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## OUR MISSION

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern Gospel and Christian Country music. With integrity, we aspire to strengthen Christians, highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God.

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Editor-in-Chief- Lorraine Walker

Copy Editors- Joan Walker, Craig Harris

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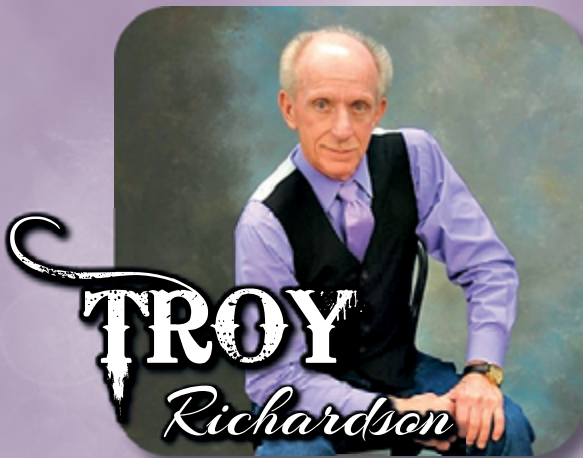
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# PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz

How many times in life have you heard the statement, “If you had told me then...”?

I have to tell you this: If you had told me 10 years ago that I would own a magazine in Southern gospel music, I would’ve told you that’s impossible. I don’t write well and I don’t foresee anyone having the desire to sell me a magazine.

But God had a different plan.

As you read this edition of SGNscoops magazine, you are looking at something that has been growing for the past nine years.

September 2009 was the first edition of this magazine with me as publisher.

I’m amazed to see how God has used our magazine to help spread the gospel through my favorite form of music. God is blessed me over the years with some great editors, starting with Kelly Burton, then Rhonda Frye, and now our current editor Lorraine Walker.

All of them have had great visions of what they wanted to see the magazine becoming. Each sacrificed hours upon hours to create what you are now seeing. I am thankful for each of them. Lorraine has been a tireless editor and has helped us to create the image and the ministry that you now see.

If you really know me, you know that I am always planning for the future. Today’s success does not guarantee tomorrow’s, so we continue to look forward.

I’m thankful for Allen Smith and his vision to create a digital magazine over 12 years ago. I asked him to tell us the story in a nutshell and this is what he related to me:

“The Lord gave me the vision for SGNscoops around 1995. I really did not want to do it, but God has His ways of helping you change your mind,” Smith explains.

“The first issue was published in October 1996, with the Kingsmen on the cover,” recalls Smith. “The original name of the magazine was ‘Missouri Southern Gospel News.’ Within about two months, we had expanded outside of the state of Missouri. Because of that, it was decided to drop ‘Missouri’ from the title of the magazine. This in effect changed the name to ‘Southern Gospel News.’





"A few weeks later, we launched a weekly email edition called SGN Scoops. Of course, SGN stood for Southern Gospel News. In a few short months, the email newsletter became so popular that it was more recognized than the print edition. Therefore, it was decided to change the name of the print edition to SGN Scoops Magazine, to further tie it into the newsletter," shares Smith.

"In 2008, it was decided to launch the first electronic edition, which was called, 'SGN Scoops Digital,'" Smith continues. "A few months later, my health began to fail, and I knew that I could not simply let the magazine just die, as I have seen happen to several Southern Gospel magazines and newspapers. So, I began to pray and seek the face of the Lord to find out who He wanted to take SGN Scoops over, and to build it up further from the foundation that was already established.

"After much prayer and seeking the face of the Lord, God laid Rob Patz on my heart," reveals Smith. "Rob had already been my friend for some time, and had worked with me several times, including with the Diamond Awards. So, I picked up my phone, called Rob, and discussed it with him. And, as is often said, the rest is history!"

I am thankful that Allen Smith did call me. There are days where I look back and marvel at the fact that he had a vision to create a digital publication. Very few of us saw that opportunity. That is why I strive to move Scoops' magazine forward.

We are going to continue to be cutting edge in how we handle new technology. Be looking for some exciting announcements over the next year, as we continue to grow and move towards celebrating 10 years of publishing this great magazine.

I wish I could tell you some of the ideas but they aren't finalized yet, so you're just gonna have to stay tuned to the magazine and to the Publisher's Point.

September is also the month that I look at my own legacy. How do you look at your legacy? Well, if you're me, you look at it during your birthday month, and you realize that the only thing that we really leave for the next generation is the things that we do for God. Everything else will fade away. So I'm excited to see what God has for me in this new year and I believe he is just about to create some amazing memories for me and for the magazine.

I want to see you next month in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., for Creekside Gospel Music Convention 2018. We have some incredible things coming up and I want to have you with us to enjoy the fun, fellowship and music that is Creekside because, as we say, "We are family!"

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# YOUNGER PERSPECTIVE

## Kody Erwin of the Erwins

**BY ERIN STEVENS**

A word from Erin Stevens...

We're about to bring it on down - but in a good way. Today, the lowest note hitter of the the Erwins joins me for his Younger Perspective spotlight. I've had the privilege of knowing Kody and his family since we were preteens (no dorky throwback photos will be posted, thank you kindly!) Watching him grow in his music and life has, as a friend, made me very proud of how far he and the entire family has come in their talents and ministry. Kody, it's all yours.

**Erin Stevens:** Growing up in a Christian home, you were surrounded by godly people, but when did you confess Christ for yourself?

**Kody Erwin:** We were actually singing in a revival meeting that my dad was preaching at. I was six years old and I remember the service still to this day. I fell under conviction and knew that there was something missing in my heart. I walked down the aisle that night and got saved.

**Stevens:** How did you and Cayla meet and when did you know she was the one?

**Erwin:** She was from our hometown, so we had some of the same friends and would be around each other occasionally, but never really talked. I knew there was something special about her, so I messaged her on Facebook. We started talking, then started dating, and we dated for four years, until I had the courage to pop the question. The rest is history.

**Stevens:** With only being in your early 20's, how has fatherhood changed you and caused you to mature a little more quickly than most people our age?

**Erwin:** It has definitely made me realize how much respon-

sibility it takes to be a father. You always hear that, but until you are living it, I don't believe you truly understand. I wouldn't trade what I have learned in the past 16 months for anything. My wife is such an amazing mother to Laney; that helps with all my imperfections as well.

**Stevens:** Home cooked meal or dinner out? Golfing or fishing? Early bird or night owl? Solitude or group activity?

**Erwin:**

Home cooked meals all day.



Golfing!

Ahh, well...Laney has unfortunately turned both me and Cayla into early birds.  
Group activity.

Stevens: If you could create the perfect family day, what would it look like?

Erwin: Give me a 70-degree day, anything outside, then go inside for a nice dinner, and relax at home. Simple is best.

Stevens: How has the Lord been challenging you to go deeper with him in your personal walk?



Erwin: God has really been showing me how his love is endless. I think it has even been more obvious since I've been a father, because I know how much I love my child. To think how God gave his only begotten son because he loved us?

That's the most amazing thing to me.

Stevens: What is a scripture that has been impacting you recently?

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

Stevens: Can fans expect any exciting up and coming announcements about the Erwins?

Erwin: We just released our new CD "Watch and See." We are excited about getting new music out there for all our friends to hear. We are also doing a tour with Joseph Habedank called "Resurrection of Faith" - it is such a great concert with lots of energy and fun, and Christ is glorified with every song.

Stevens: How would you challenge other young men who are married dads, to better lead their families?

Erwin: I would tell them to give 100% of themselves everyday, follow Christ and he will lead their home in the best way possible!

Closing thoughts from Erin Stevens...

Is it really that simple? Serve Christ unashamedly and allow him to lead the way? Seriously?! If you've been asking yourself these questions, friend, the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" The Lord knows exactly what you need, and what your family needs at just the right moment. Have you been trying to run the show on your own? Do you feel scattered and not sure what to do next? Give it to God. Surrender every piece you have been trying to hold onto, and give it to him. He can handle it, trust me. Your weight will be lifted and your perspective will be divinely shifted. Go ahead, it's time to let Someone else take the wheel.

And that's my take on it.  
Until next month,  
Scoops fans.

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them about SGNY and join us in prayer for Bob, Joyce and Southern Gospel NY



# Randall Reviews It - September 2018

by Randall Hamm

Dear Friends:

It's September and school is in session; at the end of this month, National Quartet Convention (NQC) will be in full swing as all gospel music lovers will converge on Pigeon Forge to see their favorite group, and hopefully discover a few new favorites as well.

For me it is the month of new releases and of discovering new artists as well. This month, I bring you three great projects that have been released in the last few months: A group who could possibly have their very first No. 1 on national charts, the Down East Boys; Paul's Journey is back with a new release, and Heaven's Mountain Band, one of the biggest groups on the charts right now in Bluegrass music has their best release to date.

As always, if you enjoy the reviews, pick up this music, or download it, wherever you get good gospel music.

Please send your latest releases for review to Randall Hamm, c/o Q-100 WFLQ-FM, P.O. Box 100, French Lick, Ind., 47432.

Let's not dilly, let's not dally... Let's get right to the reviews...



## **Down East Boys**

**"One Day In The Past"**

2018 Sonlite

Producer: Jeff Collins

Songs: "That Would Be Amazing" (Wayne Haun - Joel Lindsey BMI); "Somebody Is Me" (Roger Duncan BMI); "I'd Like To Tell It Again" (Chris Allman BMI); "Beat Up Bible" (Cary Barlowe - Hillary Lindsey - Shane Stevens BMI); "Lord, I Need You To Show Up" (Roger Duncan BMI); "Testimony Time" (Sandy Knight BMI); "Jesus, Have Mercy On Me" (Roger Horne ASCAP); "Beautiful, Shining, Happy, Golden Shore" (Robert J Collins BMI); "The Blood Remains" (Tony Wood - John Lemonis ASCAP); "Just What I Needed" (Wayne Haun - Lyn Rowell BMI); "Beautiful Valley" (Marcia Henry BMI)

The latest project by the Down East Boys, "One Day In The Past," is one the best projects recorded by this group from Reidsville, N.C.. In over 30 years, no single from this group has risen as quickly as has "Beat Up



Bible.” Its current position is No. 17, up 24 positions from its debut at No. 41.

There are 11 great tracks on this CD, including a remake of their biggest hit, “Beautiful Valley,” which garnered them a Horizon Group nomination at the 1990 Singing News Fan Awards.

Their last album, “Ransomed,” yielded a nomination for Album of the Year and Song of the Year for “One Way, One Name, One Door.”

Group member and lead, Ricky Carden, has been with the group since 1990 and the group has been around since 1984. Current members are: Ricky Carden singing lead; Daryl Paschal on baritone; Doug Pittman singing tenor, and Zac Barham on bass. This group has been a quartet most of its career except for a few years in the late 90’s to early 2000’s, when they were a trio. The group from top to bottom has never sounded better than they have with the current lineup.

The Down East Boy’s song “Beautiful Valley” has become regarded as a signature song. A few years ago, I had asked Ricky Carden if they had thought about re-recording it. Ricky said it’s still one of their most requested songs, and they had toyed with the idea. Well, they finally have and it’s still as good as it was when it was first released in 1989. In my eyes, it is worthy of a re-release as a possible single.

Other songs, such as the first song that kicks off the CD, “That Would Be Amazing,” “Jesus Have Mercy On Me,” featuring their bass Zac Barham, and “Beautiful Shining Happy Golden Shore” are contenders for singles as well.

This CD could possibly get a few nominations at next year’s Dove awards and possibly a Grammy nomination. To visit the Down East Boys visit <https://www.facebook.com/downeastboysquartet/>.

**Strongest Songs:** “Beautiful Valley,” “Beat Up Bible,” and “Beautiful, Shining, Happy, Golden Shore”



### **Paul’s Journey**

“The Old And The New”

2018 Inspire/Chapel Valley

Producer: Shane Roark

Songs: “Getting Ready For The By And By” (Rob Buckner-Stewart Thorson); “God Came Down” (Rodney Griffin BMI); “I’m Walkin’ Down This Road” (Justin Heaton BMI); “When God Provided The Lamb” (Scott Neal); “Nothing Can Ever Keep A Good Man Down” (Jim Waters BMI); “The Old And The New” (Tim Lovelace ); “He’s Alive” (Jim Miller ASCAP); “It’s Personal” (Randall Garland – Val Dacus BMI); “What A Time” (Jeremy Peace); “Glorious Day” (J Chapman - Michael Bleeker - Mark Hall)

Paul’s Journey is back with another Chapel Valley release. “The Old And The New” is another fine effort from Rod Treme and the gentleman of Paul’s Journey. Paul’s Journey, formerly known as the Relations, has roots dating back to 1977 when three brothers and their cousin started the quartet; hence the name, the Relations Quartet. Rod Treme, the cousin, now has sole ownership of the group and changed the name of the group a few years ago, to reflect their ministry. As Paul journeyed, he spread the gospel and love of Christ as the quartet does today, similar to Paul’s travels.

Shane Roark is once again at the helm of this project, and the wonderful Chapel Valley musicians also do a fine job.

The CD starts off with “Getting Ready For The By And By,” a song of encouragement of making preparations for that wonderful homecoming day.

One of my favorites is, “I’m Walkin’ Down This Road,” about walking down the right pathway and the choice one must make, the narrow or the wide path.

Other great songs on the CD include a reworking of a

classic hymn, “Glorious Day,” which closes out the CD.

This edition of Paul’s Journey now features Keith Gilliam at lead. You might remember him from his days with the Toney Brothers. At baritone is Brad Davis and on tenor is Ron Higgins; these men join group owner, Rod Treme, who sings the bass part. My favorite song on the CD is “God Provided The Lamb,” written by Scott Neal. In our time of need, “God Provided A Lamb,” his son, the sacrifice that was needed, to bring us back to him. This, I hope, will be a single around Easter of next year.

Another song that could be a possible single, is “Nothing Can Ever Keep A Good Man Down,” from the pen of Jim Waters.

Overall this is a wonderful CD from Paul’s Journey, worthy of being in your collection. To visit Paul’s Journey go to <https://www.facebook.com/Pauls-Journey-96645339804/>.

Strongest Songs: “I’m Walking Down This Road,” “God Provided The Lamb,” and “Nothing Can Ever Keep A Good Man Down”



**Heaven’s Mountain Band**  
“Most Requested Prayer”  
2018 Butler Music  
Producer: Roger Johnson

Songs: “Most Requested Prayer” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “A Place To Spend The Night” (Kyla Rowland); “It’s In The Blood” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “He Took Your Place” (Lester Flatt BMI); “How’s God Doing” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “His Greatest Pain” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “The Next Time You See Me”

(Leon Frazier BMI); “I Know The Tomb Is Empty” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “A Way To Live Forever” (Roger G. Johnson BMI); “When The Storm Is In My Path” (Roger G. Johnson BMI)

Heaven’s Mountain Band (H.M.B.) is back and, boy, are they back. Their latest CD is titled, “Most Requested Prayer,” and is their best CD to date. Their current single “When The Savior Called Me,” is currently vying for the top spot on the national Bluegrass Singles charts as I write this review. In their latest CD, “Most Requested Prayer,” Roger Johnson and the group will have a tough time picking a single. It’s just that good.

Looking in the credits, Roger, Deborah and group are joined by Jeff Tolbert and Mike Riddle of the Primitive Quartet, and David Johnson, in the musician department, and Les Butler as vocal producer, and they all help H.M.B. to make this a true delight to listen to. The first song on the CD will be a huge song on the national charts if released. “Most Requested Prayer,” much like the McKameys’ “Unspoken Request,” is so earnest in its plea and singing, that you’ll find yourself - like me - not getting past the track. We’ve all been there, standing in need of the “Most Requested Prayer.” How do you follow that? Well, with “A Place To Spend The Night,” the classic Kyla Rowland tune, done oh, so well.

Seven of the songs are penned by Roger and his first single from the project is “When The Storm Is In My Path.” Love the Marty Robbins-esque guitar work, and the solemn fiddle, as Roger sings about Jesus being the compass and the captain when the storm comes, and with him at the helm, no one can harm us.

This CD also features a cover of the Whisnants, and originally Kingsmen’s, “The Next Time You See Me,” as well as a classic from the pen of Flatt and Scruggs, “He Took Your Place.”

This CD is one that needs to be in your collection. To Roger and H.M.B., this is your finest CD yet and a delight to listen to. Now, if I can just get past “Most Requested Prayer.”

To visit Heavens Mountain Band go to <https://www.facebook.com/Heavens-Mountain-Band-Mississippi-1653716904885797/>

Strongest songs: “Most Requested Prayer,” “When the Storm Is In My Path,” and “A Place To Spend The Night”



# Happy Anniversary

## Les Butler reaches a benchmark

By Lorraine Walker



September of 2018 marks the ninth anniversary of SGNScoops Magazine, and we are thrilled to celebrate this event by doing what we do best ... to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern gospel and Christian Country music, both artists and industry members.

One of these special industry members is Les Butler, whose journey in this special land of music and message, began in radio in October of 1978. Over the next 40 years, Butler honed his musical skills as well as his abilities in production and management, as a TV host and as publisher of a national gospel music magazine. He's a preacher, singer, and family man. He often sings with his wife, Bev, who works in the office of Butler Music Group (BMG). Les' son Matt runs the studio for BMG and is a session player and engineer. Les' daughter, Amber, writes for Salem Music Group, sharing the family's enjoyment of gospel music.

Looking back, prior to marriage and family, Butler says he was always infatuated with radio.

"In the 1960s, as a pre-teen in Chicago, I would watch the Chicago Cubs on Channel 9," Butler reflects. "I would turn the audio down and announce the game into my Sears cassette recorder. I would read advertisements out of the Chicago Tribune and Hammond Times during the commercial breaks. In 1976, I joined the Radio Explorer Clubs at WJOB in Hammond, Ind. Then, the first weekend in October of 1978, I got my first paying radio job working for Crawford Broadcasting, WYCA, Hammond, Ind.. Part of my job was to host the Satur-







day night Southern gospel radio show, Crossroads for Christ.”

The weekly gospel radio show aided in the development of Butler’s musical influences at that time. His favorite artists included the Statler Brothers, Oak Ridge Boys, Ricky Skaggs, Primitive Quartet, Happy Goodmans, Cathedrals, Inspirations, Hinsons and many others.

Butler’s parents were major influences on the direction his life took.

“My mom had me singing harmony with her while standing on a piano bench at church at the age of 4,”



recalls Butler. “As a child, my dad had me playing instruments for the mailman when he would deliver the mail. They took me to the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) offices in Chicago to take the test to obtain my FCC Radio License with Endorsement. At 14, I was the youngest to pass the test at the Chicago FCC offices. And, my wife, Bev, has supported every single initiative in our 35 years as husband and wife. This included selling a successful business and moving our family half way across the country to manage the Solid Gospel Radio Network in Nashville. The listing of her areas of support are simply too many to mention

in a news story.”

Most gospel music fans will only be aware of a few of Butler’s accomplishments during the last four decades. Visible as host in Dollywood, Silver Dollar City, and other major stages across the nation, this quiet gentleman has also been very busy behind the scenes. For those looking at the industry of gospel music as a prosperous career path, they would be wise to note that the way was not always smooth and straight even for the talented Butler.

“Of my 40 years in Southern Gospel radio, there was a 13-year period when I was on the air only part-time,” says Butler. “During that period, I was a loan officer and eventually owned my own mortgage company, Butler Mortgage in Kissimmee, Fla. Butler Mortgage remains one of Florida’s top mortgage companies in Florida to date.”

The roles he has assumed have been varied.

“During my 40 years in gospel music, I have been a DJ, managed the Solid Gospel Radio Network, publisher of Singing News Magazine, studio musician, producer, background vocalist, radio promoter, artist manager, NQC Showcase host, host of the Southern gospel channel on Delta Airlines and host of Harmony Road TV,”

Butler – who was the the winner of the Paul Heil Broadcasting Award in 2011 – shares. “Finally, Mike Holcomb and myself are founding members of the Old Time Preachers Quartet.



“I’ve had a

lot of adventures. I hosted the National Quartet Convention/Solid Gospel Roundtable six nights a week for 20 years. It’s so fast-paced, and I never missed a single commercial break ... very challenging. Also, I co-hosted the TV broadcast and hosted the national radio broadcast of the Bowling Family post-accident concert event live on TBN (the Trinity Broadcasting Network). It was the largest single-night concert in the history of



Southern gospel music ... very stressful. These were adventurous and challenging events.”

So many that approach Butler’s world with the idea of a career don’t realize that they need to count the cost.

“Don’t get in it for the money” Butler says. “For every time you sing to a thousand people, you will sing thousands of times to 10 people. Prepare to work harder at music than anything else you’ve ever done in your life. Stay on your knees and in God’s word. Not everyone is what you’d hope they’d be in our industry, but there are some amazingly talented, Godly, real Christians involved in Southern gospel music. Find them, take hold of them and don’t let them go.”



One of those Christians is the CEO of Coastal Media, Rob Patz. He is celebrating his 25th year in Southern gospel this fall. Patz was a newcomer to Southern gospel in 1993 when the radio station he worked at asked him to take on a gospel program.

“I owe my initial gospel education to Les Butler,” Patz says with

a laugh. “The station had been airing a Southern gospel program. The host retired, and I was the next one in line to take it over. When the producers handed me the show and told me this was what I was going to play, I said I didn’t know anything about Southern gospel. They handed me a stack of Singing News – Butler’s magazine – from the previous three years, and said, ‘Go learn.’”

“It’s been a great run. I’m excited about what is ahead in the next 25 years, if the Lord is willing that we are still here.”

It would seem as though men like Patz and Butler have done all there is to do in gospel music ... but Patz disagrees.

“There are a lot of things I would love to do, and there is a great future for what we are doing,” Patz explains.

“Our biggest goal is to take Southern gospel to new audiences.”

What is it about this music that keeps people like Butler and Patz in the industry for decades?

“As a child, I loved the harmonies,” Butler points out.

“Today, I still love the harmonies, but I’ve come to like the message far more. ‘The Book, the Blood and the



Blessed Hope’ ... you don’t get that in any other music.”

The message from the Book is the reason Patz strives to promote this music to wider audiences.

“I want to keep doing this until absolutely everyone can hear a song with a message from the word that answers their problems, because God is the answer,” Patz shares.

Patz and Butler’s book, the Holy Bible, contains what Butler considers to be his foundational verse for life.

“King James Version, John 14:1-3, (says) ‘Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also,’” Butler recites.

“He’s not going to leave me in this sin-filled world. Jesus is coming, and he wants me to be with him forever. He died for me that I could have this remarkable privilege. Wow.”

# Happy Anniversary SGNscoops Magazine

By Lorraine Walker

This fall marks several anniversaries, none of which compare to the 40 year landmark of Les Butler, but special nonetheless.

In 2009, Rob Patz became the owner and publisher of SGNscoops digital magazine. He had a successful website on SGMRadio, with monthly features, a message board and a website hosted radio station. As the magazine became more popular, more writers came on board and the SGNscoops team grew.

Kelly Burton was the first editor of SGNscoops. Her exciting vision of a new look at the industry and artists attracted a large audience for the magazine. Her husband, Rod, is an artist that was involved with Southern gospel and Christian country music at the time. They lived and worked in Chicago until a new job opportunity opened, prompting a move to a different locale. As their work and lives began to change, Kelly decided to step down from the role of editor.

Rhonda Frye took the reins from Burton in 2011. An artist who sang solo and also in the group Riverside, Frye was already part of the SGNscoops team as one of the top feature writers. As her music ministry increased and her family life became busier, Frye decided to step down from her role, after guiding the magazine and website to a greater volume of audience readership and downloads.

In 2014, I became editor-in-chief of SGNscoops. My sister, Joan Walker, was already proofreading the magazine copy. Along with Joan, Craig Harris came on board, both of them increasing their involvement with managing the features.

Rob Patz is still very much involved with the planning and preparation of each issue. Ever the visionary, Patz discusses covers and layouts, coordinates the website, as well as seeking out new team members. Recently, he

began a monthly newspaper, a condensed print version available to readers through a monthly subscription.

Special mention must be made of the creative and layout team of Stephanie Kelley, Staci and Pete Schwager. Through their expertise, SGNscoops has evolved through the years, to the current format we have today. They have assembled the work of terrific authors, wrapping it up in color and style.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the hard work by Vonda Easley, who not only runs the social media arm of SGNscoops but she also is a major part of the sales team. She is very involved with the day-to-day functioning of SGNscoops.

This month's cover depicts one issue for each of the nine years SGNscoops Magazine has been available online. The Lord has blessed the publication and team with talent, creativity and vision throughout the years. Each writer and team member has been gifted with great skill and each one has given their talents back to the Lord, with interest.

May the Lord continue to bless our gifts and bring them to life within the heart and mind of each reader of the SGNscoops Magazine.





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WISE CHOICE PROMOTIONS



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

1. Woke Up This Morning - The Guardians
2. Sun's Gonna Come Up - The LeFevre Quartet
3. If Church Pews Could Shout - Gold City
4. Beat Up Bible - The Down East Boys
5. The Cross Is All The Proof I Need - The Triumphant Quartet
6. Heroes Of Faith - The Kingdom Heirs
7. Washed By The Water - Jason Crabb
8. Jailbreak - Joseph Habedank
9. Power In Prayer - 11th Hour
10. Broken People Like Me - The Old Paths
11. Find Me Faithful - The Perrys
12. Be Brave - The McKameys
13. Jesus, What A Wonderful Name - The Williamsons
14. Jesus, Messiah - The Gaither Vocal Band
15. Beyond Amazed - Brian Free and Assurance
16. What An Anchor - The Mylon Hayes Family
17. Rolled Back Stone - Greater Vision
18. When I Wake Up To Sleep No More - The Old Time Preachers Quartet
19. Deep In My Heart - Legacy Five
20. Be An Overcomer - The Hoppers
21. Gotta Be Saved - Karen Peck and New River
22. Don't Underestimate God's Grace - The Kingsmen
23. Anything Less - The Taylors
24. Living In The Middle Of His Will - Sunday Drive



25. Watch And See - The Erwins
26. Faithful - The Whisnants
27. Meeting In The Middle Of The Air - The Tribute Quartet
28. Love Them While They're Here - Susan Whisnant
29. There Is Nothing That He Cannot Do - New Ground
30. Christ My Hope, My Glory- HighRoad
31. Open Invitation - Exodus
32. Just Receive It - The Jay Stone Singers
33. Love At First Sight - The Pruitt Family
34. I Run To You - Hazel Parker Stanley
35. Go Show John - The Mark Trammell Quartet
36. Good News - The Sound
37. God Against The Law - The Sneed Family
38. Wayfaring Stranger - Jeff and Sheri Easter
39. You Better Get Right -The Jordan Family Band
40. I Can Trust Him - Michael Combs
41. Run The Race - The Hyssongs
42. The Bridegroom Cometh - Jordan's Bridge
43. King Jesus - Eagle's Wings
44. I Can't Explain It - Dean
45. Lily Of The Valley - Josh and Ashley Franks
46. It's His Story - Endless Highway
47. If It Wasn't For The Valley - The Pathfinders



48. Even If - John Whisnant
49. Standing In The Storm - The Sharps
50. When He Says Arise - Answered Prayer
51. By A Show Of Hands - The Carolina Boys
52. Back To My Senses - The Arenos
53. Love, Love, Love- Gordon Mote
54. Freedom Don't Come Easy - Debra Perry and Jaidyn's Call
55. Lost - The Jim Brady Trio
56. The Calm At The Center Of My Storm - River's Edge
57. Another Day - Sisters
58. I'm Gonna Wish I Had Worried Less - Mark Bishop
59. What Jesus Did For Me - The Walkers
60. You Never Cease To Amaze Me - Sacred Calling
61. The Return - The Soul'd Out Quartet
62. Running - The Martins
63. What A Day That Will Be- ReJeana Leeth and New Grace
64. Because Of The Blood - The Shireys
65. I Know You - The Sheltons
66. He Can't Follow Me Home - Barry Rowland and Deliverance
67. Don't Look Back - The Rochesters
68. Let Me Take You To The Cross - Ivan Parker
69. Who Do You Know - Mercy's Well
70. Why Don't We Just Sit And Talk - Mark Lowry
71. Not In This House - Lindsay Huggins
72. Looking Through The Eyes Of Love - The Ferguson Family
73. The Ground Is Level - The Bibletones
74. Love Never Ends - The Goulds
75. God Bless The U.S.A. - Jonathan Wilburn
76. Grace, Mercy, and Love - The 3rd Row Boys
77. The Old Gospel Ship - Chronicle



78. And I Know - The Hoskins Family
79. I Want To Be The One - Tim Livingston
80. When I Get Where I'm Going – Zane and Donna King
81. All My Hope - The Dodrills
82. Remember That He Loves You - Doug Anderson
83. I Know Him - The Inspirations
84. Resurrection And The Life - Rachael Gill and Redeemed
85. A Stone's Throw Away- The Hinson Family
86. You Can Get There From Here - MARK209
87. There Is A God - Summit Trace
88. Always Better - Kevin and Kim Abney
89. Yours, Amen - The Isaacs
90. I'll Never Turn Back - The Common Bond Quartet
91. I Believe – The Bros.4
92. Coming On Strong - Cami Shrock
93. Walking A Straight Path - The Baker Family
94. Go Tell - The Perry Sisters
95. Freedom - The Liberty Quartet
96. It's A Good Life - 2nd Generation
97. Come Go With Me To The Well - The Stephens
98. What Kind Of A Man - Surrendered
99. Up To Something - Sacred Harmony
100. If I Have To - The Coffmans

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# William Lee Golden

## Moved by a classic



By John Herndon

As you can easily see from my other writings on Kentucky Sings, I am a huge fan of the Oak Ridge Boys and have been for almost 45 years.

It was the days when the Oaks could get a crowd rockin' with their renditions of "King Jesus" or "Jesus is Coming Soon," much like they do today when the Mighty Oaks Band breaks into that familiar introduction to "Elvira."

That's just how it is for those of us who have been following the Oaks since the days when Archie Bunker ruled TV and leisure suits were the sharpest threads a man could wear. They are members of the Country Music Hall of Fame, but for me, they are at their best when they are singing gospel music.

That's what makes their "Shine the Light" tour so special. While they never forgot gospel when they transitioned to a country band in the late 70's, when I saw the

Oaks on June 2 at Renfro Valley, they sang more gospel than any time I had seen them since they were opening for Freddy Fender in 1975 or 1976, performing at least five songs off of their latest gospel project, "17th Avenue Revival."

All were wonderful but for me, the highlight was William Lee Golden raising a microphone to sing that old hymn I had sung so many times during church services.

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold  
I'd rather be His than have riches untold  
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land  
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand.

It's exactly how I feel today.

I was fortunate to catch up with William Lee Golden prior to the Oaks' concert that night at Renfro Valley. I



had met him a couple of times way back in the 70's, then had briefly chatted with him prior to the Oaks' Christmas show at Campbellsville University in 2014. It was never more than a hello.

We talked for about 15 minutes just before the Oaks took the stage at Renfro Valley. I found him to be extremely gracious and kind.

He was more than happy to talk about the song he called his "favorite gospel song" in a recent interview with Dan Rather on AXS-TV. It is recorded on The Oaks latest album, "17th Avenue Revival." It is also featured on a Gaither productions' release, "A Few Good Men," which contains songs by the Oaks, the Gatlin Brothers and the Gaither Vocal Band.

"Country music is about life and living. Gospel music has a lot of storytelling too," the Hall of Famer said. "'I'd Rather Have Jesus;' it's a song about faith."

Golden said the simple message of the song is what gives it a special meaning. "We are talking about someone who had love and compassion to all people," he said. "It is a great gospel song."

Like many people, Golden remembers the song from a different era. "I remember hearing it way back when I was a kid," says Golden. "I remember hearing it with the Billy Graham Crusades with George Beverly Shea." But even though Golden first started singing with the Oaks in 1965, he'd never recorded the gospel standard.

"(Producer) Dave Cobb brought that song to me and wanted me to sing it," Golden said. "It just so happened to be a song I have always liked. You never get too old to sing a song."

And you never get too old to be moved by one either.

I couldn't help but notice the connection to the past when the Oak Ridge Boys released "17th Avenue Revival," in March.

It was back in the summer of 1973 when I first heard the Oak Ridge Boys in person. I wasn't even old enough to drive, but my older sister and I made our way to Lafayette High School in Lexington, Kentucky for a Sunday afternoon with the Oaks. I remember wandering out into the foyer where Willie Wynn stood alone at the record table. I got one of those great deals quartets always had at their concerts: Three albums or tapes for \$10.

My choices were 8-track tapes. Remember them? One of the three was one of the hottest gospel albums of the day, "Street Gospel," which included the mega-hit "King Jesus." It was cool, real cool.

And it was cool to meet "Little Willie" that day. I'd been introduced to the Oaks' music earlier that year and could not believe some of those high notes he could hit on "Jesus is Coming Soon" or his smooth tenor on "After Calvary."

But the next time I saw the Oaks in person, at Louis-





ville's Memorial Auditorium less than three months later, I saw someone new standing on the left side of the stage. Little Willie had left and Joe Bonsall joined Duane Allen, Bill Golden and Richard Sterban. Golden now goes by "William Lee" and looks a lot different almost 45 years later, but the same lineup is still going strong.

A few years ago, when I was blessed to sit down with Bonsall for an interview, he told me that the night I first saw him was his second concert with the Oaks. He'd been in Columbus, Ohio the night before.

Times are sure different today. You might find 8-tracks at a flea market or a yard sale. Now you can download to a smartphone and even those CDs that I usually buy are considered old fashioned.

Ironically, I got the "17th Avenue Revival" CD as a bundle of three, this time on Amazon. And yes, the bundle did cost more than \$10 but was worth every penny.

But the Oaks are as good as ever. Maybe even better. Their (newest project) is a testament to that. Like "Street Gospel" and some of those other great albums of the early-to-mid 1970's, the Oaks' latest work is gospel with few boundaries. The song I see talked about the most is the hand-clapping, foot-stomping "Brand New Star," a new work that would fit right in at an all-night singing at the time the Oaks were at the top of the gospel charts more than 40 years ago.

My favorites, though, are some old classics: "I'd Rather Have Jesus" and "Where He Leads Me."

As for the rest of the album, I'm not a professional critic.

Like everyone else, there are some tunes that suit my fancy a bit more than others. But I do know greatness when I hear it. And what the Oaks have produced in their latest project is absolute greatness.

Every review and comment I have read about the latest CD has ranged from positive to raving. From this corner, it's not so much about the music itself, even though it's mighty good. It's the message of "Shining the Light."

You see, the Oaks are crisscrossing the country in their "Shine the Light Tour." And how we need the light of Jesus Christ today.

I am in the news business and can hardly stand watching the newscasts anymore. Too often, I get angry or depressed. I am certain I am not alone.

However, for over 40 years, the Oak Ridge Boys have been one of America's most beloved singing groups because their songs are generally happy songs. I've been to 34 Oaks concerts (unless I have missed a few here or there) and I always come away with a smile on my face.

The latest CD is a connection to my past by taking gospel music even more into the future.

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# TOP 40

## CHRISTIAN COUNTRY SONGS

1. Reed Brothers - Holding On
2. Sonshine Road - When Grandpa Sang How Great Thou Art
3. Gene Reasoner - Daddy, I'm Home
4. Lisa Daggs - Wonderful
5. Aaron Wilburn - No Charge
6. Chuck Hancock - One Pair Of Hands
7. Gayla Earlene - I Got This
8. Christian Davis - Every Scar
9. Wyatt Nations - Living Proof
10. Lindsay Huggins - Not In This House
11. Terry Davis - Braggin' On Jesus
12. Heath Knox - Face To Face
13. Cori and Kelly - Take Me Back To Church
14. Hunter May - Number One Fan
15. Tina Wakefield - Over And Over
16. Mercy Mountain Boys - Better Way Of Livin'
17. Kolt Barber - Send The Rain
18. Ava Kasich - Speak The Word
19. Amy Richardson - Sweet Whispers
20. Wade Phillips - Big Time Memories
21. Jenna Faith - Shine On
22. Freddie Heart - See You There
23. Mary Fay Jackson - No One Compares To You Lord
24. Bruce Hedrick - I'll Take It From Here
25. Tony Alan Bates - Numbered
26. Jami Lynn Flanakin - Oh, My God
27. David Gresham - Remember The Soldier
28. John Randolph - Only Room For Love

29. Tonja Rose - When The Mountain Can't Be Moved
30. Answered Prayer - When He Says Arise
31. Shellem Cline - This Thing Called Life
32. Trinity Wennerstrom - Cinderella
33. Mike Leichner - Don't Bring The Country Out In Me
34. Ronnie Horton - Call On Jesus
35. Doug Corum - Don't let The Devil Ride
36. Barbara Fairchild - Family Ties
37. Jimmy R. Price - Hey Brother DJ
38. McKay Project - Love You Like Mary
39. Brent Harrison - This Side Of Sunday
40. Gunner Carr - Take My Hand



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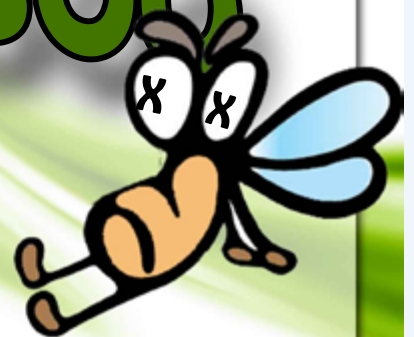
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# Day To Day Revival

**By Selena Day**

I've been thinking a lot about this new trend in churches that constantly deals with a person's identity. Everywhere you go, pastors are talking about it. Church services feel more like a self-help experience dealing with our issues than a place to congregate in worship.

I am not casting judgment, I have taught sessions concerning identity issues myself. I have also complained about it with our minister friends; it is a trend that leaves us longing for more in our lives. It feels like a shallow and weak gospel.

We are all so hungry for something more than this mealy self-help gospel.

Today, while walking through Walmart thinking about our services this past weekend, I was reminded of what the pastor said Sunday morning while introducing Chuck. He said if we realized we were Kings (and Queens) we wouldn't act like fools anymore.

So today, while walking through Walmart picking up some things we needed for the week, I felt a whisper say to me, "What if the next move of God is so great that if we don't know our true identity, it will overwhelm us and crash us into pieces?"

That is an awesome overpowering thought. For the past 10 years, we believers have been hearing this message of grace. Prophets have been talking about how we are following the cloud by day and the fire by night, leading us to a new place in God, a place of promise and

wholeness, but no one really knows what this spiritual promised land looks like.

Churches and believers keep recreating the same thing we have seen in the past calling it something "new" and "revelatory."

I am so hungry for God...I am so hungry for revival. A revival that heals the sick, raises the dead, changes lives for the good, and brings salvation.

We have been blessed to travel to many countries and it is amazing to see God moving, but I would love for us in the U.S.A. to lay down our expectations of what the gospel looks like and to receive new manna from heaven. There is so much more in God that we haven't even tapped into, so much more that God wants to give us and bless us with.

Finding my identity in Christ has been one of the greatest lessons of my life. It has helped me to become real with myself and with others. I don't do anything to help others because that is what I think I 'should' do, I do for others because it flows from my heart.

I live from a place of being and not from doing. I live from my relationship with my King.

If I have a plank in my eye I can't help anyone else get the speck from their own eye. As I find myself, my true and real self, in God then I can sit back and allow him to correct my vision along with another's vision; to our



delight, we will not see anything but Christ.

Remember the movie Peter Pan with Robin Williams; when Peter went back to Neverland, he was now older and all grown up. One of the young lost boys couldn't recognize him until he took his face in his hands and pushed the extra skin back and in amazement he said, "Oh, there you are, Peter."

I believe that is what happens to us when we spend time searching for God. We begin to look at each other without judgment and we say, "Oh, there you are, Jesus!"

I believe that when this happens, we will begin to experience a revival in a way that the world has never seen. I pray that we will lay our own agenda for church and revival down and concentrate on Christ. Christ in me, the Hope of Glory.

To see Christ, to see hope, to see glory, this is my prayer.

Thy kingdom come; let His will be done.



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Jonathan Thompson  
Joyful Hearts  
Justified  
Living Faith  
Master Peace Quartet  
Melissa Smith  
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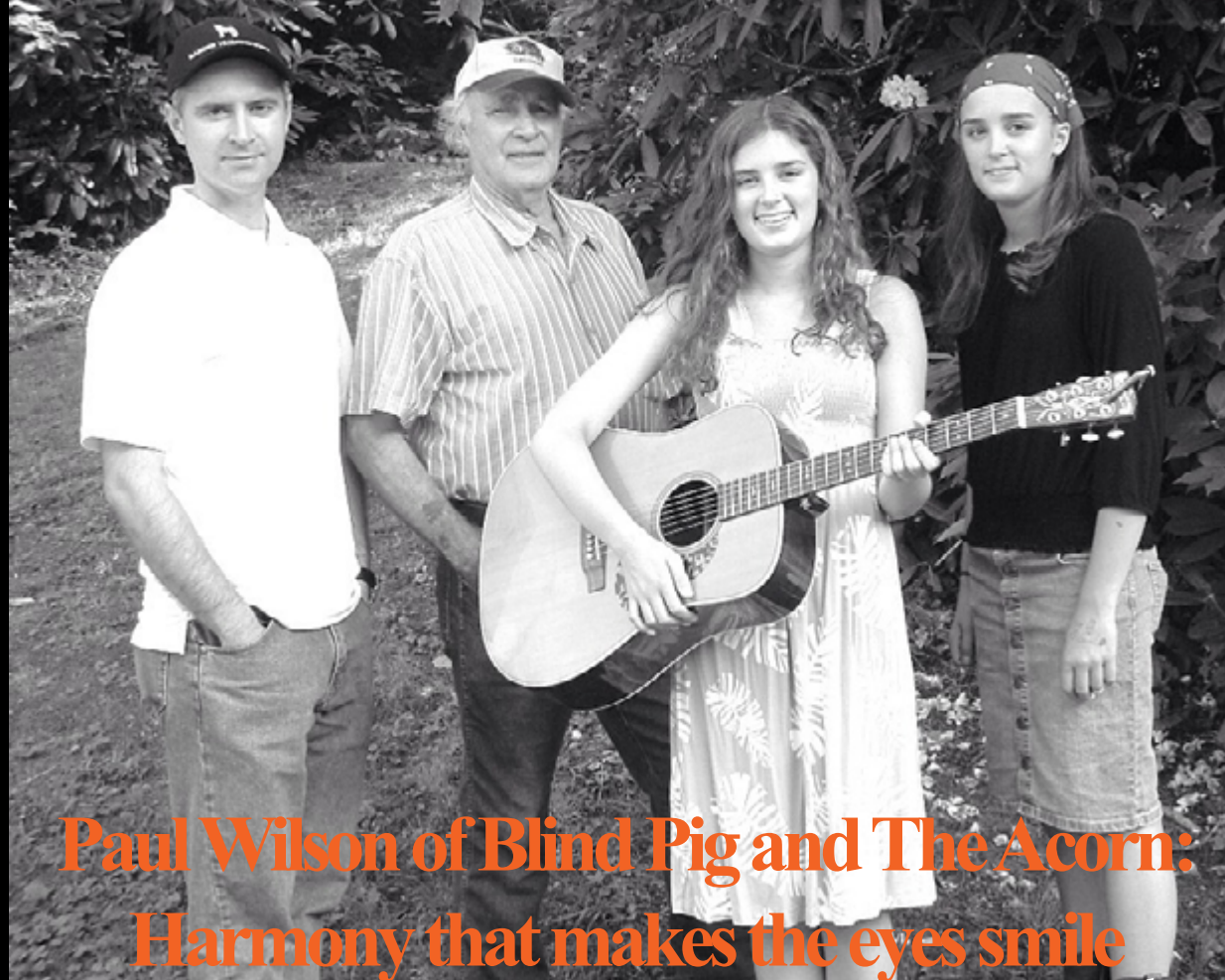


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# The Blind Pig and the Acorn



## Paul Wilson of Blind Pig and The Acorn: Harmony that makes the eyes smile

By Cheryl Smith

Once again, Cheryl Smith presents the "Inner Views" of a bluegrass musician. This edition highlights Paul Wilson of Blind Pig and the Acorn. The Blind Pig and the Acorn is an Appalachian blog which also hosts music by the Wilson Brothers and the Pressley Girls.

This is an abridged version. For the complete interview with Paul Wilson, be sure to visit the Inner Views blog by Cheryl Smith. The link is posted at the bottom of this feature.

The Blind Pig and the Acorn's Paul Wilson shares his humble beginnings.

Paul Wilson: I was born on January 1st, 1974 in Copperhill, Tenn.. I have lived my whole life in North Carolina, but we are very close to the Tennessee line.

I spent the first half of my life obsessed with baseball and was very accomplished as a pitcher. Baseball is the only reason that I went to college, but I am so thankful now that I did because it led me to a better job and easier lifestyle than

any of my family members ever enjoyed prior.

Today, I am 44 years old, and I am principal of a small, rural public school in Western N.C.. In my spare time, I play tennis and make Appalachian and gospel music.

At around 13, my dad convinced me to borrow records from my Uncle Ray, records of the Louvin Brothers and Reno & Smiley. There was something about the sincerity in the singing on those records that was undeniable, and although I hated to admit that Dad was right, I learned what real music is.

Cheryl Smith: When did you become a Christian? What life events led you to make a decision to follow Jesus?

Wilson: As we Baptists would say it, I was saved around the age of seven. The reverend Hoyt Brown was the pastor of our church at the time. I went up during the altar call that he gave. I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins. I believed that I had heard the truth, and that's what led me to go to the



altar and pray. This was the moment that I publicly accepted Christ as my Savior.

Smith: How has living for him enriched and changed your life?

Wilson: Believing in and accepting God's grace gives me hope...My belief in God's word enriches my life by helping me understand why I'm here and what God wants for us. Without the promise of our Lord, things like losing Pap would be unbearable, and I would sink into a depression and waste my life or engage in self-destructive behavior. Because I believe, I can move forward with a positive outlook, and I may be able to help others along the way.

Smith: During your growing up years, who were your strongest musical influences?

Wilson: In terms of professional musicians, my biggest influences were definitely the Louvin Brothers and Reno & Smiley (R & S). Of course, I learned to sing and play from Pap (Wilson's father), and Pap is the one who convinced me to listen to the music of the Lovins and R & S, so that makes him the most influential overall.

Although these two groups were my favorites, I could never sing or pick like them, so I don't think I ever tried to copy them but tried to develop my own sound. Pap told me once or twice (which was enough) that I should never want to sound like anyone other than myself.

Smith: Please tell us about The Wilson Brothers and their

music and how it has helped to shape your musical style.

Wilson: Pap and his brother Ray sang as a gospel duet for around 40 years, with Ray singing the lead and Pap singing harmony. They both played acoustic guitars, and toward the end of their career together, Ray played the mandolin. They sang some of Pap's original songs but devoted most of their time to covering songs from the Louvins and R & S.

Their younger brother, Henry, played with them early on, using an electric guitar, which he played in the style similar to Chet Atkins' guitar playing.

I traveled with them from age 17 till my early 30's.





Smith: Please share with us about the blog, “Blind Pig and The Acorn,” and its author, your sister, Tipper.

Wilson: Around 10 years ago, my sister, Tipper started a blog called “Blind Pig and The Acorn.” On the blog, readers learn about Appalachian cooking, folklore, history, geography, music, farming, art, and more.

An unexpected outcome from the blog is that we now have around 200 videos of Pap singing and playing music with me and some of his grandchildren.

Smith: How did the name “Blind Pig and The Acorn” originate?

Wilson: When Tipper first conceived of the blog, she wanted to name it after a common Appalachian saying. She went through a long list of possibilities and finally settled on “Even a blind pig finds an acorn once in a while.”

Smith: How has the music of “Blind Pig and The Acorn” evolved over the years?

Wilson: The Blind Pig music has changed over time as the younger generation, The Pressley Girls (Katie Pressley and Corie Pressley, with Paul Wilson), began to become more accomplished with their music and to take more of the center focus. After the first few years of filming music in the

kitchen, Tipper joined us on bass, which really improved the overall sound of the music.

We started out doing mainly music from the world of hymns, classic country, bluegrass, etc. For the most part, I sing harmony with Katie and Corie and back them up on guitar. The Pressley Girls focus a lot on traditional music; however, they also compose their own songs, both lyrical and instrumental.

With the exception of fiddle playing, the Pressley Girls learned music from Pap. They attended Young Harris College on full-ride music scholarship.

Smith: In the current group that makes up “Blind Pig and The Acorn,” which part and instrument do each of you sing and play?

Wilson: As stated above, Tipper plays the bass, a 4-string acoustic bass that we run through an amp. Katie plays the fiddle. For the most part, Corie plays guitar, but she occasionally picks up the mandolin. In performances, I primarily play guitar. For the most part, Katie sings lead and Corie sings high harmony, what Pap always called tenor.

Smith: Looking back over the years, what do you identify as being some of your favorite musical memories?

Wilson: The Wilson Brothers performed on the same stage

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with Arthur Smith. This was at N.C. State in Raleigh, N.C. We also traveled to a festival in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio around that same time.

They stand out because, in those moments, we felt like we were recognized for our gospel music, almost on a professional level.

In the summer of 1998, I traveled with Pap to Bell Buckle Tennessee to meet with Charlie Louvin. I brought Charlie a demo recording of around 20 original songs that I wrote, and he was kind enough to give the demo to the manager of Valerie Smith, who was a rising bluegrass star at the time. Although no one ever recorded any of my songs, it was a special day. We ate lunch with Charlie, and Pap and I sang on the local radio station there. I played Charlie's guitar when we sang. Charlie even added a third-part harmony to a song that we sang back at his museum in Bell Buckle.

We declined his invitation to go to the Opry with him that night, but that evening as we drove back to N.C., on the radio we heard him dedicate "See the Big Man Cry" to us before he sang it on the Grand Ole Opry.

But my most treasured musical memories will always be those times singing with Pap, times when our harmony seemed so tight, and we would look at each other across the two guitars and smile, even if it was only with our eyes.

For more of this condensed version of Inner Views with Paul Wilson, visit [homespundevotions.com/2018/09/the-inner-views-of-blind-pig-and-the-acorns-paul-Wilson.html](http://homespundevotions.com/2018/09/the-inner-views-of-blind-pig-and-the-acorns-paul-Wilson.html).

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# The Diplomats Quartet

Still representing heaven



By Robert York

The Diplomats is a name that is well known in Southern gospel music circles. A diplomat is a person who represents a foreign country, and Christians should be continuously aware that they are representing heaven and the king of heaven, Jesus Christ. This group have been successfully representing Christ for 50 years.

It all began in 1968, when Jimmy Pearson, Calvin Runion, Jerry Redd, L. M. Thorne and Morris Willis got together to form an all male quartet. When most of the men retired, Pearson remained, and the Diplomats became a mixed quartet.

Jimmy Pearson is the only living member of the original quartet. He was singing in Arab, Ala., and there he met Rita. He found out that she only lived nine miles from his town of Villa Rica, Ga., so they began dating. About 18 months later, Jimmy and Rita got married. During the first year of the Pearson's marriage, they re-

ceived some unwanted news which devastated their lives: Rita was diagnosed with cancer. They were told to prepare for surgery and because of that surgery, they would not be able to have any children. But God, the great physician, had different plans and on December 2, 1976, a son was born. They named the baby Corey. God then led the Pearsons to carry his word through gospel music from coast to coast.

Rita, who sings alto for the group, always gets requests for two favorite songs, "God Walks The Dark Hills," and "Sheltered In The Arms of God." Her distinctive voice is one of the reasons this quartet has been nominated for several years as one of the top 10 mixed groups in the nation.

Throughout the industry, Corey Pearson has become known as one of the all time great musicians playing almost any instrument. He plays the keyboard and sings





with the group. He married Heather Bowman in 1998 and they have one daughter, Audree Kay. He is called ‘Coco’ by a lot of his friends. With 20 years of experience in recording he operates CP Productions and Coco’s Place Studios, creating custom soundtracks, demos for songwriters and complete recordings.

The tenor part belongs to Harold Reed, another name that is well known in Southern gospel music. Reed started singing in December 1993 with the Dixie Melody Boys. If he wasn’t singing, he says that he would be studying mortuary science and working in a funeral home. He loves to eat at the Olive Garden but when Reed is home, he loves his wife’s cooking, especially the biscuits and gravy.

Although his tenor expertise precedes him, Reed wasn’t a shoe-in for the Diplomats. Reed explains, “I started just



to help drive the bus for the Diplomats and Jimmy asked me to sing one night and I’m still singing.”

Alex Utech handles the low part for the group. Utech says his pawpaw was the one who had the most influence on his life. Pawpaw used to carry Alex and his brother Andrew around to gospel singings when they were just little boys. Alex listened to Tim Riley sing bass and that got him started singing bass.

Utech’s professional career began when he filled in for the Inspirations. Later he took a full time position with the Dixie Echoes and from there he went with the Diplomats.



“Some of the highlights of my life were when I stepped on the stage at NQC, Silver Dollar City and Dollywood,” says Utech. “My most embarrassing moment was when I had a virus and was on stage singing a song, and I had to run off the side of the stage because I got sick. After I ran off the stage (I went) to the bus and then I found out my boss Jimmy had told the crowd I was getting married the next week. That was the reason I got sick, because I was nervous about being married.”

The Diplomats Quartet is one of the few remaining groups that still travels with a live band. Included in the band are Corey Pearson on keyboards and Jordan Hamby on the guitar. Of course Corey is part of the family and started playing at an early age, but Jordan only started on the guitar when he was about 14 years old, with his family, The Hambys. “If Not The Blood of the Cross,” is Hamby’s favorite song.





Hamby notes, "I first met the Diplomats after they and the band I was previously with were the same concert. They asked if I would go with them to play that weekend. They were scheduled in Branson, Mo., for the Southern Gospel Picnic event. Soon after, they offered me a full time position." So Jordan, who loves to eat grilled salmon, became part of the group.

The Diplomats Quartet currently travels across the country, appearing in many concerts, and on the main stage at the National Quartet Convention. After 50 years of singing, the group is still growing strong, representing heaven and their King, Jesus Christ.







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# DJ SPOTLIGHT

## *Mark Hampton*



By Vonda Easley

This month, we are shining the spotlight on Mark Hampton at WCNW AM 1560. Mark is a popular on-air personality and music and program director. The station motto is "Without Christ Nothing Works."

The website is wcnwradio.com. There you will find the Mission Statement for the station which is: "We trust in God's word which guides our decisions, refreshes us, and creates an unshakable faith."

Our dependence on God is reflected in our commitment to prayer. Our God is extraordinary and he deserves our all, so we can produce and share media with his life-changing message.

Recently, we asked Mark a few questions about his life. Here are his responses:

Vonda Easley: What is your current radio position and station?



Mark Hampton: I currently work at WCNW AM1560. The station is located in Fairfield, Cincinnati. My title is Program/Music Director and On- Air Personality.

VE: When you are traveling, what is your favorite restaurant?

MH: My favorite restaurant no matter what is Joe's Crab Shack. I love that place.

VE: If you could visit any place in the world, where would you go?

MH: That's easy! I would go to a tropical, uncharted, uninhabited island.

VE: Tell us about your family.



MH: My wife's name is Pam. We have been married for 36 years. I have two wonderful kids. God has also blessed me with two beautiful grandkids,

Charlee Anne - three-and-a-half years old and Anna Renee - almost two years old. I am a blessed man.

VE: Was there a certain age that you knew radio was something you wanted to pursue? Tell us about it.

MH: I have always loved listening to WCNW. I remember growing up always listening and about 12 years ago, I was given a chance to work for WCNW part-time and in 2010 was offered full-time. I jumped at the chance and the rest is history!





You can like Mark's Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/wcnwmark.hampton?fref=ts>

Thank you Mark for sharing with us about your family and radio career. God bless you and your ministry.

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# The Envoys are refined by time

## Singing gospel music 53 years and counting

By Charlie Griffin

The Envoys have been touring the United States and other countries since 1965 and still produce a unique style of gospel music that appeals to all ages. They are well known for their rich, four-part harmony and amazing vocal arrangements. A concert by the Envoys reflects a comfortable balance of humor, inspiration and praise, within a framework of Traditional, Southern gospel and Contemporary gospel music.

The Envoys started as a college dream in 1965. Don Storms was the founder and is now in heaven. Today the Envoys sing in all areas east of the Mississippi, a region that ranges from Michigan to Florida and up to New England.

The Envoys started in New Jersey in the late 60's, but then were moved to Charlotte, N.C. in 1975 by the PTL television network. Although not employees of PTL, they sang often on TV for them and have continued since then.

In the early years of the group while they were in Michigan, the group used to enjoy doing concerts with the Cathedrals. They also toured with Andrae Crouch, as well performed with the Downings and the Rebels

Quartet.

As the saying goes, everything gets better with age. Val Cripps and Phil Felten started their music ministry as college roommates at Spring Arbor College in 1965, and have been singing together ever since. Some have compared the two being together so long, they have become the current “George and Glen” team of gospel music. They have truly been refined with time.

Felten shares, “I was a trumpet player in high school, but then went to Spring Arbor College, a Christian school, and they needed a bass for the college quartet. Val Cripps, baritone for the Envoys, asked me if I wanted to try to sing. I had never sung before, but could sing bass...and here I am many years later still trying to sing that part.”

For Felten at that moment, “being the first time as a freshman in college that I gathered around a piano with Val and other classmates singing gospel songs, I realized that singing bass actually added to the sound. And I could do that. That moment has been a go-to moment for me over the years. I remember as a teenager in Sheboygan, Wis., my best friend was a big Blackwood

Brothers and Statesmen fan so he played all the records. I remember being fascinated by the low voice of JD Sumner.”

Over the years there have been many hallmark moments. Felten confesses, “I will never forget the time I was introducing a serious cross song at the end of the concert. I was off stage near the audience and attempted to walk backwards up the stage steps while talking. “Unfortunately, I tripped, lost my balance and rather than falling, continued on to do a backwards somersault while still holding the microphone in my hand when I stood up. Honestly it was an unintended and embarrassing snafu - but a perfect 10 that stopped the concert cold with a solid five minutes of laughter. I can still see the pastor on the front pew, with his red face, pounding the pew in uncontrolled laughter.”

“I have a great fondness in the early years of singing on the 700 Club and PTL and also doing concert tours with Andrae Crouch, where the Envoys promoted the concerts and also opened up for Andrae,” Felton shares. “Those were special times for the Envoys. We saw results in our concerts that are still encouraging today.”

There have been some great talents within the Envoys since 1965. Don Storms, group founder, is remembered fondly; add Tank Tackett and many others to the list of good performers.

Felten says, “There are too many godly young men over the years to note - but most all of them are now music ministers or pastors in churches of their own.

“Current Envoys are Steve Hill on tenor,” Felten begins. “He has a tremendous and powerful voice and does acting in local Christian theater at Narrow Way Productions.

“Lead singer, Dan Mills, is an ordained minister who pastored a Baptist church in California for many years, like his dad who pastored for 60 years,” explains Felten.

“Val Cripps, baritone, and I on bass, have been long time friends as mentioned, college roommates and co-ministers in many groups and now the Envoys for many decades,” Felten shares. “Val is a tremendous trim carpenter and can do anything well with his hands - including doing the inside of the many Envoy buses over the years.

“I am a Christian Counselor, HOA manager and church elder. We all keep busy apart from the Envoys as well,” concludes the bass singer.

Each of the Envoys made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ at a young age. The word “envoy” means messenger or representative. The purpose of an Envoys’ concert is to share the message that a Christian life is the

only way to find true joy and fulfillment. Their gospel music legacy shows they are proven gospel envoys.

Through the years, the Envoys have appeared on the 700 Club, the National Quartet Convention and the Grand Ole Opry. In addition, the Envoys have been privileged to share their music at numerous Christian conferences — such as Moody Bible Institute Pastors’ Conference, Word of Life, Maranatha Bible Conference, and Bibletown.

The Envoys even toured







Nigeria, West Africa, where they had an opportunity to bring gospel music to thousands of nationals and missionaries in the land.

The Envoys are privileged to be used frequently in music ministry by such acclaimed mission organizations as Society for International Missions (SIM), Walk Through the Bible, and the International Fellowship of Mission Agencies (IFMA). Group members echo, "Our goal is to sing every concert as though it was our last chance to sing, and to sing every song knowing the Lord is the audience of priority."

Their music is timeless sharing an age-old message that never grows old. The Envoys just released a new CD with 10 songs that captivate listeners, young and old alike. The self-titled CD is sure to launch new fans and friends, as the Envoys continue the gospel music tradition that started as a college dream.

The Envoys are singing proof that some things refine with time.

For scheduling information the Envoys can be reached at [envoybass@aol.com](mailto:envoybass@aol.com). Visit them online at [www.theEnvoys.com](http://www.theEnvoys.com).

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# Life On The Road With The Gibbs Family



By Guest Writer Angela Parker

My family always tells me that I never meet a stranger, and it was no exception when I met the Gibbs Family at a convention in Georgia in April of this year. When I met Susan Gibbs, she and I immediately began talking and couldn't stop. So I knew right then that she was my kind of friend.

After talking to Susan, I began to hear a little bit of her testimony, and I realized how much it mirrored my situation. In that moment, she became a source of inspiration for me. Then I got to meet the rest of the family, and they were so much fun to be around.

Natasha and I got the chance to talk for a bit as well and she's just as sweet and kind as her mom, Susan. Then when the family stepped on stage they utterly blew everyone away. Vernon had so much enthusiasm and fire in him, that I thought he was going to dance right off the stage. I had so many more opportunities to speak with them all during that trip, and I got to know them all better. So, when I had the chance to introduce them to you all, I couldn't pass it up.

The Gibbs Family is based out of Scottsmoor, Fla.. Scottsmoor is in the north end of Brevard County, Fla..

It is a farming community east of Interstate 95.

Vernon's father, Tim Gibbs, was with the Southern Song Boys, and Vernon was singing bass for the Floridians, when they felt God calling them to form a family group. The core members of the group were Vernon Gibbs, his father (Tim), Susan, and his mother-in-law. Vernon and Susan's children sang one song during the service and then went to sleep on the front pew.

As the kids got older, they took on new responsibilities. Natasha stepped up to fill the alto part and Vernon, Jr., began playing the drums. After watching his brother on stage, their youngest son, Timothy, took an interest in playing the piano and Vernon, Jr., jumped over to the guitar and lead vocals.

Eventually all the kids got married and had children of their own. Due to conflicting work schedules, Timothy had to leave the group. Occasionally Vernon, Jr.'s wife, Nicole, and the four grandchildren will grace the stage with their very own song.

The Gibbs Family has been in the ministry for 23 years. They have recorded 10 albums in 23 years. That's many



miles on the road and many albums sold. However, that can't compare to the lives brought to Christ through their ministry.

With all those miles traveled there is bound to have been a favorite concert. "Our most memorable concert moment was at Palm Bay Baptist," says Susan. "While we were singing 'Shoutin' Time,' the entire church got up and started a congo line around the room. Vernon Sr. left the stage and joined them." It's clear that this family definitely left a lasting impression on that church.

Susan has an amazing testimony and incredible strength and faith. "Four years ago I began experiencing severe pain in my left leg," begins Susan. "After being seen by several different doctors, having steroid shots, and going to therapy, a client suggested I see a doctor on the west coast of Florida. I was told I needed minimal invasive surgery on two different areas in my lower back. This ended up with me having four traumatic surgeries where I was awake for one of them. I thought I was going to die right there on the operating table.

"After the surgeries, the pain only got worse. The next three years I went from doctor to doctor trying to find someone to ease the pain. The pain was so severe that my body began to go into seizures. I ended up in the hospital being treated for a heart attack. Then I finally found a doctor who was willing to operate on me. He fused three levels of my back, inserted two titanium rods, and eight screws. I am slowly getting better but it will take time to fully heal."



As she spoke, she was so encouraging and kind. She goes on even when she doesn't feel like it. She lets the Lord lead her.

The Gibbs Family is well loved by their fans. Not only do they have a fantastic sound and stage presence, but they also have hearts that love God and people.



The Gibbs Family will be making their very first appearance at Creekside Gospel Music Convention on Oct. 28 – Nov. 1 in Pigeon Forge, Tenn.. They can be found on Facebook, and on the web at [www.thegibbsfamily.org](http://www.thegibbsfamily.org).

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# Greg Sullivan MINISTRIES

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# The Editor's Last Word

By Lorraine Walker

It's September and time to get up off of that patio chair, put on your running shoes, and get back into the routine of life. Isn't it funny how the days seem to pass more quickly on the warm summer days, than they do when the cold wind and snow start to blow? The pace of life seems to really pick up at this time of year however; the speed of traffic, the speed at which the stores put Christmas stock on the shelves, even the speed at which people walk down the sidewalk seems faster.

At this time of year, I often become reflective, as you can tell by the cover of this month's issue. In the fall I start to look back on where we've come, and look forward to where we're going. About 14 years ago, I began to write feature articles and a devotional entitled "Reality Check," for the SGMRradio website. Then, in 2009, the new SGNScoops digital magazine was born, and I have written for each issue, beginning with that first one in September.

It took us a little while to get our feet under us, but I think we did pretty good even from the start. I have learned a lot since then, and I think the same can be said for all of those who have been with us since the beginning. I am the third editor for the magazine, and I salute Kelly Burton and Rhonda Frye for all they did to teach me how to take up the reins where they left off.

As we head into the 10th year of SGNScoops magazine, we hope to continue to grow, to become better in every area, and to stretch our boundaries by reaching more people with the message of the music we enjoy. We

hope to engage you the reader more in what we do, so that you can be as excited with each issue as we are. To that end, I urge you again to write to me with any of your comments and ideas. Address your email to [Lorraine@sgnscoops.com](mailto:Lorraine@sgnscoops.com).

I want to take this opportunity to thank Allen Smith for his foresight and for everything that he did to prepare this entity to become what it is today. I also want to thank Rob Patz for being the visionary we need as an organisation. Thank you to Joan Walker and Craig Harris who go above and beyond every month. Thanks to our entire team of creative, motivated, Godly men and women, who volunteer their time and talents to make this publication a product that is pleasing to the eye, enriching to the mind and edifying to the soul.

We certainly have celebrated several anniversaries with the production of this issue of SGNScoops. However, we could not have done it without you, our readers and also the amazing men and women of gospel music.

More to the point, we could never have even dreamt of this without our Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, the giver of all gifts and talents, and the one who gave the greatest gift of all, his life, so that we might live ours more abundantly.

Speaking of anniversaries, we expect to see you all at the 7th Annual Creekside Gospel Music Convention in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., Oct. 28 to Nov. 1. Come worship with us.





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# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Rob Patz is the President and CEO of Coastal Media Group. Rob has an 18 year history in radio hosting the nationally syndicated radio show, "The Southern Styles Show" since its beginning in 1993. Rob is also the owner of the internet's #1 Southern Gospel station, [SGMRadio.com](http://SGMRadio.com). In 2009, Rob Patz acquired [SGNScoops.com](http://SGNScoops.com), including the all- digital Scoops Magazine and the Diamond Awards. Rob has taken part in several Christian television projects working in front of the camera and also has helped create several syndicated television programs as well. Rob does voice work for various outlets including fortune 500 companies as well as emceeing concerts and special events. Email Rob at [rob@sgnscoops.com](mailto:rob@sgnscoops.com).



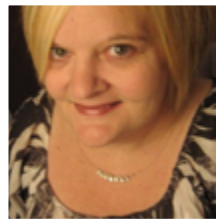
Stephanie Kelley is a public speaker and owner of Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebies, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. [Queenoq.blogspot.com](http://Queenoq.blogspot.com)



Canadian-born Lorraine Walker has a love for Jesus Christ, music and writing. The combination of these passions has produced artist features and monthly columns for Southern Gospel publications including SGM Radio website and SGN Scoops Digital magazine. Lorraine desires that the power of the written word will glorify her Lord and bring readers closer to the love, peace and majesty of the Almighty. Email Lorraine at [lorraine@sgnscoops.com](mailto:lorraine@sgnscoops.com)



Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, sharing her testimony of how she was born lifeless and how Jesus raised her up to live for Him. Jennifer is a member of the Florida Worship Choir and Orchestra and has performed with them at Brooklyn Tabernacle, Carnegie Hall, Central Park, and Times Square. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm> and a food and travel blog at <http://jennifersjourneys.net>. Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net> and [www.christwillreturn.org](http://www.christwillreturn.org).



Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she enjoys proofreading the articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



Justin Gilmore, 22, a resident of San Diego, California, graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University with a B.A. in History in June of 2014. Passionate about Southern Gospel music and its history, he decided to venture into the blog world in January starting Southern Gospel Spotlight in order to share his love of this great style of music.



# Contributors

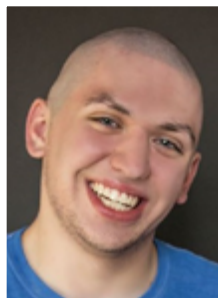
## SGN SCOOPS



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

Dusty is a man who remains passionate and secure in the calling and destiny upon his life. He has come to realize the importance of finding purpose and clear direction for not only his life, but also the lives of those he comes in contact with, no matter what stage of life they may be in. Growing up in a very dysfunctional home, surrounded by all types of abuse, Dusty had every excuse to be a failure in life. He grew up on welfare, having to steal his daily necessities of life at times, being surrounded by drugs, alcohol and pornography. He was raised by a mother who was married multiple times, living in a housing project on the wrong side of town. But in the midst of what seemed to be complete devastation, God had different plans of success for Dusty. At the age of 14, a precious couple took time out of their own lives to invest in Dusty...thus leading Him to the Lord. His life is a testimony of God's relentless love and deliverance, and is one of the most triumphant stories told in modern Christianity. Dusty is confident in the fact that if God can do it for him, He can do it for anyone, no matter the situation.

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



Justin McLeod is the founder of the Justin's World of Softball website, a site that he has built into one of the premier news outlets in the sport. Justin is a longtime Gospel music fan and enjoys researching the history of the genre, attending concerts, and reviewing recordings whenever possible. The son of a Southern Baptist pastor, he

also works for a law firm as a legal secretary and is active in his local church. Justin is a native of Memphis and now resides in Northeast Louisiana.



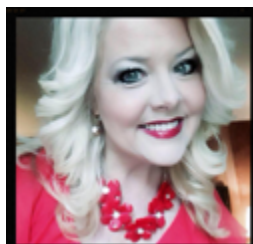
Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer with a passion for Christ. He was born in Santa Rosa, California and moved to Oregon where he spent most of his life. He now lives in the quiet town of Ringgold, Georgia and

enjoys living in the country with his family. You can find him online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate

one on one with clients and organizing ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.



Vonda Easley is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Vonda draws on a vast knowledge of Southern Gospel Music for her expertise in the field. In addition to her many personal friendships within the industry she also hosts a

weekly radio show which keeps her in touch with many of Southern Gospel's leading executives and artists. It also allows her a fresh view of new music and the latest happenings inside the industry. Vonda is also a group owner and manager as well! A self starter Vonda has started and managed several "new" events in Southern as well as "Country Gospel" Music. These events are fast becoming trend setters within the industry. She is a graduate of The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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## SGN SCOOPS



Robert York- During my childhood days my parents took me to the Atlanta City Auditorium for concerts hosted by Warren Roberts. That was the beginning of my love for Southern Gospel music. After 35 years I retired from USPS, during which time I got married. My wife and

I often went to The Joyful Noise for dinner and concerts. Every known name in Gospel Music sang there at one time or another. After I retired, we decided to start promoting concerts. Our goal was not only to promote our concerts, but also to promote any Gospel concerts in our area and attend as many as we possibly could. I came to a crossroads in December 2013 when my wife graduated to heaven, not knowing what to do. After much prayer God led me to continue promoting concerts. Have promoted around 100 concerts and can't tell you how many I attended. I still enjoy going to concerts and writing a little about the groups.



Erin Stevens is a uniquely talented shutterbug, singer, guitar player, writer, blogger, and social networker. She is the owner/operator of Photos For Keeps By Erin. Along with running her own business, she is the official photographer for Abraham Productions (API). You will find her behind the lens at all API events, along with

working behind the scenes on their social media. She also travels full-time on the road with her family's gospel group, The Stevens Family. Photography is her passion and singing for Jesus is her calling. For several years, you have known her as our very own "Younger Perspective" writer. Check out her photography website [www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com](http://www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com) and her ministry website [www.stevensfamilymusic.com](http://www.stevensfamilymusic.com).



Cheryl Smith describes herself as a "passionate disciple and follower of Jesus Christ." She says: "I am married to the sweetest, most patient man for over 30 years...Mama to one miracle son God sent to us after 12.5 years of infertility...Homeschool Teacher who learns way more than I ever teach. I love to spend time with my husband

and son in the mountains, sing and play Bluegrass music, and write. I am so thankful for your visit and hope you will visit my blogs: [homespundevotions.com/](http://homespundevotions.com/) and [biblicalminimalism.com/](http://biblicalminimalism.com/) It is my goal to encourage you in your walk with Jesus and to inspire you to let go of this world for the

sake of a higher call. It is His call that I hope you hear. So compelling, so intense, so far above anything this world has to offer. It is the call His disciples heard as they went about a normal, ordinary day, fishing. It is a call they could not refuse. A call that caused them to drop everything they had and walk away from life as they knew it, without a backward glance. Can you hear it? Are you listening?"



Hello, I'm Randall Hamm, Gospel Program Director of WFLQ French Lick Indiana, host of the Sunday Morning Gospel Show for the past 20 years on WFLQ French Lick Indiana and Singing News Top 10 Small Market DJ for the past three years. I now add something new to

my resume! Record Reviewer, ok... CD Reviewer. I'm Old School, having started in the days of LP's, 45's and Reel to Reel along with cassettes as the main form of music played. If you'd like to listen to my program, you can visit <https://www.facebook.com/TheSundayMorningGospelShow> and listen to archived programs, plus I post various Southern Gospel news updates, uplifting music and Gospel-related items. If you're in the six-county area around French Lick Indiana, in the heart of Southern Indiana, tune in every Sunday 6:00am-12:00pm and listen to the Gospel Greats with Paul Heil, 6:00am to 8:00am and the Sunday Morning Gospel Show with Randall Hamm 8:00am to 12:00pm.



After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University with a Mass Communication degree, Craig Harris has been in the journalism field for more than 15 years, working daily as both a photographer and writer at one of the largest non-daily publications in the state of Tennessee. He has experience in feature writing, news writing, action

photography, portrait photography, web-site maintenance and layout. Craig has been a part of numerous awards, both collective and individual honors in the journalism field. He has had articles published in numerous newspapers and magazines on a variety of subjects, most notably in the world of sports.

Craig's Southern Gospel interest dates back for approximately the same time span, having closely followed the industry since the later portion of the 1990s. He also performed for seven years with a local trio prior to joining the SGN Scoops staff.



# Contributors

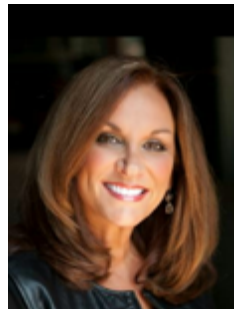
## SGN SCOOPS



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

David began singing at age 6 with family. In 1990, he filled in for the Speer Family and later that year he became the lead vocalist for The Trailblazers. In 2002, Staton filled the lead position with Priority. While with Priority, the group was the resident gospel group at the Silver Dollar City theme park in Branson, MO and they performed for over one million people in one year. After the group disbanded in 1995, David continued to write for artists in many different genres of music while occasionally performing solo. It was during this time that his song, "Every Knee Shall Bow", recorded by Dottie Peoples, was nominated for a Grammy Award. His song, "Together We Can" was adopted as the national theme song to bring awareness to violence in schools. The music video (Together We Can) that featured many Atlanta based artists was shown at the 1999 Grammy Awards show, which helped launch the careers of artists like R&B's Jagged Edge, India Arie, and 4.O. In 2004, David partnered with Mike LeFevre to form The LeFevre Quartet. During the seven years that he was the lead vocalist, the group had many hit songs and won many awards. After leaving the LeFevre Quartet in 2011, Staton began working on a solo project and also began singing with Palmetto State Quartet. The group appeared on television and toured with country music superstar, Wynonna Judd while Staton was there.

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



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

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

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

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



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

Lord by inspiring others to be who He has called them to be. You can listen to her music and read her devotionals at [www.paigegivens.com](http://www.paigegivens.com).

# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Nathan Kistler was born on the road and was singing at the age of three years old. He has had the opportunity travel with groups like Southern Gospel's beloved trio the Nelons, and most recently for almost two years with America's Favorite family of gospel music The Hoppers. Nathan has had the privilege to be in 49 states and

24 countries singing about the wonderful story of Jesus Christ our Lord. He has also been a part of three crusades on the National Mall in Washington D.C. and while there, he had the privilege of singing in the Pentagon courtyard twice. Through his father's ministry in Washington, Nathan began his work on the Hill as a ministry partner with different Christian organizations like Faith and Action and more. Nathan is a missionary to Washington and continues to work there during the week while singing Gospel music on the weekends around the country and being an artist in residence at the American Mountain Theater in Elkins, West Virginia.



Selena Day is from Atlanta GA. During her twenties she worked in the field of fashion, as both a make-up artist and model. Selena became a Christian in her early 20's and then quickly met her husband, Chuck Day, who is a songwriter and recording artist. Selena and Chuck have been in the ministry for 26 years raising

three daughters and homeschooling them while they traveled together as a family. During this time God taught her how crucial intergenerational ministry is for the furthering of God's kingdom. Selena travels the world speaking at conferences with the emphasis on empowering a multi-generation of women to rise up and become everything that God has called them to. Encouraging the next generation of the church to break the walls of limitations in their mind and rise to their full potential. Selena and her husband are life coaches for The World Race, which is an extreme missions trip for adults 21 through 35. They travel every two months somewhere around the world to mentor these missionaries. She and Chuck have been pastoring a home-church for 14 years where they have experienced God moving in community and seeing the body of Christ in action through each other.



Derek Simonis began singing gospel music at an early age, around the piano with his sister,s at home and in church. His mother, an accomplished pianist and music teacher, was his inspiration to sing. Derek was saved at an early age due to the influence of godly, praying parents and a faithful Sunday School teacher.

Derek formerly served as a Youth Pastor and previously sang with Southern Harmony Quartet. For seven years, Derek also served as a Communications Repair Section Leader for the U.S. Army; he was member of the 1/160th SOAR (A) Night Stalkers and served several deployments overseas. Derek is married to his sweetheart, Jana, and they have two boys, Daniel and Avery. The Simonis family resides in Boise, Idaho. Derek and Jana travel and sing gospel music, having recently released their debut album, "Blessed." His life's verse is Romans 12:1 which says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Derek's ultimate desire is to give his all in the service of the Lord.



Logan Smith is a 20-year-old with a lot of miles behind him. At the age of three, he would stand in his room with a pencil as a microphone and one of his dad's handkerchiefs singing his heart out to one of the Happy Goodman's songs, such as "I Wouldn't Take Nothing For My Journey Now." At the age of seven, Logan was asked to

sing at a senior's dinner at his grandparent's church. Logan recorded his first CD, "The Journey Begins," at the age of 10 and his latest release, "Hits Before My Time," at age 19. In October of 2008, Logan was invited to sing with The Gaither Homecoming Tour in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for Gaither Fest. Since that night, he has sung at many different venues with the Homecoming Tour. As of 2017, Logan has toured all across America, Canada, and has headlined two Norwegian tours. Logan is on the road more now than ever spreading the good news and has no plans of slowing down.



# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Roger Barkley Jr. is an award-winning Christian artist and musical evangelist. With multiple charting songs reaching to the top 10, his goals remain the same: to win souls for Christ, use Gospel Music of any kind to reach the world with the Good News, seeing lives changed and being an encouragement to the saints. When asked about his

ministry, Roger said, "I can remember the first time singing with my dad playing the guitar and standing beside my mom when I was four years old. I have always loved all types of music." His vision is to lead as many people to Christ through preaching, singing, sharing testimony, comedy, drama and technology as possible. Having been labeled a Christian Entertainer, he believes it is possible to minister in an entertaining way, and in over 35 years of ministry has found that he can utilize all different types of music to let people know the love of Jesus Christ. Currently he is Artist-In-Residence with his wife, Dianna, and daughter, Chelsea, at Leestown Gospel Church in Frankfort, KY, and Redemption Road Community Church in Stamping Ground, KY where he leads worship when not spreading the Gospel across America.



Fayth Lore is a young woman from southern Ohio with a love for God and people. Although she enjoys chocolate, oldies music and spending time with friends around the bonfire, her passion is ministry. In January of 2014, after pastoring for 20 years, her family decided to follow God's call into music evangelism. In September 2015, they

launched into full-time ministry. The Lore Family travels the country, spreading the Gospel through songs, sermons and seminars. While Fayth loves to sing, she also has a heart for encouraging young women in Christ. She has spoken at various youth/women's events, as well as hosted her own blog for young ladies. To see more about The Lore Family, visit their website at [www.thelorefamilyministries.com](http://www.thelorefamilyministries.com). To learn more about Fayth's blog, visit [www.truepurposegirls.weebly.com](http://www.truepurposegirls.weebly.com).



Debbie Seagraves is a Gospel music soloist, songwriter and speaker from Hull, Ga. She and her husband, Mike have been married for 21 years and have five grown children, including four sons and one daughter that graduated to Heaven in 2009, as well as nine grandchildren. She loves singing, speaking, and writing her own songs. Debbie is

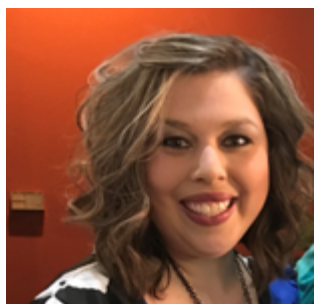
currently working on her third project. All of the songs on this CD will be songs that she has penned. She is an award winning artist, having won Female Vocalist of the Year with Lighthouse Gospel Music Association, and Female Vocalist and Soloist of the year with the GGCBA (Georgia Gospel Country Bluegrass Association) in 2016. She enjoys speaking at Ladies Events, sharing her testimony of how God spared her life from a near fatal motorcycle accident in 2011, how He brought her out of the depths of severe clinical depression, and through the death of her daughter in 2009. Also, Debbie is an avid Georgia Bulldogs fan and loves to fish, read, and spend time with her children and grandchildren. Debbie says: "No one can come as close as I did to dying and have it not change you. I am forever changed, blessed beyond measure, and just so grateful for every day that the Lord allows me to spend with those I love and to serve Him." She considers Micah 7:8 her life verse as she says that verse has carried her through some of the darkest times in her life. If you would like to have Debbie at your church or venue, you can reach her through her website: [debbieseagraves-music.com/](http://debbieseagraves-music.com/), on Facebook, or send her an email at: [fully-alive1956@att.net](mailto:fully-alive1956@att.net).



Jimmy Reno is from Birmingham, Alabama. He began singing in church at four years of age. Jimmy has sung with various groups over the years, until singing professionally for Mark209 and the Florida Boys. Jimmy is married with three children.

# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Sarah Murray sings soprano for the Southern Gospel group Bless'd. The group is from Greenville, Tennessee and has been together for over five years. Sarah was born and raised in Jonesborough, Tennessee, but now resides in Greeneville with her husband, Chase. She has a

bachelor's degree in K-6 Education and a Master's degree in Human Resources Development. Her daytime job is being the Human Resources Director for a small company in Greeneville, Tennessee. Her passion outside of singing, writing, and crafting, is simply God's people. "I love the Lord and truly believe my mission in life is to reach his people, and that's both on and off the stage, behind my desk, and in my community. I just want people to see Jesus in me! I'm so honored to be a part of Bless'd and love our tight knit family group." For more information on Sarah, visit [blessdministries.com](http://blessdministries.com)



Kaleb Powell can be found in the small town of Greeneville, Tennessee. He sings baritone for the Southern Gospel group, Bless'd Ministries. Alongside Southern Gospel Music, Kaleb's passion is playing the piano. He started playing at the young age of 13 and for the majority, is self-taught. His style of piano

playing is inspired by artists such as Kim Collingsworth, Jeff Stice, and Gerald Wolfe. He has been singing and playing for Bless'd Ministries for the last six years.

Kaleb is currently the owner and operator of AKM of Tennessee, Inc., which is an organization that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities. His life has been surrounded by taking care of others and for living out his passion through music ministry.

"I feel honored that God chose to give me the talent He did in playing the piano. I feel that if I can use this to serve Him more, I will perfect my talent to be used as only a vessel for Him. Being a part of Bless'd and traveling with our group is a lifelong dream of mine that I am forever grateful God saw fit to put together. On and off the stage, I want my talent to be only used for Him and to be a part of seeing souls saved." For more information on Kaleb Powell, visit [blessdministries.com](http://blessdministries.com).



Charlie Griffin is an avid gospel music fan, soloist, teacher and speaker. He is a staff writer for SGN Scoops featuring highlighting Southern Gospel Music history. You can follow Charlie Griffin on Facebook, Twitter or visit him at [www.CharlieGriffin.net](http://www.CharlieGriffin.net).



During his 40 plus year career, Bill has developed expertise in commercial banking, retail banking, sales and marketing, media, and financial consulting. After years of being bi-vocational, he was able to merge his professional expertise and his passion for ministry. Since 2010, Bill has been

helping churches and ministries with areas of operation. This includes financing (construction, permanent financing, re-financing). In addition, many organizations need help understanding how to market their ministries and how important it is to promote their ministries properly through media and social networking.

Over the past 40 years, Bill has become an accomplished gospel singer, having performed on 32 albums and produced over 200 albums for other performers. His extensive professional credits include singing with renowned gospel music groups including The Cathedrals, The Goffs, The Senators, and The Rhythm Masters, which performed four songs that reached No. 1 in the gospel music charts. In addition, Bill has received nominations for three Dove Awards and a Gospel Music News Award. He is also known for writing and performing the Gold Record winning song, "No Greater Love." Bill also performed in events led by Jerry Falwell, Pat Robinson, Rex Humbard, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Dr. Paul Conn, and most recently, he performed with Governor Mike Huckabee.

Bill studied finance at the University of Cincinnati and vocal performance at the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. He also attended seminary at Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and he holds a Doctor of Divinity Degree at Heritage Baptist University in Indianapolis. Currently Bill serves on the Board of Trustees for Davis College in Binghamton, N. Y.



# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Suzanne Mason, a pastor's kid and native Californian, began singing with her guitar-playing father at an early age and spent her teenage years singing and acting with her youth group. She started writing personal poetry and short stories in junior high and hasn't stopped

since. Suzanne holds a bachelor of English degree from Columbia (N.Y.) University and has interned with both literary agents and a publishing house. While living in Chattanooga, Tenn., she began writing for AFrontRowView.com before joining the SGNscoops.com team. She enjoys sharing the love of Jesus through volunteering, music, writing, and teaching.



Jade lives near Nashville with her husband, Brent. She is a mom of two incredible children and two wonderful bonus daughters. Jade makes a living in healthcare and strives to make her life about serving God. She loves being deeply involved in the world of music that surrounds us. She believes

when words fail us, music speaks.



Dixie Phillips is a Dove Award winning songwriter. Her songs have been recorded by The Talleys, Gordon Mote, The Williamsons, Doug Anderson, Susan Whisnant, The Erwins, Jay Stone Singers, Master Promise, Three Bridges, Endless Highway, 3 Heath Brothers, Fortress, and many other gospel artists.

Dixie is also an Christian Editing Services Editor and Writer. She is an award winning children's author and ghostwriter. She has been published by Abingdon Press, Standard Publishing, Eldridge Publishing, Gospel Music Publishing House, and Guardian Angel Publishing.



Angela Parker is a life-long singer and sings with her mother's group, Mercy Rain. She resides in Lexington, S.C. She's been happily married to her husband Jack for nearly 4 years. He's supported every decision Angela has made without fail. Jack travels with Mercy Rain whenever he can and helps out where

possible. He supports Mercy Rain continuously. Since Angela has recently been diagnosed with Lupus, Jack has done everything he can to take care of her.

Angela actively advocates for Autism Awareness. She feels education for all involved is the key to their success. She worked with Autistic children providing ABA Therapy up until her current illness forced her to have to quit.

She speaks out against Domestic Violence having been a victim of abuse for many years herself. Her constant battle today is healing from the mental scars that are left over after the physical and verbal abuse. Her personal testimony will help others see how God can deliver from abuse and help to heal the abused person.

Angela is very excited about writing for SGNscoops and loves all of the SGNscoops family. She loves the Lord with all her heart and has been blessed with awesome talent and love for others. You will be blessed by her talent and great spirit!



John Herndon is a Kentucky native who was raised listening to gospel music. As a child, the Sunday morning routine always included the Gospel Singing Jubilee and his summers were filled with all-day-singings-and-dinner-on-the-ground listening to local groups just about every Sunday.

He remembers seeing The Prophets at his county fair when he was seven years old and eventually, he became a huge fan of The Oak Ridge Boys, The Imperials and J.D. Sumner and the Stamps.

John spent 20 years in the located ministry and during this time, he began writing local sports for The Anderson News in Lawrenceburg, Ky. For the last 16 years, he has been the full-time sports editor of that paper. John has won over 100 awards from the Kentucky Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and Landmark Community Newspapers.

He loves listening to gospel music or playing one of his guitars.

John lives in Lawrenceburg with his wife, Stephanie, and 17-year-old daughter. He has three grown children and four grandchildren.