

October 2011

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The Collingsworth Family



It's All About Family
plus...

Jason Crabb,
Sheri Easter, Remembering
Charles Burke, Media And The
Gospel & More!



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MISSION STATEMENT

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



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RHONDA FRYE

"The Power of a Gospel Song"

What comes from the heart truly touches the heart! I didn't come up with that saying, but wow isn't it true? It's especially true when it comes to gospel music. After interviewing many great artists, song-writers and listening to testimonies at the National Quartet Convention, my heart is overwhelmed by the power of gospel music.

I had a chance to visit with Squire Parsons and listen to him explain how scripture and personal experience is where he gets inspiration to write. I would dare to say, most gospel songwriters agree. I've heard the phrase "gospel music changes lives" so much in my life, it's almost become cliché, but I'm respecting the power of gospel music in a fresh way. Obviously- there is power in the biblical truth of the lyric and the beauty of the music stirs emotions and softens hearts. I'm convinced that many gospel songs are saturated with the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps my passion for gospel music has been rekindled because I was given many new CDs at NQC. To say I've been blessed is really an understatement. Gospel music is more than feel-good songs. The truth is... gospel music is STILL changing lives. I admit as I was listening to one particular song this week, God dealt with stubbornness in my own heart. The song did more than "move me"- I was convicted by the truth of the lyric and prompted to confess and move into a deeper relationship with God through Christ. Now that's the power of gospel music! I was also moved to tears recently as I listened the Bowlings Miracles And Memories CD. Kelly Bowling shared how she came to Christ as a little girl while she was listening to gospel music. Again- that's the power of a gospel song!

I'm convinced gospel music is a powerful tool God uses to restore hope, heal broken hearts and soften the hardest ones. He uses it to soothe spirits, bring peace to trouble minds and to draw people to Himself. In this month's "Letter From The Editor,"

I'm proud to report gospel music still proclaims the majesty of God, still clings to the cross and stands by the necessity of Christ's shed blood as humanity's only hope. Gospel music is convinced the tomb is empty and is persuaded that living victoriously is possible through Christ. Gospel music is still excited about the resurrection of saints and is still looking toward the eastern sky. Trust me, gospel music still banks on the promise of eternal life by grace through faith! Gospel music is sacred and has the ability to lead people to life changing encounters with the living God. I'm a personal witness. My heart has been personally touched, my life has been changed and I am most grateful!



Thank you song-writers, artists, musicians, media and other industry outlets for getting gospel music into the hearts of people. It was a true joy to meet, visit and bond with you this year at the National Quartet Convention. Thank you to Rob Patz for believing in me enough to help you spread the gospel through media. It was a joy to work (IN PERSON) with Rob and several of our staff members during NQC. I'm very blessed to be a part of the SGNscoops team.

May God- through gospel music continue to bless us all and in return may we give 100% of our lives to Him and pour all of our love on Him! He deserves nothing less. If I can serve you in any way, email me at rhonda@sgnscoops.com.

ROB PATZ

Welcome to October's edition of the Publisher's Point. I am still Rob Patz, even though you can't see me! Unfortunately, I have been under the weather lately and I have lost my voice. Well- I haven't really "lost it"- it's still there, but it sounds pretty rough. Come to think of it, I haven't actually been "under the weather" either. Ok, so I've been a little sick lately, and my voice is... Well, let's just say it's getting better! So- this month the Publisher's Point will be in print instead of video format.



OCTOBER ISSUE

I'm excited about this month's magazine. This month we're featuring the Collingsworth Family, Jason Crabb, album reviews, inspirational articles and more. I can't say how proud I am of each and every person on the staff for always doing an exceptional job.

We welcome John Mathis Jr. this month to the Scoops writing team. John is a great guy with a great heart, so I'm sure his articles will be great. This issue is a great read and we appreciate you for spreading the word about us.

NATIONAL QUARTET CONVENTION

Wow! What a great time we had at the National Quartet Convention. I loved seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Thank you to all of you who stopped by to say hello. It was great to hear from our readers. It's great to know how much you're

enjoying the magazine. Going to the National Quartet Convention is almost like going to a family reunion. It was great to see my Southern Gospel Family!

Our booth was busy all week long from early afternoon until late in the evening. It was a huge blessing to work alongside some of our staff during the week. Rhonda Frye and Lorraine Walker were busy interviewing artists as I did video interviews. I just want to say how much I appreciate their hard work, enthusiasm and dedication. Thank you to Denise Salchow for doing a great job at the camera! Denise filmed our video interviews throughout the week. I want to thank Eric Frye for being our official NQC, SGNScoops photographer too. We worked hard all week, but we also had a great time as well.

One of the best highlights of the week was getting together with several of our Scoops team members for a meeting. Make sure you read my article about that in this issue. Also make sure you check out the NQC pictures in the magazine and also on our facebook page.

CRUISE

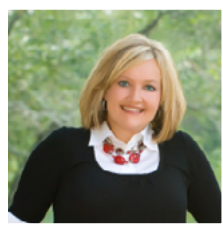
The All American Gospel Cruise is coming up February 4th- 9th! Great fun, great food, and great music- it just doesn't get any better than that! It is not too late to sign up. If you're interested, email me at rob@sgnscoops.com.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Jeremiah 29:11 has been on my heart this month. "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." I'm excited about God's plans for SGNScoops. I believe, with all my heart that God is working out an awesome plan for Scoops and our staff. Keep up with us on facebook, twitter and tell your friends about us. God is doing great things!



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



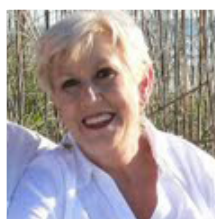
Rhonda Frye is an ordained minister serving as the Associate and Worship Pastor at Rock Pointe Church in Fort Oglethorpe, GA. She is a recording artist, songwriter, preschool music teacher and sings with family trio, "Rhonda Frye & RiverSide." Rhonda is from Ringgold, GA and is supported by her husband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



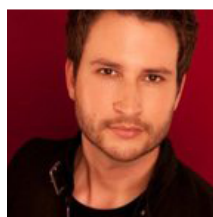
Lou Wills Hildreth appears on the Gaither Homecoming Videos, and is a founding member of Texas First Family Of Gospel Music, the "Singing Wills Family." She helped pioneer Christian television as host of "Wills Family Inspirational TV." After moving to Nashville in the sixties, she was the first woman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



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



Sandi Duncan Clark and Cliff Clark make their home in Easley, S.C. where they enjoy traveling, gardening, and the beautiful South Carolina weather. Sandi has worked in journalism for more than thirty years, and she is thankful that her love for God and Gospel music provides a great opportunity to positively impact the careers of so many in Gospel music. Email Sandi at sandi@sgnscoops.com.



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



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



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



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

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

www.themansionentertainment.com

www.avidgrouppublishing.com

www.thepathwayrecords.com

www.johnmathisjr.com



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

group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational

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

<http://jennifercampbell.net>



Rob Estep is a vital part of the ministry of the popular group, BEYOND THE ASHES. Currently serving as the Office and Road Manager, his wealth of experience in office management skills makes him a true asset to the group. His expertise of handling daily

operations and road responsibilities go unsurpassed in quality. Rob has worked full time alongside of Anthony Facello for the past two years. Rob's Music Pastor Father exposed him to all genres of music growing up, therefore since childhood; he has had a rich love for Southern Gospel Music. Rob studied business at Columbus State Community College, is a HUGE Buckeye Football fan, and is single- but open to dating when the right one comes along. Email Rob at: robestep@sgnscoops.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



PRESENTS

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AN OVERVIEW OF SCOOPS STAFF MEETING by ROB PATZ

"Change" is good- At least when it comes to technology. Last month, I celebrated my birthday. I am amazed when I think how technology has progressed in my lifetime. When I was a child, technology had advance to the point to where we had a bulky

Growing up, I watched TV channels multiply and TVs shrink. Isn't that just the way it is, though? Doesn't everything shrink as the original version is advanced? I watched many things shrink and change drastically while entering my adult years and I bet you

My life has been revolutionized by technology and the internet. I remember getting my first cell phone in the early 90's and setting up my first email account in 1996. It's hard to believe that today, I literally have the world at my fingertips! I can check the news and weather, download the latest music and communicate with people from all over the place from my phone! Ha- I can even watch ESPN from my phone!

take advantage of the latest in media technology to get the good news of Christ to the world. We are using the internet to strengthen Christians, highlight ministries and to promote gospel music.

Using the internet to spread the gospel is a brilliant idea considering there are 2,095,006,005 internet users in our world today, according to internet world stats. com.



TV carrying three major networks and we had a radio. We got the latest news from the TV, radio or the newspaper left at our doorstep every day. As far as communication technology- Well, we had a telephone that plugged into the wall. We could communicate with our local friends and family, but if we wanted to talk to our relatives across the country, we would have to pay a long distance rate. If we didn't want to pay for the expensive call, we could always hand write a letter and drop it off at the U.S. Post Office.

did too. Things like- business men and women used to use computers and work in their office. Now, using their computers, many of them work from home. Not only that, but computers used to be used for work only, now through social media outlets- the computer has become a place to hang out. The internet drastically invaded the lives of people changing the way they do business, the way they study, communicate and socialize. Thank goodness, I am one of those people whose life has been invaded. Change is good.

I've always enjoyed observing people, culture, technology, statistics and business. I've always seem to find myself right in the middle of emerging technology- especially when it comes media. I guess you could say it excites me! I am grateful for Dr. Allen Smith and his vision of developing a tool to promote the gospel creatively by utilizing the media. He caught on to the trend of digital media at just the right time. He was the first to come up with the idea of a Southern Gospel Digital Magazine and has passed his vision on to me. Now, I am passing the vision of this tool on to the Scoops Staff. The vision basically is to

During the 2011 National Quartet Convention, I had the privilege of meeting with several of our staff members to discuss technology and our vision at SGN-Scoops. Although every staff member couldn't be present, both Rhonda and I received emails and text messages from staff members, not present, letting us know we were supported in prayer. Also, several staff members were at the convention, but were busy with other activities during our staff meeting. Those not present were certainly missed, but were with us in spirit. It was awesome to have Howard and Lou Hildreth, Lorraine Walker, Joan Walker, Eric Frye, Rhonda Frye, Jeff Hawes

AN OVERVIEW OF SCOOPS STAFF MEETING by ROB PATZ

and John Mathis Jr. present for the team building time. It was great to sit face to face with some of our staff and to reassure them that we are on the cutting edge! Of course, the chocolate doughnuts made the meeting even better! We are indeed using the most advanced technology available to get the gospel into the world.

The fact is, we live in a day and time where people are utilizing the internet. The United States is ranked number two, right under China as far as the top 20 countries of internet users! Pew internet.org explains that we live in an era where News (the news in general) has become portable, participatory, personalized and is sometimes a social experience. We also live in a day and time where most people get the news from the internet

before radio or newspaper. It was great to commend our staff for being right on task and to also stress how we are taking advantage of this opportunity to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to a world in crisis. The staff contributed many positive comments, shared ideas of practical ways we can continue on our path. I can honestly say, everyone walked away challenged to report stories that have depth and meaning. Our intention is to report news and features that are a bold witness to the life changing power of Jesus Christ. It is our intention to keep highlighting how God is using Gospel Music as a tool to reach a hurting world. I received many confirmations and compliments throughout the week from artists and others in the industry

confirming we are living out our vision. I can't say how proud I am of our team. It blesses me to

sive and on the cutting edge. Although the methods of delivering the message will change,



know our staff supports and is actively living out our mission statement. As we move forward, Change is still good! I'm looking forward to the changes that are sure to come in our ever emerging technological world. This is truly an exciting time to be living. As technology improves and methods are amended, modified or revolutionized, SGN-Scoops will be progres-

the message itself will remain the one, only, tried and true message of the cross! The message will always remain the same!

Sources:

<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Online-News.aspx>

<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats14.htm>



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LOU WILLIS HILDRETH

The Lord is good and worthy to be praised! We give thanks for the fabulous progress being made by SgnSCOOPS in getting the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people. A phenomenal report from Publisher Rob Patz, at a gathering of the Scoops staff attending the National Quartet Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, united us in purpose. We are poised and committed to making a huge impact, now and in the future, for the gospel music fans and the industry. For daily up-to-the minute news on your computer, click

on SgnSCOOPS---it lives up to the name! Scoops Monthly Magazine is reaching a growing number of people who passionately embrace gospel music. Rhonda Frye, editor-in-chief, has assembled an excellent group



of writers, and I am honored to be on the team. Howard and I basked in the warm and loving welcome received from fans

and artists at the NQC. Judy Nelson, Vice President, invited us to share the Southern Gospel Music Guild booth. Greeting the industry executives who came by to consult with her gave me great pleasure. A multitude of friends from the past stopped to say hello, among them was Dr. Allen Smith, founder of Scoops Magazine, and his wife Susan. Adding to the excitement, XM Sirius Radio was broadcasting from the booth, and a steady stream of major artists gathered, waiting to be interviewed. I chatted with members of the Vocal Band there to share with the radio audience their personal appreciation of the "Gaither Vocal Band Reunion," a first for the NQC. In retrospect, every year at the NQC, some of my greatest memories are made while taping televi-

sion interviews for Family Friendly Entertainment. Owners of the network, Jimmy & Dorothy Jones, treat us like family, and we love working with their daughters Mary Fay, Carla, and Dinah. Producer



David Thomas, Dinah's husband, makes being in front of a TV camera easy. And again, the highlight of the week at Louisville, each year, is being onstage with the Homecoming Friends at the Bill Gaither SingAlong.

Bill is a genius at presenting the artists, and the huge audience response was exhilarating! I am blessed and thankful that God allowed me to attend the National Quartet Convention again, my 54th year. My heart overflows with great expectations for gospel music



in the months ahead. May God bless all of us as we strive to enlarge the boundaries of gospel music.

Visit Lou Willis Hildreth at www.louhildreth.com or email at: gospplvideo@aol.com.

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE MUSIC

FEATURE ON SHERI LAFONTAINE by ROB ESTEP

As a child, I remember tearing into new CD's and yes even cassettes and the first thing I would do was read about the songwriters, musicians, and producers. I always wondered who they were and exactly what their jobs entailed. Because of my curiosity, I have decided to start interviewing some of these "behind the scenes" people. This month, I'm going to start with Ms. Sheri LaFontaine. Sheri is loved and respected in the music industry. Heather Ruppe, of The Sisters, shares: "Sheri LaFontaine is, in my



opinion, one of Gospel Music's top writers. Sheri is also a very gifted singer. We always look forward to getting a new song from her. We have recorded many of her songs and I'm sure many more to come."

Rick Shelton says, "Sheri LaFontaine is truly one of

the most multi-talented servants in the Kingdom. Her writing is original and effective. She sings with power and finesse. Her life is exemplary. Sheri's ministry is a blessing to all who have the opportunity to hear her songs, play her records, listen to her radio show, or experience her in concert."

Take a few minutes to read this interview and learn more about Sheri's ministry.

Rob: "Sheri let's give the people a little history behind the person that is Sheri LaFontaine, let's start at the beginning."

Sheri: "I was born in Tucson, AZ and raised in Ontario Canada, Arkansas and Ohio.... yeah, I'm pretty traumatized from that. lol The baby of four very musical preacher's kids, I grew up singing. During the recording of my first solo CD, the piano player took one of my songs to The Ruppes, who cut it the next day. Jeff Easter, my producer, got me a job with Frank Arnold when I was 19. Touring with the Arnolds for

almost 4 years opened many doors for me as a singer and songwriter, including performing on a Gaither video. A songwriting lesson with Daryl Williams at



Stamps Baxter School of Music brought a surprise when I was asked to sign on the spot with Centergy Music. I later moved to Daywind Music Publishing at the request of my friend, Rick Shelton. I've been blessed to have so many wonderful groups record my songs and even chart them. In July of 2011, my first radio single, "New Every Morning," as a soloist reached #13 on the Singing News Top 80 Chart. Many divine appointments have brought me to where I am today and I pray God will continue to order my steps."

Rob: "Sheri, many writers start at a very young age, how old were you when you wrote your first song

and what was the title of it?"

Sheri: "I was 9 years old and it was called, "Yours Forever," my sister helped me write the verses, so I could record it on our Sunday school class CD. None of us had a clue how that CD would go all over the world. When I traveled to Germany for my high school senior trip, I was pleased to see it in their songbooks."

Rob: "What one artist would you say has the most influence on the way you write your songs?"



Sheri: "Because the Ruppes (Sisters) have recorded so many of my songs, many times I'll hear them singing it as I write. I am a huge fan of Chris Rice too. He gets me thinking out of the box."

Rob: "Sheri, many writers get there inspiration from many different

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE MUSIC

FEATURE ON SHERI LAFONTAINE by ROB ESTEP

Rob: "If you could pick just one song out of the many you have written, what one would be your favorite and why?"

Sheri: "This is a hard question to answer, but two different songs pop into my head right now. "What Are You Doing Right Now?" that the Hoskins Family recorded is crafty, fun and yet, powerful. The other one is a song called, "You Always Answer Me," recorded by Sisters. This song came at a time in my life when everything seemed to be going wrong. A broken heart, my parent's poor health and failed occupations left me feeling that the heavens were closed to me. I was suffering from depression and losing my vision of ever hearing from God again. One day for some strange reason, I started singing this chorus, 'You always answer me, right in my hour of need. Not always how I think you should, but always for my good. You always answer me.' The song was a reminder to God of His promise... as if He needed one. The next service, God spoke to me through His Word. An unexpected visiting minister spoke about David and all the songwriters of the hymns

down through the ages. He spoke of why they had to go through hard times and why they wrote of it."

Rob: "Many writers



always dream of writing with one of their heroes. If there was a writer, past or present that you could co-write a song with, who would it be and why?"

Sheri: "Well, as far as past, I would say Irving Berlin. He knew the heart of his audience and related well. In present day I would love to write with Wayne Haun. I write the lyric with the music and even arrange it while I go. I think he would get me."

Rob: "A song that really stuck out to me and has spoken to me every time I listen to it on your latest CD, Something More was "I Could Have Been Something." Can you tell me the story of how that song came to be written?"

Sheri: "I was sitting in the food court at the mall during lunch time. All the business men and women rushing by, in their designer clothes and styled hair,

glared at the young mother and her noisy son seated at a center table. It was evident that they were not just having a meal, they were having a moment. The little boy laughed loudly as they dunked their McNuggets and chatted about silly things. What I observed brought one thought to mind...What the world calls success, is not necessarily what God calls success. Sometimes we set out to be something the world sees as great, when God has called us to 'Something More.'"

Rob: "So besides writing killer songs, what helps pay the bills until the next Sheri LaFontaine hit comes along?"

Sheri: "As far as hobbies go, I enjoy spoiling my

nieces and nephews. I spend a lot of time with my sidekick, Miss Darby. She is my Shih tzu. I am a big animal lover. I also enjoy finding deals at garage sales and reselling them for more on Craigslist and E-bay."

"Aside from singing on the weekends, I am blessed to have a full-time position as an on-air radio personality at WPOS FM in Holland, Oh. I also promote concerts there once a month. I book artists such as, Ivan Parker, Jeff & Sheri Easter, The Talleys, Selah, Woody Wright, Mark Schultz, Three Bridges, 33 Miles, Beyond the Ashes and more."

I hope that you have enjoyed this look into the life of Sheri LaFontaine. If you have suggestions of writers or other industry people that you would like to know about please email me at robstep@sgnscoops.com

NOC HIGHLIGHTS

STORY OF NQC IN PHOTOS

Oct 2011



MEDIA & THE GOSPEL: BEING COURAGEOUS

LORRAINE WALKER

Christian media has long been in the background of what is happening in the world. Like the old shoe in the closet, it has been pushed aside and only looked at when everything else is in use.

this series we will look at those who sacrifice time, energy and funds to spread the love of Jesus and the message of the Gospel through print, web and visual media. From the movie industry

In an area held fast by Hollywood and its morals and world-view, Christian media has made great strides into the mainstream film industry. The "Passion Of the Christ", the Mel Gibson 2004 mega-hit, was a retelling of the last hours of Jesus' life and death that had believers and non-believers flocking to the theatres. Number one on its opening weekend, the movie grossed \$611,899,420 worldwide¹. According to a Barna poll, only half of the viewing audience of Passion considered themselves born-again Christians². This has lain to rest the criticism that only Christians will view Christian movies. Other popular releases have also shown that Christian films do not have to dilute their

the recent Soul Surfer. Fireproof, released in 2008 by Samuel Goldwyn Films and Affirm Films, became the highest-grossing independent film of that year. Sherwood Pictures produced this last film, a production company that is a ministry of Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia. Sherwood Pictures brought a story of commitment and fidelity to 839 theatres nationwide⁴ with a budget of \$500,000 and using mostly volunteers and donated locations. The Christian grass-roots project reached viewers across the country and across the world. Sherwood Pictures has followed this popular film with a new release on September 30, 2011 entitled "Courageous." Releasing to 2,000



From magazines to radio to movies, media with a Christian focus has been criticized for its lack of quality, professionalism and relativity. However, several facets of this industry are taking the secular audience by storm and destroying pre-conceived notions by creating a product that is making the world take notice. They are doing it without compromise, without diluting the message and without listening to those who say it can't be done. They are doing it with courage and with excellence. What is the heartbeat of Christian media? In

that seeks to portray the timeless story through new parables to the media that promotes Christian music, we look at the motivation and methods of those that broadcast and publish a statement that can be offensive, enraging or liberating. The statement that 'God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son' is the only message that our subjects find worthwhile to share with the world. They spend their lives giving their talents to ensure that all might hear this message. In Part One of this series, we focus on the Christian movie industry.



message to gain viewers, such as Left Behind, the Narnia series and

screens nationwide, this police drama follows four men on and off

MEDIA & THE GOSPEL: BEING COURAGEOUS

LORRAINE WALKER

this police drama follows four men on and off the job, delving into their home lives and centering on fatherhood. Alex Kendrick, Director, Co-Writer and star of the film, talked to SGN Scoops prior to the release of this new film, about the courageous movie-making of Sherwood Pictures and its association with Sherwood Baptist Church.

"Sherwood is an "out-of-the-box" church," said Kendrick. "Our Pastor, Michael Catt, believes in doing whatever is necessary to share God's truth with the world. Since God had given me a passion to use motion pictures as a ministry tool, Michael gave me his blessing to make a low-budget digital film in 2003. That \$20,000 effort was called "Flywheel," and played locally in our one theater. What happened next amazed us."

"Although we had prayed extensively over the project, we didn't think it would go beyond our city, but once we began selling DVDs of the movie, it took off. Today, over 600,000 copies have sold, and the film is now in 56 countries. We still hear from people each week that have been

touched and challenged by the story."

"That led us to our next film, Facing The Giants, which was shot in HD for \$100,000. Sony picked up the distribution rights, and put it in 441 theaters in 2006. It grossed \$10 million and sold over 3 million DVDs worldwide. Like Flywheel, the response was overwhelming."

"Fireproof was next, which expanded to 800 theaters and 3.5 million DVDs. Now, Courageous is set to come out September 30th. We can't wait to see how God uses this movie to impact people! In a way, God has taken our limited efforts and has done more than we ever imagined."

The Kendrick Brothers have increased their budget and their viewing audience with each release. Their evangelism may differ from that of a traveling preacher or musician, but they have the same goal of reaching the lost and encouraging the found. Kendrick said, "Jesus would tell stories in the form of parables to the masses. He used this method to engage them and to teach them truth. In like manner, we are telling stories to engage the audience and to share a message of truth

and hope. We're just using movie screens to do it."

"Since everyone loves a good story, it's an ideal way for us to touch millions of lives all around the world. As far as how well we do it, that's improving all the time. The technology is always changing, but the more education and experience we gain, then higher the level of excellence. For us, it starts with prayer, then research on the topic or theme. But when it comes to production, we're using the latest forms available, and we love the way technology is allowing us to do more and more."

The quality of the production and the depth of the storyline are increasing with every release of Sherwood Pictures. At a time when many would dilute their gospel message to make it more palatable to a larger audience, Kendrick sees their mission as the straightforward relating of Scriptural principals. "Making movies is like going to war," notes Kendrick. "An effective strategy doesn't involve just one attack point. In other words, we may send the army on land, the navy by sea, or the air force to gain a victory.

In Christian filmmaking, we need various stories that share truth from various angles. Ours are fairly bold and clearly evangelistic in their presentation. Others may make films that use a subtext message. But either way, the goal is the same."

"We desire to point people to a relationship with God through Christ. We would only ask other filmmakers to seek God wholeheartedly before making their film. When God's favor is on it, then you will have fruit."

Sherwood Pictures have gained acceptance into a large market despite their bold message. Kendrick says, "We don't ride the fence at all. Our first target is the church, and we're open about that. The reason we do that is because we're called to remind believers that we must be salt and light to the world. If they see no difference in our lives, marriages, and families, then our message is weakened."

"Secondly, we realize our audience will often contain those that don't know God in a personal way, so we purposely include the gospel. As a result, we've seen thousands of viewers come to Christ

MEDIA & THE GOSPEL: BEING COURAGEOUS

LORRAINE WALKER

after watching one of the films. So we start with the church, but acknowledge that the audience will include others too."

As an arm of the media that seeks to encourage believers and reach the lost, Sherwood Pictures is making great strides in film industry. With its fourth release, this courageous team of moviemakers is raising the bar for Christian films and for all of Christian media. Not satisfied with the status quo, the Kendrick Brothers keep pushing for excellence in their form of evangelism.

"God has placed a drive in my heart to share His truth through stories," says Alex Kendrick. "I feel like I am obeying him when I do this. I sense His pleasure, and there's no better thing in the world that to obey the calling of God."

Alex Kendrick and Sherwood Pictures are proving that Christian filmmaking is rising above a level of mediocrity and making a mark in the mainstream movie industry. Christian media of all types should follow their example, pressing on toward excellence, following the calling, and aiming for the pleasure of their



Almighty God.
For more information on viewing Courageous at a theatre near you, visit <http://www.courageousthemovie.com>.

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COVER STORY: It's All About Family

THE COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

When we speak of our family we think of mother, father, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles and so forth. When Kim and Phil Collingsworth speak of family, they are speaking of being a part of a spiritual family; the Family of God, and their ministry is focused on that spiritual family. As a matter of fact, the title of their latest recording is PART OF THE FAMILY with emphasis on that spiritual family.

The Collingsworths; Phil, Kim, Brooklyn, Courtney, Phillip Jr. and Olivia have one of the best recordings they have ever created, with some of the best songs and arrangements you'll ever hear! We recently caught up with Phil Collingsworth to discuss his family, and all the things God has brought their way.

Having just returned from the SINGING NEWS AWARDS at Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, Phil was playing catch-up on phone calls and messages. He also was trying to keep his feet on the ground, since Courtney has just been awarded both the Favorite Young Artist and Horizon Individual Awards. "It's always

special to have your children recognized for their talent and Brooklyn won Favorite Young Artist last year. It was a surprise that Courtney won both this year," Phil explained.

This recognition of the Collingsworth young ladies from SINGING NEWS fans is a definite indication that the family is making their presence known in the world of Southern Gospel Music. Phil commented, "Since a lot of our music arrangements are not exactly what you would call traditional Southern Gospel, we are thrilled that the fans are enjoying our music."

Phil and Kim Collingsworth have just celebrated their twenty fifth wedding anniversary and Phil took a quick trip with us back through time. "Kim and I met while we were both in college," Phil reminisced. "I thought she was beautiful, and she was a preacher's daughter. She could play the piano, and I just knew God was bringing her into my life for me to love and for us to work together for Him. She was so talented!"

The Collingsworths

first appointment was working together as musicians at a church camp. Phil continued his story, "That was in 1986, and along with our wedding anniversary, we're also celebrating twenty five years in the music ministry. We have been privileged to work together as Ministers of Music, and in other music capacities throughout these twenty five years. We would often do extended revivals, church camps and other musical presentations at various churches across the country, and as the children came along, they would join us. This has always been a family affair for Kim and me," he concluded.

When the children began coming along, Phil and Kim were praying for direction with their music ministry. "We had talked about a concert ministry, and the Lord really seemed to be leading in that direction," Phil explained. "We were recording and traveling; not much different than we are now, but not being able to spend any quality time with our children just to enjoy them, because we were always coming or going or getting ready to go,"

In 2000 the Collingsworths' prayers came to fruition; they began a full-time concert ministry, limiting the number of dates they would perform. By the following year, they were booked for a year ahead, sometimes as much as a year and a half in advance. Phil explained, "The kids were growing up and had become a key part of the music ministry. Along with Kim playing the piano, I played the trumpet; both Brooklyn and Courtney were learning to play the violin, Phillip was learning to play the guitar and all three were learning to sing harmony." He further stated, "We were beginning to put together various combinations of voices. We could have a trio with the Kim and the two girls, or myself, Kim and one of the girls, or Phillip and the two girls, or the entire family group or Olivia singing solo (she has recorded two solo albums,) and it became a lot of fun for all of us."

By 2004 the family had a number of recordings to their credit and they were touring regularly. They signed a booking contract with Dominion Talent Agency. Michael

COVER STORY: It's All About Family

THE COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

Davis began handling all their concert dates.

People have commented on the crowds of fans who attend the Collingsworth's concerts, so Phil described the work the family does to promote the concert schedule. "One thing that we've learned is that people can't come to your concert, if they don't know you're doing one," he said. "Several years ago we began building a data base of mail contacts, which has grown to more than forty five hundred mailing addresses. When we are booked into an area, we go into our computer data base and mail cards

come, then WE will make sure they hear something that lets them know that Jesus loves them, that He is real and He will never turn them away."

"That definitely made a difference for us," Phil said. "We now work about one hundred fifteen or twenty dates a year, which allows more opportunities for us as a family."

That became important when the older children began dating, and last year both older girls were married within six months of each other. Phil laughed and said, "Now that was fun! Two big weddings within a six



to every person in that zip code area, who has signed up for our mail list. When people realize that you're interested in them enough to send them a post card or a note, then they will put forth the effort to come to the concert. Once they

month period!"

Brooklyn and William Blair were married on December 10, 2010 and Courtney and Michael Metz were married the following June 4th. "Both spouses were able to travel with us during

the summer months. They went with us to Sweden when we sang for the Homecoming event there, with Karen Peck and New River, Linda Randall and Marsh Hampton," Phil stated. "Both William and Michael are in college and are limited as far as traveling during the school year, Brooklyn and Courtney want to continue to sing and travel and we want to work with them as much as possible. Contrary to what anyone might have heard, the girls are still a part of this family ministry."

One of the most exciting recordings available in Christian music right now is the Collingsworths' new album on Stowtown Records titled PART OF THE FAMILY. Producer Wayne Haun, who has worked with the family for several years, produced for them again and the results are astounding. Each of the twelve songs is uniquely different and yet so alike that they each fill a specific need on the recording. "Tell That Mountain" is the first song we are hearing on Gospel radio, and this song features Phillip. "Phillips voice has matured so much,

and he does a wonderful job on this song," Phil stated. "This is just one of the great songs on the recording."

Kim's sister, Julia, called one day and said she had just sung for a funeral and had an awesome song she wanted Kim to hear. She sang it to Kim over the phone, and then told Kim that it was written by the father of one of their friends, Phillip Batten. Phil Collingsworth told the story, "Phillip Batten's father, a powerful minister of the Gospel, wrote 'That's Where I'm Longing To Go,' and had never published it. He and his wife would sing it in revivals and camp meetings, so we introduced the song to Wayne. Once he heard it, we all agreed that it was a song we really needed on the recording."

Daryl Williams and Cyndi Ballard wrote a song a few years ago that the Collingsworths and Wayne Haun fell in love with. "We were looking for a fast song that had some 'meat,' not just pretty words and a good beat," Phil revealed. "Just Another Rainey Day' was exactly what we needed and we knew it had to be added to the album."

COVER STORY: It's All About Family

THE COLLINGSWORTH FAMILY by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

Marty Funderburk wrote a song that Courtney does a fantastic job singing. "Nothing's Worrying Me" is a jazzy song that Courtney calls her "crooner" song," Phil laughed. "It's got such wonderful lyrics and the music tracks fit the song perfectly."

Phil Collingsworth discussed the songwriters whose work is featured on **PART OF THE FAMILY**. "Songwriting is a craft, an art that sometimes is overlooked, or just not respected," he stated. "Men and women who have that talent are important to the Kingdom of God, since their words are what speak to the heart of the listener. Yes, as artists, we sing those words and present the message, but without the craft, the art of putting the songs together, there would be

no message."

As Kim and Phil Collingsworth have grown their ministry, they have grown their family into a unit of praise to God for His



blessings on their lives. Their children are taking more ownership within the family ministry, and that thrills Kim and Phil. Since William and Michael married their daughters and joined the family, they, too, share in the duties, as well as the ministry of The

Collingsworths. "We're so thankful that these two young men have the desire to be a part of this ministry," Phil stated.

The words to the Lanny Wolfe classic, the title

song, "Part of the Family (of God)," are so easy to sing since the Collingsworths really live the song. "We're so pleased to be a part of the family of God, and we want others to know the love and acceptance that is there for them, when they become a part of

that family," Phil testified. "That's what this ministry is all about; growing the Kingdom, and it is our job in the Kingdom. And we're here to work till the King comes back for us.

The Collingsworths want you to know that they love you and would love to welcome you into the family of God. That's the best gift they could ever give you and not only do they enjoy sharing their music and testimonies, they enjoy giving you the opportunity to know the God they serve. They want YOU to be a **PART OF THE FAMILY** that they are singing about. Whenever the Collingsworths are scheduled for your area, make it a point to go out to enjoy their music and their family.

JOHN MATHIS, JR

"That's My Story, So What's Yours?"

"That's my story, so what's yours? Everyone has a story!" that question and brief statement caught me by surprise. In my 40 years of living no one had ever asked me outright what my story was. I had played music in front of thousands, written songs on charts, been an evangelist, a pastor, a worship director and been in prominent positions in high profile businesses. I instantly realized that in all of those platforms no one had ever asked me that question and I didn't even know where to begin.

I had been frequenting a little shop where several guys hung out while they had coffee or a soft drink and chatted about sports, politics, life, etc. I had recently befriended a gentleman who had just finished telling me the amazing story of his life, how he grew up in an orphanage, was sentenced to life in prison by the time he was eighteen years old, was miraculously freed and became a minister, national speaker and author. Now I found my mind racing through all of my life events trying

to formulate them into a two minute summary of "my story". I didn't even know where to begin or what to say. And most important of all, it was a low time in my life where I had gone through some major life changes and events and really didn't feel all that great about "my story".

I began to stumble through the highlights and lowlights of my life; over-explaining some things and under-explaining others. I felt a sense of pride when telling certain events and a sense of shame when mentioning others. I felt like I had lived five lives already so it was difficult for me to keep "my story" from sounding like a zigzagging ramble and have it somewhat arrive at an ultimate conclusion or direction. In fact, the difficult part was that I had lived all of this life and yet there were no conclusions or resolutions or ultimate successes..... in my mind. Seemingly just a life of ebbs and a flows, starts and stops, high's and low's, some successes and what felt like many failures. It felt odd and uncomfortable for me to verbalize my life story for the FIRST TIME, like I was trying

to recount some crazy dream I had the night before. So I basically spilled my guts and blurted out the life scenes that flashed across my mind!

James, my new friend,



listened graciously and finally said, "Wow, you have an amazing story!". Then he began to share Romans 8:28 with me, a verse I've heard, read, written songs about and even preached on myself! "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose." He began to expound how God has a 'thesis' or 'prothesis' (the root meaning of the word "purpose" in Romans 8:28) for our lives. A composition or story that HE is the author of. How that we often have a hybrid of God's purpose that WE try to write for our own life or as he termed it; a 'hypothesis'. A

"proposed" story that has a little of what we feel God's purpose is and a lot of what we'd like to see our purpose become. And how the enemy has an 'antithesis'. A story he would like to write for our lives that is completely the opposite of what God intends. That one encounter and conversation that day has opened my mind to the fact that we all have a story. Not one written on paper with pen, but stories that are being lived out simultaneously and intertwined with countless others. Stories that are continually being written each day and most often without the knowledge or awareness of its author. That encounter allowed me the insight and ability to compare the story of my life with those of books and novels. How authors write with specific aim, intent and purpose. How they want to take a reader from "point A" and journey to a concluding "point B". A writer will construct and introduce a main character in his book, conveying all of his attributes and creating this complex individual. Over the course of our reading we learn whether this main character is kind or harsh,

JOHN MATHIS, JR

happy or sad, positive or negative, grounded or lost. What their mental state is, what are their strengths or weaknesses, what they struggle with or excel at, how they react and cope with each situation, even what their inner most thoughts are. Then the writer will introduce supporting characters to enable the theme or plot to take certain twists or turns, influencing the life of the main character and guiding the story to its final conclusion; allowing the reader to see how each event, each person, each action ultimately led the main character to a final conclusion and chapter. A journey to those last two words of the book, "The End". It's so easy to read books or watch movies and want to tell the main character to "watch out" or "stay away from that person, they're T-R-O-U-B-L-E" or "don't make THAT decision!". However; WE are our OWN main character in the story of our lives!

I doubt the gentleman I spoke with that day realizes that ten minute conversation we had that day invoked so much awareness and focus on my own story as to set off a new resolution to begin to write my story

with more purpose and clarification. It steered me from a moment of cloudiness to clarity. I know more now about how I want my story to end and how I want it to read when my children and grandchildren hear it or when I share it with others. I realize how impactful it can be and could possibly change the direction of some random person I may meet and have a brief conversation with. You may be reading this "story", but you're living and writing your own at this very moment and God can be the author of it. He has to power to take everything, both good AND bad, and complete your story with purpose and intent. Write your story! Share your story! Ask others what "their" story is! It's a great way to open a door and help someone follow the path God has for them in life.

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SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC

LOSES ANOTHER HERO (Remembering Charles Burke) by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

One of Southern Gospel Music's best known and well-loved heroes went home to be with

Charlie served as a board member of the Southern Gospel Music Association and the

September 18th.

Without a doubt, Charles and Carolyn Burke have impacted the lives of countless individuals in Southern Gospel music. His legacy is the success these individuals attained through his support and encouragement. Mrs. Carolyn Burke spoke with us on Saturday morning, September 24th, thanking the industry and fans for their concern and support during this trying time for her family. "We respectfully ask that everyone continue to pray for us," she stated. "Charlie had been doing very well and enjoyed the week at the National Quartet Convention, visiting with everyone. The suddenness of his passing has been a shock and we appreciate the calls, prayers and cards that we are receiving. You're continued prayers mean so much."

A number of people involved in the industry and who have interacted with Mr. Burke over the years have offered their comments and memories. We have compiled these as a tribute to our dear friend, Charles Burke.

Clarke Beasley

Executive Vice President, National Quartet Convention President, Southern Gospel Music Guild

"The greatest among us are those who do not focus on elevating themselves but elevating others. Charles Burke spent a lifetime elevating others, dreaming dreams and bringing them to fruition, advancing the cause of the music he loved and the professionals within that music that he loved even more. To the countless people whose lives he impacted, his memory will be cherished and he will be greatly missed. Last week, as president of the Southern Gospel Music Guild, I watched as Mr. Burke was celebrated by the people who loved him most as he was presented the Lifetime Achievement Honor. I am so glad he knew just how much he was appreciated."

Clayton Inman:

"I'm saddened today by the loss of Mr. Charles Burke. A father figure to my family and me. Mr. Burke gave me the opportunity to sing professionally in 1983.



Charles Burke Family pictured at the SGMG Lifetime Achievement Honor Reception

L-R: Kristen Dellinger (Michael & Tina's daughter), Michael Burke, Tina Burke, Carolyn & Charles Burke, Donna Goodson (daughter of Charlie & Carolyn), Franky Goodson

Photo by Aaron Crisler / The Judy Nelon Group

the Lord on Friday, September 23rd, 2011. Charlie Burke, as he was affectionately known to all, passed away early Friday morning, after suffering what doctors have described as a brain aneurysm late Thursday night at his home in Maiden, North Carolina. Charlie and his wife Carolyn have been a major part of Southern Gospel Music for more than half a century.

It has been reported that Charlie was a "behind the scenes" participant in the industry, holding various offices and positions within the governing bodies of the industry.

Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame. As partial owner of the National Quartet Convention, and owner of the '80s sensational quartet, The Singing Americans, his expertise in managerial skills and quality quartet performance was sought by many. Along with his son Michael, he owned the very successful Tape Corporation Of America.

During the recent 2011 National Quartet Convention, Mr. Burke was recognized by his peers with the Southern Gospel Music Guild's Lifetime Achievement Honor. He celebrated his 75th birthday on Sunday,

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The Inmans dearly love the Burke family and continue to remember them during this time. Thank you Mr. Burke for my start in Gospel Music."

John Crenshaw, The Original Southern Gospel Music Historian:

"Charlie was a kind man that always had time for others. I would often stop by his office "unannounced", and he would treat me like royalty. We were able to spend some time together at the Grand Ole Gospel Reunion and I will miss this gentleman!"

Ann Downing:

One thing that encourages me concerning the attributes of a person is their commitment to what they believe in and strive for. Charlie believed in Gospel music and was committed to doing whatever he could do to make it better and better, all the while giving so many an opportunity to spread their wings.

Kathy Crabb Hannah:

"I just heard that my old friend, Charlie Burke passed away this morning, and I am sad. I wanted to see

him at NQC and didn't get to this year. Charlie was there for me in the beginning of the Crabb Family days in a big way! My 'Charlie Burke' story will be a chapter in my book! Love you old buddy, you will be missed."

Gerald Wolfe:

"Charlie was always an inspiration to me, both professionally and personally. I love his great sense of humor, and his consistency



was unquestionable. I always knew I would be dealing with the same Charlie, every time I saw him. Seeing him and hearing his great stories were one of the highlights of attending some of my early NQC Board meetings. I could always depend on him for a good laugh and a word of encouragement. I will miss him, as will everyone who knew

him."

Kelly Nelon Clark:

"I loved Charlie Burke. He was a good friend to my father and to me. He also gave my husband Jason his first job in gospel music. Jason and I talked with Charlie for quite a while at this last NQC and he shared his passion for God and our industry. He told us, 'You know I might have been a little hard at times, but I just wanted to have the perfect quartet, a group

that just did everything right.' Really, that is what we all strive to do; be the best we can be in God's eyes. Charlie surely did strive for that and we will miss him so much!"

Josh Garner:

"Wow! Our loss is Heaven's gain. Just got a huge kick in the gut when I learned our dear friend, Charlie Burke,

had gone on to glory. I can't begin to tell you what an influence he has been on me over the last few years. Of course, his touch on Southern Gospel music is unprecedented, but to me, personally, he has been a mentor and friend like no other. At my lowest point, when I thought my singing days were over, Charlie motivated me to keep fighting for my dreams and even counseled me on ways to support my ministry. He is one of the biggest reasons I have gone back to college. He was always quick to remind me that God gave me a voice to sing, but He, also, gave me a mind to create opportunity to use my gift. I am forever grateful to Mr. Charles Burke for his contributions to our industry and my life. My prayers and support go out to his precious family at this time. Thank you, Lord, for my friend, Charlie!"

Sheila and Paul Heil, The Gospel Greats:

"Charlie Burke was a gracious gentleman. Gentle but effective. God gave him his business acumen and Charlie gave God the results. God gave Charlie a loving

SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC

LOSES ANOTHER HERO (Remembering Charles Burke) by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

personality; Charlie used it well, and God multiplied His love in return. Charlie was a make-it-happen kind of guy, but he knew Who really made it happen."

"Just one week before his untimely death, I asked Charlie if he felt Southern Gospel music was in good hands for the next generation. Although he had a lot to say about that (which I shared on the air,) it could be summed up in one word: 'Yes.' And, coming from someone who's been such an enabler behind the scenes for so many years, that's reassuring."

"Charlie is missed by all those who knew and loved him. What a shock after just talking with him last week. We never know when it will be our time and we need to be ready."

Rick Busby:

"Charlie Burke was a big man, but had an even bigger heart. In 2002, after I had left the Professional Quartet Circuit and was in Music Evangelism with my wife Cyndi, I took ill and was unable to sing or travel for quite some time. One day UPS came by and I unloaded three large

boxes from TCA (CD and Tape Duplication Co. owned by the Burkes). Brother Charlie and his son Michael Burke gifted me about 2000 of my two solo CD's, so that I could sell them to help pay my medical and living expenses. We will never forget such a wonderful act of kindness and love. He will be sorely missed!"

Jeff and Sheri Easter:

"Regarding Charlie's death, he hired Jeff as the Singing Americans' bass player in 1984. Jeff said earlier today, 'Charlie taught me a lot. He was a part of me meeting Sheri and he always loved to celebrate any successes with us, saying it would never have happened without him. He loved this music and will be missed.'"

James Rainey:

"In 1986 I received the greatest phone call of my career. It was Dewayne Burke asking me to come play for the Singing Americans. Little did I know this was to be the greatest 5 1/2 years of my life. Charlie Burke taught me how to be a great quartet pianist. Even though he could not play piano himself, he knew

exactly what it took. The funniest moment I had with Charlie was when I missed the bus leaving convention headed to the next date. That wasn't the funny part. I missed it because I was saying goodbye to a girl from California, and Charlie had told me to leave her alone and stay focused on my job. Because I didn't listen, Charlie made me ride 2 1/2 hours in the back of his mini-van loaded down with convention items. He lectured me for the ENTIRE 2 1/2 hours. I thought he was going to fire me over it but thus began a great friendship. I was told that Charlie had just told this story to someone just hours before he passed away. He is probably telling God about it now. He was a boss, a friend and a father figure. He will be greatly missed. May the things that he did for all of us live on. Thank you, Charlie, for the GREATEST days of my life. By the way, you were the only one that I would let my wife kiss on the cheek every time you rode your scooter by our booth, except Miles Cooper who still remains Laura's boyfriend."

Steve Perkins, former long-time bass guitarist

for The Bishops:

"I met Charles Burke back in the mid-eighties, when the Singing Americans Quartet was the hottest thing going, and I was the Music Director at an FM Southern Gospel Radio Station in the Cincinnati/Dayton market. My dream was to play bass guitar for a major full-time Gospel group. Mr. Burke allowed me to ride the bus with the Americans, giving me a chance to see first-hand, just how "glamorous" road life was. He also advised me to learn all I could about the business side of Gospel Music, because he felt that bass players would one day be a luxury that most groups could not afford. When Mark Fain joined Gold City, Mr. Burke almost hired me for the Singing Americans, but felt that with keyboard and tracks, he could save the salary. He was one of the pioneers to go that route. After I joined the Bishops, he would always joke with me that his biggest mistake was not his failure to keep a consistent vocal line-up of his group, but his biggest mistake was not hiring me! We both knew that wasn't true, but it was his way

SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC

LOSES ANOTHER HERO (Remembering Charles Burke) by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

of encouraging me and acknowledging my success with The Bishops. Last week, he and I spoke for the last time. And like all the times before, we would talk "business" only after he asked about my family. When he befriended you, you were more than just a colleague in Gospel Music. He was interested in your life first and Gospel Music second. Charlie did so much for people that others are not aware of. There is a huge void in the Southern Gospel Music family with Mr. Burke's passing. His shoes, which we always teased him about, were quite large and will be impossible to fill."

Carroll L. McGruder :

"Charles Burke was a true leader in the Southern Gospel Music arena. He led the field indeed, not merely word! It was a privilege to know him, and to work with him in the enterprise he loved so dearly! He is greatly missed, already, by us all. "The 'Singing American' has journeyed on!!!"

Holly Robinson-Blanton,
Son Sound Studios:

We have lost a good

man today! Our staff at Son Sound Studios was honored to work with him just a few weeks ago on a recording project for the Master's Music Men Quartet. We sat and talked into the night about how much he loved Gospel Music. He will be dearly missed but we KNOW he is HOME now!"

In closing, my heart was crushed early Friday when I received a phone call of Charlie Burke's passing. In 1980, when I had just become involved in the journalistic part of Southern Gospel Music, Charlie was my staunchest encourager and supporter. He introduced me to his wife, and Carolyn became just as special to me as Charlie. I can honestly say that I would not be involved in this music, in the capacity that I am, without their compassion and support. I spent some quality time with Charlie at the Grand Ole Gospel Reunion in August of this year. Once again he reminded me that this is where God placed me and I should always remember that.

Charlie, we will meet again around the Throne in Heaven. You are missed! – Sandi Duncan Clark

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RHONDA FRYE

Grammy Award Winner, 14-time GMA Dove Award Winning, Jason Crabb is one of the most esteemed and diverse vocalists in Gospel Music today. Scarcely did he fathom, as a youngster, enjoying country and gospel music, that God was shaping his life for ministry. Little did he know that God was preparing him for

and credits God for his success. At almost every concert, Crabb proclaims boldly through song; he'd rather have Jesus more than anything.

Up until 2007, Jason realized many accomplishments touring with his brothers and sisters. The Crabb Family is known for

connected many people with the life-changing power of Jesus Christ.

Just as the Crabb Family was soaring high, God had a new plan. In 2007, the Crabb Family officially retired. Ministry was hardly over, in fact, that was just the beginning of a new explosion of Kingdom expanding! The brothers and sisters parted ways, but have been covering more territory separately than together. Although Jason was initially nervous about the drastic change, he has continued to experience tremendous success as a solo artist.

In 2009, Jason released his self-titled debut album garnering a Grammy Award for the best southern/country/blue-grass gospel album of the year. This album also claimed a Dove Award for Song of the Year for "Sometimes I Cry." In 2010, Spring Hill Music Group released Jason's Christmas album, BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS. From this album, Crabb received Dove Awards for Inspirational Recorded Song of the Year for "Joseph" and Traditional Gospel Recorded Song of

the Year for "Go Tell It On The Mountain."



Extending his music ministry, Crabb released his first inspirational book, "Trusting God To Get You Through," in January 2010. Crabb takes the lyrics of the Crabb Family hit-"Through the Fire" and shares his personal life stories about how he has lived out the lyrics of the song.

On April 19, 2011, Jason Crabb burst onto the stage of Nashville's historic Loveless Café Barn following an introduction by longtime friend and mentor, Bill Gaither. Gaither and Crabb had previously collaborated and chose a collection of great church songs that have stood the test of time. Excitement ran high as Crabb and his band



a ministry that would stretch across the nation and spread into foreign lands. From Beaver Dam Kentucky, Jason Crabb began his music career at the ripe young age of 14. During his career, he has performed at the Grand Ole Opry, Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn Tabernacle and Gaither arenas- just to name a few places! His music has topped the charts over and over again and garnered numerous awards. Despite the fame and success, Crabb remains humble, approachable

heart-touching songs such as "Greater," "Through the Fire," "Please Come Down To Me," and many more. The Crabbs re-defined gospel music by blurring the lines between genres with their unique Crabb style. Not only could they strike the heart with their music, but they always catered to every single fan that visited their table night after night. With a potent anointing, incredible musical skills, power-house vocals, and a raw transparency, The Crabb's ministry

RHONDA FRYE

resurrected these songs by adding that one-of-a-kind Crabb flair. A CD and DVD recording seized the unforgettable moments of the electric night and is now available.

During the 2011 National Quartet Convention, Jason Crabb visited the SGN Scoops booth and shared his enthusiasm about the new project, **THE SONG LIVES ON**.

Scoops: "Tell us about your new project."

Jason: "It was a LOT of fun, I had a blast. This was something that I had always wanted to do. I wanted to do the older songs, the songs that I grew up singing. These were the songs I sang as a kid and the ones that the church sang. Back then, we'd go to church and we would get out of the old hymn book and start picking songs. The next thing you'd know - it would just turn into a song service! I just like that! Today, a lot of people are doing praise and worship, and that's cool, I like praise and worship

too. I just don't want the hymns and the great songs of the church to die. If there's any way we can keep these old songs going, we want to be a part of it. And you know-I wanted something I could give to my kids too!"

Scoops: "Who were some of the guest performers?"

Jason: Bill Gaither was there, the Gaither Vocal Band was there. It was so cool that they came and sang and did some numbers- they're all on the new video. They did "Please Forgive Me"- the Crabb Family old song. William Lee Golden, from the Oak Ridge

wasn't meant to happen, it just happened. Bill and William were sitting beside each other and we were doing that song, "Why Me?" Bill said, man- you should have heard us singing the next thing you know they are up on stage and we are singing that song together! It was the coolest thing!"

"The family {Crabb Family} came and sang 'Through the Fire' and the Isaacs sang with me on a tune too- which is probably going to be one of my first singles, "Who am I?" It's such a great song, I REALLY love it!"

Scoops: "Did your band play?"

pickers! This is what I've always pictured and what I've always wanted. I've always wanted the band and I to do this- And that's just take old songs give them a fresh touch like you're hearing it for the first time, but it's still familiar."

Scoops: "Can you tell us a few of the songs that are on the album?"

Jason: "Oh, there are so many good songs on there! Songs like: "I Saw The Light," "Midnight Cry," "Sweet Beulah Land," "Until Then," "Through The Fire," "God on the Mountain," and so many more. There are 18 great songs on there.

Scoops: "When is the release date?"

Jason: "The release date is October 18, 2011. We're taking pre-orders on my website now and the first 250 copies will be signed."

Celeste Winstead of Spring Hill Music shares,

"**THE SONG LIVES ON** will also include a new version of Crabb's GMA DOVE Award-winning Song of the Year for



Click this square to activate Jason Crabb video

Boys, was there too. That was so cool! Actually, William Lee, Bill Gaither and I got together and we sang a song, but it

Jason: "Oh yeah! I was so excited that the band got to play on this record. They are such great

RHONDA FRYE

2011 "Sometimes I Cry," which Crabb recently re-recorded at the Billy Graham Library in NC, as part of the filming for the fall releases of the two new Gaither Homecoming videos—Tent Revival Homecoming and The Old Rugged Cross.

positioned across retail and online accounts. Both releases are distributed exclusively by EMI CMG Distribution."

For more information on Jason Crabb, please visit <http://jasoncrabb.com>

Both projects, produced by Gaither, will be featured on multiple TV networks as part of a direct campaign this fall and will be strategically

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HELPING PASTORS FINISH WELL by RHONDA FRYE

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance." That's a great reminder from Paul found in I Thessalonians 5:12 and that was before there was an official "Pastor's Appreciation Month!" October is the month set aside to express appreciation to pastors- but if we want to help them to FINISH WELL, let's honor them all year long!

I have been the Associate Pastor at my church for the past four years. Although I work with a great group of people and under a wonderful senior pastor, I have to say there have been days I've thought to myself, "I didn't sign up for this!" I have felt the weight of carrying a few secrets which has prompted me to wonder how many secrets a pastor will take to their grave? I have felt the sting of being mis-understood as well as many other emotions and I'm just getting my feet wet in the ministry. I'm just an associate pastor, but I have had my eyes opened to what it's really like to be a pastor and it's made me cringe over the times I

gave my previous pastor grief over little things.

Pastors carry a tremendous load. Many are juggling families, ministry and an outside job. Often, pastors do not have staff or volunteers and they do everything from cleaning the church, mowing the lawn and keeping up with church finances. Speaking of which, many pastors are thrown into roles of business and office

management and we all know seminary hardly teaches those skills! On top of the daily routines that come with being a pastor, perhaps the obligation that brings the most stress is the responsibility of the spiritual well-being of those in which the pastor is accountable. Rightly dividing the Word of Truth is an enormous task. With the stress of responsibilities

and unreasonable expectations, many pastors walk away from the ministry.

According to The Christian Post Website, Jonathan Falwell, Senior Pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church noted during the 2010 Refuel Pastors Conference, "Half of pastors would



leave the ministry tomorrow if they could. Seventy percent are fighting depression and 90 percent can't cope with the challenge of ministry." The Christian Post reported that Falwell cited sources from Lifeway, Barna and Acts 29 by claiming as many as 1500 pastors exit the ministry because of moral failure, burnout, discouragement or depression. Falwell

claimed as many as 80% of Seminary and Bible School graduates leave within the first five years of ministry. There are many websites and studies available online confirming the fact that MANY pastors are leaving the ministry downhearted and defeated!

It's hard to imagine the person standing behind the pulpit could be fighting feelings of inadequacy, is lonely because they have very few friends, and often feels misunderstood. After all- this is the PASTOR we're talking about! If the pastor doesn't have it all together than who does? Good question! Making matters worse, the pastor lives in a fishbowl with the entire congregation watching the pastoral family and often expects perfection from all pastoral family members at all times.

The good news is, although being a pastor is tough, most can't imagine doing anything else! Our pastors just need more than a gift card to the Cracker Barrel every October, they need serious encouragement and support! Surely we can provide it. Don't

HELPING PASTORS FINISH WELL by RHONDA FRYE

get me wrong- pastors appreciate gifts, but we can encourage our pastors all throughout the year, not just in the month of October. Here are a few things that top a Pastor's wish-list for Pastor's Appreciation Month and also some ideas of how we can help:

Love: Truly love your pastor using I Corinthians 13:4 as the standard. It's easy to say "I love my pastor," but do you love your pastor enough to not keep records of wrongs? Remember, love is patient, love is kind! Pastors need to be shown true Christian love like everyone else!

Acceptance: To make your pastor feel accepted, become interested in their hobbies, hopes and dreams. Remember gossip and criticism will tear a pastor down quicker than anything! We all need to respect (in public AND in private) the pastor for he/she is and for the position held. Remember, pastors are still human and we should make allowances for one another's faults.

Prayer: Satan glories in a minister's downfall. He is out to kill, steal and

destroy, and trust me pastors are not exempt from his plan. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Pastors need prayer on a daily basis. It's a good idea to pray scripture of the entire pastoral family. Pray for an increase in knowledge and wisdom and also pray for protection. It's always a good idea to pray that your pastor will hear and obey God's voice as well.

Spiritual Maturity: Remember what it was like when your child took his first step? In the same way, pastors take great delight in the spiritual growth of their flock. When people mature spiritually, the other issues in the church seem to take care of themselves. Spiritual maturity will raise the spirit of love and cooperation throughout the congregation. The result of spiritual maturity will be an increase in church leadership too, thus reducing the pastor's "task-list." Let's honor our pastors by growing up!

Time Off: Regularly schedule time off for the pastor to rest, relax and receive ministry.

If your church is looking for tangible ways to express appreciation during the month of October, most pastors feel appreciated by acts of kindness and generosity. They enjoy notes and cards of encouragement, tickets to sporting events, musical, plays and concerts. They like gift cards to Christian bookstores, Christian music CDs, Christian books and Christian movies. We know that all pastors love to eat, so restaurant gift cards are great too.

The sky is the limit for tangible expressions of appreciation, but let's remember to

honor our pastors all year long especially in the ways mentioned above. We want our pastors to FINISH WELL the assignment God has given! Remember, I Timothy 5:17 says, "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is teaching and preaching." Let's show our pastors with double honor this October and beyond!

References: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/falwell-measurements-of-success-in-ministry-are-messed-up-45219>



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WITH ADAM BROWN by VICTORIA SHIREY

Hello everyone! This month I had the privilege doing an interview with Adam Brown, of The Browns. Adam is such a sweetheart and a very talented young man. I met Adam and his family a few years back at Singing In The Sun, I believe. I instantly fell in love with his family, and I know you will too. So, here are some things about Adam...

Victoria: Is there anything exciting happening with The Browns right now?

Adam: Well, this spring our sister, Jessica and her husband Nick Trammell joined our group. We also just came out with a brand new CD with 14 songs, 11 of them written by us. We also just finished our 2nd music video of our new Celtic violin song.

Victoria: That's awesome! What is it like traveling with the Brown family?

Adam: Traveling with my family is a blast! I could write a book with all kinds of good stories. Traveling on the bus and touring with the family, there is never a dull moment. I wouldn't want to travel with any other group!

Victoria: You guys are so talented on your instruments! What all do you play, and how long have you been playing?

Adam: I play the violin and guitar. I've played the violin for 12 years, and the guitar for 7. The last 5 years I've been endorsed by Taylor guitars, which is an amazing blessing!

Victoria: What is your favorite thing to do on the bus?

Adam: My favorite thing to do on the bus is probably practice guitar or write songs. We all enjoy watching football though.

Victoria: Do you have a favorite restaurant that you guys like to eat at while on the road?

Adam: We like to eat at Cracker Barrel on the road.

Victoria: How old are you now, Adam?

Adam: I'm 21 now and will be 22 on November 6th.

Victoria: Do you have a secret hobby?

Adam: My secret hobby is buying real estate. I

bought my first house and started my own real estate company when I was 18. Now, I have multiple properties in three different towns near where I live. I absolutely love real estate!



Victoria: That's a really neat and unique hobby for someone your age. Your family puts on the bowling night at NQC every year, which has been a part of that week for a very long time. I know I always enjoy going to it and having fun with my road buddies. How cool is it to you that you guys get to make such a major impact on folks, just by opening up your hearts and sponsoring an event like that?

Adam: We love to reach out to young people in gospel music. Jason

Crabb first invited me to the bowling party back when their family sponsored it. When we first attended the bowling party, it gave our family a chance to get to know other artists better and make

lots of great friends. It just gives everybody a chance to hang out and get to know each other. We want everybody to be involved and feel at home in the Southern Gospel industry, like we do. It's a way we can give back what's been given to us.

Victoria: What is your favorite Southern Gospel event to be involved in?

Adam: My favorite Southern Gospel event would be The National Quartet Convention, hands down!

WITH ADAM BROWN by VICTORIA SHIREY

Victoria: I definitely agree with you on that one! Do you have a favorite singer or musician?

Adam: My favorite singer is Jason Crabb. In fact, we just opened for him at the Gaither Fall Festival this weekend.

Victoria: Is there anything coming up in the near future that you're looking forward to?

Adam: I'm always looking forward to

something. This year our family was asked to play on the main stage at the National Quartet Convention for the first time, which was the highlight of my year!

Victoria: To keep up with and see The Browns LIVE, you can visit their website, which is what?

Adam: You can go to our website at www.thebrownsmusic.com. You also can like us on Facebook, The Browns.

Thank you so much, Adam for taking the time to do this interview for all of the SGN Scoops readers! Keep reading every month to see interviews with your favorite, young Southern Gospel artists!



Rhonda Frye

LOOK FOR MY NEW RELEASE ON
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"Come To Me"

WWW.RHONDAFRYE.COM

SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

Thank you to all who have submitted your new recordings to us for review! It's a privilege to enjoy your talent and to share your new music with our readers. Please be patient with us, as space constraints limit us to a certain number each month. We will have your project featured in a future issue, as we have received them. I do want to remind everyone that we will be featuring new Christmas music in the December magazine, so please get your new recordings in the mail now!

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FAROE ISLANDS
Russ Taff
Springhill Music Group Inc
Producer Ja'kup Zachariassen

This recording is such a delightful change of pace and is particularly enjoyable. Russ Taff is a brilliantly talented gentleman whose voice is brimming with emotion. His music is passionate and he has sixteen unique songs with outstanding music tracks and powerful messages. Several are written by musicians and song writers from the Faroe Islands. I love the style and music!

The Faroe Islands are located between the North Atlantic Ocean and the Norwegian Sea, between Scotland and Iceland. The producer used the musical style of the region to create several masterpieces. Russ Taff's talented wife, Tori, contributed lyrics to a couple of songs, as did Suzanne Jennings, Gloria Gaither and Russ, himself. Several well-known songs have been given new life on this album; "Help Me" and "I Believe In You" are uniquely different.

I have several favorites, each for a different reason. "Here Comes Jesus" tells the life story of Jesus in a very unique way, with excellent music tracks. I also like "Harvest" since it begins with the native Faroese chants and is such an emotional song.

Gloria Gaither and Russ wrote "Go Play In The Sun" which speaks to anyone who has ever felt lost, unsure of his relationship with God, and wondered if God's mercies are true. This song assures us that God is with us and His mercies are everlasting. The final cut is "Day By Day," making the statement that God is with us constantly for all our days. Sharing my thoughts with you cannot reveal the blessing on this recording. I challenge you to get your copy, enjoy and be blessed. You may contact Russ Taff Ministries at www.russtaff.com



CARRY ON
Four Fold
Sanctuary Music
Producer Shane Roark

Four Fold has enjoyed a long career singing traditional Southern Gospel music quartet style. They have a great number of fans who follow their music ministry and this new album is certainly a "must-have" for those fans, or any fan of smooth, traditional quartet music.

CARRY ON has twelve good songs for your enjoyment. This is one of the quartet's best recordings, and is definitely well worth your time. The title song "Carry On," has first-rate orchestration on the music and a very compelling message. The group does a great job on this one. "Heaven Knows" is one of my favorite songs, and Four Fold is impressive with their version of this one. Another old favorite, "Look For Me" is one of the quartet's best songs on CARRY ON. Four Fold gives the old song made famous by the Statesmen Quartet, "Happy Rhythm" a unique twist just after the first verse. You'll have to hear this one!

"Love Brought Me Back" and that old church favorite, "Supper time" are both good songs with music tracks that compliment the

SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

vocalist featured on each one. Good quartet music has always been one of my favorite styles and this album is solid and enjoyable. I did miss seeing the song writer credits, but I do love the album! Order yours at www.four-fold.com



HOPE OF THE BROKEN WORLD

Selah

Curb Records

Producers Jason Kyle, Todd Smith,
Allan Hall

This album is thirty five minutes of pure enjoyment and encouragement! Each song has a special message and Todd, Allan and Amy present each one with heartfelt vocals. Each vocalist is featured on one or more songs with the music arrangements complimenting the vocals. This recording leans more to a folksy sound or more of a praise sound, and it will touch each listener just the way you need it most!

Dolly Parton's well-known song, "Coat Of Many Colors" features Allan, who sings this with so much sentiment. Amy is featured on the first verse of a "He'll Hold You," a song she wrote. It is the most encouraging and uplifting song I've heard in a while and will minister to anyone who is suffering from a crisis in their life.

Todd does such a wonderful job on "I Turn To You," a thanksgiving prayer to the Father for His help and praise for that help. Amen and Amen!!

Selah's unique version of "'Tis So Sweet To Trust In Jesus" is especially touching, with the group singing part in English and part in Kitubo (African.) The music arrangement is complimentary to the African lyrics and sticks with you after the song has ended. Each member of Selah is a gifted songwriter, which makes these songs more meaningful. The songwriter is always able to interpret his own material so much better than another performer. I have pushed "return" on my MP3 player more than once on each of the songs, which are more of a testimony from this talented group, than anything I've heard recently.

I can tell you about each song; I can describe the quality of the vocals and music; I can explain the blessing they have been to me as a listener/reviewer, but I urge you to get your copy at www.selah.com and experience it firsthand.

SOME THINGS GO TOGETHER

Crawford Crossing

Willow Creek Records

Producer Terry Thompson

Crawford Crossing has another winner here! This new recording continues the tradition established by Tabitha, Whitney and Israel with their first recording, TURN UP THE MUSIC. This new album is just "chock full" of awesome music. Excellent song selection and complimentary music tracks

provide great listening. Each song speaks to the lives we live, our blessings, our trials, hurts and problems – things everyone goes through – and teaches us life-lessons, if we listen closely to the lyrics.

The harmony of family is present here, with brother-sister team, Tabitha Crawford Wheeler, Israel Crawford and his wife Whitney. Their talent is a definite, their dedication to God and to their music is commendable, and their love for their family is evident. Tabitha, Whitney and Israel sing from the heart.

"Born Again" is a song describing the routes so many of us have taken in our lives; moving away from what we know is right, to "try our wings." The message is so down to earth and real. This song is one of twelve, the last being a special bonus song for Christmas, "Do You Hear What I Hear." I love the country style of this and all the songs on the recording.

"He Knows Best" and "He Knows Your Name" are two songs that especially spoke to me. The trio does a fantastic job on both of these. Sometimes we all get so bound down to things in our life and the stress is overwhelming. I'm so thankful that He always knows best!

I love the lyrics in "Live For The Day," and love hearing Crawford Crossing sing this one. My advice is that you have your personal copy of SOME THINGS GO TOGETHER. You will enjoy the music, but more than just the music, you need to hear the messages in the songs. Check out www.crawfordcrossing.com for your copy.

STEPHANIE KELLEY

Being a fan of Southern Gospel music doesn't mean you have to live in the south. In fact, those of you in the great Pacific Northwest know that there is a large fan base here in our little corner of the world. Our friends down South have a hard time believing that us west coast, northerners can know a thing or two about Southern Gospel music, but we can! I remember one of my first trips to the National



The Northwest is full of breathtaking natural beauty and interesting cultural destinations.

Quartet Convention. My name badge had my home state of Washington clearly printed under my name. Most people I met that week assumed I was from Washington, DC. When I corrected them, they turned their heads sideways and gave me a funny look. "You have Southern Gospel out there?" they'd ask. Of course, you can't go to a Southern Gospel concert every day of the week, or even every weekend, but

thanks to some determined promoters and faithful fans, some of SG's most prominent groups make their way west to encourage and entertain fans and to, of course, spread the Gospel.

In an effort to entice other Southern Gospel artists and groups to our beautiful neck of the woods, I am going to be sharing some of the amazing things that make this area, well, amazing. I might even throw in a Southern Gospel tid bit or two, just to prove that our geography has little to do with our musical preferences.

With that being said, I'd like to give you a little teaser about what awesome adventures await you in my upcoming articles because I know you just can't wait until next month to read about them. Together, we'll be exploring some of the most beautiful natural scenery, unique towns and interesting destinations including the Museum of Flight, the Space Needle and the World Famous Chuckanut Drive.

If you live in this area, you'll see some beloved and familiar sights and if you don't, well, I just hope that we will tempt you to step-off the highway next time you're in the area and explore some of the amazing things the Northwest has to offer.

A SINGING ENGLISH TEACHER by JEFF HAWES

I cannot believe that is has now been a little over a year since I first became a writer for Scoops. What an exciting year it has been, and I have loved being able to share my stories of road-life experiences with you.

September is always one of the biggest and busiest months for New River--mainly because of the NQC and the Singing News Fan Awards. Each year as September approaches, my mind cannot help but drift back to the classroom I once taught in, the papers I once graded, and the high school football games I once attended. Now my world consists of church stages and concert halls I sing in, songs to choose, and the music conventions I now attend. Wow! Things do change in just a few short months.

For this issue of Scoops, rather than only describing my life on the road, I wanted to share with you a feature of someone who is perhaps by biggest supporter, my grandmother. Grandmothers are special ladies and prayer warriors. Just this February one of my grandmothers passed away and I really began to realize just how special grandmothers are. My grandmother Hawes lives right across the road from me and has always been my buddy. In fact when I entered the fifth grade, she offered to pay for piano lessons if I would take them. Eight years later when I finished as a senior in high school, Grandmother Hawes still paid for each lesson. Before I learned to drive she faithfully drove me back and forth to each

lesson--in rain, snow, sleet, or shine. In her old house (before it burned in 2001) she had a large upright black piano in her living room, and it became the instrument that became instrumental in the person I am today. It truly became my release from the sometimes tough days of middle school.

Grandma grew up in the middle of a family of eight children, almost always taking on multiple roles in every day tasks. When her mother suddenly died of a heart attack at an early age, Grandma stepped into motherly roles for her younger siblings. Having to quit school as a young girl, Grandma immediately knew she would have to rely on her common sense to be successful. As she entered her teen years, she would often work in the fields, prepare meals, and work as a maid for families in the city.

While in her 80's today, Grandma still relies on her common sense just as much as she did as a young girl. If you pass by her house on any given day it is common to see her working on her car, mowing the lawn, or

having a yard sale. Yes, she even follows New River on Facebook--dial up internet only. She loves Facebook and all the perks it provides. She keeps in touch with family, friends, church events, and most importantly, Karen Peck and New River. In fact, she usually knows my schedule better than I do. Even though she hasn't traveled to many states outside of the South, she imagines she has when she can log on to Facebook and look at the pictures and descriptions we post. In many ways, I feel like I am living this life for her as well.

Never as a fifth grader, did I or Grandma Zola ever think I would be traveling the world, using the talent God gave me to spread His gospel. I often wonder if she, as a young girl working in the field, ever thought she would play an instrumental part of a ministry that wasn't even established yet.



A SINGING ENGLISH TEACHER by JEFF HAWES

I wanted to share Grandmother with you all because I know many of you are grandmothers, have a wonderful grandmother yourself, or know someone who serves as an honorary



grandparent for you. The truth is: prayers are why am where I am today. Many times when Grandma would take me to our local church to practice the piano, she would sit in the pews and pray for me while I was playing. Never cease to pray for your loved ones--especially the youth. God can do above and beyond anything our minds can conceive.

When we are faithful to pray and seek God's guidance, the sky is the limit to what he can do in our lives and through our loved ones--whether it be today or generations to come.



SHERI EASTER'S NEW BOOK reviewed by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

Released in mid-September, HEAR MY HEART is an inspiring view of the life of one of Christian music's best loved ladies. Sheri Easter is the dynamic female voice of Jeff and Sheri Easter, and HEAR MY HEART is Sheri's personal feelings about the events that have graced and challenged her life and shaped her into the Christian woman, wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend that she is today.

Sheri describes the unspoiled years growing up in the Lewis Family, the renowned bluegrass performers from Georgia. She explains various events and decisions that impressed her at an early age, and what those events and the love of her family taught her about life. Sheri loved to write and kept journals of her thoughts all through her life.

In HEAR MY HEART Sheri shares stories of her days at elementary school, the busy years of high school, her years at college and the things that helped form her structured existence. She then relates how losing her father when she was only twenty years old

was the worst tragedy of her young existence and taught her the reality of life.

In Sheri's photo gallery, she included a photo of her as a little girl in her bedroom with her stuffed animals. This brings Sheri's

mother. Those photos are priceless! One thing she emphasizes over and over is the love she grew up with and how that legacy has guided her throughout her life.

In the mid-eighties, Sheri and Jeff Easter were on the same program

really didn't know each other. Just one short year later, on June 18, 1985, they were married combining the talent of the two acclaimed performing families. For a time, Sheri and Jeff toured with her family, and in 1988, Jeff and Sheri stepped out on faith and began their own music ministry.

By 1988, this couple had recorded two albums; "A New Tradition" and "Homefolks," which they carried on the Lewis Family record table. Sheri and Jeff learned in mid-March, 1988 that they were expecting their first child. Sheri's comment is recorded, "It was one of the most difficult choices we ever made, but when I was eight months pregnant, we left the family with no dates of our own, no ideas, and no direction." In November of that year Jeff and Sheri welcomed a baby boy, Madison, to their family.

Their step of faith proved to be exactly what God ordained. Through the years, Sheri's comments in her journals, her writings for various magazines and her comments in many articles on the



commentary to life, as she describes her bedroom and the furnishings. She discusses various things that were the stepping stones in her life, and has added a number of photos of "stepping stones," as a little girl, a young woman, a wife and

at the Albert Brumley Sing; Sheri, performing with her family, The Lewis Family, and Jeff, son of James Easter of the famed Easter Brothers, playing bass guitar with The Singing Americans. This was a re-acquainting, since they had met earlier at another concert but

SHERI EASTER'S NEW BOOK reviewed by SANDI DUNCAN CLARK

on the ministry she shared with her husband, speaks of faith, prayer, love for and from family and friends. Each of those comments reinforced Sheri's belief in a loving, protective God. Like most everyone who keeps a diary or journal, Sheri would skip months-even a year or two, but would always come back to update her life events and thoughts.

Sheri records the birth of her second child, Morgan, in September, 1993. She shared the association she and Jeff shared with Bill and Gloria Gaither and the Homecoming Tours, and tells of the loss of her Grandmother and Grandfather Lewis. Sheri discusses her sadness upon learning of her Mother's diagnosis of Parkinsons, and of going back to school to earn her MBA in Business. Sheri is very open and talks honestly of many

other life-changing events.

The birth of a third child, Maura, in 2005 was a surprise for Sheri at the age of forty two years, just before she and Jeff celebrated their twentieth anniversary. She humorously records Jeff's reaction when she showed him the early pregnancy test. "I woke him up at 5:30 that morning saying 'It's got two lines! It's got two lines!' and handed him the test. As Jeff reached for his bifocals, he said, 'If you have to get your bifocals to read a pregnancy stick, you might be too old to have a baby!'"

And then Sheri writes about her battle with breast cancer, and how she dealt with it. Again, it was an awesome challenge and her writings are compelling. Sheri leaned on the Lord, and her faith became

stronger.

These are only a few of the highlights of this talented lady's new book. I can assure you; I laughed, I cried (over and over again) and could not put the book down until I finished the final page. You will be encouraged, challenged and uplifted to soar to greater heights in your spiritual life by this lady as she reveals her innermost thoughts. HEAR MY HEART is a must read, and I especially urge you to do that during this month of October as we celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

I share one of Sheri's comments; "A writer can only write what is inside. Many times I've wondered whether I had anything of value to say to a reader, however the desire to write has never weakened or diminished. It grows stronger with each opportunity I

postponed. Therefore, I picked up a pen and began to jot down things that were in my heart. My prayer is that someone can take with them a similar memory, story or quote and find comfort in the words-the kind of comfort that brings a smile."

Visit www.jeffandsherieaster.com to order your copy of HEAR MY HEART.

FOR THE COURAGEOUS MAN by LAURETTE WILLIS

"And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their father." (Malachi 4:6, NKJV).

Have you seen the movie Courageous yet? Our family really enjoyed it – lots of action, a compelling story, humor, top-notch acting, and built on a solid foundation -- the Word of God and the Father's

When we come home from a "hard day at work," the last thing many of us want to do is think about anything more physical than elbow-bending (as in fork-to-mouth, repeat, 40 reps).

In the movie Courageous, police officer Adam Mitchell (played by director and co-writer Alex Kendrick, father of six) and his teenage son Dylan start building a new relationship with

Love is spelled T-I-M-E. Why compartmentalize faith (Sunday only), family (around the dinner table...when we're not watching TV) and fitness (does watching football on TV count?)? The Courageous man (and woman) puts God first--so why not ask the Lord how to make fitness a part of your family time together? No matter what the age of your children, you can begin making fun physical activity a part of "what we do as a family." What's stopping you? Excuses?

"I'm too tired." "I don't have the time." "I'm too fat." "I don't have the right workout clothes." "I'm not as young as I used to be." It's been said that an excuse is "a reason wrapped around a lie." The truth may be that what is stopping us is a BIG LIE! And who does Jesus call "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44 NIV)? The battle is between your ears, the enemy's favorite playground. Come against the lies of the enemy. Say out loud "I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me!" Make a decision. Get up, DO something--and start a

new habit as a family. You already have a number of habits as a family (some good, some not-so-good perhaps--I know we have!).

New Courageous Family Fitness Habits

Here are just a few ideas to get your wheels turning - and your bodies moving!

* The Family that Walks together, Talks together! Take a leisurely stroll about 30 minutes after dinner. Make it a new family tradition. Enjoy each other's company and walk at a gentle pace for 15-20 minutes to help digest your food. Do not walk briskly or jog. This will also keep you from snacking after dinner. Take a portion of scripture and talk about it. Ask each one their thoughts about the verse and how we can start applying it in our lives.

* Go to the Gym or Church Fitness Center with your son or daughter. Work out with light weights (not on the machines). Show your kids how it's done.



great love for us. Its subtitle is "Honor begins at home."

As the promotions for this movie state, "Four men, one calling: To serve and protect. When tragedy strikes home, these men are left wrestling with their hopes, their fears, their faith, and their fathering. Protecting the streets is second nature. Raising their children in a God-honoring way? That's courageous."

How does the Courageous Man Combine Faith, Family & Fitness?

one another, and fitness becomes an important part of it. All Dylan seems to want to do is "run a 5K race or play video games," says Adam. Parents realize that in order to build (or rebuild) a relationship with their child, it takes becoming interested in what interests them. Adam decides to lay aside his personal comfort zone for the greater good of blessing his son. He and Dylan begin running together, and their relationship deepens as Dylan sees his Dad's love in action, not just in words.

FOR THE COURAGEOUS MAN by LAURETTE WILLIS

* PraiseMoves Fitness Class. If you want to be considered the coolest Dad or husband in town, take a PraiseMoves class with your teenage daughter or wife. More and more men are finding how PraiseMoves strengthens their muscles and makes their bodies more flexible. Other options include spinning or swim classes. --We get requests quite frequently from men taking the P90X program (the exercise system from the popular infomercial). They wonder if they can substitute Power PraiseMoves or another PraiseMoves DVD for the yoga in the program. Our answer is a resounding "Yes!"

--Moms and Dad often work out with their 3-9 year-olds to PraiseMoves for Children.

* Indoor Fitness Games. Remember Twister? You can still play that as a family! Add an element of scripture memorization by writing verses on cards. Call out all or part of a verse with each move. See how many verses you can remember (if you don't wind up collapsing into a giggling pile before too long!).

* Train for a Charity Race -- a walk, run, or bike race! Train as a family team, or with one of your children. Use the time to encourage your child.

In the movie *Courageous*, Adam says, "I think the Lord is requiring me to call out the man in my son." That's something Dads get to do for their children; emulating our heavenly Father by "calling out" and encouraging the best in their sons, daughters and wife.

Take the lead, Dad. Be *Courageous*. Be a Fit Witness for Christ in spirit, soul and body. Your family will follow-- and will HONOR you for it.

Christian Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry (<http://PraiseMoves.com>). Get your free fitness kit at <http://ChristianFitnessKit.com> ©2011



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JENNIFER CAMPBELL

On the first day of October, I woke up to find a crisp, cool breeze outside, something quite uncommon in my little corner of the world. Living in Florida, we do not generally have a significant change of seasons, yet I have grown to notice the subtle changes that occur at this time of the year. For instance, the warming nature of a friends' status update on Facebook concerning a pot of chili she has simmering on the stove in celebration of the fall weather coming on. Or the beauty of the increasing number of pumpkins, scarecrows, and mums displayed on every corner. Everywhere I look, I see the transition from summer colors to fall ones. And you know what? The leaves aren't the only things that are changing.

Just like the changing leaves, our lives change each season, each month, each week, and each day of our lives. Some of these changes are welcome, much like the refreshing nature of the cooler weather in the fall or the birth of a new infant. But other changes are undesired, such as the failing health of a friend or loved one

or added stress from a new job. Even so, we do not have control over these situations. We cannot change the future no more than we can change the past. But we can pray for God's strength and peace to help us get through every difficulty we encounter.

Recently, I have had several close family members and friends face critical medical conditions. Just today, I found out that one dear friend may be battling cancer and another may be going into assisted living. Another has doctors trying to figure what is causing their discomfort, and still another is being asked to try a fairly new medication to see if it will help them. Several others are facing various trials in their lives as well. None of them expected to have their health change so drastically, but their physical condition changed nonetheless. Still, they must ask God for strength and healing, holding on to the joy that still exists all around them, despite the unwelcome change in their lives.

Personally, I have seen

change in my own life as well, some welcome and some otherwise. Being blessed with my first trip to Europe this summer was a very welcome change from our usual summer routine. This was a change that filled my heart with joy and provided me with an epic adventure that I will always cherish in my heart. On the other side of the coin, there was

that God is always with me. He was with me as I made my way to the top of the Eiffel Tower, just like He was with me when I sang at my mom's funeral. You see, He wants to be a part of every aspect of my life, from the most amazing joys to the darkest sorrows. He walks with me in good times and bad. And He wants to do the same for you. All you



one change three years ago that caused my heart to break in two. Losing my mom was a very unwanted, tragic change. There are still days when I cannot believe that she is not here with me. I cannot comprehend why this happened. I only know that it did and there is nothing I can do about it.

Both of these changes came like a gust of autumn wind, but what a difference between the two. Even so, I know

have to do is ask.

Much like the brilliantly colored leaves that fall to the ground, the changes we experience in life will never be distinctly alike. Some of changes will be pleasant ones that we wish would last forever and others will bring with them an unpleasantness that seems unbearable. No matter what type of change you are going through, God will walk through the valley with you. He will hold your hand. He will carry you

JENNIFER CAMPBELL

all the way. While this world may be racked to the core with change, there is one thing that will never, ever change. Remember that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews

13:8 NIV). Put your trust in Jesus. Don't let the unwelcome changes in life get you down. Instead, step outside in the crisp, fall air. Listen to the rustle of the wind blowing gently through the trees. Spend some

time alone with God in prayer in the midst of the changing leaves.

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HOPE FOR TOMORROW

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time He will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you." 1 Peter 5:6

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think." Ephesians 3:20

"Imitate God, therefore in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ." Ephesians 5:1

"Then Jesus said, Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-29

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

"May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ." 2 Thessalonians 3:5

"Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings and He knows everything." 1 John 3:18-20

"God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward, they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him." James 1:12

"The Lord is close to the broken hearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed." Psalm 34:18

"And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." Luke 11:9



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