our hearts hurt, we have hope in Christ. Daddy has not lost his wife. I have not lost my mom. Pamela Suzanne Campbell is not lost because we know exactly where she is. Her new home is not a "Secret Place." In Heaven, we will see her again, where there is no sorrow or tears, sickness or pain. Until that happy reunion, we must dwell on God's promise in Revelation 21:4: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

It is no secret. Heaven is only a prayer away. 🇺🇸

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



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



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



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



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



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JENNIFER CAMPBELL has returned to *Scoops* and we're happy to have her. She resides in Florida where she is a master English teacher and enjoys singing and writing gospel music. We invite you to read her rich testimony at her website. jennifercampbell.net



Guest contributor **ROD BURTON** is a gospel music soloist and the co-owner of Branson Gospel Music Revival. His heart is for his family - wife Kelly and their 4 children - and to bring forth a message of grace to the lost and encouragement to other ministers. He recently moved to Myrtle Beach, SC where he works as the General Manager of the new Pat Boone Family Theater. rodburtonmusic.com

Diamond awards

2011 Final Nominees!

FAVORITE ALBUM

Almost Morning, The Perrys
Declaration, The Booth Brothers
Driven, Driven
Greatly Blessed, Gaither Vocal Band
Jason Crabb, Jason Crabb

FAVORITE SONG

"Did I Mention" The Perrys
"Father Who Cares" Voices of Glory
"Mercy Saw Me" Driven
"Please Forgive Me" Gaither Vocal Band
"Wounded Hands" Gordon Mote

FAVORITE MIXED GROUP

Heaven's Highway
The Hoppers
The Isaacs
Jeff and Sheri Easter
Karen Peck and New River

FAVORITE QUARTET

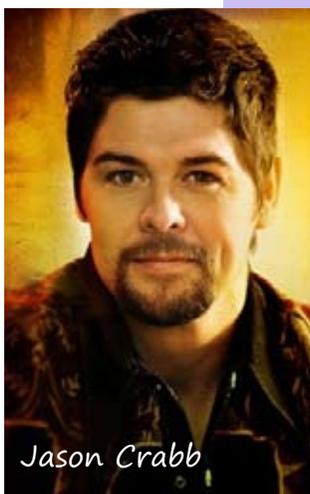
Brian Free & Assurance
Driven
Ernie Haase and Signature Sound
Gaither Vocal Band
Triumphant

FAVORITE TRIO

2nd Generation
Beyond the Ashes
The Booth Brothers
Karen Peck & New River
Voices of Glory

FAVORITE DUO

Aaron and Amanda Crabb
Dailey & Vincent
Hearts of Faith
Heart to Heart
Reggie & Ladye Love
Smith



FAVORITE SONGWRITER

Aaron Wilburn
Christy Sutherland
Gerald Crabb
Jim Brady
Squire Parsons

LIVING LEGEND

Claude Hopper
Ed O'Neal
Gerald Crabb
Gloria Gaither
Ronnie Hinson

FAVORITE INSTUMENTALIST

Gordon Mote
Jeff Stice
Kevin Williams
Kim Collingsworth
Zack Swain

FAVORITE DVD/ SHORT VIDEO

Better Day by Gaither Vocal Band
Count Your Blessings by Bill Gaither
Jubilee! By Greater Vision, Booth Brothers, and Legacy 5
Someone Like Me by Jason Crabb
Tribute to Cathedral Quartet
By Ernie Haase and Signature Sound

FAVORITE BROADCAST PERSONALITY

Daniel Britt of Enlighten
Don Frost of Music City Gospel Showcase
Greg Hutchins of Solid Gospel
Karen Berka of Branson Radio Live
Les Butler of Solid Gospel

VOTE

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@Branson Gospel Music Revival

Diamond awards

2011 Final Nominees!

SUNRISE

Beyond the Ashes
The Harper Family
Heaven's Highway
Southern Grace
Voices of Glory

FAVORITE ARTIST WEBSITE

Brian Free and Assurance
(brianfreeandassurance.com)
Christy Sutherland
(christysutherland.net)
Driven (drivenqt.com)
Jason Crabb (jasoncrabb.com)
Karen Peck and New River
(karenpeckandnewriver.com)

FAVORITE INDUSTRY WEBSITE

AbsolutelyGospel.com
BransonRadioLive.com
DaywindRecords.com
GospelCruiseFest.com
SolidGospel.com

FAVORITE MALE SOLOIST

Guy Penrod
Ivan Parker
Jason Crabb
Mark Lowry
Rod Burton

FAVORITE FEMALE SOLOIST

Christy Sutherland
Janet Pascal
Kim Hopper
Lauren Talley
TaRanda Greene

FAVORITE BLUEGRASS ARTIST

Dailey & Vincent
Doyle Lawson &
Quicksilver
Jeff & Sheri
Easter
Ricky Skaggs
The Isaacs



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FAVORITE COUNTRY ALBUM

Breathe Deep by Guy Penrod
Christy Sutherland by Christy Sutherland
The Difference by Rod Burton
Expecting Good Things
by Jeff & Sheri Easter
Get Ready by Heart to Heart

FAVORITE COUNTRY FEMALE ARTIST

Christy Sutherland
Karen Peck Gooch
Sheri Easter
Sonya Isaacs
Wendy Word

FAVORITE COUNTRY MALE ARTIST

Chris Hester
Guy Penrod
Jason Crabb
Jeff Easter
Rod Burton

FAVORITE COUNTRY GROUP

Driven
Heart to Heart
Jeff & Sheri Easter
Oak Ridge Boys
The Isaacs

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In April, Trevecca Nazarene University hosted the first date on the "Diamond Awards On Tour" concert series. Nominees Beyond the Ashes and Christy Sutherland, as well as guests HisSong and Wilburn & Wilburn took the stage. Industry friends and music fans were present in person and via a live webcast.

Photos courtesy of Evie Hawkns and Lori Schultz



Above: Jackie (far left) and Elaine (far right) Wilburn smile with Darrell and Tojuana. Left: Beyond the Ashes ministered to the crowd.



Left: Bev McCann and Christy Sutherland. Right: Tane' Miller with Kelly and Rod Burton.

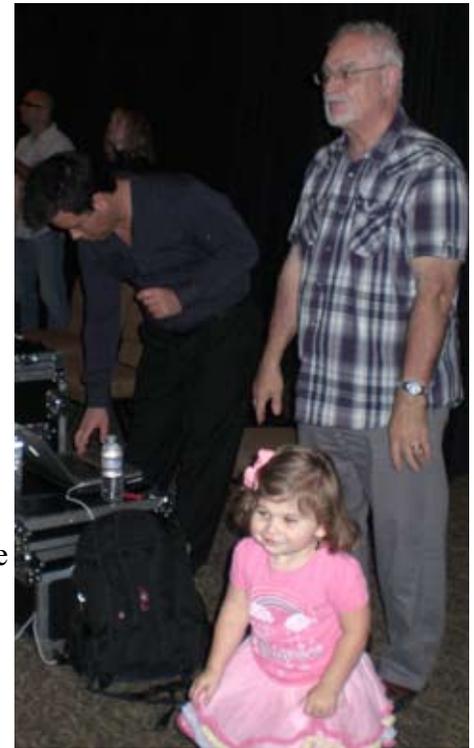


Diamond awards on tour

VOTE
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Above: Rob Patz and Matthew Dudney hosted the event; Right: Emme Blu, daughter of soloist Shannon Bunch, entertained the audience from the back of the room. Left: Event sponsor Evie Hawkins (EHA) with Daywind's Donna Beauvias; Bottom left: Rob with Word Publishing's Dusty Wells.





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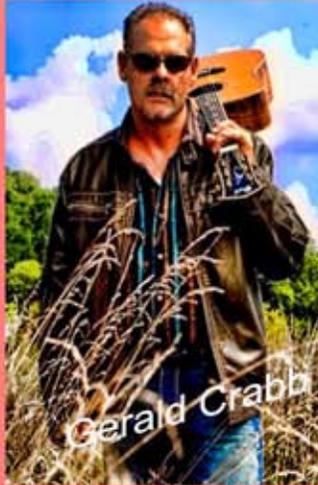
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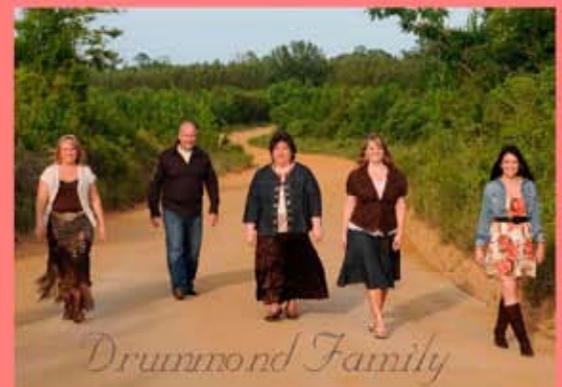


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Thanks for playing "Walk On"

“Believe it or not, I sang tenor with my brothers,

my Uncle Will and my Mom’s family,” shared Ed O’Neal, who has, for more than fifty years, been an essential part of Southern Gospel Music. He began singing with his family around 1958 and adds, “Avis Adkins had founded the Dixie Melody Boys Quartet, and in 1961, when he needed a bass singer, I filled in at first, and eventually joined the quartet singing full-time.”

Eventually, Ed became the owner and manager of the quartet. Over the years the group has established itself in Southern Gospel music as one of the premier quartets in the industry today. Their recordings have yielded more than twenty chart-topping songs and they are booked on major Gospel music events all across the country.

As part of his legacy in this industry, Ed is well-known for recognizing the potential of young artists. He built the quartet’s front line with talented young men, who, after learning from the “Master” quartet man himself have moved on to enrich the music of other touring groups today. These include



Ed O’Neal

Celebrates 50 Years in Gospel Music:

The Call Is Still The Same

By Sandi Duncan-Clark

Devin McGlamery with Ernie Haas and Signature Sound as well as Ernie. McCray Dove sang with Ed before forming his own group, the Dove Brothers. Rodney Griffin with Greater Vision and Bryan Walker of American Idol and now The Perrys were part of the Dixie Melody Boys before joining these respective groups. These are only a few of the young men who have "graduated" from the "Ed O'Neal University."

Today's Dixie Melody Boys Quartet proves again Ed's ability to search out the best vocalists for his quartet. Don-

ald Morris sings lead and is a wonderful song writer. Steven Cooper sings baritone and has been with Ed for about four years. Matt Felts joined the group in late fall, 2010, and sings tenor. "Each of these men brings something unique to the quartet," Ed stated. "All I ever wanted to do is to sing a song, and I just want to see it done right. It's good to have a group of men who feel the same."

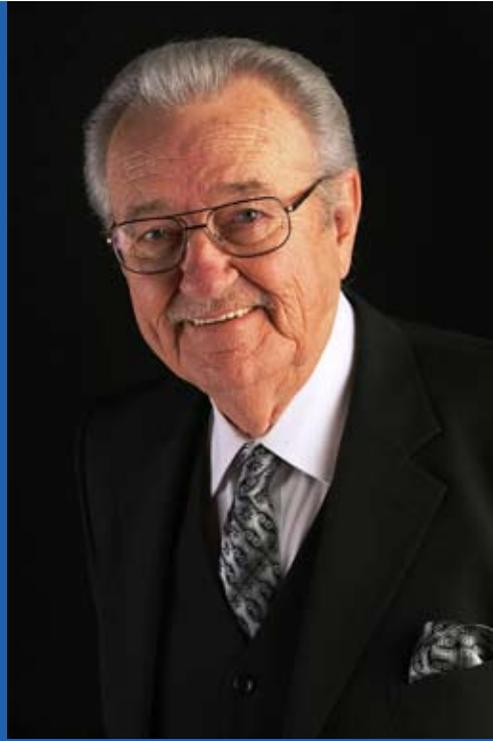
So many wonderful things have been planned to recognize Ed's fifty years in Gospel music, as well as the 50th anniversary of the Dixie Melody Boys. On February 4th, this year Ed and the quartet celebrated their annual homecoming in their hometown of Kinston, North Carolina, singing to a standing room only audience. Mayor B.J. Murphy attended and declared February 4th as "Ed O'Neal Day" in Kinston. A letter from Bill Gaither and another from North Carolina state senator Richard Burr were among the many tributes honoring Ed and the Dixie Melody Boys quartet.

To mark their 50th year, the Dixie Melody Boys are working on their debut album with Song Garden, their new record company. Ed told us, "Since this is our first label project in ten years, we're excited about being in the studio. It's a big production, and David Staton is producing this new project. We have some exciting new songs and have revived several older songs."

David commented on the recording, "It's exciting to

'All I ever wanted to do is to sing a song, and I just want to see it done right.'

~ Ed O'Neal



be a part of the Dixie Melody Boys' new recording. It's been great seeing their excitement and to hear their songs. Several artists came in to the studio to add a cameo appearance to the recording."

The title of the project is *The Call Is Still The Same*, and the song of the same title was written by Rodney Griffin. Ed said, "It was like God was

saying 'Fifty years and you're still doing what I called you to do.'" Rodney joins the quartet singing the second verse of this song.

Rodney contributed another song to the recording, "God Will Hear Your Prayer, of which Davis says, "When we started working on this one, we learned that Jason Crabb was in town, and asked him to come over and do a verse. It turned out really well."

The Dixie Melody Boys invited some former group members to be a part of this recording. "There's a great song that they did, titled "I've Got Jesus in My Boat," and Ernie Haase and Devin McGlamery joined the group on this one," David explained.

Former lead singer Ken Humphries sings with the quartet on an old Dixie Melody Boys song from 1981, "Good Ole Boys," and McCray Dove and Alan O'Neal come back to sing "Too Much Thunder," a song the quartet recorded in 1984.

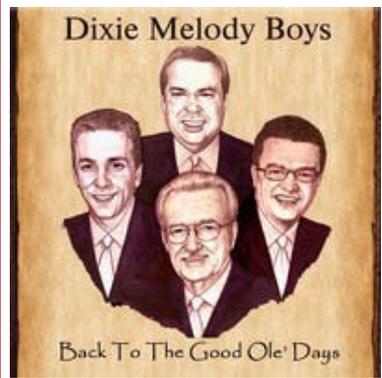
The Dixie Melody Boys also chose a song co-written by Marty Funderburk and Phil Mehrens, titled "I've Got Family There."

"This is a wonderful song, and on one verse it talks of a mother and father waiting there," David explained. "We asked Ben Speer to come sing with us and he does a duet on that verse with Ed."

David Straton adds, "With this new recording, I think the Dixie Melody Boys move into more of the mainstream of where Southern Gospel music is today.

There's a little country flair on some of the songs, and a little progressive sound to some of them. Each is done with the professionalism we have come to expect from Ed and his quartet."

In his memorable career, Ed has been honored by his peers with a number of awards. He was presented the Marvin Norcross Award in September, 2000 for his outstanding contributions to Southern Gospel music. In October, 2004, Ed was inducted into the



Shown: A sampling of vintage DMB album covers.

Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame, located at Dollywood, in Pigeon Forge, Tn. On January 1st, 2011, the Dixie Melody Boys learned that they will be inducted into the Christian Music Hall of Fame scheduled for November 5th this year.

For a couple of years now, Ed has served as

Host for a new Gospel music television show, "Great American Gospel." He is excited about the show and informed us that new episodes will be airing soon.

The show airs Monday through Friday, on more than 200 channels here in the United States, and in more than 200 foreign countries. Check www.greatamericangospel.net for the show times in your area.

Congratulations to Ed and the Dixie Melody Boys Quartet. We look forward to hearing the new recording, and to celebrating the outstanding accomplishments you have enjoyed for over 50 years!

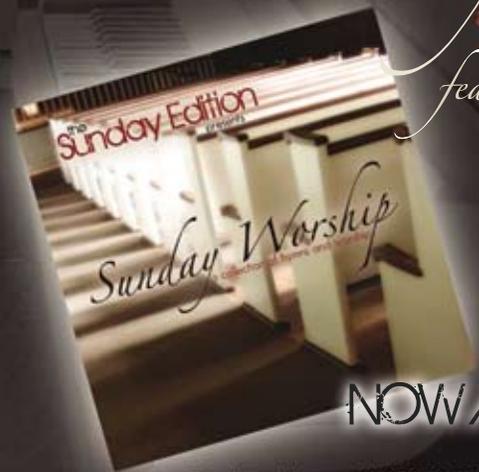


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Marty Funderburk's Musical Message

By Sandi Duncan-Clark



Fresh from receiving a BMI songwriter award for the Talley Trio's hit song, "Life Goes On," and enjoying the honor of having one his songs recorded as the title cut for Kenny Rogers' new album, Marty Funderburk recently sat down with us for an interview. Without a doubt, God has been good to Marty and he is the first to tell you that!

Marty Funderburk is one of the premier song writers in Christian music today. For a number of years, his songs have appeared on recordings by every major artist in

Southern Gospel music as well as artists of other musical styles. While his music is reaching the masses, Marty Funderburk keeps a very low profile.

"I am extremely blessed to be able to work at something I enjoy," Marty shared. "I moved from Mississippi to Nashville to pursue a career in Christian music in 1987. One of the first people I met in the industry was Gary McSpadden and his publishing company was the first to sign my songs."

In the mid 90's Marty was part of a Contemporary Christian trio called Beyond the Blue. They signed a recording contract with Word Records and toured the country for the next 3 years. "After I came off the road I decided to move across town. That's where I

met a new neighbor and friend - Wayne Haun. He introduced me to Dottie Miller and Ed Leonard at Daywind who offered me the position of Director of Publishing for Daywind. That job allowed me to work with some of the best writers and artists in Gospel music today, and that's where I really learned to write Southern Gospel music." After a few years of working as a publisher I decided that my true passion was songwriting, so I gratefully stepped down from my position to begin writing full-time.

"The Cumberland Quartet was one of the first Southern Gospel artists to record one of my songs," Marty said. "I remember the first time I heard 'Waiting on





The Water' on the radio. I was excited and amazed that God can use my music for His glory."

Marty also co-writes with some of the industry's best writers. "I've enjoyed working with Wayne Haun, Joel Lindsey, Sue Smith, Jerry Kelso, Daryl Williams and so many more," Marty said. "I'm blessed to have such great song writers as my friends."

When it comes to his writing, Marty's shared, "I'm looking ahead, and my goal is to reach the most people that we can reach for God," Marty continued, "There are several groups in Gospel music that have the ability to communicate the message to any audience. What excites me is to see the younger generation respond to artist like Brian Free and Assurance, The Talley Trio, Sisters and others."

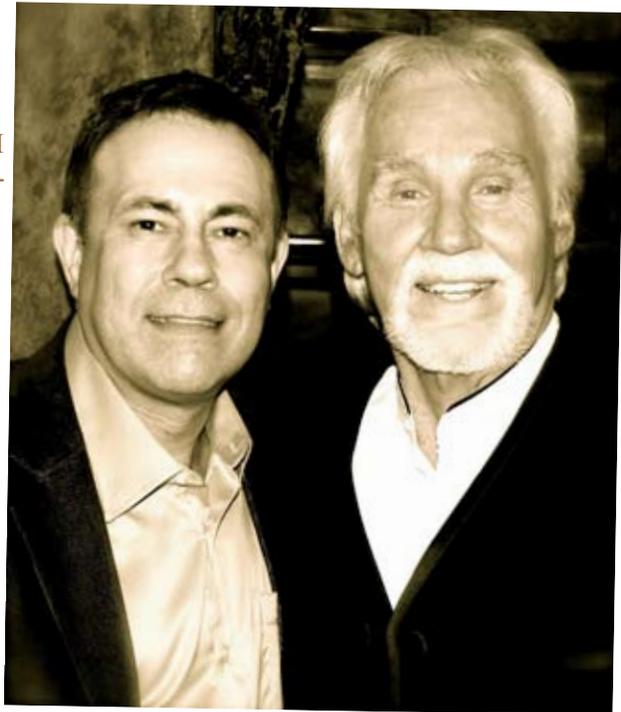
Marty has written more than forty songs that have been sent to Gospel radio and I'm sure you've heard. The Bowling Family's "I Still Glory In The Cross," "Die Another Day" by Brian Free and Assurance, "The Cross Said It All" by Kim Hopper, and "I Have Never Walked Alone," by Jake Hess, are only a few songs you will recognize.

Ideas for songs come to Marty from various sources. He shared, "I think we're all driven by where we came from; our background." Marty continued, "I try to keep my mind fresh and I'm always looking for new ideas. I look at the people in my life, people I love and go to church with, and look at what they're listening to, and I want to convey the message that God gives me in a relevant way so that they will hear; not just listen, but really hear it."

In learning that Kenny Rogers wanted to record a song that he had co-written with Gina Vera, Marty was excited. "We had actually written the song many years ago and it was a little different than what he wanted," Marty said. "It was already determined that the title for his album would be *For the Love of God* and our song was "For the Love of Christ." Kenny asked if we could adjust the lyric to reflect the title and we did."

Photo previous page: At the 2011 BMI Christian Music Awards, Marty pauses with Rodney and Regina Griffin. Top: Marty with kenny Rogers. He was able to for Kenny's new album, for which he and Gina Vera co-wrote the title song.

Bottom: (L-R) BMI's Beth Mason Laird, Marty, Rick Shelton (Daywind Publishing), Ed Leonard (President of Daywind Records) and friend.



This is an opportunity again, for God to take the message of Marty's music, to a larger audience; to open another door. Having heard Marty's songs recorded by some of my favorite Gospel artists, I've become a fan. I've heard the message in his songs, and wished I could express my thoughts that clearly. But then I realize that God gives each of us a talent to use for Him, and while that is Marty's talent; HIS song, it can just as easily express exactly how I feel about the Lord. I truly believe Marty Funderburk is getting the message out there!

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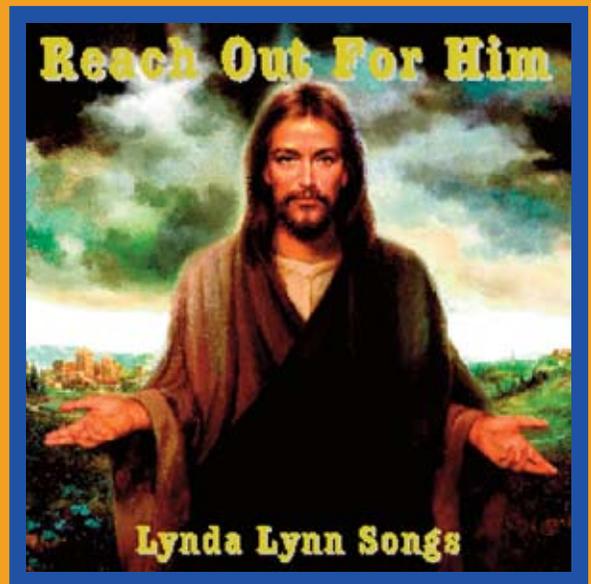
Frequent television guests, **Lynda & Bud Lynn**, are Country Gospel Music Association's International Media Personalities of the Year for 3 consecutive years. They also received a Publisher's Award from SGN Scoops Magazine.

Lynda & Bud with Gregg Busch honor the Purple Heart Recipients at Branson's Chateau on the Lake. Branson cares for our Veterans. Lynda & Bud performed Lynda's song *One Voice* at the Missouri state capital in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Photo George Kurlin

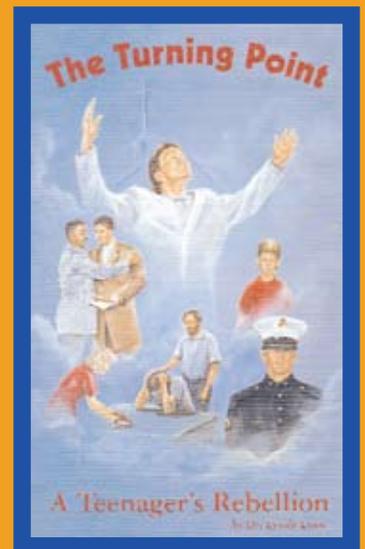


Dr. Lynda Lynn is a 14 time ASCAP award winning songwriter. Her latest CD, *Reach Out For Him*, features 16 Branson artists and 19 songs. Barbara Fairchild, Randy Brooks, Andrea Blackwood Carter, Glory-Anne Prophet and more. Gene Higgins' Powersource Magazine, Nashville, listed *Little Boys & Little Toys* by Barbara Fairchild at #7.



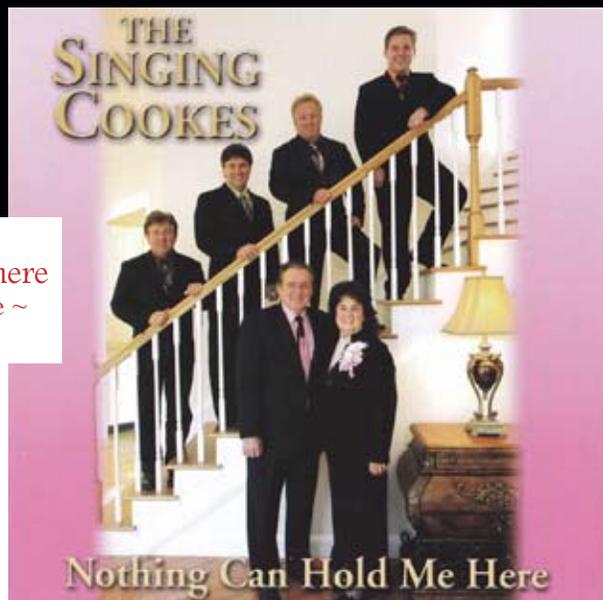
An Ozark winter wonderland at **Chapelwoods**, this was built to make a difference as Rod Burton stated. Rod chose this as an image for the front cover of his new CD titled *The Difference*. Come see and pray. God will "God Zap" you as you enter through the door of this quaint little chapel.

Lynda has co-authored a book with her son Rory titled, *The Turning Point, A Teenager's Rebellion*. The book focuses on trusting God to bring families with troubled teens through rebellious times allowing family restoration.



Behind the Music

The Singing Cookes
Nothing Can Hold Me There
Produced by: Jeanette Cooke ~
Cooke Records



Since 1962 the Singing Cookes have remained faithful to the calling they feel God has placed on their lives and faithful to the musical sound that has endeared them to the hearts of their fans. Beginning as a duet-just Jeanette and Hubert, the group grew as the family grew. Each child joined the family on stage, when he was old enough, until all the Cooke brothers were part of the group. Now they have the third generation playing and singing in their concerts.

A number of songs on this recording have quickly become favorites with fans everywhere, and have played on Gospel radio all across the country. Jeanette kicks off the recording with "I Wasn't There," and the music and excitement just builds.

"Stand Back" features Hubert Cooke and picks up the tempo. A very timely song on this recording has quickly become a favorite at Cooke concerts. Jeanette sings "What's Wrong With Living Right" which addresses a number of moral issues that have been abandoned by society in the world today, such as taking prayer out of school, and gang strife in the neighborhoods.

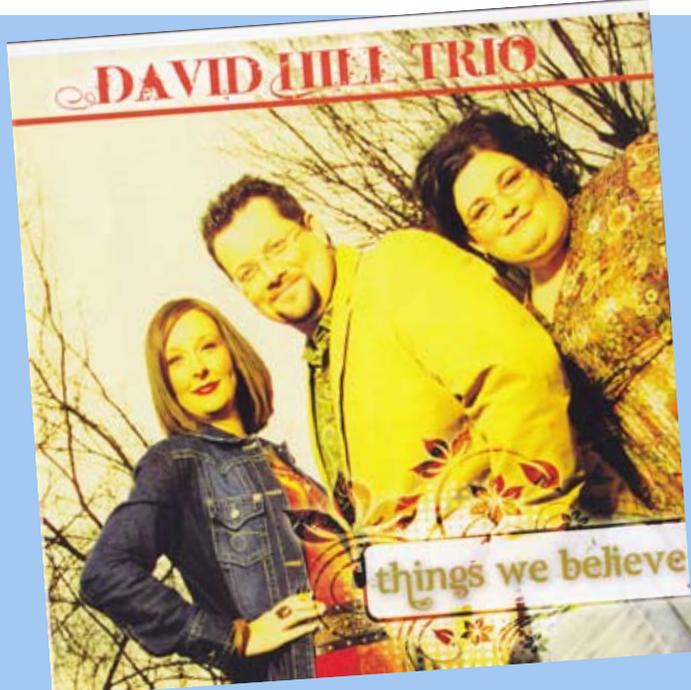
"That Same Spirit" is one of the Cookes' best known

songs and is a "must sing" at every concert.

Jeanette can deliver this song with enthusiasm and fervency. There will always be encores when she sings this one.

Every song on this recording will be a blessing to all Cooke fans, and will create more fans, as they enjoy the music. Over the years... more than 48 of them, The Singing Cookes have enjoyed a following that is steadfast and solid today, as it was when they began. That fan faithfulness was recognized when Jeanette received the Naomi Segoe Living Legend Award from the SGM Fan Fair gathering in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee in May 2010.

Nothing Can Hold Me will appeal to all Singing Cooke fans and especially to fans of bluegrass/country Gospel music everywhere. Log on to www.thesingingcookes.com for your personal copy. 🇺🇸



After traveling professionally as a member of several Southern Gospel groups, David Hill and his wife Amanda joined forces with Stephanie Lindsey, and formed the David Hill Trio. This recording is their third and allows each member of this group to exhibit their individual talent, combined to bring spirit and anointing to the music. David is featured on the first cut on this project titled "Good, Good News," written by Jason Clark (The Nelons.) The song is a medium tempo dealing with circumstances we face every day, and that the good news of Jesus' power is our only hope "Good, Good News" was shipped to Gospel radio as the group's first radio single from *Things We Believe*.

"I've Got A Right" picks up the pace and gets your toes tapping and your hands clapping. Stephanie's talented vocals are sampled as she does an incredible on this song. The chorus modulates up and Amanda picks up the

Behind THE Music cont'd

David Hill Trio
Things We Believe
Gospel Heritage Records
Produced by: Jason Clark
ACA Records

the lead, finishing the song in a hand clapping,

rousing fashion.

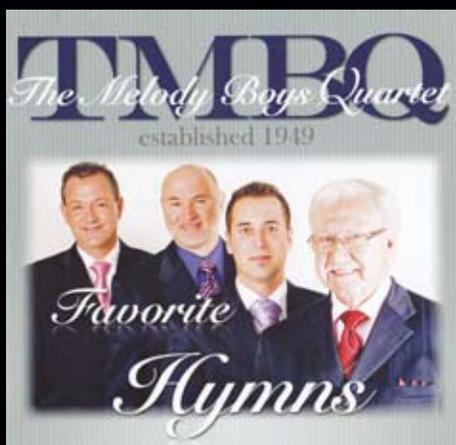
Amanda leads straight into a wonderful anthem of praise, "No Sweeter Name," followed by "I was Glad When They Said Unto Me." Both songs are uplifting, drawing one closer to the Lord in worship.

"Awesome Are You Lord," calls us into praise and worship of our Lord and King and Amanda does a wonderful job with this one. David speaks to our hearts with the magnificent "Thank You For The Blood," a moving version of an extraordinary song.

My favorite song on the recording is "He'll Never Leave." The glorious message of encouragement is brilliantly delivered by Stephanie.

"I Believe" rounds out a superb introduction to the David Hill Trio. It is a "testimony" song, declaring the ultimate of what a Christian should believe, and this trio does a fantastic job on this one.

The David Hill Trio may be contacted at www.thedavidhilltrio.com for your personal copy of this recording. 



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Read Sand's review of The Melody Boys' latest this month at SGMRadio.com

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KPNR singing in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Below: Receiving awards at Absolutely Gospel Awards Show in TN



This past month has been a whirlwind for KPNR. Where did April go? We began the month with a ten day tour starting in Florida and ending in Wisconsin. We could not wait to get to Florida. With the weather still so cool at home, we were anxious to get toward the coast and feel the temperatures of summer. We sang at a Bill Bailey concert there in Florida, and the people were so sweet. I even added a new member to my family. Her name is Sonny, and she is my newly adopted aunt. I believe she is also the adopted aunt of Suzanne Taylor of the Taylors. It seems that I now have family scattered throughout the nation.

visit the folks at the Fireside Theatre and Restaurant. This place is like none other.



Karen and Susan had sung here several times before, but I did not know what to expect. How NEAT! If you've never been to the Fireside before, you are missing out. This is a great venue if you are interested for a dinner and a concert....a Southern Gospel concert that is.

Before we sang we were treated to some great fish and chips. This is a usual meal the folks at Fireside prepare, and we topped it off with the best ice cream cake EVER! We then sang to an excited crowd for around 2 hours. DO you know how many songs it takes to fill up 2 hours? A LOT! We had the best time laughing and singing with the sweet people of Wisconsin. I even met another family member. No, not an adopted aunt this time, but a lady who shares my last name. She introduced herself to me and said her last name is Hawes. What are the chances?

The Chronicles of a Singing English Teacher:

Mercy & Grace

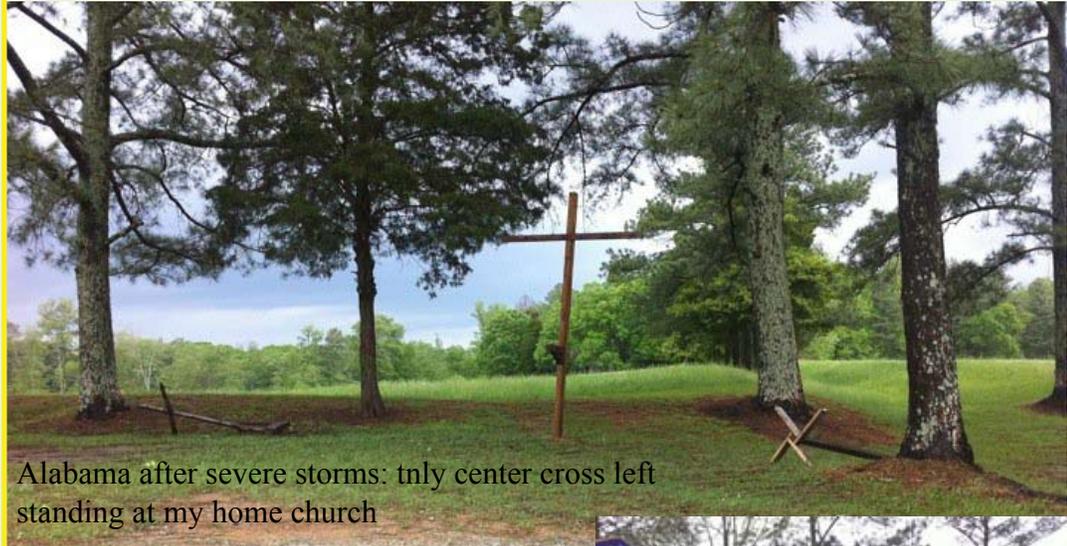
A Counting Series by

Jeff Hawes

of Karen Peck & New River

While at the Fireside we sang 3 shows and loved every minute. Karen had been suffering from a severe cold, but her flawless vocals were seamless. At the end of the week we headed to the South to prepare for Easter. We had the weekend of Easter off and it was so exciting to spend this special holiday with our families and church families. Later that week, the spirit of our community would be forever changed.

Just a few days after Easter, one of the worst storms to come through my hometown in Alabama devastated many families. Not only my community but many others across the South were affected by severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. This was definitely one of the scariest things I have ever experienced, but I felt so blessed that God shed His mercy and grace upon my family. During this time it seems almost surreal that my life was spared, not even a tree was blown down, but yet, God simply whispered, "I am Sovereign." He knows everything and His ways are much higher than anything my mind could ever comprehend. **My thoughts and prayers are with you all.**



Alabama after severe storms: tny center cross left standing at my home church



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