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Making the Most of Every One of These Days

In This Edition:

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Letter From The Editor

RHONDA FRYE

When a life enters into the world, it's a precious sight. Just as precious and even more, is the sight of a spiritual birth. Recently, I led a 12 year old boy to Christ. I wasn't able to see his sweet face because we were on the phone, but his following email made me want to shout. "I feel so good," he said. "Believe me, I know," I thought. I've been a believer for 11 years now and I'm still overwhelmed with gratefulness. I believe, how grateful we are for our salvation will determine our enthusiasm of sharing our faith.

Two days after leading my young friend to Christ, I was a witness to another salvation- this time right in front of me! I must admit, I wasn't very spiritual at the time. I was peeking during prayer. Gasp! I didn't want to miss it. While he was praying, his repentant heart sank as tears splashed on the floor. It was if I could see God taking the man's shame away as he slowly raised his head and began to smile. My new brother immediately made his way to every person standing there and hugged them one by one. There was no doubt that Jesus had reached down and pulled him from the grips of a literal hell he was destined for and filled his heart with love. It was written all over his face. I was there. I saw it- and that my friend, sparked a fire!

What did THOSE stories have to do with my role at SGNScoops? Everything. The Holy Spirit nudged my heart as the new saint hugged everyone. He reminded me that He used a TEAM to bring this man to salvation. In the circle stood those that had been friendly, some had opened their home and taught scripture, some had reached out to him during a time of loss, some had ministered to him in song, and one had preached the Word.

God uses the Gospel Music Industry to connect people to Jesus Christ too! God whispers songs to

songwriters, and a host of team members' work together to get God's message out to those in need. Involved in the process

are musicians, producers, engineers, vocalists, djs, promoters and the list keeps going- but certainly includes MEDIA! We all play a significant part in spreading the gospel and it's truly a beautiful sight to see it in action from the vantage point of the SGNScoops News Desk and Scoops Magazine. God is big, God is busy and I'm fired up!

I describe my role as the editor-in-chief at SGNScoops similar to that of a liaison. By posting news on the website and sharing stories in the magazine, we connect the messenger and the message with their intended audience. At Scoops, we minister to artists and minister to fans. Like a liaison, we build the bridge between the two and serve both in the process.

I am grateful and so excited about this assignment. Rob Patz and I work very well together and share a common desire to spread the gospel using the media. We worked very hard on our updated mission statement which truly reflects what we are all about. "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."

With a little fear and a lot of faith, I'm assuming this position with a goal to do everything I possibly

can to support the industry, artists and fans so that we can relish in the celebration of spiritual births! As part of the Gospel Music Industry Team, I'm committed to praying over stories, getting news up quickly and also extending love, support and encouragement to our staff, peers and our audience. I am grateful for my salvation and thrilled to share my faith in this way. And...I'm blessed to say, I will be helping others share their faith too!

If I can serve you in any way, please contact me at rhonda@sgnscoops.com.





AUGUST 2011

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We are working on a story for our September issue highlighting **YOUR** favorite NQC stories. Send us a short story of your most memorable or your very first experience at the National Quartet Convention.

Please submit to
rhonda@sgnscoops.com no
 later than August 19th.
 We're looking forward to hearing
 from **YOU!**

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"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."

*Have a scoop to share,
 submit news and info to
news@sgnscoops.com.*

THIS EDITION'S CONTRIBUTORS

RHONDA FRYE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Rhonda Frye is an ordained minister serving as a worship and children's pastor. 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.

NATALIE STARK, LAYOUT AND DESIGN



Natalie Stark is a private piano teacher in Collegedale, TN where she lives with her three children. She grew up in a musical family and has participated as a soprano for several choirs and a percussionist for several concert bands. In addition she volunteers at a local church school in their band program and assists in teaching advanced percussion skills to aspiring percussionists. Her formal education is in graphic design and she is currently working on her M.F.A. in Web Design and New Media.

LOU WILLS HILDRETH, WRITER



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.

EVIE HAWKINS, WRITER



Evie Johnson-Hawkins is a native of Somerville, AL and has always had a passion for Gospel music and writing. She has written for newspapers and magazines and used her talents to develop EHA-Nashville, a management/consulting agency for the music industry.

CLAYTON WATSON, WRITER



Big Clayton is a full-time piano player at a popular tourist spot in Branson, Mo, the Branson Landing. Not only has Big Clayton played in front of Millions in the past 4 years in Branson, but he has been head engineer in both studio and live events. He also served as lead tech in an audio/video company for several years. On stage and off, he is right at home.

VICTORIA SHIREY, WRITER



Victoria 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.

LORRAINE WALKER, WRITER



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.

SANDI DUCAN- CLARK, WRITER



Sandi 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.

LAURETTE WILLIS, WRITER



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

STEPHANIE KELLEY, WRITER



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

JEFF HAWES, WRITER



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.

We would like to say "thank you" to our Scoops writing team. Our staff is comprised of professional writers, singers, speakers, publicists, teachers and ministers. Our team of veteran writers has a combined experience in the Gospel Music Industry of nearly 100 years thus making SGNScoops a trusted source of Southern Gospel and Christian Country news. We appreciate their efforts of presenting a gospel music world view.

Rhonda Frye, Editor-in-Chief

Sweet September Deals!

Expand your ministry for as little as \$99 for the next three months! September is a GREAT month to advertise with us. In addition to our all-digital magazine, we're printing 5K of the "NQC Edition" to distribute at the National Quartet Convention. We have reduced our prices so that many can take part in this opportunity. Visit our website at <http://www.sgnscoops.com/advertise/> for more details or email Rob at rob@sgnscoops.com

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Thank You for Voting!

ROB PATZ



Wow! Thank you for making this a record year of participation in the Diamond Awards Voting! Your votes were calculated and the winners were named at this year's awards show on June 30. Hey- ya know, it would be awesome if you would take the time to congratulate the winners either through facebook or on twitter. I know the winners would appreciate the encouragement. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone for working countless hours to coordinate an outstanding 2011 Diamond Awards Show. I'm humbled by the amount of effort that was given and support from so many associates and friends.

Before you know it, January will be here and the nominations will begin. We would appreciate so much if you would participate and encourage your friends, family and fans to vote for their favorites as well.

We know that the awards show only happens once a year. But you can stay involved and be a part of the Diamond Awards all year long by visiting sgnscoops.com. In fact, to ensure you never miss anything, click "join our mailing list" from the home page and get the latest updates delivered straight to your inbox.

We are in the planning stages of 2012's event and anticipate GREAT things. We'll be announcing the location and details soon. We are confident that you will not want to miss the 2012 Diamond Awards. Thank you again- your vote really counts!

Rob Patz





Christ-Centered, Fan-Driven

LORRAINE WALKER
DENISE SALCHOW

The 2011 Branson Gospel Music Revival was the host for the 20th Anniversary Diamond Award Ceremony on June 30, 2011. The Tri-Lakes Centre was a lovely setting, where the crowd gathered in anticipation of an engaging and worshipful evening. The theme for the Awards was "The Cross," a subject that was echoed in the music presented by the evening's performers.

The ceremony began with a Color Guard marching in while Sarah Davison, vocalist from High Road, sang the National Anthem. The Ascension Quartet followed the presentation of the colors with "This Piece of Cloth," for which they received a standing ovation. A choir formed of artists and presenters joined Ascension for the standard, "At Calvary."

Jonathan Edwards of Ascension Quartet was blessed by the evening's events. "It's always an honor to be a part of an

event like the Diamond Awards. It was a thrill to be able to sing 'This Piece of Cloth' with the Color Guard in front of the stage. What a way to start the event off."

The initial note of praise was carried on throughout the evening, as audience and performers alike turned the attention of all toward God. Co-hosts Anthony Facello of Beyond The Ashes and Christy Sutherland kept the ceremony flowing from awards to music. "I had a wonderful time this year co-hosting the Diamond Awards with Beyond the Ashes," said Sutherland. "Congratulations to all of the winners and thank you again to all of the fans for voting! Without the fans, there would be no Diamond Awards. The Awards truly celebrate the spreading of the gospel through song. I am honored to have been a part of it."

Spreading the gospel in song was the key to the entire ceremony. The



ABOVE: ROB PATZ WITH DRIVEN

crowd enthusiastically greeted each artist, the list of which included Beyond the Ashes, The Williamsons, McMillian and Life, Praise Inc., The Tacketts, Ann Downing, Christy Sutherland, 2nd Generation, The Shireys, Jay Stone Singers and Driven Quartet. Other industry professionals appearing included Lou Wills Hildreth, Hearts of Faith, Deon Unthank, Bev McCann, and Chris Unthank.

Excitement ran high as the eighteen Diamond Awards were distributed throughout the evening's ceremonies. Driven Quartet were multiple award winners, recipients of three Diamond Awards including Album of the Year, Christian Country Artist of the Year and Favorite Artist Website. Other multi-winners included Gaither Vocal Band, Jason Crabb and Sheri Easter. A full list of Diamond Award recipients follows this feature.

Many of the artists and presenters during the evening were thrilled with the event and shared their thoughts with Denise Salchow, Diamond Award on-the-spot reporter. Jason Funderburk of Driven Quartet told Denise: "We had such a great time being in Branson for the Diamond Awards. It was an honor to just be nominated but to be blessed with three awards - that was amazing. The night was special but what I enjoyed the most was the fact that it was an awards ceremony centered on the Cross and Christ. We have found an awesome friendship in SGN Scoops and are thrilled to be a part of their

BELOW: BTA AND CHRISTY SUTHERLAND





ABOVE: ANN DOWNING AND BILL DYKES

endeavors. Thanks again to all the fans for their support!"

Coastal Media founder and Diamond Awards head, Rob Patz, remarked that evening truly was special. "We are so excited that we have another Diamond Awards in the history books," said Patz. "We had a blast this year, and we know that everyone involved loved being a part of the show as well!"

One unique presentation was the announcement of the Lou Hildreth Award. Hildreth commented further on the evening's event. "Howard and I could not miss one of our favorite award shows, the Diamond Awards. We have attended this award show from its premier years ago at the National Quartet Convention and the past three years in Branson. This year's production was excellent as always, and I salute Rob Patz, Coastal Media Group, and his staff, for an exciting and smooth production.

"The fans vote for their choice of recipients of the beautiful Diamond trophies, but there is one award given each year that is different. I am truly honored to have the privilege to choose and present the Lou Hildreth Award.

"This award was established many years ago and is given in recognition of a person, or company, who is making a significant contribution to gospel music. It is an industry award given to those behind-the-scenes people in appreciation of their efforts. I have presented this award to many deserving men and women in the past. This was a very special moment for me at the 2011 Diamond Awards as I walked onstage and presented a Lou Hildreth Award to Rob Patz, and one to Kelly Burton.

"May God continue to bless the Coastal Media Group, and the faithful men and women supporters in the ongoing preservation of the legacy of the fabulous "Diamond Awards." Patz and Burton gratefully accepted this honor from this friend, colleague and industry giant.

Another notable presenter for the evening was Carroll McGruder. "Some of our best experiences are not pre-planned," said McGruder. "So it was with my recent visit to the Diamond Awards in Branson, Missouri. As a presenter of an award I was prepared to be a giver, but what I was given was even better! I was allowed the pleasure, as was my new wife

Brenda, of fellowship and renewed friendship with a great number of Southern Gospel artists. Thank you, Rob and Denise and the entire team for a wonderful experience that was more [than that]. It is an event that every Southern Gospel Music lover should experience in their lifetime."

Bill Dykes, of Legacy One LLP, agrees with McGruder. "The evening was filled with outstanding performances by some of the finest groups in gospel music today," said Dykes. "I still say that one of the things that make such a difference is the leadership of Rob Patz. His love for Gospel Music and the groups set him apart from others because it's not all about the business or all about him."

"So many award shows are driven by who the industry loves and not the fans," Dykes continued. "The Diamond Awards are driven by the fans. It's about who they love and who ministers to them. I so enjoyed being a small part of this great event this year and look forward to seeing what next year will bring for the Diamond Awards!"

Hearts of Faith is an annual fixture at the awards program and the audience loves this duet. The feeling is mutual according to Brenda Messaros. "It's always an honor for Hearts of Faith to be a part of the Diamond Awards. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication of the staff of SGN Scoops and all of the support from the fans over the years. It was exciting for Hearts of Faith to once again be nominated for Favorite Duet. We are thrilled to know our music is blessing so many people." Her duet partner, Donna Strong, commented: "What a privilege to have been part of another Diamond Awards program. There are great folks behind the scenes who truly care about the artists and what the awards program represents. Thanks for allowing Hearts of Faith to be a part of this!"

Presenter Bev McCann was also thrilled to be a part of the event. "We had a wonderful venue this year at the Tri-Lake Center," remarked McCann. "There is

just something special about sharing the stage and acclamations with such a wonderful group of singers, musicians and friends. The excitement that moves through the artists back stage as well as in the seats makes it feel like Christmas! The Diamond Awards give a sense of accomplishment to the artist in the world of Southern Gospel Music. I know I feel extremely honored that I've been in the top ten Female Vocal category the past two years. We had a great time, lots of laughs and [it was a] job well done!"

A new addition to the Awards program for 2011 was a segment entitled, "New Faces." Voices of Glory was excited to be part of this portion of the program and Michael, Nadia and Avery were recipients of the Diamond Sunrise Award. The group commented, "We were so blessed and honored to have won the 2011 Sunrise Award and for this we would like to give thanks to God and all of our fans around the globe. Keep up the good work. We know that the great job your staff is doing on an everyday basis is not an easy task. We pray that God will continue to bless your ministry and that you will be able to reach more lives than you ever imagine."



ABOVE: ASCENSION QUARTET

Victoria Shirey, member of The Shireys and Diamond Award staff member, said: "I had so much fun during the Diamond Awards at the Branson Gospel Music Revival. I had the privilege of working backstage with some amazing people, along with actually being a part of the awards through singing and presenting an award. I am excited about helping

out again next year." The Shireys also commented: "We thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the Diamond Awards this year. Getting the opportunity to sing and present an award was truly an honor. We look forward to next year!"

Continued on page 17.

2011 SGN SCOOPS DIAMOND AWARD WINNERS:

J.D. SUMNER LIVING LEGEND AWARD:

GLORIA GAITHER

QUARTET OF THE YEAR:

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

MIXED GROUP OF THE YEAR:

JEFF & SHERI EASTER

TRIO OF THE YEAR:

BOOTH BROTHERS

DUET OF THE YEAR:

AARON & AMANDA CRABB

FEMALE SOLOIST OF THE YEAR:

JANET PASCHAL

MALE SOLOIST OF THE YEAR:

JASON CRABB

SUNRISE AWARD:

VOICES OF GLORY

SONG OF THE YEAR:

"PLEASE FORGIVE ME" – GAITHER VOCAL BAND
(WRITTEN BY GERALD CRABB)

ALBUM OF THE YEAR:

DRIVEN QUARTET – DRIVEN QUARTET

INSTRUMENTALIST OF THE YEAR:

GORDON MOTE

SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR:

SQUIRE PARSONS

CHRISTIAN COUNTRY GROUP OF THE YEAR:

DRIVEN QUARTET

CHRISTIAN COUNTRY FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR:

SHERI EASTER

CHRISTIAN COUNTRY MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR:

GUY PENROD

BLUEGRASS GOSPEL ARTIST OF THE YEAR:

RICKY SKAGGS

VIDEO/DVD OF THE YEAR:

"SOMEBODY LIKE ME" – JASON CRABB

FAVORITE ARTIST WEBSITE:

DRIVENQT.COM – DRIVEN QUARTET

FAVORITE INDUSTRY WEBSITE:

SOLIDGOSPEL.COM

LOU HILDRETH AWARD:

ROB PATZ & KELLY BURTON

FAVORITE BROADCAST PERSONALITY:

KAREN BERKA, BRASONRADIO.LIVE.COM

PUBLISHER'S AWARD:

KWFC-FM, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

CHANNING ELETON



CHANNING ELETON

Making the Most of Every One of These Days

LORRAINE WALKER

Channing Eleton is a brilliant pianist with a resume that includes top Gospel groups Poet Voices and Gold City Quartet. Many across the continent have heard his musical talents but few fans may actually have known the heart of this artistic genius while he accompanied some of the best singers in the business. Now he is using his God-given gift as a solo ministry to touch his listeners as he shares his heart and his faith with those who will listen.

"I absolutely love the life of a musician," says Eleton. "Everything about it: the practice, recording, stage, travel, people and places. I love experiencing different cultures and the hard work it actually takes to get to the stage. Now, as I start this brand new solo ministry, the music has taken on somewhat of a different role."

Eleton goes on to explain his new journey. "While music is very much a part of who I am and what I do, I look at it a little differently now. Music is a vehicle and a means to get to a destination. Music tears down walls, breaks

down barriers in hearts and lives. Once those walls are down, God can do the amazing."

"There are so many hurting people around us everywhere we are, no matter where we are. Every night I pray that I am sensitive to those needs so I can minister on every level.

So you see, music takes us to a place where we can be ministered to. Music is a very powerful tool that we have as ministers of the Gospel."

Eleton has been honing that tool since he was six years of age. From the Cadek Conservatory of Music in Chattanooga, Tennessee to the influences of Anthony Burger and Martin Guresko, Eleton has had master musicians shape his skill. "I have to give credit to several guys who influenced my playing. I loved James Rainey's stage presence and playing. He actually showed me my very first speed lick."

"Music tears down walls, breaks down barriers in hearts and lives. Once those walls are down, God can do the amazing."

"Garry Jones had a huge impact on my approach to playing," continues Eleton. "I had never heard anybody using jazz voicings in Gospel music like Garry. Not only the voicings, but also Garry phrased his playing like a jazz musician. This is something that is very hard to do. I loved it all and set out early on to do those things!"

"Anthony [Burger] was a great friend and encourager. I think his influence was far more than [just] the playing. I sure miss him."

As in the careers of those great pianists, the talents of this musician have taken him to many special venues. "I've played some really great stages in my career," says Eleton. "Each one is special for different reasons. Usually, the reasons are not because of the stage, the lights or the crowd. Most of the time, the reasons are different and are more on a personal level. For example, the Yamaha C7 grand piano was great at the Jonesboro, AR Civic Center. Or, [at other times] it had nothing to do with music. For example, there is a great little coffee house next door to the Bama Theater in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It is places like this that some of the guys and I would hang out before concerts. These are great memories."

Even so, out of all the places in the world where he could present his ministry, Eleton doesn't really have a dream venue, one stage out of all the rest where he would love to play. "I can say this; my most favorite place to play is the local church. The most important element in that is not the stage, but the people. I love community and I love to minister."



Although Channing Eleton started his career with Southern Gospel quartets, he finds now that this new solo ministry is exactly where the Lord wants him to be. When asked if he would consider accompanying a group again, his reply was definite. "The Lord would have to tell me, in an audible voice, to play with a group again for me to do it," laughs Eleton. "I'm just kidding! You know, I do miss being a part of a team, but I don't think I'll ever do the group-thing again. It has nothing to do with ego or the limelight. It has everything to do with calling."

"There is a calling upon my life and ministry that I cannot escape," continues Eleton. "And like I mentioned before, I have so much more now to communicate. My ministry has taken on a very different role over the last three years. As I look back over my career, I can see where God was leading me right to where I am now. It is not to a solo career, but to a unique calling and ministry that He had especially for me."

"I would be a miserable man if I did not go and do what God has put me here for. We've all heard about purpose. In fact, it has been a popular subject over the last few years. I am so thankful that I know my purpose. Because of that, I am happier now than I have ever been in my life." Eleton is determined to continue down this path the Lord is making for him to travel and he doesn't have any plans to turn back.

"There is dear friend in my life that God has greatly used to help me. His name is Buddy Mullins. You may remember Buddy from The Mullins days and later on as lead singer for the Gaither Vocal Band. Buddy told me something one time that has always stuck with me. He said, 'Music ministry is like a marathon and not a sprint. You have to be determined to be in it for the long-haul.' In other words, things don't happen overnight. It takes a long time for the

Eleton also accompanied Buddy Mullins, his wife Kerri and Paul Lancaster while they traveled as Everyday Driven. As an artist with Southern Gospel in his blood and in his portfolio, many would think that the Southern Gospel label would define Eleton's career. However, he says this just isn't true. "First of all, I hate boxes," says Eleton. "The music industry, especially Christian Music, is really good at passing out labels and putting you in a box, so to speak. I think a lot of great music is missed out on because of this."

"There are so many great Gospel songs that the church and the world miss out on because of the label Southern Gospel," continues Eleton. "And it works both ways of course.

I love and enjoy different genres of Christian music. But I gravitate toward Gospel Music. First of all, I grew up with it and it's all I knew for the longest time. However, the older I get, the more I realize why."

"Here's something I've been thinking about lately: if someone is going to tell me to trust in God or lean on Jesus, I want to hear it from someone with a little life experience, somebody with a few gray hairs and wrinkles. Give me somebody who has weathered some storms."

"Now, I love Christian radio and I think there is some great stuff out right now, but here's the deal. Without getting on a soapbox, I think that's a little more believable than hearing it from a 21-year-old kid on Christian radio with little or no life experience. Some radio formats and genres won't give you much of a chance if you as an artist are not in your early twenties. My point is that Gospel music doesn't shut an artist out because he or she is past a certain age. I think that is really cool."



Eleton himself is no longer a single twenty-something artist, but a husband and father with life experience. As he has progressed along this path, he has found that the changes in vocation have had many rewards for his family as well. "One thing I love about solo ministry, is that I get to take my family with me most of the time," says Eleton. "I wouldn't trade that for anything. I used to dread leaving, but now it has become a joy because they are with me!"

"As I look back over my career, I can see where God was leading me right to where I am now. It is not to a solo career, but to a unique calling and ministry that He had especially for me."

"Keeping a good balance between ministry stuff and family is just some-

thing you have to do. That's a real challenge because there is so much to do in a ministry. I'm very task oriented and if I'm working on something, I don't want to stop until the job is done. I have learned to stop when it gets around 6:00pm. Unless I'm trying to meet a particular deadline, I try to shut it down and focus the rest of my evening on my family. Regardless of the task, whether it's the studio or office work, it can wait."

"My little ones are getting bigger every day and I'm trying to enjoy every moment. On my new record, Summer Rains Have Gone, I have written and recorded a song that talks about this very thing. The song is called 'Days'. The chorus says this:

'One of these days it won't matter, all the nights that I work late, or how high I climb that ladder, on the way to my big break, when those that love me waited in the wings, as I worked for the



things that'll pass away one of these days. What matters most is my family, the time I spend with them, and if I've made peace with Jesus, this life I've given Him. Starting now I'm gonna make, make the most of every one of these days.' I think no matter what we do or where we are in our lives, that song sums it up."

Not only is Eleton making the most of each day with his family, he works on his relationship with the Lord on a daily basis as well. "I think spending time alone with the Lord is of the utmost importance," states Eleton. "If I start my day in quiet-time with Jesus, my day goes better than it ever would have trying to do things on my own. I am able to focus, accomplish things and make important decisions that I need to make."

"If we do not have a prayer covering on our lives, we are vulnerable to the attack and discouragement of the enemy," Eleton continues. "When I was starting out into this solo ministry, a wise old preacher told me something that I have never forgotten. He said, 'Son, keep your family at the foot of the Cross. You and your family, stay there. The enemy has painted a big bull's-eye on those in ministry. Stay humble and at the foot of the Cross.'"

"Spending time in God's precious Word is very important as well. I have-

some people tell me, 'I want to read my Bible, but I don't know what to read.' Read Genesis, it's fascinating. It's not just about creation; it's so much more. Then, read on from there!"

Whether it is about reading God's Word or personal devotions, Eleton loves speaking to his audience and encouraging those that come to talk with him. Personal ministry is important and it also affects his choice of songs that he performs in concert. Of the many he plays regularly, there are one or two that have become favorites. "Different songs provide very different reasons as to why I love them," says Eleton. "These days, a song that I love to perform live is a song from my new record called Up On This Ridge. It's another song I've written that has a kind of Celtic/Bluegrass style that I get up from the piano and play accordion on. The lyrics are very personal and really are connecting with folks, both musically and lyrically."

Whether it is in singing, songwriting, playing the accordion or piano, Eleton has many musical talents that the Lord is using in his ministry. Should something happen to him to make him unable to play his instruments, Eleton says he knows exactly what he would do. "I'd still go minister. I'd still go encourage. I'd still go share the Gospel. I'd still go and speak hope into lives. I'd still speak of faith and trusting in Jesus. I'd still go."

While God has given Channing Eleton a challenging and exciting new path to follow, Eleton realizes the serious purpose behind what he is doing to share the good news of Jesus. As he wrote in the song quoted earlier, Eleton knows he has to make the most of every day. "We are truly in the last days," Eleton states. "It's time to quit being lazy and be up and about His business. We don't have long."

"Our job is to share Jesus with as many as we can, whether it is those around

us every day, our families, our co-workers or people we go to church with," continues Eleton. "Yes, you heard me correctly, people we attend church with. There is a big world out there that is lost and undone without Jesus. But yet, there are still those around us every day that are lost and undone without Jesus Christ. There are hurting Christians that need to be reminded to whom they belong. The work is great, but the laborers are few. Come on, let's go and preach the Gospel!"

For more information on Channing Eleton, visit his website at <http://channingeleton.com/>

The Real Channing Eleton – The Fans Speak Out

Channing Eleton has garnered many fans and friends across the country through his travels and performances. This award-winning pianist, lauded by the Singing News, the Gospel Music Association and the Southern Gospel Music Guild is described as one of the most humble, down-to-earth artists in the industry.

This special segment allows the fans of Channing Eleton to speak out on what they know of the pianist from Georgia.

"I met Channing Eleton and heard him play at his home church in Northern Georgia, in mid-1998 just before he joined the Gold City Quartet. From the beginning, I was impressed with Channing's humility, his heart for the ministry and desire for quality music. I grew to respect his work as I experienced more of his talent. His musical style is unique and inspiring. He plays standard Southern Gospel with finesse yet will often add a touch of blues, jazz or country to enhance an arrangement.

Continued on page 26.

COMING SOON...

JERRY AND THE SINGING GOFFS' REUNION!

SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

A blurb on the internet last year set rumors flying of a reunion concert and tour with Jerry and the Singing Goffs. Jerry Goff clarified this stating only a reunion CONCERT was planned in October, 2011 at Meramec Caverns with the Lesters. That comment sent fans in search for the date and ticket opportunities.

Pursuing the announcement, we called Dr. Jerry Goff and when the reunion was mentioned, you could feel the excitement through the phone connection!

Jerry said, "I can't believe people still want to hear us after so many years! I'm thrilled with the interest and want everyone to know what it means to us!"

He went on, "This began on the spur of a moment last year at the festival. On stage, I mentioned to Brian Lester how fun it would be to do a Goff Reunion there. The crowd went wild and Brian worked to make it happen on Friday night this year at the Lesters' Fall Festival."



"I'm almost as excited about our rehearsal as I am about the concert," Jerry laughed! "Tank Tackett, Bill Dykes and Gene Jones will be here and there's nothing like singing great songs with old friends. I'm looking forward to singing harmony with these guys again."

He chuckled as he said, "Everyone has been asking about a tour and I keep telling them I'm having difficulty remembering the words to enough songs for a concert. I would really be pushing it to do an entire tour."

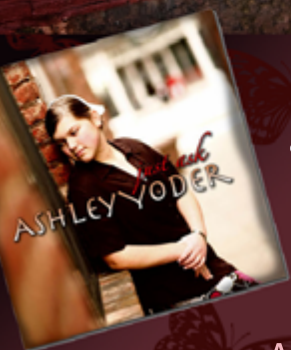
During the '70s, the Singing Goffs were on fire with some of the most talented men in the business, exciting stage presence and original music. Fans drove hundreds of miles to concerts where an added attraction was Jerry's sweet trumpet solos.

Following our conversation with Jerry, we checked with Tank Tackett and Bill Dykes for their comments. Tank shared an old photo and said, "October 21st will be a night to remember. Jerry, Bill, Gene and I are looking forward to the first ever Goff Reunion at Meramec Caverns," Tank stated. "No one wants to miss it. We'll sing all the favorite Goff songs so make plans to be there."



ABOVE: JERRY GOFF

Bill Dykes said, "Short and sweet, after 35 years I can't believe we're still alive, much less doing a reunion concert! I'm excited to sing with the guys again at one of our favorite places with one of our favorite groups, The Lesters. This was where I sang my final concert with the Goffs in 1977. I have many great memories and look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones."



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- National Quartet Convention booth # 448

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Continued on page 17.

Love, Life, And Legends

LOU WILLS HILDRETH

DIAMOND *from page 11.*

The excitement of the fans, commitment of the artists and the dedication of staff to keeping the Diamond Awards Christ-centered and fan-driven, bode well for the next twenty years of this prestigious ceremony. The 2011 Diamond Awards may be in the history books, but the worshipful event and fellowship of the Body of Christ will live on in attendee's hearts and minds. Until next year, may each one remain focused on The Cross, the theme of the 2011 Diamond Awards.

BELOW: CHOIR WITH ANNA GRACE



GOFF *from page 16.*

Duane Garren, Emcee at the Fall Festival, is anxious for the evening to arrive. He said, "It's a once in a lifetime event. There will be a live band, complete with a Hammond B-3 organ, just like the early days of the Goffs. I don't care how you get there; drive, fly, ride a bus, hitch-hike, whatever, just GET THERE! The Dixie Echoes, Diplomats and Lesters are also on the concert {schedule}."

Jerry said, "The camaraderie on stage with a full band is something we haven't enjoyed in so long. I love looking out at the audience and seeing the joy on their faces when they hear the old songs."

He concluded for the fans, "We'll sing 'The Old Rugged Cross,' 'I'll See You In The Rapture' and 'Guilty,' like fans remember from the old albums. They'll get more than they bargain for that evening."

We will report on the Goff Reunion in our November SGNSCOOPS!

I began writing for Scoops Magazine many years ago at the request of the founder, Dr. Allen Smith. I am thankful for the privilege, and the past two years working with Kelly Burton have certainly been gratifying. As a new chapter begins, I look forward to the months ahead with the incoming editor Rhonda Mitchell Frye. Without a doubt, Rhonda will continue increasing the level of excitement that has been established in the industry, and with the fans, for this fine magazine. Coastal Media President & CEO, Rob Patz has my admiration and support for his commitment to broadening the influence of gospel music. As the owner of Scoops Magazine and the Diamond Awards, Rob has excellent plans for the future. I pray God's continued blessings on our combined efforts to spread the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



One of the sweet surprises for Howard and me on our trip to Branson for the Diamond Awards was a visit to Barbara Fairchild's Diner to see our longtime friend Ray Burdett. We knew in our hearts it would be a final goodbye because he was dying of cancer. We had spent the day taping television interviews with Mary Fay Jackson for Family Friendly Entertainment. A phone call came as we were driving back to the hotel with her. A mutual friend, Sue Ann O'Neal called to tell us Ray was at Barbara's and asking for us. We drove there immediately and spent precious time with him talking about the years he traveled with my brother Bob Wills & the Inspirations. The following week, Barbara Fairchild organized a benefit for Ray. My brother Bob and his son, Ron Wills, brought the Inspirations to Branson to perform. Bob presented Ray with a certificate of induction into the Texas Gospel Music Hall Of Fame. Other members of the quartet, who had traveled with Ray and came to say goodbye, were Curtis Elkins, Ralph Green, and Bill Wills.



On July 25th, Ray's funeral was held at the Oak Ridge Boys Theatre in Branson, and he was buried with military honors at Dayton, TN. We were all thankful God had allowed us a time to express our love to a friend whose bass vocals earned him a place with the elite of gospel and country music. Ray is the first member of the Inspirations to leave us for Heaven, and a video on YouTube, created by Bill Wills, features his fabulous bass vocals with the quartet. I am personally thankful that every time our paths crossed, Ray Burdett would tell me that his time with my brother Bob had laid the foundation for his life of faith in Christ. That is what gospel music is all about---"Loving God, Loving Each Other." Contact me at gospplvideo.com and visit my website at www.louhildreth.com.



CRAWFORD CROSSING

Leaving the Old, Embracing the New

RHONDA FRYE

Crawford Crossing has been turning heads since its formation in 2009. The trio has shared the stage with many top Southern Gospel performers and their first CD, *Turn up the Music*, received a Dove Nomination and an Absolutely Gospel Music Nomination for Country Album of the Year. "Crawford Crossing is the future of Southern Gospel Radio. They are raising the bar. Their quality, great songs and style are so refreshing. We are proud to play their music on WPOS," says Sheri LaFontaine (The Ike and Sheri Show). Three-time Gospel Music Dove Nominee, Tabitha Crawford Wheeler, is the trio's lead vocalist. Tabitha's brother, musician and song-writer Israel Crawford shares some lead vocals and his wife, Whitney sings harmony completing the trio.

Although Crawford Crossing is a new group, Tabitha and Israel have been singing all of their lives. While growing up, the brother-sister team sang in church, weddings and Christmas plays. Since childhood, both Tabitha and Israel have loved music. Tabitha explained, "You could say I'm definitely one of those Southern Gospel junkies. I listened to Jeff and Sheri Easter, The McKameys, The Martins and also the Crabb Family when they came on the scene. I also had a country influence. I have always been a big Martina McBride fan and my favorite singer EVER-bar none was Dolly Parton and still is." She concluded, "Israel was influenced (especially when he was younger) by country artists such as Garth Brooks, Diamond Rio and Alison Krauss."

In 1998, Tabitha formed Living Waters Trio and received two Dove Award nominations and had several songs charting in the top 40. When the group disbanded, Tabitha's music ministry was far from over. Tabitha shares,

"I just felt like God wasn't done with me and it wasn't time for me to quit singing. Although Living Waters Trio had split, there were appointments still scheduled on the calendar and God had a new plan."

The desire of Tabitha's heart was to sing again with her brother. "I had always wanted to sing again with Is-

rael, but the circumstances (as far as him being busy with his wife and kids and me and with mine) kept it from falling into place until now. This is going to be kind of funny, but before I even asked my brother, {to sing} I asked Whitney. Whitney had never really sung in public very much. She sang at a couple of venues with my brother- he had put together a

"I just felt like God wasn't done with me and it wasn't time for me to quit singing."

couple of different bluegrass, bluegrass/gospel groups and she would sing a little bit with him. I asked her first. I asked her to fill in with me on a couple of dates and she has been on board from the start. She {Whitney} said 'you may have to give me a little while to practice, but I will be glad to help you whenever you need me.' From that moment on, every appointment I had, she was there, she never missed a date."

Lack of stage experience didn't get in the way for Whitney. "I do get nervous," she admits, "but once I'm on stage I'm ok- it's just getting to that point. I pray a lot!"

"Nobody would ever know that she gets nervous," Tabitha adds, "She's grown as a singer and I don't say that because I'm her sister-in-law, I say it because I can see it. I can see the progress from day one. She's been put in the position where she has had to sink or swim. We were all at that point and we just jumped





in. We threw every dollar we had, every ounce of effort and every prayer that we could get through to God. When we sat down to do that all three of us said it was all or nothing. Whitney gave every ounce of effort that she had. I've never seen anybody in my life to work as hard in a studio or on the stage as Whitney does."

With the beginning of a new ministry and with singers in place, it was now time to develop a style and sound. "Although Israel and Whitney have a love for bluegrass, Crawford Crossing's sound is country," Tabitha explained. "We are a completely different group with a different sound. This is a whole new ballgame. Honestly, the best description I can give of our sound is... It's our heart," she expressed sincerely.

Continuing to share, Tabitha says, "We're from the south, we're definitely country. We've grown up on Southern Gospel and we've grown up on country music. Our sound is more of a country sound with a Christian faith based lyric. You may hear a mandolin every once in a while, but there is nothing bluegrass about us at all."

Yes, God was up to something new and the group needed a project all their own. Crawford Crossing worked

closely with Terry and Rhonda Thompson of Willow Creek Record Nashville (WCR Nashville) on the new record. Tabitha explains how Crawford Crossing's first album came about. "When the band came together, I needed a project because I didn't want to sell Living Waters Trio product anymore," she shared. "I was ready to start something completely new. When it was time for Turn Up The Music record, we got together and found songs that we liked, that felt good to us and also had a positive message about Christ, and a positive life message as well. That's how that record came about more or less because we were trying so hard to get something together as a group so we could get it out there and not have such a big gap in between albums.

"I had all these appointments that I was still filling, but I didn't have any product, Tabitha said. "We needed something to express who we were. We received a lot of songs. We listened to songs by different writers, even songs that other groups had recorded. We took a couple of weeks and narrowed it down, then we just went into the studio, cut the tracks and then the next week, we cut the vocals.

"I feel like the title cut of the record, 'Turn Up The Music' and 'I Run To You' probably describe this group's starting off better than any other songs on the record," Tabitha testified. "We just had to come to the point of understanding we were beginning a brand new thing in our lives and in our ministry. Leaving the old and letting God show us something new. We just had to completely trust God and that's how it came together," she affirmed.

Crawford Crossing will be releasing their second project, titled Some Things Go Together also produced by Willow Creek Record Nashville (WCR Nashville) on August 16, 2011. The group has been testing out a few of the new songs on live audiences and has received positive feedback. Tabitha explains the new record, "Out of everything I have ever done in my life- and I've been singing since I was 2 years old and singing on stage with groups since age 17- and out of all the songs I've ever sung, records I've ever cut (I've been on 11 different albums) this record probably speaks my heart and our group's heart greater than anything. There are songs about God's love... It talks about how Christ can get you from one place to another... When you feel like you can't go any farther and He's right there to carry you through."

Tabitha continues, "There are songs on this record that talks about everyday life. I think sometimes as Christians, we forget that we are still human and that we still have to live. We have to face the world in different circumstances every day. Our difference is that we have an advocate with the Father, which is Jesus Christ. That's the greatest difference in our life and this record is just incredible. It gives you an outlook as a Christian to your life with Christ and how full it really is. The record has 12 songs plus a bonus cut of a Christmas song on it. This album will feature some new writers and plans are being made to release one or two songs to country music as we did with the last album."

Although Crawford Crossing has worked hard at choosing their sound, making their records and singing in many venues, they are learning to let God define who they are and lay out the plans for their group.

"I think when you start a new group, you try to be professional and you try to do everything by the book," Tabitha says. "You want to fit in and you want to look a certain way. You also want to make sure you have stage presence like 'this & that.' I would say about 6 or 8 months after the first record came out, we were trying to get comfortable with our songs and our new group. My brother just kept being bothered by us wanting to look a certain way and dress a certain way. As an artist, you go through comparing yourself to everyone. What God is showing Crawford Crossing is that the greatest thing you can do is show people yourself and what God has done in your life and for you. It's not a competition. We are all working together for the same result and that's just to spread the wonderful message of Christ and happiness and success in life through Him. By trying to keep up with the Jones' all you're doing is selling God short.

We're learning that through patience and letting God teach you things, you become more successful in Him. It's about listening to Him and not trying to do what everybody else wants you to do."

Crawford Crossing has embraced this new season in their lives and enjoys each other as they explore this new direction. They say they have a blast on the road, and that's understandable since sometimes the 9 children, ranging in ages from infant to 14, stay home with "Grandma." The baby always goes along.

The trio has shared many experiences together some serious and some rather humorous. Tabitha shares: "We were doing a tour date in Nashville. I was 8 months pregnant. We were in the middle of a song and my brother went to put his arm around me (we've always been real close). As he did, the button on the sleeve of his shirt got caught in my hair. He tried to pull his arm away, but when he tried my hair went with him. I got tickled, we're laughing and I wasn't even singing at all. During the break of the song, he had to turn around and used both hands to get free, but a big wad of my

hair fell to the floor!"

Sharing what the group does, when they're off the road, Tabitha revealed "Israel and Whitney love the outdoors and spend much of their time boating, kayaking, mountain climbing and camping with each other and their 4 children." Tabitha expressed, "To me, their {Israel & Whitney's} marriage is a friendship. They are best friends, confidants and singing partners." She further notes with a smile, "Our family is very active as well, but at the present season of our lives, we have a lot of fun with the baby."

Crawford Crossing has had a successful start and God will perfect what He has started until the very end. Until then, Israel wants their fans to know that God's love is unconditional.

I want the fans to know- especially the young people, that God loves us no matter what. That's most important to us being fairly young ourselves and with making a lot of mistakes earlier in life," Israel concludes, "I see a lot of struggling young people beating themselves up for stupid things they've 'done- that we've all done, but Jesus loves us no matter what."



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You really can't drive the strip of Branson, MO without noticing the TITANIC! It's not the real thing of course (although, that would be cool... impossible, but cool)! What you are seeing is the world famous Titanic Museum. On my first trip to Branson, I merely stopped by the museum to take some good photos (you, know, for Facebook) of my kids standing outside of the museum. I was impressed with the size of the building and my kids were more impressed with the water that was splashing against the building to make it look as if it was speeding through the ocean. The huge building is designed as a replica of the real Titanic, complete with an ice berg!

Last year, however, I had the opportunity to tour the museum. What a delightful place! I only wish I had allowed more time for the experience. We arrived at the museum and were greeted by a "first class maid" in authentic costume which provided another great Facebook photo. After standing in-line for about 10 minutes, we were allowed to enter the museum. They only allow you in at certain times and in groups.

We were each given a card that revealed our identity. Not only was our new name included, but also our new personality. We would find out in the last gallery whether or not our character survived the Titanic. Couldn't wait to find out!

I was the "snootiest" woman aboard the Titanic and I made the best of my new identity. I did not allow my husband, who was a third class worker, forget who was "more important" on the Titanic. The children were given sweet and honorable identities such

Branson Titanic Museum

STEPHANIE KELLEY

as my daughter, who was told she was the prettiest girl on the Titanic. I have to agree!

We opted for the audio guide device, which I would recommend as there is additional information not written on the label copy.

The collection of artifacts from the real Titanic was amazing and so fascinating to read about. I've always been interested in the Titanic (and it has nothing to do with Leonardo Di Caprio), so being in the presence of such historic pieces was a highlight for me. I also enjoyed seeing life size replicas of the different cabins. Those first class passengers sure had some posh accommodations.

The highlight for my children were the sloped decks that they were allowed to climb on. We had a lot of trouble getting them out of that gallery! There were three decks that show the degree of pitch the Titanic was at during various stages of sinking. Visitors are allowed to walk on the deck to feel the pitch of the deck. My children were able to climb to the top of each deck

and would have been likely survivors. Sadly, had I been a passenger on the Titanic, I don't think I would have survived. I was struggling by the time I got to the second deck. I'm blaming the open backed shoes and the fact that I was seven months pregnant.

The grand staircase, which divides the galleries, is a replica of the real Titanic staircase. I have to admit that I might have pretended, just for a minutes, that I was Rose descending the staircase in the movie. But just for a minute. And if you are interested in the movie, the final gallery houses some interesting movie tid bits, but I don't want to spoil the surprise.

When we arrived at the Memorial Wall we were all able to find the fate of the passenger's persona that we had taken on. The kids and I survived, but my poor, third class husband didn't make it. Sorry, Honey.

All in all, it was a marvelous adventure and learning experience for all of us and I would highly recommend a visit to the Titanic Museum on your next trip to Branson, MO.



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TAMMY JONES-ROBINETTE

"I am Blessed!"

EVIE HAWKINS



As a small child, Tammy Jones-Robinette remembers a tug at her heart that she couldn't deny. All of her fondest memories were centered around family, church, and singing. Tammy Jones-Robinette knew her special "work" was a call to minister in song...and that she did and continues to do! Tammy's beginnings were with her siblings, The Jones Family, (Eddie Crook Company) who traveled regionally in Ohio and Kentucky.

After the group disbanded, her desire to continue singing led her into a solo career, recording mostly original material. No venue has ever been too small or too large for Tammy to share her message and amazing voice, as she appears in over 15 states at churches, camp meetings, high schools, theatres, concerts, festivals, and numerous events.

As Tammy's prayer to be a blessing and inspiration to others came to fruition, other nationally recognized artists began to take notice and began to record her material. "There Has Never Been" landed on the Top 10 of Singing News charts for the Perry's, and the Bishops took "I'll Live Again" to the #1 position. In the 90's, she garnered the coveted Songwriter of the Year Award with the Eddie Crook Company. Continuing to pen excellent material, 18 of her songs released to radio went to the Top 80. "Until I Hear From Heaven" reached the Top 10 on Singing News charts. Four of her projects were produced under the direction of renowned, Kevin McManus, with Zion Music Group. Other successful songs propelled Tammy's songwriting career toward new heights and in the visibility of Nashville-based publishing companies, including, Chestnut Mound Music; Best of Zion Music Group; and Centergy Music Group.

From one end of the country to the other, Tammy takes her music to the masses and reaches even more listeners by co-hosting a Southern Gospel radio program with her husband, Jim. Southern Celebration on WLRD 96.9 FM, Willard, OH, is aired every Saturday morning on 18 stations in the US and Canada and streams live on WLRD.net.

With numerous successful recordings behind her, Tammy continues putting out fresh, new material, including the I'm Blessed project and a single, "Sing A New Song", that hit the Top 80 Singing News charts. Her current, "We Are Proud to Be Christians" is rapidly becoming a fan favorite as a powerful and uplifting patriotic anthem.

Tammy reflects back on her music ministry, which incidentally hasn't slowed down a bit, "My main goal is to be a blessing through song or testimony and to exalt the Lord in all that I do. I am so grateful to my husband, Jim, who is my rock and for the support of my family." Tammy, Jim, and their son, Preston, reside in Berlin Heights, OH and she currently records independently with Harvest Gospel Studios in Huntington, WV and distributes her music through Little Creek Records. She also co-hosts the weekly radio program, Southern Celebration, with Jim on WLRD 96.9 FM in Willard, Ohio that airs Saturday morning from 10:00 am to noon. It features southern gospel music, events, announcements, and testimonies, and is intended to minister to Northern and Central Ohio. The program is aired on over 18 radio stations in the US and Canada and streams live Saturday mornings on WLRD.net.

Tammy has 12 phenomenal recordings under her belt with the majority of songs being original material. She says, "I get most of my inspiration from good old-fashioned preaching and great sermons. 'Ravens Still Fly' was inspired by a sermon she heard preached by Pastor Mike McCoy from Crossville, Tennessee. The song is about God's provisions for his people and is an uplifting song of encouragement. 'I am Blessed' was

"To see lives being touched and changed and to see the Lord's work being done is the best blessing imaginable."

inspired through a sermon she heard at a camp meeting." She notes, "Evangelist, Jacob Berry, is a giant for God and preaches from his wheelchair and reaches so many lost souls."

Tammy says her life was destined to that calling she first felt as a small child...when the tug at her heart was to minister in song and testimony. She says, "I have no regrets; I am so blessed that the Lord allows me to hear those lyrics he sends and in turn to sing them to those he knows they will bless. I am humbled and so grateful for those who lift me up in prayer as I continue my journey. I can't imagine wanting or desiring anything else. To see lives being touched and changed and to see the Lord's work being done is the best blessing imaginable. I pray that with this latest CD, I will reach even more people through my music. I am blessed!"





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Elijah School of Performance Transforms Ministries

RHONDA FRYE

Although The Elijah School of Performance came to a close on July 2, 2011, in many ways, the conference will never end. Students from all over the United States and even as distant as Turkey gathered to receive knowledge, wisdom and instruction about music, ministry, performance and most of all communication. Founder, legendary Allison Durham Speer, unreservedly poured heart and soul into the lives of the students and was pleased with the outcome of the week. Allison notes, "This year's Elijah Conference was our most successful to date. We had the largest number of students we have ever had, and they were all fantastic. We made many great steps toward more effective ministry and service to God."

What is the Elijah School of Performance?

The heart of the Elijah School of Performance revolves around effective communication, and the mission is to make ministers out of performers. The conference is designed with a balance of performance training and informative workshops regarding the business aspect of music ministry. The hands on critiquing with Allison Speer and Gaither Homecoming favorite Mike Allen provides invaluable training in performance. The objective of Elijah School of Performance is to teach musicians how to execute a ministry of integrity with the principles of holiness, musical excellence and servant-hood. It is intended that by the end of the course, students are able to properly plan and execute musical packages of varying lengths to communicate the gospel in song in the most professional

and spirit filled manner. (Adapted from Elijah School of Performance Website)

"Students from beginners to those serving full-time in ministry all benefit from the Elijah Conference," says long time student, Wess Adams. Adams continues, "Some artists may think they don't need Elijah Conference, but honestly those are some of those that need it more than a beginner. If we stop growing, we soon grow ripe, then rotten. God always has more for us if we are willing to be vulnerable and listen. There is always room for improvement in anyone. If we are serious about presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the very best of our ability, it's best to listen to another set of ears and eyes who can see some of the things we are blinded to. Allison pours truth into her students in a loving and compassionate way allowing us to correct things that stand between what you want to deliver and the audience."

Elijah School of Performance 2011

The conference kicked off with a devotion shared by Mike Allen and then he challenged students to take advantage of Allison's investment. Allen credited Allison Durham Speer for much of his professional growth and expressed his respect for her. The students were then launched into 4 days of non-stop learning. Years of experience flowed from Allison's heart with conviction as she made statements such as these: "What you do is who you are." "Great communicators are focused on the audience."

The objective of Elijah School of Performance is to teach musicians how to execute a ministry of integrity with the principles of holiness, musical excellence and servant-hood.

"We diminish our performance if we can't connect ourselves with the audience." "When you say something in front of an audience, make it good!" "Everything that is said needs to have a purpose." "We ramble if we don't have a plan." "Make musical events and experiences, don't just string songs together and tie them with senseless clichés." "Give people something they haven't heard everybody else say." Those great truths were imparted in just the first day!

Highlights from the week included a work-shop by Pastor Ken Dove of hosting church, Grace Church of the Nazarene in Nashville. Pastor Dove encouraged the students to be a "Worship service on wheels." Pastor Dove believes in the goals of the Elijah conference and shares his support: "I traveled for nearly eight years as an evangelist and I understand in part the sacrifice that is made by anyone with a traveling ministry. So supporting Allison Speer is straight out of my heart because I believe in her and in what she is doing through her ministry. A direct outreach from her heart and life is helping and supporting others. That is one of the dynamic goals of the Elijah Conference. For during these days there is an encouragement and support that makes

God always has more for us if we are willing to be vulnerable and listen.

every person in attendance feel that this is not a competition, but there is help to fine tune a ministry that the Lord has given. I have seen attendees leave with new confidence in themselves and that they are a part of a new extended family of sisters and brothers in Christ who will continue to

support them and pray for them long after the conference ends.”

Sound engineer/ producer, Brian Speer taught on CD production and distribution. Rebecca Irwin was back again explaining how to establish and operate a 501-C3 non-profit ministry. Brenda McClearen’s topic was entitled “Your Image, Your Choice” and Nancy Morgan shared “Staying Busy and Booking Tips.” A special treat during the week was a visit from none other than, “The... Ben Speer.” The beloved gospel legend sounded like a 20 year old as he performed “Gospel Ship” and “Didn’t it Rain.”

A panel of industry professionals came in to critique each artist and group. The panel consisted of John Mathis Jr. from Mansion Entertainment, David Staton, producer at Song Garden and also of the LeFevre Quartet, Associate Pastor/ Artist/ Producer, Aaron Minick, and Session Player/Worship Leader/ Producer, Jeremy Medkiff. The panel gave written assessments to each artist. It was obvious; everyone on the panel affirmed and supported the objectives of the Elijah School of Performance.

John Mathis Jr. says, “I walked away from the Elijah Conference and I could only say ‘Wow!’ Not only was I moved by what I saw taking place there but I had a million thoughts running through my head of how this can shape and continue building a solid foundation for our industry. I love Southern Gospel and I choose to work in it. I want to see it not only survive the changes that take place due to economy, technology and cultural influence but I want to see it grow and thrive. Brian

and Allison Speer, though they may not know it, have always been one of the chief examples I cite when I talk to new or developing artists of people who have ‘done it the right way.’ It was great to see the Elijah example of passing decades of knowledge, wisdom and insight to a new group of Elishas. Allison taught the hows and whys, what-to-dos and what-not-to-dos, and the true purpose behind ministering to others. I promise you, there will be influential artists and ministers rise out of the Elijah Conference and become bright shining lights of the Gospel because of this.”

Jeremy Medkiff adds, “If anyone is looking for the run of the mill music conference, the Elijah Conference is not for you. The Elijah Conference is the most invigorating, motivating, and life changing conferences I have ever seen! Allison Durham Speer uses her awe inspiring gift to challenge her students to new heights in performance and to break off inhibitions like no one else.”

Each day, there was a spirit of cooperation and Christian love. Artists cheered for another and applauded each other’s accomplishments- truly



a spirit of family. The students were eager to move beyond their comfort zones into the artists God made them to be. Every detail was planned with the artists’ best interest at heart. Everything from the critiques, to the home cooked meals was an expression of God’s love through the entire Elijah Staff. Artist, Lindsay Huggins notes, “The Elijah School of Performance was truly a wonderful experience. I

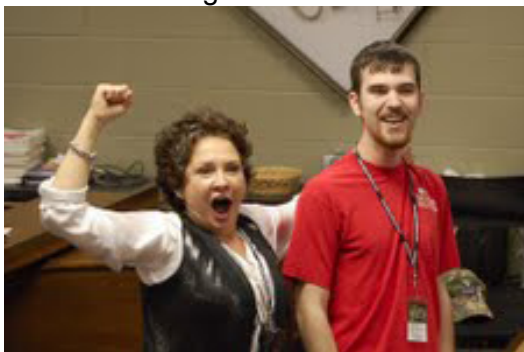
I grew as a performer, but most of all I was challenged to be a better disciple of Christ.

can’t say enough good things about Allison, Brian, and the other instructors! I grew as a performer, but most of all I was challenged

to be a better disciple of Christ. We desperately need this if it our desire is to truly communicate the Gospel. Oh, and they serve really good food, too!”

Plans are being made for 2012 Elijah School of Performance.

For more information, visit <http://www.elijahconference.com/>.



Secret Weapon for Busy Believers

LAURETTE WILLIS

“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19 NKJV).

“Choose Life” = Spiritual Shorthand for the Busy Believer.

What’s one of the quickest ways to experience positive change in our lives? Choose life. How about for weight management, fitness and vibrant health? Yes, the “choose life” decision can be made in a minute and lived moment-by-moment one day at-a-time. Choose life. I have found these two simple, yet startlingly powerful words have kept me from falling prey to sudden urges for “just one” (bite, cookie, candy bar, soda, binge or foray into Debtville). For me “just one” rarely ends with just one. **Whenever I simply stop and say to myself, “I choose life,” my spirit (the real me) rises up with strength to overcome the flesh and I’m suddenly able to say “No” to temptation.**

These two potent little words from scripture can also help us get moving when our flesh wants to “veg out” or skip that day’s fitness commitment. “I choose life,” I’d say as I laced my running shoes and headed for the door or mini-trampoline. “Choose life” I’d say to myself when I wanted to “punish” my husband for hurting my feelings instead of forgiving him. “Choose life” would often turn the whole situation around.

What IS “Life”?

Jesus said His words are life. “The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life,” He said in John 6:63.

We are presented with countless choices every day which affect the health and fitness of our spirit, soul and body. My flesh would cry, “I want it and I want it NOW!” I had to have my favorite snack, drink, a second helping. Like a child, the desire of the present moment took over. It didn’t matter how strong my will power had been or how solid I thought my commitment was. My flesh would scream and I’d cave in like a startled soufflé. “Choose life.” I’d be faced with a temptation to forgo my food plan for the day, or neglect the exercise I’d purposed to do and the words would come to me: “Choose life.” I’d want to blow off a commitment I’d made, or stay in bed instead of getting up early to invest in my relationship with the Lord, and the Word whispered, “Choose life.” A third-party report (i.e. gossip) would come to me and I’d want to share the “news,” but then I’d hear the words in my heart, “Choose life” calling me to make a godly choice.

To choose life is to choose God’s way of doing things. Can we override the gentle nudge of the Spirit of God bringing His Word to our remembrance? Yes. The Lord’s still, small voice doesn’t come with a two-by-four to enforce compliance. While we may try “reasoning” or bargaining with the Lord, the more time we invest in reading, meditating and speaking His Word, the more we will want to heed His gentle reminder to “Choose LIFE,” the secret weapon for the Busy Believer.

(Adapted from *The Busy Woman’s Guide to Total Fitness* by Laurette Willis, Harvest House Publishers)



ELETON *from page 14.*

“The privilege of meeting Channing’s parents, Earl and Janice Eleton, revealed their great contribution to the life and personality of this young man. Earl and Janice are prime examples of the Christian influence in Channing’s life, as well as his devotion to his family. His wife Christina and his two little girls are his greatest accomplishments.” - Sandi Duncan Clarke, Southern Gospel reporter/writer

“Channing is an extremely talented musician. When he played for a group, he was able to bring the group to a higher level. He is a humble individual who exhibits a true Christian attitude in everything he does. I am proud to call him a friend.” – Dean Adkins, Southern Gospel historian and fan

“Channing is a humble, personable, truly genuine friend. That emotion carries through to his music, sweeping the listener in to being an active participant in the musical experience.” - Jana Dennie

“Channing is a wonderful sweet man with a heart for God. His music is great. I have known him for a number of years now & I am proud to call him my friend.” – Elaine Eaton Reyes Harcourt

“There are not enough words to describe Channing Eleton. Whenever I have the opportunity to be in worship with him, I receive a blessing. He sings about what he believes, and he believes what he sings. I have met many people in the Gospel Music industry, and he is one of the rare jewels - someone who you can truly count a friend. He sings and plays from the heart with a passion to see lost souls saved. He is a welcome addition to any worship service.” - Robby Brown

“Good music starts from the heart! Channing’s heart is full of love because he loves the Lord and he loves ministering through his music. I love the melody, the words and the delivery. He is very gifted.” – Cheryl Burgess

“Everything!” – Sheila Eleton Howard

Pauline Patterson



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AN EVENING OF COMPASSION

WITH JASON CRABB AND JESSICA KING

SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

On June 18, 2011, Compassion International came to Greenville, S.C. with an exciting Gospel concert. Billed as "An Evening of Compassion," the concert featured Jason Crabb and Jessica King. The artists played to an enthusiastic crowd at Tremont Church of God and fans came early and stayed as long as Jason and Jessica would sing. On this evening of exciting Gospel music, both Todd Stewart and Zane King, representatives from Compassion, shared the message and the mission of Compassion International.

The organization was founded in 1952 by Rev. Everett Swanson. Compassion began providing Korean War orphans with food, shelter, education and health care as well as Christian training. Currently they work to support more than 1.2 million children in 26 countries.

Compassion is committed to liberating children from poverty in Jesus name. In response to the Great Commission, Compassion International exists as an advocate for children, to release them from their spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty and enable them to become responsible and fulfilled Christian adults.

Individuals or groups may choose a child from any number of foreign countries, for monthly sponsorship. For only \$38 each month, the child receives food, clean water, medical care, educational opportunities and important life-skills training. They will hear the message of Jesus Christ and be taught the difference He can make in their lives.

This evening concert marked the first time Jessica had been to South Carolina since her return to Gospel music, and fans adored her. Her music has

played on local Gospel radio stations, so everyone was familiar with her music.

Of course, this was a return engagement for Jason to Tremont Church, and fans were waiting when the doors opened, to see one of their favorite performers.

Jason has worked with Compassion International for several years and took time to share his mission visit to the children that he and his family sponsor through Compassion. Following Jason's message, fans viewed a video of the Compassion mission so that they might learn how they too, could participate in this special mission work.

A number of other concerts are planned throughout the year through Compassion. These "Evenings of Compassion" will feature other artists in various cities across the country and will provide opportunity for fans to enjoy the music, as well as agree to sponsor a child. If "An Evening of Compassion" comes to your area, be sure to attend the concert and join in the joy of sponsoring a child.



FANS REALLY ENJOYED JESSICA'S PERFORMANCE!



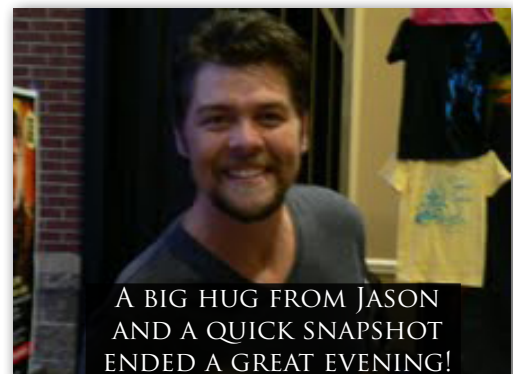
JASON AND HIS BAND BROUGHT FANS TO THEIR FEET WITH HIS MUSIC.



ZANE KING, REPRESENTATIVE OF COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL, EMCEE'D THE PROGRAM



ZANE AND VERTICAL SKY'S DONNA BEAUVAIS MANNED THE COMPASSION INFORMATION TABLE AND HELPED WITH JESSICA'S PRODUCT TABLE AS WELL.



A BIG HUG FROM JASON AND A QUICK SNAPSHOT ENDED A GREAT EVENING!



Conversation with Donald Morris of Dixie Melody Boys

VICTORIA SHIREY

When I was asked to do an article on the youth of Southern Gospel music each month, one of the first individuals that came to my mind was my buddy, Donald Morris, with the Dixie Melody Boys. Donald has really come a long way in the past year or so, especially in his writing. So, I picked up the phone and asked if he'd be interested. He quickly agreed. There are some exciting things going on with Donald right now, as well as the Dixie Melody Boys. Here are some of the things we spoke about.

Victoria: "Tell us some exciting, new things that are happening for the Dixie Melody Boys right now."

Donald: "Our brand new 50th anniversary CD, *The Call Is Still The Same*, from Song Garden Music Group, is the most exciting new thing happening for us now. This CD is not only a mile stone for the Dixie Melody Boys, but a compilation of songs featuring some of the best voices and songwriters in gospel music today, several of whom are former members of the DMB... singers such as Ernie Haase, McCray Dove, Devin McGlamery, Harold Reed, Ken Humphries, and Ben Speer. The album also showcases a solo from Ed's son, Allen O'Neal, who many still ask us about from the DMB band era days. Jason Crabb also stopped by the studio and showed his appreciation by putting an amazing vocal on a beautiful ballad written by Wayne Haun and Rodney Griffin entitled, "God Will Hear Your Prayer." Other songwriters include Darryl Williams, Greg Day, Marty Funderburk, David Staton, and myself. I feel very honored to not only have my voice on this special CD, but to also have 2 songs I've written among

this all-star lineup. It has something for everyone, and we are very proud of it. This CD is a must buy for all. Also, we have been getting great feedback from the TV show we host, *Great American Gospel*. Be looking for new episodes showcasing the best in gospel music soon. Visit www.greatamericangospel.net for a complete network coverage schedule. We will also be hosting a showcase at the National Quartet Convention Friday afternoon and having a Dixie Melody Boys Reunion Showcase Saturday afternoon, celebrating 50 years with former members. It's one you don't want to miss! Go to www.dixiemelodyboys.com to sign up for our mailing list so we can keep you informed about this and other exciting news to come."

Victoria: "What's it like traveling with the guys? I know it can be tough, especially since you just recently got married."

Donald: "Traveling with us is like taking a vacation with your family. We enjoy Grandpa Ed telling us stories about the days of old. Ed's wife of 55 years, Mrs. Joy, Mama Joy to us, travels with us now with their little black poodle, Sambo. Sambo is my buddy, and along with Matt and Steve, there's always something going on to keep us entertained. For the most part, the atmosphere is very laid back. As far as my new beautiful wife as of February 8th, 2011, it is hard leaving sometimes. I miss her very much while I'm gone. I'm very thankful she understands the job I have. She actually has been traveling and singing with her family group, The Hoggle Family, for years in Alabama. She has a very beautiful voice! So, she knows and understands the ins and outs of being on the road. I was lucky enough to meet her at a concert where we were both singing at in Alabama. If it

wasn't for singing with the Dixie Melody Boys, we would have never met."

Victoria: "I remember you mentioning something about not only being a fairly new husband, but becoming a first-time daddy soon, as well! How does that feel?"

Donald: "Talk about a year for me...a 50th anniversary album, my first singing news cover, my songwriting and new publishing company, my first top ten song, getting married....now we have found out we are expecting! And it's..... a girl!! Wow! {This is} A whole new world for me. We are very excited about the future arrival of little Miss Kailey Grace Morris. Future singer?? If daddy has anything to do with it, I'm sure of it!"

Victoria: "Now, you've been doing some writing here lately, and I understand some of your songs have already been recorded. What are some of those songs, and who have they been recorded by?"

Donald: "Yes I have. I've been writing off and on since I was 16. I've always written and loved poetry; even have some poetry published in books nationwide. As for recently, I've just started pitching songs to groups. I have had several cuts by local artists from California to North Carolina. The Inspiration Quartet just recorded one I co-wrote with my buddy, Van Mitchell Jr. called, "Living In The Land Of Canaan," and of course the 2 new songs "Bottom Of The Basket" and "Go To The Well" on our new CD. Be looking out for more in the future, as God is already opening doors for me as a songwriter. If your group is looking for songs, go to our website, www.dixiemelodyboys.com, and email me!"

Victoria: "You also have a publishing company that is doing pretty well for you. Tell us more about that."

Donald: "Yes I do. True Testament Music is only a year old, so it is very new to the industry as well. I figured since I was pitching my songs to groups; why not push other songwriters songs as

well? I know many writers that have great songs but have a hard time getting in contact with artists. Singing fulltime helps me out greatly in this area, so I figured I could help others by starting a publishing company. Our first radio single was recorded by the Inspirations Quartet, "I've Never Known A Day," from the On The Sunrise Side CD, written by Van Mitchell Jr. Van is an associate pastor from my neck of the woods in eastern NC. It went top ten in the Singing News magazine. Since developing a relationship with Van as his publisher, he was the one my wife and I chose to marry us! Be listening for more singles from True Testament Music in the future."

Victoria: "Here are a few fun, random questions. First of all, what is your favorite place to eat on the road?"

Donald: "My favorite place to eat is "Steak n' Shake"...bar none. NONE! Absolutely love it! My mouth is watering just by answering this question."

Victoria: "What do you mostly do while traveling?"

Donald: "I'm a very simple kind of guy...wake up, ride, text, eat, call the wife, sing, and sleep. Not always in that order, but that's about it."

Victoria: "Do you play any instruments?"

Donald: "I do actually. I play drums, guitar, bass guitar, harmonica, saxophone, and some piano."

Victoria: "Who has been your biggest influence in Southern Gospel music?"

Donald: "My home church has always had great singers and groups come out of it, along with many great concerts, which is where I first met Ed O'Neal. So, to be 100% honest, my greatest influence in gospel music has always been my church. Visit their website www.kingscrossroads.com. You can see and hear my wife, Kaylan, sing while you're there."

Victoria: "What was it that made you know traveling full-time in a Southern Gospel quartet was what you wanted to do?"

Donald: "Well, when I thought about how I could best serve God with the talents He's given me, it seemed like a no-brainer. It just makes sense to me, like $2 + 2 = 4$."

Victoria: "Is there anything else you'd like readers to know?"

Donald: "Yes...there is. Order our new 50th anniversary CD, watch Great American Gospel, and come to a DMB concert soon! Let me know you read this article when you see me! Thank you for this opportunity Victoria, God Bless!"

It was a pleasure interviewing Donald for this month's issue. Check in each month for a new article with some of your favorite, young Southern Gospel artists.

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Finish Well

Grounded in Love, Carved on the Rock

RHONDA FRYE

With a sparkle and a smile, I can say, I'm honored to return to SGN-Scoops. During my season away, the Lord unlocked new doors of opportunity, stretched the borders of my personal ministry and has expanded my circle of influence. YIKES! Honestly, that jolts me into panic mode! With knowledge comes responsibility and the same is true with opportunity and privilege. Ministry is a privilege that I don't take lightly and I consider my responsibilities at Scoops a ministry. My desire is for readers to be edified and for God to be glorified.

My last published article in Scoops Magazine was along the lines of "Finishing Well." The sobering visual of presenting myself before God to account for the talents, gifts, people and ministries He's entrusted to me, has since burned in my mind. I discovered quickly, I wasn't capable on my own to "finish well" the assignments given to me. After asking for help, God has taken me on a field trip showing me how to live with eternity in view so that someday I will hear those sweet words, "Well done, thy good and faithful servant." Oh- I should stop right here and say; I haven't arrived anywhere, yet! Trust me! We're still on the trip and I've been tried, tested and tempted in every imaginable way to quit along the ride. Ok- moving along now, enough said. In my last article, I noted King Saul and King David had the same opportunity and the same anointing to be King of Israel. God's very own words about both Kings truly penetrate my spirit. God said David was a man after His own heart and God also said that He was sorry He ever made Saul king. People can possess great talent, anointing and calling, but our character is what makes or breaks us. When all is said and done, our character and motives (not our accomplishments)

will determine if we have pleased God in this life.

So- here we are a few months down the road, and God is leading me to pick up where I left off and begin a new column called "Finish Well."

My intention is to write encouragement along the lines of sticking to the course and running the race well. Often times when we are up to our necks in ministry, we focus on developing our skills to the point of forgetting the basics of spiritual maturity. I'm learning, if we lack the practice of spiritual disciplines and neglect to cultivate the fruits of the spirit, it's only a matter of time until we drop by the way-side all fizzled out. I Corinthians 13:1 says, "If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything

People can possess great talent, anointing and calling, but our character is what makes or breaks us.

I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it, but if I didn't love others I would have gained nothing."

If we aren't grounded and rooted in the basics, we'll be nothing more than like pretty rainbows in the sky or writing in the sand. Don't get me wrong, rainbows are beautiful, but rainbows don't last! Because rainbows are made up of transitory sunbeams and fleeting raindrops, they will eventually fade just like sandcastles get wiped out by the tide. Thank you, Charles Spurgeon, I get that analogy. In the devotional Morning &

Evening- a collection of work from Charles Spurgeon, he continues: "May your character not be a writing on the sand, but an inscription on the rock. Be rooted and grounded in love. May your whole life be so settled and established that all the blasts of hell and all the storms of earth will never be able to remove you!" That's it in a nutshell! Our character has to be grounded in love and our lives have to be carved on the unshakeable, immovable Rock of Jesus Christ. It takes hard work to get to the place of being settled and established. An established life is a stable life and unfortunately doesn't take place over night. Thank God for



grace, a learning curve and multiple do-overs!

I'm also thankful for the word of God that directs our path. I plan to examine Galatians 5:22 over the next few months. "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." A connecting passage is found in 2 Peter 1:3-8. "By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know Him, the One who called us to Himself by means of His marvelous glory and excellence. And because of His glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share His divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous

provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Skip down to verse 10. "So dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things and you will never fall away." Drum Roll, Please... "Then God will give you a GRAND ENTRANCE into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Grand Entrance. Sweet!

Yes, I want to hear "well done thy good and faithful servant" as I march into the eternal Kingdom of God, but first things first. To finish well, one must start! Next month, I plan to explore the topic of "Faith." Faith is what will pry our hands

loose from the death grip we have on the side of the boat and faithfulness is what will keep us walking on water. I'm looking forward to sharing this journey with you and please feel free to *contact me if I can serve you in any way at rhonda@sgnscoops.com*. Until then, "I pray that from His glorious unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is! Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think!" (Eph3:16-18, 20)



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NEW MUSIC FOR AUGUST

SANDI DUCAN-CLARK

I'm thankful that music comes in all styles or as I like to say, "flavors!" While a lot of the music I enjoy is Southern Gospel, over the years I've come to appreciate every type of music, within reason! Christian music with the message of the Gospel or faith based life messages stir my heart. I also enjoy a sweet love song from my husband!

Several years ago, some of my favorite musicians recorded instrumental CDs of secular love songs and I dearly love them! It would be a very dull life if there was no variety.

This month I have selected three different styles of music to share with you. I hope you will give each artist a chance, should you hear it on the radio, and I pray that you enjoy these reviews of some great music.



SOUNDS LIKE HEAVEN TO ME

LOU REID & CAROLINA
RURAL RHYTHM RECORDS
PRODUCER LOU REID

Kicking off the new music this month is a wonderful new bluegrass project from Rural Rhythm Records, *SOUNDS LIKE HEAVEN TO ME*, by an exciting band from Union Grove, North Carolina.

Lou Reid and his band, Carolina, play and sing bluegrass Gospel with expertise and finesse. Organized in 1992, the band is well-known in churches throughout the southeast and at bluegrass festivals across the country.

The first song on this recording is "God's Front Porch." The writer imagines God's front porch to be as welcoming and comforting as our own. Dennis Duff wrote this song and contributed three others to the project.

"John In The Jordan" is another strong song, written by William L. Golden of the Oak Ridge Boys, and is perfected here by the smooth vocals of Lou and Carolina. Music on this recording is pure bluegrass, played by band members and consists of mandolin, guitar, bass guitar, banjo and fiddle.

Lou contributed "Lord Have Mercy On My Soul" to the song line-up. Carolina does an excellent job on the old church hymn, "Sweet Bye and Bye," featuring Christy Reid. The music on this song is not overwhelming and allows us to enjoy Christy's sweet vocals.

There are fourteen solid songs on the recording, with wonderful music and strong vocals. If you're a bluegrass gospel music fan, you'll enjoy this one. For your copy visit Carolina's web site at <http://www.loureidandcarolina.com>.

About ten years ago a young lady stepped on the Southern Gospel stage and won the hearts of fans and DJs all across the country. Jessica King established a national fan base and scored a number of hits on all national Southern Gospel charts. The need for a break from the music, travel and spotlight became evident to Jessica after a while, and until just four short months ago, she was singing in her home church in Texas where she and husband, Cory were busy raising their family.

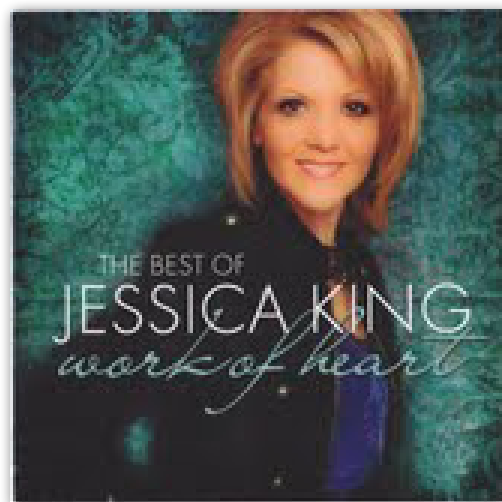
Jessica began feeling God's call back to the music ministry. After prayer and contacting several old friends in the music world, she began working on a new recording. *WORK OF HEART; THE BEST OF JESSICA KING* is Jessica's answer to God's call. I was recently privileged to enjoy Jessica in concert, and to hear her sweet testimony. I realized even more so how God is using her. This recording shares Jessica's heart for the ministry and her joy at returning to the music.

Strong, heartfelt vocals with awesome music tracks on some great songs proves once again, why fans and DJs responded to Jessica's music. Three new songs and nine songs reproduced from her first recorded project provide hours of listening enjoyment.

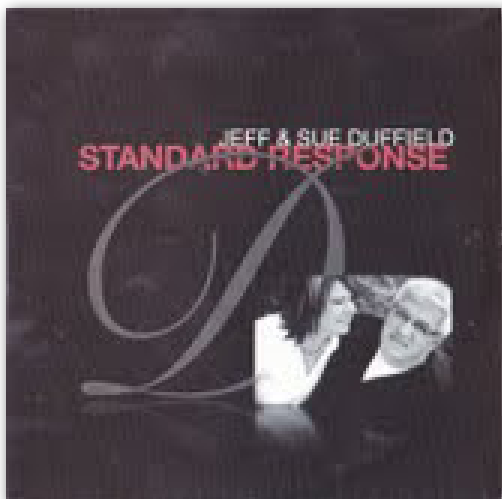
Jessica's version of Dottie Rambo's "Come Spring," is such a beautiful reminder of the joys awaiting the Christian when this life is passed. "Work of Heart," "Gift Of Grace," and "Keep Me In Your Will" are some of my favorite songs on the recording and Jessica's clear vocals and personal excitement brings life to any song she sings.

You'll also enjoy "Kiss Of God," and another of my favorites, "Sometimes It Takes A Storm." The mixture of slower message songs, along with upbeat, happy ones speaks to the variety of emotions we are all prone to experience, and gives comfort, joy and peace through Jessica's music.

You may have your copy of this recording by visiting her website at www.jessicakingmusic.com.



WORK OF HEART
THE BEST OF JESSICA KING
DAYWIND RECORDS
PRODUCERS ZANE KING,
KEVIN WARD



STANDARD RESPONSE
JEFF & SUE DUFFIELD
DUFFIELD MUSIC
PRODUCER, JEFF DUFFIELD

I was introduced to the music of Jeff and Sue Duffield by a sweet friend a couple of months ago. I immediately fell in love with their new recording! This couple has been involved in the music ministry of for many years and I was so inspired when I read their bio and visited their web site.

While they have a number of Gospel/Christian albums to their credit, STANDARD RESPONSE is a recording of fourteen of the best known love songs of all time. When I first put the CD in my car stereo, I was anticipating traditional Christian music, and was very pleasantly surprised with what I heard. "The Look Of Love" kicks off a wonderful listening experience, and is followed by thirteen more songs that you'll remember sharing with your spouse or someone special, and possibly hearing your mom and dad sing to each other!

Jeff is a well-known producer and keyboardist for a number of national artists. Sue is wife, mother, wonderful vocalist and renowned speaker. Their years of experience only enhanced this product for our enjoyment.

My husband and I have always enjoyed "Someone To Watch Over Me" and the Duffields do a phenomenal job on "our" song! "You Belong To Me," "Dream A Little Dream," and "The Nearness Of You" are three of my favorites on the CD, and I'm sure you'll find something here that you and your Special Someone will call your own.

You may contact Jeff and Sue to learn more about their music and to order your copy of STANDARD RESPONSE at www.duffieldmusic.com.

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LIVE SOUND

Audio 101: "What is Sound?"

Ok, so we might not start that far back but to actually answer the age old question, if no one is in the forest to hear the tree fall then the tree did not make a sound. The definition of sound is the combination of the sound being made and being heard. The process of duplicating that sound to a larger audience is the basic purpose of a PA (public address) system. There are many components to a sound system along with many different brands of each item and feature.

Artists have a lot on their plate from driving to trip planning to product tables. The last thing they need to worry about is fighting with the sound system to get the right sound. Artists do need to have equipment that will reproduce their sound accurately so that it comes across to the listener at an enjoyable level and with good tonal quality.

The idea of this column is to help professional artists understand more about sound equipment and to answer any questions they might have. Not only will I address sound systems, but I will be discussing recording studio setup, equipment, recorders (D.A.W.) and software (ProTools ©) tips. I will also be happy to share your tips in the tips section to come. I intend to give reviews on new products and software plug-ins, as well, so please check out this column each month. Let's get started!

SOUND ADVICE

BIG CLAYTON

The Mixer: "You know what all of them knobs do?"

Instead of following signal flow, I thought it might be best to just jump ahead and start with the mixer to get a general understanding of the boards. Writing from the assumption most artists are used to setting up their boards and getting a sound, I'd like to go further and teach how to actually have a great sound and not damage the mixer board.

Starting at the very top of each channel is the "gain" knob. The gain knob is what brings the low impedance microphones or high impedance instruments up to a usable level for the mixer, and is also known as the "line level." If you set the gain too low you will not get a loud enough signal. If it is set too high, the sound will be distorted. The correct level that every signal needs to be set is at "0db." Most artist and engineers set the gain by hitting the peak light (often a red indicator light on each channel) then backing off gradually. Most people don't realize they are still running a very hot signal into the board and it could actually be set at too high of a signal. Each manufacture will design this light to come on at different levels and is only a warning indicator- not a level set. Most every board has a "PFL" button on each channel or it could be called "Solo." When this button is pressed, it turns the meter that is on the right of the board from a master meter to a channel meter. This will indicate the actual level of the signal coming into the board. During the sound check, I recommend to have the vocalist sing or play tracks, then use the "PFL" (pre fader listen) to make adjustments. While singing or playing music, use the meter on the right to bring the level up or down to keep the signal's average stay on or around "0db." Usually, the lights will turn to yellow on anything above "0db" and will be green on

anything below it. The signal can peak above "0" but it's probably best to not let it stay above it too long.

For some people, this signal will not be as loud as they were used to and adjustments may need to be made. If this is the case, the volume on the amps or powered speaker can be raised. My opinion is that the only time the gain should be changed is when changing out a microphone or when someone else uses it. To adjust the levels, use the main fader (for the house signal) or the Aux busses. One of the old school methods is to set the faders to "0db", the master fader at "0db" and use the gain on each channel for the volume level. On older boards, that have tube pre-amps, it is okay to run the signal hotter in order to tap into the warmth of the tube. However on newer solid state equipment, distortion happens shortly after "0db" and the circuits are less forgiving than tubes.

STUDIO SOUND

"To Pre or Not to Pre- That is the Question"

Everyone wants that "Nashville sound" on their project, and many artists understandably cannot afford it. There has been a significant increase in project studios and even full blown in-home studios. One of the first steps in getting a more full sound than what your local producer makes in his home is using a quality preamp. It is not only the preamp, but the microphones, recorder quality and room treatment, combined, that makes a difference and we will discuss those topics later on.

The preamps that are built into portable recorders do not even come close to the pre's found in a high end studio. Outboard preamps are priced from a few hundred dollars, up to several thousand.

Continued on page 39.

PAULINE PATTERSON

Celebrates 6 Years in the Business with Patterson Promotions

EVIE HAWKINS

Pauline Patterson was raised on good Southern Gospel music. Her roots go back to rural Kentucky where her family relied on church for their spiritual strength and singing the Gospel as a past time and passion. Most everyone that is acquainted with this petite and energetic lady knows her to be about the ministry.

Six years ago, she was going about her daily routine and says the Lord spoke firmly to her heart that she needed to work in radio promotions and help others get their music heard. Pauline had past experience as a DJ and experience as a recording artist but

she had never tried radio promotions. She didn't hesitate to heed that call, but says she had to pray diligently to know the Lord's leading and understanding in providing the best services for her artists that she would serve.

The Sons Family was Pauline's first group and with them came their debut on the Singing News chart and even a top 20 hit. Pauline says, "That really confirmed to me, with no doubt that the Lord was definitely wanting me to do radio promotions. I knew this was a

ministry for me, that my background could hopefully allow me to put myself in the shoes of my artists and that I would be able to put forth my best effort in getting their music to the ears of DJ's. He has continually blessed me since. I have a

wonderful husband, Ken, who is so supportive and helpful. We are full-time and in this for the long-haul."



Pauline has achieved much success since the beginning of Patterson Promotions. She has assisted numerous artists over the past 6 years in getting heard, played, and landing on several of the industry charts; including, Singing News, Christian Voice, and Southern Gospel Times. Her own love of singing has not slowed down; however, she notes, "I will always love to sing and love to use the talent the Lord blessed me with; however, my priority is to work with these artists needing to spread their message through the airwaves. I receive such a huge blessing from this challenge and it is simply what the Lord wanted me to do. He has proven it to me time and again and I want to continue with that mission he laid upon my heart 6 years ago. I appreciate all the support and prayers and continue to pray that I can always be in his will and continue to provide great services. I feel blessed and honored to work with each and every artist that comes our way." Pauline and husband, Ken, live in Lily, KY and enjoy time with family and grandkids when she is not in the office or singing on the road.

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Chronicles Of The Singing English Teacher

JEFF HAWES



For the best way to describe the month of July, I would definitely have to use one adjective, HOT! As the scorching heat shines on New River, we are thankful that we had our annual homecoming celebration in June of this year, rather than the usual July event.

We began July with a full schedule and are still rolling ahead. We were able to be home with our families on the fourth of July but quickly returned to Dahlonaga on the fifth to begin recording our much anticipated Christmas album. The phrase "Christmas in July" became a reality as we began to lay the vocals to some of the prettiest music known to man. However, it did seem quite crazy to be singing "Christmas Time is Here" while everyone outside was experiencing the record-breaking heat wave of the South.

This Christmas project has been twenty years in the making. Since New River began in 1991, Karen and Susan have always wanted to record their favorite Christmas songs. For me, this has also been a dream come true. I can remember Christmas always being my favorite time of year, and I could not wait to get out of school for the holiday break. Since Mom and Dad

had to work during most of my time off from school, I had to find ways to entertain myself, most of which included music in one way or another. There were many times when I would conduct my own Christmas musicals in our family living room. Recording these songs brought back so many fond, yet slightly embarrassing memories.

We finished that week by singing in Bean Blossom, Indiana (one of my favorite concerts of the year) but that week was an emotional one for our group. Karen and Susan's aunt passed away at the beginning of the week and then Susan's mother-in-law passed away the following day. While in the midst of recording a new project and getting ready for the release of our latest Daywind release, Karen and Susan mourned the loss of several loved ones. Although it was an extremely tough time for the girls, they were able to connect on stage at a much deeper level. Our latest single "On the Banks of the Promised Land" was especially relevant in their lives as they spoke of the comfort of seeing our loved ones in heaven.

Another exciting time for New River was the release of our latest Daywind release Reach Out. The album debuted on July 12 to encouraging reviews and sales. We were able to release our album to the world in an exciting new way by hosting an online streaming video of our release party in Nashville at Daywind Studios. The format was recently new to Daywind as well as KP&NR but went very well. Supporters from all over the nation as well as Iraq and Brazil tuned in to ask questions, visit with a few of the song writers, and of course, listen to the new songs. Les Butler from the Singing News magazine served as the moderator of the evening. It was so neat to have people submit questions via the internet chat page. One question in particular was "Does Jeff Hawes have a girlfriend?" To which I replied, "Yes, I have several 80 year old ladies whom I consider my girlfriends."

After doing several interviews and concerts in the Nashville area, we headed

Continued on page 39.



SOUND *from page 35.*

These preamps are just one channel of the large mixers that are often found in large studios. Those kind of boards can range in price of a new luxury car and even higher. The higher end preamps add tone and texture that the lower quality pre's often do not. They can add a punch to the kick drum and fatten the bass track or just make that vocal have the winning sound.

'Til the next session,

Big Clayton

clayton@claytonwatson.com

TEACHER *from page 38.*

to Alaska again for the Dr. Charles Stanley In Touch Ministries Cruise. We had such a great time not only singing and visiting Alaska but listening to Dr. Stanley as he preached and held a question and answer session.

As July ends and August begins we are excited about our upcoming trip to Sweden where we will be singing at a music festival there. God is opening doors for our ministry that we would never have imagined. I would

like to leave you with some encouraging words I heard Beth Moore say the other day on her television program. "Blessed are we when something that comes naturally to others comes supernaturally to us." May this encourage you in your daily walk with the Lord and may He supernaturally open doors for you that you could never open yourself.



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